What is the difference between a tree surgeon and an arborist?

No, there's no punchline, it's not a joke. The titles of 'tree surgeon' and 'arborist' are often used interchangeably, as people sometimes think that they are one and the same thing. Whilst tree surgeons and arborists do share some things in common, there are some key differences between the two roles.

Firstly, the qualifications that they hold are different. Think of an arborist as a doctor, diagnosing disease and providing recommendations for treatment. Just as a doctor might refer you to a surgeon for an operation, an arborist may refer you to a tree surgeon.

What is a tree surgeon?

An experienced tree surgeon can safely prune, fell and remove trees for you, stumps included. Just as you wouldn't trust an unqualified and inexperienced person to perform an operation on you, you should never trust just anyone to remove a tree. Felling a tree can be a dangerous and difficult task, and must be done so professionally and in a safe manner. Any number of things can go wrong without proper training, including people being injured by falling branches, and surrounding trees, fences and walls being brought down by the weight of the tree falling into them. Even removal of a single tree branch can pose challenges, and should only be performed by a professional tree surgeon.

So, when you see an individual with a chain saw high up a tree, that's a tree surgeon, not an arborist. They are experts in pruning, crown reduction, (where the top of the tree needs cutting back) removal of dead branches, whole trees and stumps. The way in which they cut the tree will minimise recovery time and the chance of disease, and they stick to stringent health and safety regulations.

What is an arborist?

The various interactions within ecological systems are complex and varied, depending on the environment. Groups of trees, plants and animals cannot just be thrown together and expected to get along.

A qualified arborist will know what type of trees will be able to thrive in the conditions available, taking into account soil conditions and existing plant and animal life. They can also diagnose and treat diseases in trees, and refer to a tree surgeon if necessary.

An arborist has a skill set that is complementary to that of a tree surgeon. Tree surgeons are masters of maintenance, whilst arborists deal with tree management.

Why use Howe2?

Howe2 as a company are arboriculturalists. Don't let this throw you though, this just means that we manage and care for trees, hedgerows

and shrubs, mostly in urban areas. We employ both tree surgeons and arborists, making Howe2 the perfect one-stop shop for all of your tree related needs.

We are passionate about tree conservation, and ensure that we plant more trees than we remove. There are often many more options available than simply removing a diseased tree, and our expert knowledge and experience means that many trees can still be enjoyed for years to come. Give us a call on 01772 619 908 to discuss your requirements.