

Hedgerow Working Party Meeting – Notes

Date convened – 21st September 2022, – 6pm start.

Clerked by – J. Fullbrook

Members attending – Cllrs Young, Sullivan, Goldsmith, Alexander & Campbell

Residents in attendance – Representing the SCO – Roger Brown and Janet Holter, representing the Allotment Association – Mike Warren and Kevin Hammond.

Notes

- The group concentrated on the main issue – to consider a cutting regime for the Rublees Allotment eastern hedgerow adjacent the MPF
- Consideration was given to the Feb 2017 Hedgerow Report, which looked at the ecological value of this hedge, and its recommendations. Also, the subsequent Hedgerow working party report in Autumn 2017 which made recommendations in terms of a cutting regime for this hedgerow, and also more recent letters/emails and testimony from residents and Cllrs and the briefing note from the clerk
- It was agreed that though there were in some respects conflicting views as to the preferred height and shaping of the hedge, that a compromise could be struck
- It was agreed to recommend to Community Committee once again that the height of the majority of the hedge should be cut to 3.5 meters but that when cut there was a need to ensure the contractors did indeed cut it to this height.
- It was agreed to recommend that this financial year 22/23 the lower third of the hedge (Mill Road end) be cut to 3.5 meters excepting for the Perry Pear Trees that would be allowed to remain uncut in this section (approx. 4/5 trees) and that these trees would be identified with the kind assistance of Roger Brown and possibly other SCO volunteers as had been the case previously in the first two thirds of the hedge cutting programme.
- Also, it was agreed to recommend that to catch up on a 'slipped' programme due to Covid, that also this year 22/23, the Perry Pear trees within the first third be 'reduced and shaped', with one of these trees being cut back to the height of the main hedge as it had been left to grow during the first cut by mistake.
- It was further recommended that the following years cutting regime be discussed at a later date subsequent to gaining an understanding of how successful this year's 'cut' was going to be.
- Lastly, there was discussion regarding how successful a programme of hedgerow planting - in the gaps - had been, and that to help with the Rublees site security further planting be considered, and a new idea was discussed which involved possibly adding an additional hedgerow in a line adjacent the main Rublees/MPF hedge on the MPF side and the group recommended to Community Committee that this idea be considered further.