

Climate Change Working Group
7pm on Monday Tuesday 31st July 2023 – The Cannon Inn

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

Apologies: Joan Bisseker, Howard Hughes, Ted Swan and Maz Dufall.

MINUTES

1. Tree Maintenance

1.1. All but 6 of the Jubilee Copse trees survived being flooded and they'll be replaced by spare whips in the autumn.

1.2. The Jubilee birches are bending badly so Rosemary will price up taller stakes.

1.3. Parklife watered all the DCC trees on the sportsfield and in Burrow Lane on 16th June, they couldn't do it before then because of an unfortunate accident. Before that the trees were suffering so members of the CCG managed to water and save them. It hasn't stopped raining since the end of June so no need to water for a while.

1.4. All the Rowans are too tall for their stakes and Parklife said they'll re-stake them later in the year so in the meantime we've propped them up with bamboo canes. The St Lukes cemetery Rowan snapped in half but is re-growing strongly from the bottom with a new leader forming so Gill will ask Parklife if this might be the best way forward for the sportsfield Rowans, especially the ones on the bank near the MUGA.

1.5. Woodchip

- On 30th April volunteers put woodchip around the orchard, the jubilee trees, the two poplars, two other Harpford trees and the sportsfield DCC trees. Another 25 bags were given to the school for their AONB trees.

- On 9th May floods washed away woodchip from the hedging to the south of the sportsfield but fortunately the hedging whips were salvageable. DCC/Parklife gave us 50 new tree guards and paid for replacement woodchip which was put out on 26th May and 16th June. There's still approx. 25 bags left for any new trees.

2. New Trees

2.1. East Devon Street Scene will pay for a tree to replace one that died in Millmoor Vale which CCG members will help to plant in the Autumn. The Parish Clerk has arranged for a nearby volunteer to water it.

2.2. All the AONB trees planted in the school field are doing well except one Oak which died. Most of their free whips have also died. Gill has a spare Oak and some native Cherries so will ask "Nicola" (who looks after the school Forest School) if she'd like them as replacements.

2.3. Ted confirmed to Mark Ward that we'd like to plant a Memorial Tree for Val Ranger in the location marked in Harpford churchyard. Mark Ward has asked the Diocese if they agree and once we have final confirmation we'll ask CCG members and Parish Councillors if they'd like to make a donation to pay for the tree (in the region of £64 to £75, plus the cost of a stake, tie and plaque).

2.4. Thirty whips from the Woodland Trust were potted up last year by Venn Ottery and Shan Merritt has asked for these to be collected. Gill to ask Howard if they can be stored at his place otherwise Gill has offered to collect them.

3. Webber's Meadow Amphibian Habitats

3.1. Rubble got mixed into the MUGA foundations deposited on Webber's Meadow so on 21st June five volunteers gathered up as much as could be found and built an Amphibian Habitat in Webber's Meadow. Once the grass dies down more rubble will become visible and be collected for the same purpose.

3.2. A heap of woodchip was also left as a habitat and it would be good to make the pile bigger if anyone has any spare woodchip.

4. Bird Boxes - Ted put up a bird box in St Luke's cemetery and two more in Harpford cemetery. Gill hasn't yet asked Venn Ottery if we can put a bird box up there

5. St Luke's Churchyard Bio-Diversity

- The 22nd May Parish Council okayed our bio-diversity plans for St Luke's cemetery;
- Gill carpeted two flat graves ready for wildflowers next year;
- Chris marked out wild areas which are to be left wild and some areas which will only be strimmed once a year. Chris will strim these in the autumn;
- A hedgehog and a bird box were installed;
- Rosemary to ask Jacqui how much money is available to buy early flowering bulbs and corms and a Gorse bush;
- Gill to ask Devon Wildlife to lend us a microphone & sensor (FoC) to see if there's bats in the old hidden shed.

6. Left Over Freebies!

Gill still has some freebies left by the ED AONB

1 x standard beech tree – Gill to ask the Parish Clerk/East Devon if we can put this on Chestnut Green. There seems to be no plan to cut down the Ash trees, but the Beech tree will probably outlive the Ashes and eventually take over from them.

1 x standard alder tree – the 22nd May Parish Council okayed this to be planted in the south field of Webber's Meadow;

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

7. Grass Bank in front of the higher School Lane houses

Rosemary to ask Jacqui who owns the higher School Lane grass bank then we could consider whether wildflowers could be planted there.

8. Next Year's Projects

8.1. Gill attended a Saving Devon's Treescapes online Forum on 17th May. They 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 so Gill will ask for more details.

8.2. They will also give apple trees to create or enlarge a Community Orchard. Maybe Howard can find out if Venn Ottery Green might be interested?

8.3. Ted went to an AONB meeting and will give an update to the next meeting, especially about helping to test River Otter water.

8.4. Rosemary spotted an article about the 'Living Churchyards' scheme; the contact details given weren't valid but this could be investigated further.

8.5. Landscape Recovery in Otter Valley Project - Funding is being sought from Defra to support environmental enhancement in farmed landscapes which will restore and connect wildlife habitats up the River Otter to the A3052, so includes Newton Poppleford. Rosemary will go to their meetings on behalf of the Parish Council and CCG

9. Next Meeting

The next meeting is on Tuesday 5th September at 7pm on in the Cannon Inn.