



**LEADING  
THE WAY IN  
JAPANESE  
KNOTWEED  
ERADICATION**





# Invasive Vegetation Management

## Removing Japanese knotweed

Without doubt, Japanese knotweed is one of the biggest challenges for the construction industry today.

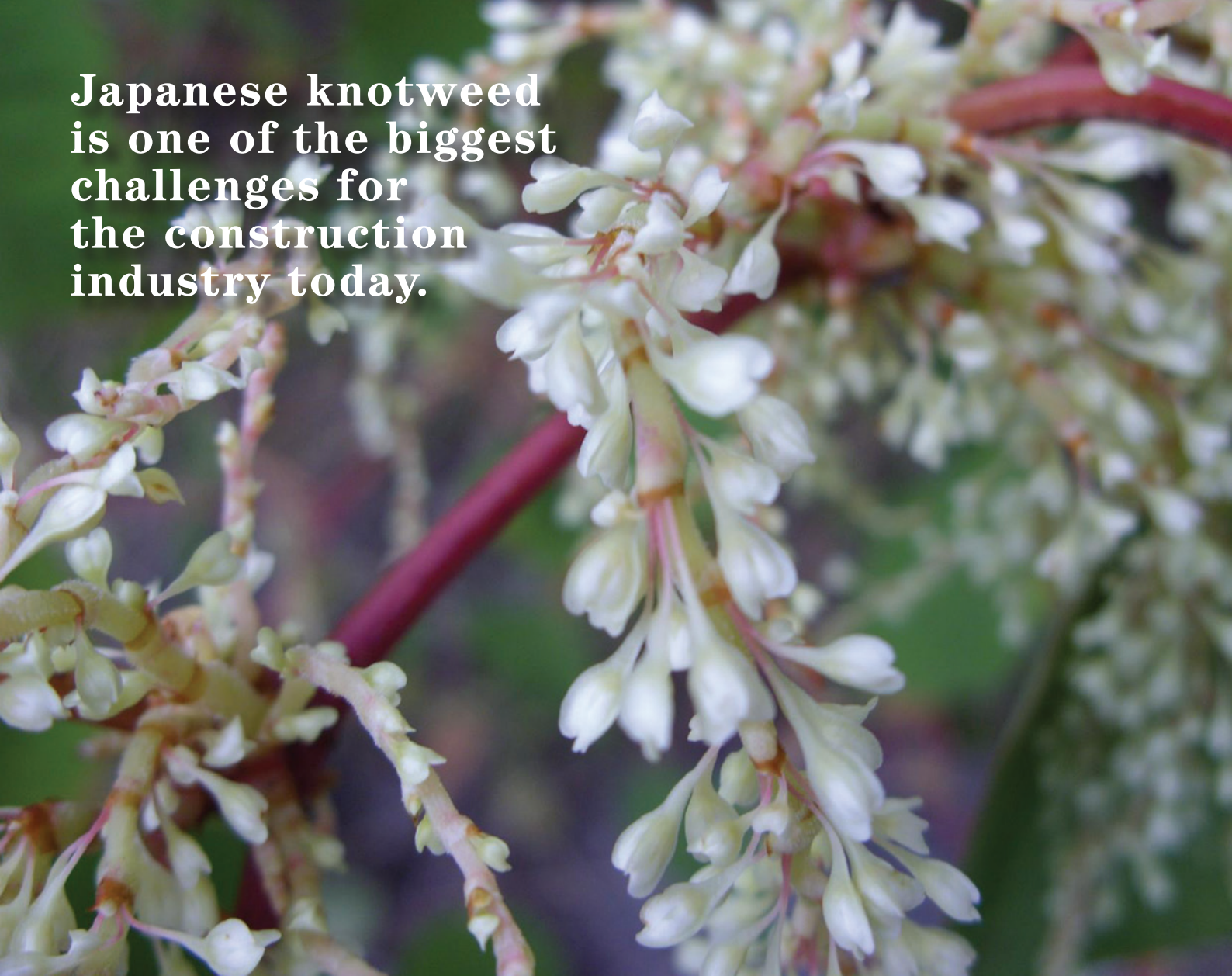
A highly invasive weed, it can spread quickly from only a small fragment and cause extensive damage to property and displace native species of flora.

As it can remain dormant in soil for over four years, the scientific and professional approach to its eradication is vital if 100% success is to be guaranteed.

Japanese knotweed is proscribed under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, which makes it an offence to wilfully cause the plant to spread.\*

\* We understand that the law may be revised later this year within the proposal in the Government's Queen's Speech to amend the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 so that "species control orders" can be made where voluntary agreements cannot be reached with relevant land owners. (see scanned extract from the Times)





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All parts of the plant, and any soil contaminated with rhizome, are classified as 'controlled waste', requiring all the duty of care requirements under the Environmental Act 1990 to be met.

In order to eradicate this, Invasive Vegetation Management (IVM) has developed the 'FAST' System (Foilage and Stem Treatment), which uses a range of application techniques developed to significantly increase the effectiveness of a standard herbicidal treatment method.

When used alongside IVM's tailor-made site solution, they form a formidable partnership, even allowing the construction programme to continue unaffected on occasion.

IVM is committed to providing scientifically advanced, cost effective solutions to invasive vegetation issues. This sees the Company regularly conduct scientific studies and undertake research projects, which provide the most advanced packages for all clients.

All active sites that IVM is currently treating form an important part of research; samples are taken from every site at various stages of the treatment process, allowing the Company to constantly monitor, revise and improve application techniques, resulting in an optimum package for the client.

A member of the Property Care Association (PCA), IVM can offer ten year site guarantees.

With offices in Birmingham, Cambridgeshire, Somerset, IVM can service knotweed sites all over the UK with ease.

Its directors can point to over 30 years of combined experience in Japanese knotweed treatment and invasive vegetation management between them.

All IVM's techniques for vegetation control have been developed with the environment at the forefront of thoughts. The aim is to supply customers with a cost effective and guaranteed solution to their weed problems that is also environmentally friendly and carried out by environmentally friendly staff.

In terms of excavation and remove to licensed disposal solutions, IVM can offer a fully managed excavation service, supplying the machinery, plant and operatives for any job, allowing the client to hand over a knotweed contaminated site and receive a clean site ready for development.

IVM arrange everything, including mapping and haulage, and clean backfill - all at competitive prices anywhere in the country. Invasive weeds can be prevented from spreading onto a clean site thanks to IVM's full range of membrane and root barrier systems, while the Company also supplies a fully trained member of staff to advise during Japanese knotweed excavation. **>6**

# PROPERTY CARE ASSOCIATION

## Taking Japanese knotweed seriously

Japanese knotweed has become increasingly well known in recent years, and is a growing commercial problem because of the challenges it causes in the urban environment.

Native to eastern Asia, the plant was introduced in the early 19th century to adorn gardens of Victorian England.

Along with Giant hogweed and Himalayan balsam, Japanese knotweed is one of three non-native plants most commonly encountered in Britain that concern homeowners, landowners and developers.

As early as the beginning of the 20th century, it was widely recognised as an invasive species. Where the plant grows on development sites, it can cause damage to hard structures and surfaces.

Developers also often need to tackle the plant in order to avoid contravening the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

The Property Care Association (PCA) - the trade association representing specialists who can be trusted to resolve problems affecting buildings - offers advice to developers about the impact of Japanese knotweed and the risks posed by this invasive weed, and is continuing to help the UK property and land management sectors take control with a comprehensive training programme designed to normalise the problem.

It includes a two-day modular course, control and eradication of Japanese knotweed, which focuses on identification and control measures, but also briefly covers other invasive plants.

Comprising two modules - The Management of Invasive Plant Species and Identification and Control Options for Invasive Plants - the course is aimed at professionals in sectors including construction and development, surveying, horticulture, ecology and land remediation.

A training programme for technicians and field operatives working on the control of Japanese knotweed has also been devised by PCA.

Lasting one day, the course is targeted at site workers who want to understand more about the plant and its eradication.

Steve Hodgson, General Manager of the PCA, spoke about the steps to eradicate the problem of Japanese knotweed.

He said: *"Japanese knotweed is just a plant and we are taking all steps necessary to normalise it, so it is viewed generally as any other type of property problem, in that it can be identified and treated with minimal impact."*

*"The delivery of professional training is a major step forward in that process and this course shares the latest thinking and expertise to enable the UK to take control of Japanese knotweed and give reassurance to lenders that it can be remediated."*

It is an important function of the PCA, whose members can investigate and provide solutions that involve damp, condensation, timber decay or insect attack, dampness and water penetration in basements, floodwater recovery and flood protection, structural defects, as well as invasive weed control.

The Company works with government departments, respond to consultation documents and provide assistance with the department of new guidelines, all with the aim of improving outcomes and promoting best practice.

When choosing a member of the PCA, people can be certain that in order to become a member, these companies have undergone rigorous checks to achieve and retain membership.

All members are audited and the quality of their work already checked, and regular technical, operational and procedural checks give consumers the assurance that all members can deliver high quality service and peace of mind, supported by independently insured guarantees.

The PCA is intent on setting the highest standards for its members and therefore they have to have comprehensive industry recognised qualifications, as well as offering insurance backed guarantees.





All members must adhere to a formal Code of Conduct, a strict Code of Ethics and adhere to minimum Performance Standards.

They have to enter a deposit protection scheme for damp proofing, timber preservation, structural waterproofing and structural repair works and are all licensed to the government's TrustMark scheme.

The PCA also expect its members to co-operate in the unlikely event of any problems or complaints, which again puts all prospective customers at ease.

A range of different memberships are offered by the Company. Categories include contractor; freelance/independent surveyor; invasive weed control contractor; consultant, manufacturer and associate.

Contractors comprise of companies providing services to the domestic and/or commercial market within the damp-proofing, timber preservation, structural waterproofing, structural maintenance and flood remediation trade sectors.

A freelance surveyor offers a specialist surveying service as well as a declared commercial link with one or more organisations, while the independent surveyor will have no commercial link.

A consultant member is a professional who is not directly employed by a company and provides services to the domestic and/or commercial market within the sectors represented by the PCA.

These consultants are also deemed to have the ability to act as a witness in litigation cases as well as produce CPR 35 compliant reports in accordance with civil procedures.

Associates can be both individual and companies, and the manufacturer/distributor members comprise companies that manufacture and/or distribute products used by contractors within the sectors represented by the PCA.

The invasive weed control contractors that are members provide services to the domestic and/or commercial market within the invasive weed control sector.

This section of membership provides consumers with a means of identifying specialist contractors and consultants who can undertake works that can lead to the eradication of Japanese knotweed and other invasive plant species.

A new membership section, this has been formed by a group of leading industry experts who have formulated strict criteria for PCA membership. The implementation and monitoring of these standards will provide assurance that members listed as experts are capable of offering the highest levels of technical knowledge and practical skill.

Promoting high standards of professionalism and expertise within the industry through training and other support services is key to PCA.

These standards are promoted outside the Association to ensure that members are perceived as the best providers in the sectors of structural maintenance, timber preservation, damp and condensation control, flood protection and remediation, and the control of management of invasive weeds.

The origins of the Company go back to 1930, when the British Wood Preserving Association (BWPA) was founded for the industry with the key aim to 'spread knowledge of wood preservation with a view to prevent wastage of timber and to standardise specifications for wood preservations and their application; to investigate all possible methods of wood preservation; and to afford members opportunities for the interchange of ideas regarding improvements in wood preservation'.

In 1977, the British Chemical Dampcourse Association (BCDA) was formed and 12 years later, the two Associations merged to form the British Wood Preserving and Damp Proofing Association (BWPDA).

Members of the BWPDA were instrumental in the formation of Guarantee Protection Trust in 1982, to offer insurance-backed guarantees to customers, which became Guarantee Protection Insurance on achieving FSA approval in 2002.

A year later, two divisions were created; the Property Care Association and the Wood Protection Association. In 2006, members of the BWPDA voted for the separation of these two divisions and shortly after, both became individual trade associations in their own right.

When called upon, PCA's members will undertake professional trustworthy site surveys and investigations delivering peace of mind through detailed investigation and correct diagnosis.

All of these services are provided by trained, experienced, vetted and qualified surveyors and inspectors.

When repairs or improvements are necessary, PCA's members are able to complete highly specialised repairs and treatments effectively, efficiently and safely, using skilled experienced site operatives.

With a comprehensive training programme and a wealth of information for members, industry professionals and householders, the PCA is the industry expert.





The IVM FAST System uses less herbicide than traditional vegetation control methods and therefore has less of an impact on surrounding flora and fauna and the environment.

In addition, if the FAST System is implemented, no soil is required to leave the site and enter already full landfills.

It is a crucial element in the eradication of Japanese knotweed which, if left untreated, can damage pavements, roads and car parks, retaining wall structures, building foundations, flood defence systems and archaeological sites.

In its untreated state, it can also reduce land value and delay construction projects, reduce biodiversity through out-shading vegetation, restrict access to riverbanks for anglers, bank inspection and amenity use, and it can also reduce the visibility of roads and railways.

The directors have vast experience in invasive weed control, while also working in the landscaping and construction industries.

In the 1990s, they spent their time specialising in selective weed control on sports pitches and golf courses.

It was during this time they realised that every site required a tailor-made solution, owing to the physiology of vegetation and the nature of its growth.

This knowledge played a major part in the creation of the successful FAST System.

When first approached about Japanese knotweed, the directors used their experience in an amenity environment and applied it to the knotweed.

This led them to discover that the largest problem to overcome was to improve translocation rates of herbicide into the rhizome system of the plant.

It was achieved by encouraging herbicidal acceptance within the rhizome and sampling various methods of application.

Together, these advancements made the dated 'five year treatment programme' a thing of the past and allowed the eradication of Japanese knotweed to become something that can be guaranteed.

With all procedures at IVM, there is a dedication to working towards the highest standards of health and safety, environmental awareness and customer satisfaction.

This has benefited many different areas that have used the FAST System, one of which is the Belvedere Industrial Estate in Kent. Work was necessary because the site was contaminated with Japanese knotweed, floating pennywort and giant hogweed.

Consisting of 87 separate areas of contamination, these were eradicated by implementing the FAST System to all areas of contamination, including a two-year monitoring package.

IVM worked in partnership with the London Borough of Bexley, Northwest Kent Countryside Partnership and the Environment Agency to ensure eradication was completed within the set timescales.

This system was also used on a development site in West London where the construction of new apartments and regeneration of an existing building was planned.

Japanese knotweed on site meant the Company's expertise and FAST System were required.

No soil had to leave the site, and a root barrier system wasn't needed, which resulted in cost savings to the client.

IVM also offers supervised excavation technology - an advanced service that can reduce the volume of soil leaving site by up to 95%.

This not only reduces the amount of soil entering landfill sites but also reduces the production of greenhouse gasses by haulers transporting the contaminated soil from the site.

The Company also has an on-site burial service, which uses no herbicides and means no contaminated soil has to be removed from the site, which reduces both greenhouse gas production and herbicidal use.

IVM Services assist in the regeneration of brownfield sites and the re-establishment of native flora and fauna.





**All IVM's  
techniques for  
vegetation control  
have been developed  
with the environment at  
the forefront of thoughts**





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