

CASE STUDY

CUSTOMER

Home buyers and owners,
mortgage lenders, conveyancing
search providers

DELIVERABLE

Data sets and hazard alerts for
Japanese Knotweed

OUTCOMES

Informing home buyers and
owners, mortgage lenders and
conveyancers about the risk of
Japanese Knotweed presence;
enabling evidence-based
decision making



*Japanese Knotweed is
a serious and necessary
consideration for
conveyancers and we are
pleased to offer this new
hazard alert service thanks
to the input from our
scientific partners.*

Alan Thorogood
CEO of STL Group

Japanese Knotweed and the property market

Providing robust information on invasive plant species

The challenge

Japanese Knotweed has been described as the UK's most destructive
invasive plant, because its root systems often cause physical damage to
man-made structures. It is a legal requirement to prevent its spread.

The presence of Japanese Knotweed can affect property prices and
mortgage lenders may refuse applications if the plant is known at
a site. Therefore estimating the risk from Japanese Knotweed to a
property is clearly valuable.

The research

Scientists from the Centre for Ecology & Hydrology (CEH), alongside
partners in the Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland (BSBI) and the
conveyancing company STL, developed a high-resolution model of
Japanese Knotweed presence in Great Britain.

Environmental data were combined with information on where the
species occurs. The results from our predictive maps of Japanese
Knotweed occurrence were combined with the data from actual
Knotweed localities to produce a risk model covering every postcode
in Britain.

The outcomes

- Our datasets and risk model have also been incorporated into a
'hazard alert' for Japanese Knotweed, currently offered by the
conveyancers STL, who first helped to identify the need for such
a product.



Japanese Knotweed





BSBI volunteers have been recording the spread of Japanese knotweed since it was first recorded in the wild in 1886: this has formed the basis for a substantial body of research into its ecology, spread and invasiveness. Although still relatively uncommon in the wild, it can become very abundant in the right sort of habitat (disturbed places close to habitation), where it spreads through the dispersal of root fragments (usually in dumped soil). In these locations, it can exclude all other plants species and cause physical damage to man-made structures such as pavements, walls, foundations and roads."

Dr Kevin Walker
Head of Science at BSBI

- We are also working to license our datasets and risk model to other conveyancing search providers.
- The product has the potential to help home-buyers, lawyers working in conveyancing and mortgage lenders to make decisions about the risk from Japanese Knotweed at any particular location. Such information should assist with subsequent decisions on the need for insurance or site surveys.
- Regular updates to the datasets underlying the hazard alert will ensure that the risk model remains appropriate and up-to-date.



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