

Councillors' Briefing Note No. 153

Service : Neighbourhood Services

Further Enquiries to: Mark Smith

Direct Line: 01225 716666

Date Prepared: August 2013

Ragwort and Japanese Knotweed in Wiltshire

Members may have received a letter regarding Ragwort and Japanese Knotweed in Wiltshire.

We are aware that Ragwort is one of the most frequent causes of plant poisoning of livestock in Britain and we are continuing to work hard to manage this invasive species and others growing on highway and other council owned land.

Since 2004 the council has recorded sites with Ragwort and Japanese knotweed. Our policy of ragwort removal has been successful in many remote locations, and techniques have improved over the years. Ragwort is now at a more manageable level and the council's highway maintenance teams regard the removal of these invasive plants as an integral part of managing the large rural highway network. The Council has an annual ragwort removal programme where priority is the removal of ragwort on these verges, particularly where there is a high risk of spreading to land used for the grazing of horses, other grazing animals, or for the production of animal feed.

If you wish to discuss this further, or require any advice on responding to Ragwort issues in your division, please contact Mark Smith, Director of Neighbourhood Services, who will be pleased to talk with you.