

Subject:

FW: Hedgerow Working Party. Report for 26th Nov Amenities

HEDGEROW WORKING PARTY REPORT

Items requiring Council decision.

- 1.1. New annual cutting regime for the Eastern (MPF) hedge
- 1.7 Den area. Complete the clearance in this area this winter.(previously approved)
- 3 Purchase of Wildflower seed for hedge base
- 4.3 Annual cut to the hedge adjacent to Allotment 7.

Hedgerow Working Party. Report for 26th Nov 2019 Amenities

(WP meeting held on 11th Nov)

As before, we have updated each item on the Recommendations Document agreed by Council in Sept 2017.

1. Eastern Hedge. (MPF boundary)

1.1 Hedge height.

This 'hedge' has been difficult to manage for many years, and no successful management plan has yet been found for it. The problem is that it is trying to meet all these varying requirements:

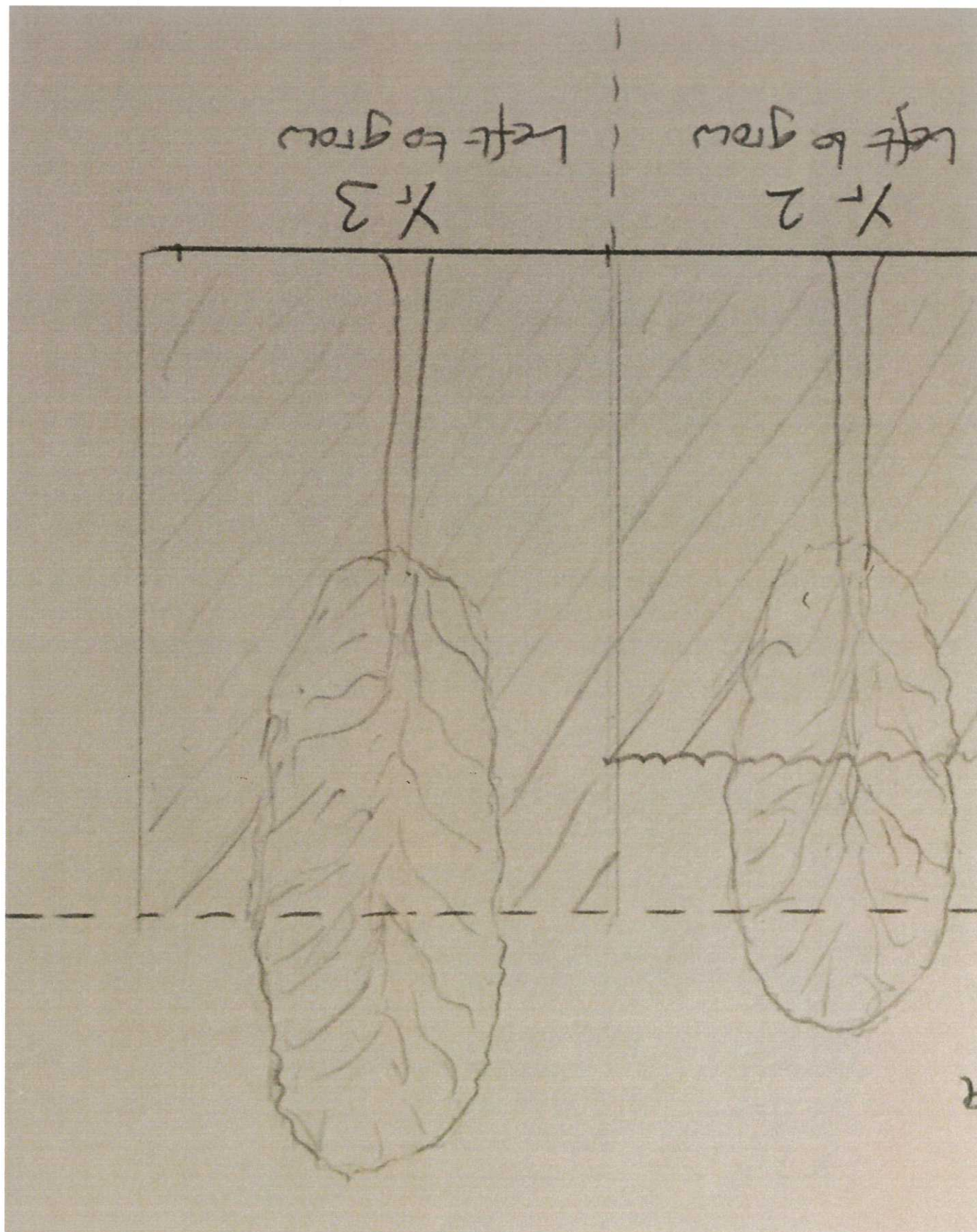
- It is a 'landscape feature' recognised in the MPF Conservation Area
- It provides allotment wind protection
- It provides habitat for wildlife, with cover for nesting, insect nectar source, bat highway
- Incurs a large cutting bill for Council every 2-4 yrs.
- Needs to avoid excessive overshadowing of allotments, reducing crop viability.
- Contains many unusual Perry pear trees that require better management than they have had in recent years.
- Acts as a barrier to unwanted intruders (animal and human) from entering the allotments.

The WP hopes that the following proposal will be an acceptable compromise to meet all these requirements. It would create (over the next 3) years a trimmed 'lower hedge' with about 15 standard trees above it. (these being the Perry pears where we are cutting the ivy (see 1.4)

We recommend that a third of the length of the hedge is cut each year, then leaving that section for 2 years. A cut height of 3.5m is suggested, whilst carrying out thinning and reduction (approx 33%) of the 5 Perry pears in that section. These trees will be approx 11m apart (12yds).

We recommend that cutting should be done in late winter (February) with held chain saws/hedge trimmers. All cut materials to be chipped and removed from site. (with agreement could be left for allotment holders on a spare allotment)

(The very rough sketch below explains this 3 yr cycle.)



The benefits of this proposal :

- cost management for the Parish Council, with a regular annual spend rather than a larger cost every 3 yrs.
- 15 (out of 60) Perry Pear trees in the hedge will be managed sympathetically and pruned as trees rather than overgrown hedge plants.
- the remaining Perry pears and other species will be reduced to 3.5m every 3 years. This hedge was reduced to 4m in March 2017.

- will allow each cut part of the hedge to recover, flower and fruit in yrs 2 and 3, since only 1/3 of the length of the hedge will be cut annually. This will also benefit the wildlife living in the hedge as they will have cover, nesting sites and food from 2/3 of the hedge each year.
- Those allotment holders with plots backing onto the hedge will have improved levels of light due to the regular cutting regime. The taller Pear trees will be well spaced out along the hedge, so should not affect any one allotment to any great extent.

NOTE: It was recognised that managing this cutting regime will take careful supervision, especially in the first few years when the various tree/hedge heights are being established.

1.2 Hedge face. MPF side.

Recommend that Mark Streeter continues to cut this annually in winter. The newly planted hedging plants need light to establish. In future years we might consider cutting half one yr and half the next, for habitat/wildlife reasons. 2m wide wildlife strip starting to establish. Will mark this with hazel hoops next Feb prior to grass cutting commencing.

1.3 Hedge face. allotments side.

Last cut March 2017. Most is fine. A few areas could do with a trim. Propose visiting with tree surgeon to supervise what is cut.

1.4 Perry pear trees. Ivy cut

To match the proposal in 1.1, Roger and Fran will cut ivy from a further 4 trees this winter, and cut any new growth from the 11 already done.

1.5 New hedge plantings

Have planted 70+ plants over last 2 yrs - growing well on the MPF side. Will add a few more dog rose/hawthorn this winter from nursery bed

1.6 New hedge planting - orchard area

Area at top of orchard cleared and grass seeded by Council earlier this yr. Can now access fence and will plant hedging plants as part of the SCO Work days this winter.

1.7 'Den' area

Partial clearance last winter, but work stopped before job completed. Need large cherry plum pollarded as agreed, and surgery on two other cherry plums in this area. Trees needing work will be marked with red tape.

New hedge plants and 2 Perry pear trees at the back of this area in the hedgeline growing well.

1.8 Area adjacent to tarmac strip (now basketball court)

Grass now fully established and part of the mowing regime. Great improvement over the rough ground with nettles, brambles and rubbish only 2 years ago.

2. Western Hedge. (Spackman's field side)

2.1 Tree felling, new hedge planting.

Field Maple reduced 30% as agreed. 20 new hedging plants where sycamores removed all growing well.

2.2 New stock fencing, new hedging.

2 stretches of stock fence completed last winter. 40 new hedging plants in 3 gaps all doing well. A few gaps remain especially at plots 35/49/53-55. Will look at filling these with new hedging this winter.

2.3 Hedge face cut.

No cutting required last year, propose no cut required next year either.

3. Northern Hedge. (Mill Rd)

Now 2 yrs old and growing well. Hand prune again next year. Leave protective spirals for another year, then remove. Recommend sowing a hedgerow wild flower seed at the base of the hedge. The nettles, brambles and dock that are currently growing in front of the hedge will need to be pulled out and the surface stirred up a bit before sowing, but will aim to get it done by early Dec. Many wildflower seed germinate after a cold period, so late Autumn sowing is ideal.

Plants such as Yarrow, Bedstraw, Vetches, Campion and Ox-eye Daisy are included. Cost is £19 for 100g enough to sow the whole length of this hedge.

4. Southern Hedge (Newham Lane)

4.1 SCO are keeping the footpath into the MPF clear of vegetation

4.2 40 of the 80 hawthorn hedging plants were replaced last winter, due to them not surviving the heat and drought of 2018. Only a few need replacing again this winter, others are growing well.

4.3 Hedge adjacent to Allotment Plot 7 has been cut annually for the last 2 years. Much appreciated by the tenant. Can this be repeated next year?