

Climate Change Working Group
7pm on Monday Tuesday 10th October 2023 – The Cannon Inn

Present: Rosemary Walker, Chris Lea, Ted Swan, Geraldine Swan and Gill Cameron Webb

Apologies: Joan Bisseker, Steve Filer, Howard Hughes, and Maz Dufall.

MINUTES

1. There will be a talk on “Why did the Newton Poppleford Floods happen?” in the cellar in Kennaway House at 7.30pm on Weds 11th October.

2. Tree Maintenance

2.1. We'll replace dead trees in the Jubilee Copse in the autumn; we could use some of the 30 Woodland Trust whips. Also Geraldine and Ted have several hazel whips and Gill has hawthorn and oak whips.

2.2. Keith (Parklife) checked out the DCC planting on 6th October and found that the hedging needs to be weeded in the sportsfield and new cemetery.

Keith's proposed 20th and 27th October to do the weeding and also to re-stake over-tall trees (e.g. the sportsfield rowans) and has asked for volunteers to help. He's also going to contact Bicton College and Toby Taylor to see if they can help again. Ted will ask Ian and Gill will ask Orchard planters to see if they can help.

Ted offered to strim along the new cemetery hedging so that we can get in to weed.

2.3. We'll need to check the November pruning requirements for the apple orchard.

3. New Trees

3.1. Trees on EDDC land

EDDC had proposed 21st September for planting a Rowan “Olympic Flame” in Millmoor Vale but realised that there were services under the location and cancelled. They'll let Gill know a revised date.

Gill sent EDDC our surveys, asked for permission to plant trees in those locations and asked if they could give us any trees. They're surveying the locations on 12th October and said they can give us some whips.

3.2. Gill has now got details of who has the 30 Woodland Trust whips that had been grown on in Venn Ottery, so will arrange to collect them. Shan says there are 10 rowan, 10 birch and 10 cherry trees.

3.3. Gill to contact Steve Filer to see about planting ½ doz more trees at Newton Pop School. Chris may also be able to help once he's applied for his DBS clearance.

The original proposal was 6 cherry trees but as the 30 Woodland Trust trees include rowans and silver birch it would be better to have two of each species.

Rosemary will check if the Parish Council will fund stakes, ties and guards for the new trees and 8 guards for the existing 6 trees. (cost IRO £30?)

3.4. Val's Memorial Tree

Ted met with the Harpford Churchwarden and got all final permissions to plant the memorial tree for Val in the churchyard. The tree must be a small columnar type of tree such as a prunus due to space issues.

The original plan was to fund the tree through CCG and Parish Councillor donations but the Parish Clerk is not permitted to ask Councillors for donations. Also many more suggestions have been made so these were discussed with the following decisions made:

a) we'd very much like to accept two offers of additional commemorative trees for Val:

- a disease resistant elm from Anita Kemp. This will be a large tree so probably best suited to Webber's Meadow and
- 3 whitebeams from Howard Hughes; we'd like to suggest Venn Ottery green for these;

b) stakes, ties and guards will be needed but we need to see the trees before deciding which ones to get;

c) Ted will investigate where to buy 3 memorial plaques.

d) Gill to set up a GoFundMe page to gather donations:

- this should give the approximate cost of the tree, stakes, ties and guards;
- it shouldn't suggest how much people should donate;
- waiting for confirmation from Jacqui Baldwin to allow the money raised to be paid into the parish council bank account;
- once the site's created we'll let people know via email;
- we'll close the GoFundMe page when it gets to about £200;
- any surplus funds will be used to make a charitable donation to 'Sidmouth Hospice at Home' as this was the charity chosen by Val for her funeral donations.

e) we won't do a formal planting ceremony as there will be three sites and it's likely that bad weather will mean it's not possible to fix a date. Instead we'll advertise the tree locations after they've been planted.

4. We found quite a few stumps where trees have previously been cut down so Rosemary will ask the next Parish Council meeting if a policy can be put in place to make sure any trees that are removed in the future are replaced.

5. Webber's Meadow

5.1 Contractors excavating Back Brook's river bed drove big diggers across the wildflower meadow and ploughed it up. We'll wait and see what grows back and also plant wildflower seedlings.

5.2. Once the grass dies down in autumn we'll see if we can find more rubble from the MUGA foundations to build a bigger (or another?) rock habitat.

5.3. Chris will source some gorse bushes to put in Webber's meadow behind the rock habitat.

6. Keith Poultney says the PCC are keen to have a bird box put up in Venn Ottery so Ted will arrange a date with Keith to put it up

7. St Luke's Churchyard Bio-Diversity

At the next meeting we'll arrange a group day for doing the following in St Luke's churchyard:

- Chris will strim the area which will only be strimmed once a year;
- Chris will provide a honeysuckle to plant in the wild area around an old stump and a gorse bush for the northern corner;
- Rosemary will buy £100 crocuses, cyclamen, anemones and small early daffodils which we'll plant around the churchyard together with 20 pots of snowdrops which Gill will bring.

The bats will be going into hibernation so Gill will leave it to next year to ask Devon Wildlife to lend us a microphone & sensor (FoC) to see if there's bats in the old hidden shed.

8. Left Over AONB Freebies

1 x standard beech tree – Gill has asked EDDC if we can put this on Chestnut Green to eventually take over from the Ash trees.

1 x standard alder tree – we need to plant this in the south field of Webber's Meadow during the autumn.

20 hedgehog fence markers – 5 have been given away but Gill has yet to advertise the rest FoC in the Parish Magazine

9. Grass Banks

9.1. Gill to ask Jacqui Baldwin who owns the higher School Lane grass bank so we can consider whether to plant wildflowers or trees there.

9.2. The gardening club no longer want to plant up the little flower bed on Green Bank. Rosemary to ask if we can have approx. £120 to buy 8 – 10 shrubs site appropriate shrubs to plant along the bank.

10. Next Year's Projects (not discussed)

10.1. Saving Devon's Treescapes will give communities all the stuff needed to create a Micro Nursery to grow up to 200 trees from seed. Steve thought the school may be interested but Gill has yet to ask for *more details*.

10.2. Ted went to an AONB meeting; the minutes have only just come out so he'll provide an update to the next meeting.

Ted bought along the East Devon AONB Annual reports which include a feature on Newton Poppleford's tree planting.

10.3. Ted will phone the Electricity people to see if we can plant trees or shrubs to hide the generator station.

11. Next Meeting

The next meeting is on Tues 14th November at 7pm on in the Cannon Inn.