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JULIAN FORBES-LAIRD

QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE

Julian Forbes-Laird is Director and Principal Consultant of Forbes-Laird Arboricultural Consultancy Ltd (FLAC), a small but nationally reputed practice. He has over twenty five years' experience in arboriculture, and works with a wide range of public, corporate and private clients.

JFL started his career on the practical side of the profession, before completing a gradual transition to consultancy in 2000. After two years spent working as an independent consultant, he spent a further two years as Senior Consultant at CBA Trees, before establishing FLAC in 2004.

Having developed and lectured widely on a respected and peer-reviewed method designed to quantify the risk posed by defective trees (THREATS), JFL is a recognised authority on tree hazard assessment. He has undertaken several forensic accident investigations, including in relation to fatalities caused by trees, and has appeared as an expert witness in the High Court several times.

He is national Special Advisor on Tree Risk for Network Rail Infrastructure Ltd and Consultant to *L'Union Internationale des Chemins de Fer* (the world cooperation body for railways), for whom he has drafted a new International Railway Standard *Technical Aspects of Tree Risk and Vegetation Management – Recommendations*.

JFL has published a number of articles in the arboricultural and landscape press, variously covering tree risk assessment, legal aspects of liability for hazard trees, subsidence, and the arboricultural significance of certain wood decay fungi on trees. In addition, JFL is a well-known figure on the arboricultural lecture circuit.

JFL is regularly instructed in the area of tree root damage to buildings, frequently acting as an expert witness in this demanding area of arboriculture.

JFL has been instructed as an expert witness on several occasions in relation to prosecutions for offences under Tree Preservation Order legislation, and has appeared for the prosecution in the Crown Court. Additionally, he is author of the TEMPO system for assessing whether trees merit TPO protection; TEMPO is used by over 60 local authorities and dozens of consultants.

JFL has appeared numerous times at planning-related Public Inquiries, and also undertakes advocacy at Inquiries on behalf of selected Rule 6 parties.



www.flac.uk.com

JFL was a technical editor of BS5837:2012, being responsible for preparing drafts of the sections relating to tree survey methodology, and demolition and construction in proximity to trees.

JFL has undertaken several items of original research, including:

- Stability of trees on slopes to derive failure criteria for tree height against degrees of slope
- The use of infra-red aerial imagery for tree vitality assessment
- Site-related predisposing factors for storm resilience modelling of large-scale tree populations

JFL holds the following memberships, designations and appointments:

- Chartered Arboriculturist and Registered Consultant of the Institute of Chartered Foresters
- Member of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors
- Professional Member of the Arboricultural Association
- Registered Consultant of the Arboricultural Association 2004-2018
- Member of the Expert Witness Institute
- Member of the Royal Forestry Society and holder of its 'Professional Diploma in Arboriculture'
- Technical editor for BS5837:2012 'Trees in Relation to Construction – Recommendations'
- Member of the British Standards Institution technical committee on trees, B/213
- National Special Advisor on Tree Risk for Network Rail Infrastructure Ltd
- Consultant to the world cooperation body for railways, the UIC

Testimonials from members of the legal professions:

"A highly intelligent and articulate witness"

Opposition QC

"JFL's report was excellent: helpful, informative, superbly presented and exactly the right length"

High Court Judge

"Despite sustained cross-examination from a senior QC no blows were landed"

Client's QC

"Their cross-examination strategy collapsed as soon as JFL started speaking: he had the jury from the off."

Counsel for the Crown

"Simply masterful under cross-examination"

Planning Counsel

"The excellence of JFL's evidence goes without saying. I was hugely impressed"

Planning Counsel

"Probably the best-prepared expert I've ever worked with"

Client's QC