

**Customer:**  
Saxon Weald Homes Ltd

**Project:**  
Tree Management

**Solution:**  
Trimble GeoXT and FastMap

## Case Study



costs was held in spreadsheets. Nothing linked the information and we had no specific location data other than street names. With our background in GIS, the obvious solution was to invest in a GPS data capture system to undertake a full tree survey of all our stock. The collected information would enable us to understand the scale of our tree liability and what it would take to effectively manage them. For the first time, we would have the tools to be proactive in our tree management as opposed to being reactive."

Saxon Weald had clear criteria that the new system would have to meet:- Tree locations had to be recorded as accurately as possible with as little post processing as possible. The system would have to be rugged and able to withstand heavy usage in all weathers. On-board software had to be user friendly and applicable for all generic data capture tasks.

Justin was able to immediately rule out any specialist arboricultural software solutions along with anything that would not interface with Saxon Weald's corporate ESRI GIS. "Our 'wish list' meant that there was just one system that delivered all our criteria – the Trimble GeoXT. Following a trial from Trimble's UK distributor, KOREC, we purchased a Trimble GeoXT with a Beacon. This would provide us with the all important sub-metre accuracy in the field and the perfect platform for KOREC's FastMap Mobile data capture software. The fact that we could bring in a FastMap proprietary file type and then save it as an ESRI Shapefile meant almost no

"...just one system delivered all our criteria – the Trimble GeoXT."

processing of the data back in the office – data could be displayed and distributed in our GIS with little or no delay. The FastMap software also allowed us to create customisable

forms. This means that every data collection project we undertake can be designed to specific criteria and that we can have more than one project on the go. For example, we can now capture Street Furniture locations, manholes etc whilst on site undertaking our tree survey. Both have separate databases with pre-defined fields."

Continued overleaf ►►

## Knotty Problem

Excellent service, high performance, a growing business and a trusted partner in business and neighbourhoods..... Saxon Weald Homes Ltd has clear corporate aims and is committed to being one of the highest performing housing associations in the country. It is also heavily involved with the development of [www.gi4housing.com](http://www.gi4housing.com), a website focusing on use of GIS in the housing sector and the promotion of best practice.

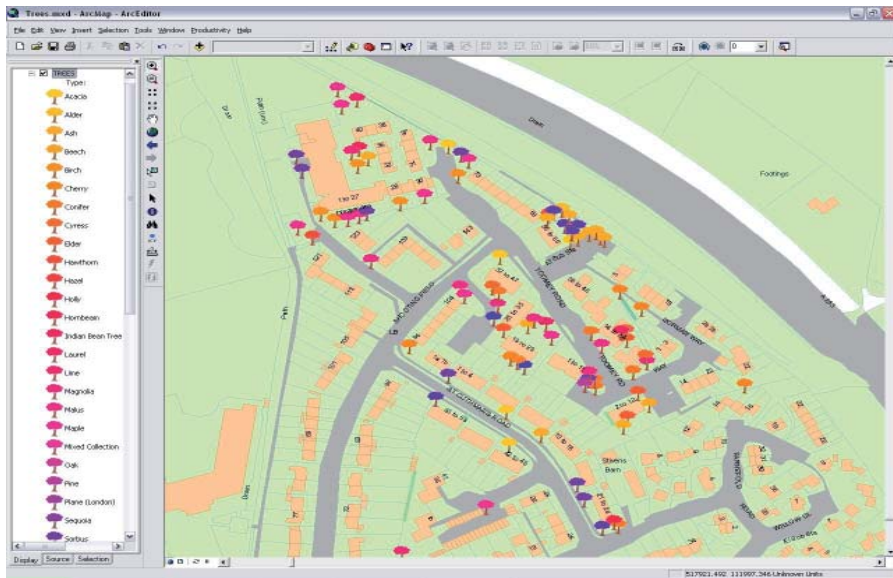
The association was therefore perfectly positioned when it came to finding a solution for the management of the thousands of trees in its care, a need brought into sharp focus with the recent change in law introducing corporate manslaughter liability for injury or death caused by negligence in the management of trees.

Saxon Weald's GIS Manager, Justin Chamberlin, explains, "Our usage of GIS is constantly evolving. Essentially anything with a geographic element can be mapped into the GIS system, and given a business case and relevant use, we will investigate how worthwhile a certain data set will be. A typical example of this is our latest tree management project. We have

been grappling for a number of years with how best to identify and create a rolling programme of management of this liability and the recent change in law has increased our determination to proactively manage our stock and bring this service in line with our overall corporate aims and objectives."

### Multiple challenges – a single solution

Justin continues, "The immediate challenge we faced was that no data had been collected before – all our tree information was held in the heads of people involved with their management whilst data relating to budgets and work



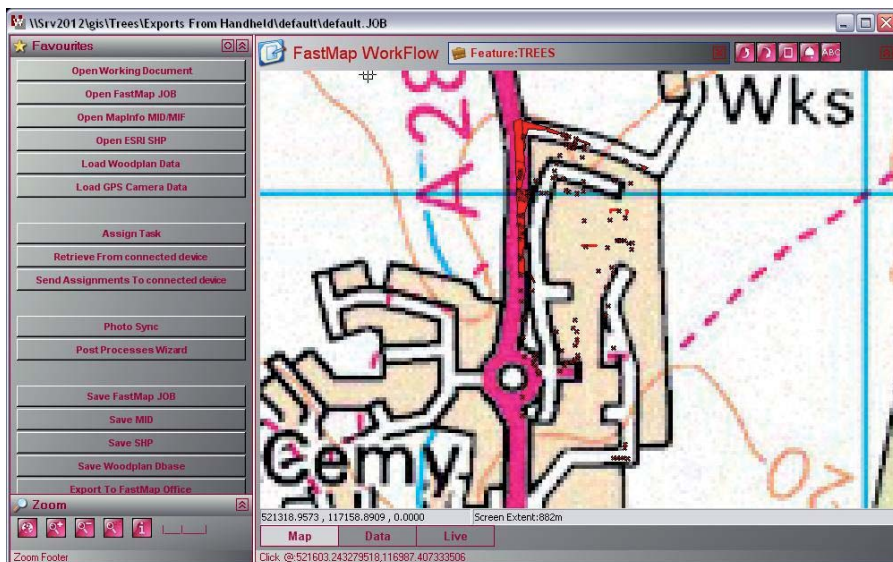
## System Benefits

Saxon Weald's tree surgeons have now been actively recording tree data for around 6 months. Prior to going out into the field, Saxon Weald used their contractor's knowledge and experience to establish exactly what type of data and attributes needed to be captured. Corresponding forms were then built by Justin and loaded on to the GeoXT along with OS MasterMap data overlaid with any relevant data exported from Saxon Weald's GIS. Once collected, data is downloaded in the office although it can be sent 'live' from the field.

The collected data has already enabled Saxon Weald to identify some immediate benefits. For the first time, a tree can be accurately identified within a given street, analysed and then prioritised depending on the level of work required. Justin has then been able to extrapolate these works to include other trees within the vicinity to generate economies of scale for works programming. The accuracy relating to the location of individual trees means less time spent on the phone or going on site trying to identify trees.

Justin concludes, "By the end of this project we will know exactly how many trees we are responsible for, their exact location and condition all backed up by a history of work done. All this means a more efficient and effective management programme. For us, the ability to seamlessly download data collected in FastMap Mobile into our ESRI GIS has been invaluable. If a problem has cropped up, KOREC's Technical Support Team has been on hand to sort out any niggles. We can now clearly demonstrate that Saxon Weald meets its responsibility for the effective management of our tree portfolio."

- ▲ Field data captured with the Trimble GeoExplorer GeoXT sub 1m handheld GPS running FastMap Mobile software displayed for preview/edit purposes in FastMap WorkFlow desktop processing software prior to export to the corporate ESRI ArcGIS system.



- ▲ Showing different types of collected tree data on an OS MasterMap background in ESRI

S

## Contact us:

Please do get in touch for further information on any of the products or services mentioned in this case study, a demonstration, support or just a chat about your requirements.

T: **0845 603 1214**  
 E: **info@korecgroup.com**  
**www.korecgroup.com**