

Invader knotweed menace may return

CITY residents are being warned about the return of Japanese Knotweed in areas of the city following one of the mildest winters on record.

Coventry City Council had to hand out anti-social behaviour orders when the unwanted imposter was discovered in parts of Coventry last November - in an attempt to control the plant spreading.

But now a new warning has been issued on a national scale after red shoots were discovered in parts of the

UK in late March following one the mildest, yet damp, winters on record.

Changes in legislation have given local authorities the power to take legal action against the owners of private land where Japanese Knotweed is invading neighbouring properties.

Coventry City Council has advised residents to deal with the problem as quickly as possible if they believe to have Japanese Knotweed in their garden by informing neighbours

about the problem.

In some cases, the presence of knotweed has devalued properties by as much as 50 per cent.

Introduced into the UK from Japan in the 1840s as an ornamental plant, Japanese Knotweed is now one of the UK's most invasive plant species.

The heart-leaved, red-speckled stemmed plant can spread into and destroy or damage other gardens – and even walls and buildings.

With reports of the plant shooting up early this year in parts of Britain already, Nic Seal, managing director of knotweed removal specialist Environet, said: "When the knotweed hibernates over the winter, it's out of sight and out of mind.

"But soon, knotweed will start to grow again at a spectacular rate."

The issue has become so severe that it's now a legal duty for people to disclose whether the property is affected by Japanese Knotweed.



Japanese Knotweed presented some Coventry residents with an **unwelcome problem last year.**

For more information visit www.coventry.gov.uk/japaneseknotweed