

Home of the week
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Brief-Case



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The perils of knotweed

I own a plot of land which I hope to develop one day. It is overgrown and a friend who was visiting told me that it looked as if I had some "Japanese Knotweed" taking over in one corner. He said I would need a licence to remove it. Can you tell me more please?

Japanese Knotweed was brought to Britain as an ornamental garden plant in the mid-nineteenth century. Since then it has become widespread in the wild and causes serious problems by smothering native flora and causing structural damage to buildings (for example by growing through drains, foundations and tarmac and even through the floors of houses).

How can I identify the weed?

Japanese Knotweed dies back in late October each year, leaving only dead brown hollow canes as an above ground sign of its presence. In late March each Spring, the rhizome system starts to throw up new shoots which look like asparagus on emergence. These shoots grow rapidly, reaching two metres by the end of May and three to four metres by the end of June, which are identifiable by their bamboo like nature and fleshy green/red tinged colour. The leaves are light green and heart shaped and in late August the plant produces clusters of small, cream flowers.



Japanese Knotweed is regarded as controlled waste and has to be disposed of at licensed sites or by burning on site

Do I have any legal responsibilities for Japanese Knotweed in my garden?

While there is no statutory requirement for landowners to remove the plant from their property, because of its potential harm to native species, it is listed on Schedule 9 and subject to section 14 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, which makes it an offence to plant, or cause this species to grow, in the wild. Both the police and local authorities have enforcement functions for the 1981 Act. In addition, Japanese Knotweed is regarded as controlled waste and has to be disposed of at licensed sites or by burning on site.

How do I remove the Knotweed?

There are only three ways of removal: by excavation, biological control or chemical spraying. Your local council or the Environment Agency may be able to advise you or you can contact a specialist removal company.

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know everything that has been done!

In total, there are nine bedrooms in this house as well as a coach house. It has a very interesting history, believed to be the second oldest property in Holt, after Byfords. The front part of the house was probably rebuilt and completed in about 1720 with the middle section of the house mentioned in Norwich archives as surrounded by a moat between 1000 - 1500!

The Tithe Barn, no longer part of the property, is a little further down Letheringsett Hill.

The house was occupied by various rectors of the Parish Church of St Andrews in Holt until it was sold in 1962, the last clerical occupant being the Reverend John Southern

who was highly regarded in the area.

The property was then purchased by Sir Roy and Lady Harrod who had moved to Norfolk on his retirement from Oxford and remained their home for the rest of their lives.

For me, this was a joy to visit, I also enjoyed a stroll around the grounds which includes a kitchen garden and you get that lovely feeling of privacy yet you are only down the road from Holt centre and close to Letheringsett the other way and the north Norfolk coast. A real find!

The Old Rectory, Holt, is for sale for £2.5 million with Strutt & Parker on 01603 617431.

instructions in the paper this week we continue to find vendors who are keen to sell. This combined with the continued influx into the county of out of area buyers is a good sign for those who want to take advantage of the buoyant market.

On another positive note, we are seeing a quicker transaction process in the last couple of months. On a whole exchanges seem to be coming through a lot quicker with buyers heeding our advice of 'getting

their ducks in a row' before formally offering on a property, particularly on the financial side of things. This can save a lot of time and heartache for all involved!

I am starting to get potential clients mention to me at the valuation stage that they are preparing for Spring next year. Now in some cases it is in some peoples' best interests to wait until 2016. However, the Autumn market can quite often be overlooked. The market usually

runs right through until mid to late November. The biggest positive I see for this time of year is that in terms of selling your home there is nowhere near as much competition about as there is for the Spring Market. This combined with good enquiry levels can not only mean you secure a sale but possibly a greater selling price due to the lack of competition. So make sure you give this some thought when next thinking about

when is the best time to sell your home!!!

Today in the EDP there is a selection of unique properties across different price ranges. Enjoy and remember if you have any queries please feel free to give me a call at Fine and Country on 01603 221888 or email me at cameron.black@fineandcountry.com Fine & Country has sponsored this column.