

Ashover Tree Group

Summary of meeting: 17 March 2016

Minutes of last meeting 14 January 2016 agreed and actions carried forward discussed as follows:

1. Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)

Development of our data to continues, supplemented by contributions from NEDCC.

The Tree Warden was asked to comment on proposed work on trees (topping out / removal of dead branches) for some Limes/Sycamores in Malthouse Lane and following review confirmed approval.

Note

The arrival of the bird nesting season will inhibit our activities on tree maintenance so it was agreed we could usefully spend time using our TPO records as the basis of a survey to plot the accuracy of the plans and the present condition of the trees. Arrangements will shortly be confirmed for discussion with the Tuesday morning working party.

2. Specialist speaker on TPOs

The Group feels that a presentation by a specialist in TPOs would be very interesting and worthwhile. Subject carried forward to next meeting.

3. Specialist speaker on riverbank preservation techniques

We have a candidate who will be happy to present to an open meeting for us. Agreed this would probably be best in two parts – the first, an illustrated talk indoors and the 2nd a visit to a riverbank to put it in context.

Agreed we carry this forward as an agenda item for the next meeting when we would firm up on arrangements for communication etc. Meanwhile, we need to check when the Smallholders group have their meetings as they are likely to be interested.

4. Member reports for the areas they represent around Ashover.

Highboredish. Gorse-bashing continues to improve access

Ashover centre. There is ash, sycamore and silver birch saplings pressing against the wall opposite the showground. Our working party will offer voluntary Tree Group in pruning etc to the Ashover Committee.

Kelstedge. Amber House, Vernon Lane has been sold, destined to be a wedding venue. There are some lovely Victorian trees in the grounds and members of the Group are arranging to carry out an assessment and will determine whether any are under threat. Carried forward to next meeting

Fabrick. Work on the heathland continues, supported by volunteers. Responsibility for management has transferred from Middleton Top to Clay Cross.

Great Eastern Plantation. Quite a few problems and the challenge is to sort out old, decaying trees, some of them very big, and come up with a plan on how best to re-generate the plantation. Representatives of our group have carried out a useful site visit and the land-owner has also voiced his support. Update at next meeting.

5. Tree planting

An application has been made for an allocation of the free trees on offer. Outcome now in doubt so we need to review other options at next meeting – seedlings may be available locally for ash, horse chestnut, wild cherry and hazel.

6. Working party

See update in 1 & 4 (Ashover Centre) above.

7. Public Liability insurance

The Parish Council confirmed they have asked their public liability insurers to extend cover to include members of our Group as working party volunteers.

8. Future meetings

A schedule of dates for our bi-monthly meetings for the rest of the year has been circulated.

9. AOB

9.1 Expert input. In previous meetings we have talked about approaching a local expert on tree matters. It was agreed we were encountering a number of issues where advice would be welcome and topical examples include:

- The history associated with the Great Eastern Plantation
- An overview on Hornbeam disease and how it might impact us locally
- Which indigenous trees would he recommend we prioritise in new planting
- How best to deal with ivy while sparing the host tree

Agreed we would invite a local expert to join our group.

9.2 May-day. The Footpaths group has a stall at the forthcoming event and we have been invited to use this opportunity to promote aspects of our group's work as well.

9.3 Fund raising. Initial discussion about the topic, prompted by the apparent availability of large quantities of leaf mulch which might be bagged up and sold with the money put into a fund to buy trees. For discussion at next meeting

9.4 Parish Council Annual report. Mention has previously been made of a request that we provide an article about our group for the 2015/6 Ashover Parish annual report. It was confirmed this has now been provided, along with a photograph of some of the work carried out in Fallgate.

Date of next meeting: 7.30, Thursday, 12 May at the Sports Pavilion

ATG/MT/28.3.16