



## **Pesticide spraying for the control of Oak Processionary Moth**

Oak Processionary Moth is an invasive, non-native insect pest which can pose a serious threat to human, animal and tree health. The caterpillars have toxic hairs that can cause skin rashes, eye irritation and sometimes breathing difficulties in people and animals. The caterpillars can also cause extensive defoliation of oak trees. There is an active population of the moth in Richmond and Bushy Parks.

The Royal Parks has a rigorous management programme for the moth in order to protect human, animal and tree health and biodiversity and to ensure that visitors are able to safely enjoy the parks in the summer and all year round.

Control begins with targeted pesticide spraying in carefully selected areas of the park within a limited timeframe of late April to mid May.

In order to minimise the inconvenience to visitors some of the spraying will take place at night in areas of high public footfall. However, spraying during the day is sometimes necessary, particularly where ground conditions are unsuitable for night-time working. It is likely that some areas of the park will be temporarily closed to the public while spraying is in progress.

Please avoid the proximity of the spraying operation and follow any instructions given by the ground crew accompanying the spraying rigs or on signage around the park.

The spraying programme is followed by systematic surveying of the park for the caterpillar nests in June/July and manual removal of these by specialist teams at the optimum time from the beginning of July to the middle of August.

For further information please email [Richmond@royalparks.org.uk](mailto:Richmond@royalparks.org.uk).