

Cliffsend Parish Council

Financial & General Purposes Committee

Meeting held on 30th April 2015 at 7.15pm in the Committee Room

Present Cllr, Hovenden, Chair, Cllr Searle, Cllr Lyon
Apologies from Cllr Wendholt

A Stacey, Clerk, and 1 member of the community

Acceptance of the minutes from the meeting of the F & GP meeting on 2nd April 2015 as a true record.

Proposal Cllr Lyon Seconded Cllr Searle, all in favour
All Cllrs in favour.

Meadow Working Party report

The original entrance between the Recreation Ground and Meadow is still not closed off. The plastic mesh path is now almost hidden in the grass, and appears to be undamaged by the gang mower.

Tree Damage

Tree 12 – Silver Birch

This tree, which has recently been caged for protection, is STILL being attacked. It was undamaged in late March, but when I looked at the trees on 19th Apr it had some chew marks on the lowest branch, and the end of the damaged branch was broken off. I placed the broken piece inside the cage.

On 25th Apr I found that there was even more damage to the branch.

Tree 11 – Canadian Maple

The cage around this tree badly bent and distorted on 10th Apr. The heavy wire cage has been hit by something large and heavy, probably the mower. (It was undamaged after the 1st meadow cut at the end of March.)

The cage was pushed up to, but thankfully had not been pushed into the trunk.

The lowest branches on this tree are very high – about 8'+ from the ground – so there is nothing to prevent the operators taking the mower right up to the cage.

The contract for the mowing is specific – they MUST only use a strimmer up close to the trees, and must not contact the trees or branches with either equipment or themselves.

The contractors were contacted about this on 13th Apr, but no acknowledgement or explanation has been forthcoming.

Trees needing further work this season

Currently staked, and need to be tested for stability, and ties re-attached if still necessary.

Tree 1 – Pineapple Broom	Owner – Beryl Harrison
Tree 7 – Ash	Owner – Mr & Mrs Jones
Tree 9 – Cherry-leaved Hawthorn	Owner – Unknown
Tree 21 – Common Beech	Owner – Ratna Ratnasingham

Carry out early Summer

Pruning required

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Tree 14 – Walnut

Owner – Susan Smith (Pembrokeshire)

Very low branch to be removed. Has to wait until mid-late Summer or will bleed badly.

Other problems

Tree 1 – Pineapple Broom

Owner – Beryl Harrison

Extremely lopsided; being swamped by large pines on Eastern boundary

Trees 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8

As for Tree 1, these are heavily affected by being too close to the pines / native hedges.

This is restricting their growth, and they all try to lean out towards the light.

They have been “part-rescued” in 2013 & 2014 by selective and sensitive pruning of the competing pines / hedge plants; however, the lease-holder is reluctant to allow even this limited pruning, and this is an ongoing (& worsening) problem.

Tree 10 – Foxglove Tree

Owner – no response

This had died back & regrown in an extremely lopsided manner in 2012, and the fragile, fast-growing & soft new growths after pruning in 2013 were persistently damaged during summer 2013.

It was reduced back to a single new growth in spring 2014, and an additional high cage, extra stakes and loose soft ties added to protect it.

The main growth has survived the winter, although the soft tip of its stem / trunk has again been lost.

This month, the multiple buds growing from the top have been rubbed off, leaving just one, to encourage a new strong single leader.

The ties have been adjusted to allow growth, but restrict lateral movement. These require regular inspection / adjustment (every 2-4 weeks) as the stem rapidly lengthens

Tree 17 – Hornbeam

Owner – Mr & Mrs Scott

Tree seems “loose”, with noticeable trunk sway, and has done for over a year; but it is still vertical.

The tree surgeon has inspected it and recommended not to stake it unless absolutely necessary.

A continued watching brief is needed.

Tree 25 – Crab Apple ‘Evereste’

Owner – Dave Snow

This tree suffered from “attack by mower” last year. It was re-caged & re-staked.

The trunk damage is healing well.

However, a low branch was partly broken and was bound with soft plastic tie to support it to allow it to heal.

The branch is growing OK at the moment, and this plastic tie will need to be removed later this year to check whether the wound has fully healed.

Replacements

Tree 13 – The fallen Scots Pine

Owner – Mr & Mrs Hammond

The owners are thinking of putting in a plaque instead of a replacement tree, and this will also mark the position of the time capsule which is buried within the remaining roots of the original tree.

Tree 4 – False Acacia

Owner – Frank Hall

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This tree was dead in 2011. The nursery had agreed to supply a replacement, but the owner has not taken the offer up. He has now moved away, and we have no forwarding address.

Cllr Searle proposed that notices be put in the noticeboard advising if anyone sees any damage occurring to the trees that they contact the clerk. Seconded **Cllr Lyon** – All in favour.

Cllr Hovenden thanked **Cllr Searle** for all her hard work with the meadow and trees.

Neighbourhood Working Party

As agreed at the last Parish Council Meeting, the Questionnaire has been printed and distributed.

Responses are to be collected door to door by 6th May.

The information will then need to be entered into a data base, ready for the next stage of drawing up the Neighbourhood Plan for Cliffsend to 2031.

The monitoring form for the Bridging Grant has been submitted.

Grants up to a total of £8,000 are now available and can be applied for in amounts to be spent within the following 6 month periods. These are available for 3 years. It should be noted that the aim is for this Plan to be completed and ready for Inspection by the end of 2015.

Thanks are due to all of the Working Party and the volunteers in their work to date.

Finance Working Party

Clerk advised that the audit had taken place and no issues of concern had been raised. The report was circulated.

Meeting closed at 7.33pm