

Eastcombe Ward Annual Report

In the past year the Parish Council voted to adopt the principles detailed in the Cotswold Conservation Verge Management policy, and the 'Plantlife' Good Road Verge Guide. This resulted in the majority of the verges only being strimmed once, after the wild flowers had finished flowering. The exceptions to this were road junctions which were kept clear for visibility reasons. In addition in several parts of the village, residents have opted to look after the verges immediately outside their properties such that they may encourage wild flowers and improve the environmental and wildlife habitat. This arrangement will continue and will be refined over the next 12 months when it is also hoped to engage with GCC Highways so that a more structured approach to verge strimming can be put in place.

As part of the project called 'Trees, Hedges and Wildlife Corridors', which is a collaboration between Thomas Keble school, the Parish Council and the Teaching Trees programme of the Royal Forestry Society trees and a hedge were planted along the edge of Thomas Keble playing field.

As the Parish Council has declared a Climate Emergency it was decided to plant some large trees in a public space that would draw villager's attention to the need to plant more trees. The site selected by the ward councillors was the football pitch by the Eastcombe allotments. The trees were to be spaced in a line at the entry to Eastcombe from Old Neighbourhood, forming effectively an avenue with the mature trees that run parallel in the Pleasure Ground. The exact positions were chosen with approval from the Eastcombe Cricket and Football Clubs.

This planting took place in February when the successful contractor, Gardiners, a local firm, planted 5 lime trees of Selected Standards of min 3.5m in height. Tilia x euchlora (Caucasian Lime an aphid free lime, had been specified for all, but Gardiners brought two Tilia x europaea Pallida (European Common Lime - a more golden leaved form called Kaiser Linden) which we agreed to retain after the Tree Planting Ceremony as they had been planted at the northern part of the row away from the allotments, alternately with Tilia.x Euchlora. All should be around 20m plus at maturity. We have a two year contract with Gardiners for maintenance including replacement should any die.

Jenny Exley has also drawn up a list of 'Tree planting suggestions for Eastcombe' which is available on the Environment page of the Parish Council website:
<http://www.bisley-with-lypiatt.gov.uk/environment/>

The playground equipment on the Recreation Ground had it's annual inspection and a number of minor maintenance issues were identified. Work to correct these will be carried out shortly.

New fencing for the allotments was installed alongside the track to the Scout Hall and rubbish that had been dumped there was removed. The new fence should ensure that no further rubbish is fly tipped there. This work was paid for out of our Community Infrastructure Levy funding.

We always submit feedback to SDC on planning applications in the ward. One that was objected to was at Fort View, Fidges Lane. This was refused by SDC and then a redesigned application was resubmitted that we also did not support. We await the Stroud Planning Committee's decision. There have been a number of approvals for new builds in Fidges Lane this year and some home extensions in the ward.

Refurbishment of the stone work on the Millenium Wheel on the village green was completed last year and this year it is planned to improve the drainage system so that it no longer fills up with water following heavy rain.

The Parish Council is taking over responsibility for the defibrillator by Eastcombe Village Shop from the Eastcombe Village Group with effect from November 2020 and will pick up the annual support cost of £440 and subsequent ownership including replacement in due course.

We would also like to thank the following:

- Ian Trueman for all his hard work cutting the village green, strimming our lanes and verges, and dealing with fallen trees and other issues.
- Robert Bryant who is our Allotment Warden.

Bob Brooks
Eastcombe Ward Chairman