

CUCKFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Queen's Hall, High Street, Cuckfield, RH17 5EL



Assets, Community and Environment Committee Meeting 12 March 2020

Item 9.c: Horsefield Green Maintenance Plan, Spring 2020

1. Background

In August 2013 a Landscape Management Plan was prepared by Allen Pyke Associates. The purpose of the document was “to set out the overall management objectives for the common external areas and retained structural vegetation, and to describe the long term maintenance required to allow the planting to flourish and reach its design potential”. When the Parish Council took over maintenance responsibilities for the public areas of Horsefield Green in December 2017, this plan was adopted as a guide to maintaining and developing the location.

2. Action Areas

a) Grass

The regular grass areas are mown regularly but have been sodden for the last 3 months; mowing will resume once dry weather returns.

b) Meadow Grass

These areas need to be cut and bailed to prevent the cuttings from settling on the surface and smothering the wild flowers that are coming through. Quotes have been sought from local contractors as we do not have the equipment to be able to do this “in-house”. First cut this year is scheduled for March/April.

c) Pond

As per the management plan Alex has constructed the first of two hibernacula which are essentially covered mounds of dead wood, rocks, bricks, etc. for the shelter of amphibians and grass snakes.

d) Trees

Following the inspection carried out by Alfred Harmsworth (Golden Crown Tree Surgery) a number of trees were earmarked for pruning, coppicing or pollarding. Alex has dealt with those that fall within our capability; Alfred has dealt with the others, including one that was presenting a potential danger to pedestrians on the pavement close to the pond.

Some hard pruning also done in the dell and wooded walking areas, as well as removal of weak saplings near the container and of unwanted suckers/growth in that area.

Newly planted trees have been supported with stakes and ties.

e) Container

Painted green last summer to help blend into its surroundings, the container will now be screened to some degree by natural foliage. We have sought the advice of local "flower lady" Sue Graves (who provided the plants for the autumn/winter displays on the High Street). Sue has advised against attaching a trellis to the container principally because of the heat it generates during the summer months and suggests planting, for example, beech hedges, viburnum or escallonia along the side of the unit.

f) Paths

Leaves are cleared from all pathways as necessary.

g) Litter Removal

Carried out once a week (as required).

3. Plans for the Immediate Future

a) Grass

Mowing to resume as soon as ground is sufficiently dry.

b) Paths

All pathways will be edged and subsequently treated with a suitable herbicide to prevent weed growth.

The condition of the lower path needs some attention as the rain has worn two narrow routes across it.

c) Pond

Completion of the second hibernaculum.

d) Fencing and boundary areas

These are generally in good condition but will be monitored regularly.

e) Bird and bat boxes

We will consider the purchase of these as per the management plan.

Name: Paul Stevens
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Date: 6th March 2020