

Pupils 2 Parliament

Pupil Special

DEFENDING PLANTS AND TREES

**Written by Roger Morgan
for the Pupils of Clun**

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Hi again, all ye children of Clun!

Your *Pupil Special* this time is to tell you what YOU said in our survey about Defending Plants and Trees.

Your views about this are on their way to the Government.

So well done again, you Pupils of Clun!

Roger Morgan

What could we all do to save Britain's plants and trees?

Here are some of the things you said about this ...

Only use dead wood,
not living wood

If you cut down a
tree, then make sure
you plant another one

Grow more
trees in
busy places

Make a chemical to paste over
trees to stop diseases
spreading ... also to make
animals not want to eat it.
Put covers around saplings, like
plastic covering to protect it

Stop grey
squirrels and put
them back where
they belong!

If you cut down a
tree and it has
seeds, plant them

Stop global
warming

If you cut down a tree,
replace it with two smaller
trees, so they will survive

If you have to
cut 1 tree down
you have to plant
3 because not all
trees will live

Your biggest idea was to replace the trees we have to cut down.

About one in five of you knew the name of at least one plant or tree disease. But most of you didn't.

The main one you knew was Ash Dieback (a disease that Ash trees get).



The biggest risks to plants and trees ...

People often bring pests and diseases that attack our plants and trees into this country by accident. Sometimes they do not care enough about this. Other things, like climate change, are bad for our plants and trees, too.

You said which risks you thought were the biggest ones for our plants and trees. Here is what you said, in order with the worst risks first ...

People bringing plants and trees from other countries to sell in this country

People bringing plants or trees back to this country from holidays abroad

Climate change

People not knowing enough about plant and tree pests and diseases

People not knowing enough about how to keep trees and plants safe

People not bothering to do what they can to keep trees and plants safe



So, you were worried about pests and diseases being brought into this country accidentally, on plants and trees people bring back from other countries.

And you thought people need to know more about pests, diseases, and how to keep plants safe from them.

But you didn't think the biggest problem is people not bothering about keeping plants and trees safe – though that is sometimes the case.

Almost all (but not quite all) of you said that everybody should do more to protect plants and trees from getting pests or diseases.



You thought the best way to get people to do more to defend plants and trees is to tell them why it is good to have healthy plants and trees.

The next best way is to tell people about pests and diseases that attack our plants and trees.



And lastly comes telling people not to do things that bring pests and diseases to our plants and trees.

You thought the very best time to tell people about the need to defend our plants and trees is ...

When pests and diseases are actually attacking plants and trees where those people live.

The next best time is ...

When people are buying plants in this country

And the third best time is ...

When people are coming back from a holiday abroad

And lastly came when people are visiting woods and the countryside.

Most of you said that you and your family had never brought a plant or a tree back from abroad yourselves. Though lots of you weren't sure.

A few of you said you or your family had brought a plant or tree home from abroad.

A third of you said YOU might know whether a particular plant or tree is likely to bring a pest or a disease with it if someone brought it back from holiday into this country.



But two thirds of you said you wouldn't know.

The Government wants to know where people would go to find out about keeping plants and trees safe from pests and diseases.

Here is what you said were the most likely places YOU would find out ...

- 1st the internet**
- 2nd a book**
- 3rd your teacher**
- 4th your parents or carers**
- 5th other people in your family**

And you might perhaps find out from these ...

- 6th TV programmes**
- 7th your friends**
- 8th a magazine you get.**

If you were a tree, what would be your biggest worry? You said:

Catching fire

Dying

Being cut down by humans

Getting a disease

Getting cut down for no reason

If I will get cut down

Getting eaten

That people will cut them down and not plant any more

Creatures will eat the seeds

I simply do not know. It is so dangerous I think we should stop as many of the dangers as we can

Using plastic seals around them is bad for the environment and animals

Getting chopped down

The Government wants to know which of these things it should spend most money on to defend our plants and trees ...



Finding out how to defend them from pests and diseases in the future

Or

Fighting a pest or disease that is already attacking plants and trees

You thought the Government is wrong to say it must choose between these!

Your top answer was that they should ...

Spend the same amount of money on

BOTH of these things!



Though some of you said that finding out how to defend our plants and trees in the future should get more money than fighting pests and diseases that are already attacking them.

Here are the three top three things you thought the Government should get scientists working on **straight away** to defend our plants and trees ...



1st Finding out which pests and diseases are the most dangerous



2nd How to fight different pests and diseases

Your third choice was a bit different – it was about getting us all – not just scientists – to join in the fight to defend our plants and trees.



So your third choice was ...

3rd Getting people to do more to help defend plants and trees from pests and diseases





So far, we've been talking about both plants and trees. But now we go on to your advice to the Government about defending our trees.

Lots of you said you weren't sure whether any of the trees near you look as if they are dying because of an attack by a pest or a disease.

But about a third of you said you knew a tree near you which is dying right now because it is being attacked by a pest or a disease.



You voted on the Government's list of ten weapons for defending trees.

You voted this one the top weapon ...

Doing more inspections of trees being brought into this country

This one came second ...

Testing all trees for pests and diseases before they are planted

And these two weapons shared fourth place ...

***Keeping trees brought into this country in quarantine for a time
and***

Doing more inspections of trees after they have been planted

And finally, here are some of the other things you said about defending trees and plants ...

PEST CONTROL



Don't cut down trees for no reason, and replant them if you have cut them down

Always replace trees if they have been cut down or died of pests or diseases

I think you should check more trees after a week after they've been planted

DO THE RIGHT THING!

Plant more trees

Try not to let in anything else that might have a disease or pest on it or in it

I think the Government should be more careful and aware about their trees

Please oh please come to Clun because I know that trees in my nearby forests need help

Well done again all you pupils of Clun!!

You did well!

As you usually do!

So, thank you for your thinking!

I'm looking forward to doing our next survey together!