

Environmental Audit December 1st 2024

By A. Millerchip

Overview We were looking good at the last audit three weeks ago. Since then, our team have been able to do another cut of the verges and further work was completed on shrub beds and hedgerows so that we are now looking even better. There is just one hedgerow (No2) and one shrub bed (No17) to be attended to and then we will be looking our very best. Unfortunately, last weekend's downpour prevented us from completing the flailing of Wootton Brook Meadow so it will remain in this unkempt state until the spring.

Woodlands

Wootton Brook Woods We have lost momentum on the community planting project so we are going to re-ignite this early next spring while it is still the planting season for bare rooted saplings. We have to consider for how long we have the funding and when we should purchase the saplings.

The Spinney We are monitoring the progress at felling the 60 trees already marked. One newly identified threat is an oak tree which is lop-sided and leaning over a garden. We plan to remove this tree and have contacted Dan for a quote. The structuring of the community woodland classroom and delineated paths through the woods is another community project we don't have momentum on. Coppicing could commence this winter so we will have to see if there is room in the schedule.

Alamein We have completed the making up of trees to be felled. These are marked with pink dots. We have also delineated the re-planting coops by marking the perimeter trees with horizontal stripes. The trees marked with stripes are not to be felled. All trees within the perimeter will be felled to create space for re-planting. The re-planting requirement is: in the fence line coops, 660 trees – hazel, red oak, silver birch, wild cherry and mixed broad leaf. In the conifer section coops. 220 trees made up of 120 douglas fir and 100 mixed conifers. We have allowed Dane to start felling the larger trees in Alamein because there are none left in the Spinney to support his training schedule. He has committed to continue with the smaller trees in the spinney.

Structural belt east We have completed the three- meter strip. The next step is to fell the remaining 23 trees in the six-meter strip. We aim to do this in-house this winter.

Structural belt west We have completed the three-meter strip. There are around 25 trees to fell in an awkward position on the slope of the bund. Some of them may be pollarded rather than felled. We need Dan on site to do an assessment, agree the specification and provide a quote. After the felling we do have a requirement to replant along the top of the bund. 440 trees made up of blackthorn, hawthorn and woody shrubs.

Litter the three fly tipped spots identified in the last audit have been cleared. We now have a new one as some wooden chairs have been dumped in the hedge next to the concrete rings. The community litter pick this morning cleared 7 sacks of rubbish.

Ongoing issues

- Replace the bridge in Wootton Brook woods
- Fallen security fence in grange valley greenway
- Concrete rings need a tidy up
- Brambles hanging across pavement just outside the pavilion.