

Tree Planting for Conservation Proposal

As we are all aware Fen Ditton has a potential for flooding. We are close to the river and have flood plains within our boundaries. It is therefore important we do our bit for conservation and climate change. Over the last couple of years we have lost trees in the village but not replanted in equal numbers.

Proposal – To plant approximately 50 trees within the village boundary. There are potentially 10 sites within Fen Ditton where we can plant more trees. (please see map). They are split into 3 areas of land responsibility. **Fen Ditton Parish Council**, **Highways** and **South Cambs.**

All these locations were assessed by our South Cambs. Tree Officer (SCTO), Miriam Hill, who has very kindly taken the time to suggest tree species that are suitable for the locations proposed. She has considered the dry climate we now have in Cambridge and the need for diversity in our tree population. For this reason you will find non-native species within the plan.

1. Green End We need to be aware to keep open views in this area. However to detract from the telegraph poles and to combat the pollution from the A14 trees would be a benefit to this area. There are one or two spots across from garages from number 28 and number 36 that have potential. As with all sites a scan would need to be done for services. On this site we also need to be especially aware of the sewage pipe. It would be recommended to plant only 2 feature trees with light canopies. Cinnamon Birch *Betula Nigra*. Birch leaves also take up pollution so would be a good choice.



2. The children's play area this could do with some shelter from the sun in the summer and wind in the winter. We have the potential to get the children/school involved in this area. It is proposed that 3 large trees are planted in the centre. A Himalayan Magnolia is one suggestion as it's robust should any of its branches get damaged. In addition to this 2 groups of 3 trees either side of the play area as you approach it. Hornbeam Rockhampton Red which gives great autumn colour.

We need to ensure that the play area is not blocked from view and the trees are planted in such a way that they do not become potential football posts.

From a distance the area would also have the benefit of raising the skyline when coming into the village along the Horningsea Road.



3. The Cemetery This area is a big project.

This year we have removed 3 dead trees along the border with Stanbury Close and the cemetery. The previous years we have removed approx. 7 trees. Some of the trees in this area are reaching their end of life and are self sown rather than planned. It is proposed to plant the gaps with small trees such as crab apple, or hawthorn while at the same time re-establishing the native hedging that is already there but smothered with brambles and allowed to increase in height.



On the other side of the cemetery beside the railings it is suggested to have mixed height planting and the occasional tree. Gaps are required to allow for digger access to the cemetery. The SCTO has suggested narrow forms of native trees, hawthorn, variegated female holly and field maple to intersperse. These narrow versions should thus not affect any sports. This will also act as a wildlife corridor for hedgehogs and birds, give some atmosphere and privacy within the cemetery (this has been mentioned as a resident's request in minutes. (Ref 2016/10/04 section 108) and give shade for

sport's spectators. A proper distance from the fence will need to be maintained when planting to avoid damage to the railings by big stems.

4. Verge outside 29 and 31 High Street - These are wide borders along the High Street where we could plant at least 5 trees. The SCTO has recommended a mix of interest such as quince, medlar, cherry and a Liquid Amber (otherwise known as a tulip tree) outside number 31 as a statement tree. We are aware that the tulip tree is not native however due to the changing climate in Cambridge this would be an interesting and suitable feature tree.



5. Ditton Lane Bank

Some of the houses along Ditton lane are happy to have a small tree in front of their property on the bank. This would reinstate the Sorbus tree feature that used to give that pretty look when coming into the village. The residence we have spoken to have no objections but we will need to check for services as per all sites. There have been issues with planting on this bank but I think they could be overcome by creating a small platform in order to plant at the correct level and ensure that the bark is not damaged by strimming. (Ref minutes from 2014/11/04 section 152). Residents are happy to water.



6. Ditton Lane. Potential for something big without it affecting any residents. We could echo the beech trees at the crossroads or a pretty spring display with wild cherry which would also benefit the birds but does have a habit of suckering. The SCTO does not see the slope of the bank in this location being an issue.



7. High Ditch Road

Two small Sorbus Tormenalis. These would not interfere with the power lines above and the border is wide enough not to effect traffic. We need to ensure they are planted in such a way pedestrians can still pass and cars are not affected. It would be nice to have a Sorbus tree feature coming into each area of the village. Plus it would replace the 10 or so Jubilee trees we lost when the cycle path was created.



There are three areas that are not maintained by Fen Ditton but by South Cambs. They are marked A B C on the Map and coloured in pink.

Victoria Laxton, SCDC Housing and Services officer, who deals with these sites has taken the time to meet with us to look at the potentials in these areas (that might also prevent cars parking on the verges). Victoria will look into putting her own proposal forward to her manager for these sites. There is a possibility that this might go ahead independently of this proposal. Our involvement then would be community engagement i.e. watering trees etc. Therefore it remains as part of this proposal.

A and B. Wrights ~Close and Musgrave Way

There is a potential for about 5 small trees on each site. It is proposed to have a small communal mini orchard at both these sites. Miriam recommends using trees planted on small root stock. We could potentially use trees from the Apples and Orchard project.



C. Ditton Lane car park.

Possibly a micro park, one large oak tree surrounded by 3 Prunus Avery the native cherry tree which could match the ones on the other side of the road. As the cherries have a shorter life span they can be removed and allow the oak to shine. The oak would also be a replacement for the one from the churchyard.



Fen Ditton sites considered but dismissed

There has been village interest in planting on Wadlows footpath and the meadow at Poplar Farm. Unfortunately the land is in the private hands of Gonville and Caius College so cannot be included. However the good news is that residents have taken up this project and are making progress.

Finally, Thoughts for a new Hedgerow.

We have two hedgerows in the recreation ground. Could we consider joining these two up in the following location? Currently there are already some self sown trees/bushes on the boundary that we could incorporate and extend.



Tree Funding.

This is an ambitious programme if it is all approved. The means of funding this project is hopefully via the following two avenues.

1. **Zero Carbon Communities** grant which will be launched again on 10th of May and closes at the end of July <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/climate-change/zero-carbon-communities/zero-carbon-communities-grant/>
2. **Carbon Footprint Ltd** (an environmental consultancy) are currently looking for land available to plant trees in Cambridgeshire
3. **Fen Ditton Parish.** Cost can be saved by asking volunteers to water and plant. And it could be done in sections, a bit every year and a rolling plan for funding similar as we did for the tree maintenance in 2016. There is £1700 in the Fen Ditton allocation within Quy Fen Trust.

There are many other tree funding charities that have been highlighted to me but we do not necessarily comply with their requirements as this is a council initiative.

Community Engagement

Should the council find this proposal has potential then we will require community engagement and find volunteers to plant and water the trees in each area. This could possibly be achieved by highlighting the plan in a newsletter. This might also be a way of allowing the residents to raise any objections to the proposed sites.

The Next Steps

The trees have a better chance of survival planting in autumn so we don't have much time if we wish to plant this year. We need to get approval from Highways which might take a long time, scan the ground for cables and be successful in our grant application.

Proposal – Subject to CAT scan for services and cables.

I propose we approve all these sites marked on the map. With the understanding that some might need to be removed after consultation with the village, highways and scanning results. It is essential we get funding in place so also propose we apply for that this month before the grant is closed.

