

### Hug a tree...



Go out into the nearest garden, park or field, select a sizeable tree, stand against the trunk and reach your arms around its girth. Feel good? Of course it does; you can touch the texture of the bark, smell the earthiness around its roots, look up into the sculptural shapes of the branches against the sky and see the colours and light created by the foliage. Quite apart from bringing you closer to nature, your actions could help save some of Britain's most important living landmarks. One of my regular dog walks takes me past a huge oak (*Quercus robur*) and a magnificent black walnut (*Juglans nigra*) planted in the 1720s and noted as one of the finest specimens in Britain. I was amazed to learn that, unlike many historically important buildings and gardens, our ancient trees have little protection and no status. Considering many are hundreds or even thousands of years old, this is shocking. That's why *Country Living* has teamed up with the Woodland Trust to launch a campaign called *Very Important Trees*, in a bid to create a register for the protection of those of special interest.

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