

Ashover Tree Group

Summary of meeting: 14 November 2019

The Minutes of last meeting on 19 September were agreed with actions carried forward as follows:

1. Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)

1.1 Our plans to re-survey NEDCC's TPO plans have been described in previous Minutes.

1.2 There is a need to validate TPO records recently provided by NEDDC as the plans and schedules don't marry up in every case. Agreed we should spread the work within the group by parcelling up the schedules and plans according to where members live.

1.3 The management of the Hydro in Malthouse Lane are notably active regarding their TPO protected trees. They have now provided us with up to date versions of their plans so we can compare them with records provided to us by NEDDC and use this exercise as a model for follow-up in other parts of the parish.

1.4 Noted that there may be local trees in the parish, currently lacking TPO protection, which might be suitable for nomination. A possible example in the Milltown area was mentioned but when the details were shared with the group it was concluded no further action was necessary.

1.5 Noted that some trees currently TPO protected don't deserve it and we should take this into account as part of our review.

1.5 Noted that we should check whether maps on the DCC portal include location of TPO protected trees.

2. Expert input

Currently no speakers lined up for future meetings but we can review this later in the year.

3. Planning applications

Planning applications. Status of current, relevant, applications is as follows:

Overton, Jetting Street – 19/00910. Relates to construction of a 2-storey dwelling where a tree survey report shows that proposed extensive excavations would affect the roots of nearby trees. Inspected by members of our group who concluded that the plans to mitigate potential damage are satisfactory.

Kelstedge. Work continues on the site on Ashover Road. Protection around the TPO oak on the site perimeter has now been improved.

Footpath closure – Jetting Street. Noted that 'temporary' closure of the permissive footpath is within landowner's rights but the original planning application had stated there would be no impact on public use. The current closure has been in place since July, meaning that pedestrians are being diverted to a busy, narrow lane. The issue has been raised with the parish council with a request that they in turn raise this with the landowner.

4. Milltown conservation area

Our initiative is aimed at protecting the natural heritage in this area – quarries, trees, flowers/fauna, archaeology and industrial heritage. It was agreed we should initially focus on securing blanket TPO protection for the area of land highlighted on a map prepared by the tree warden.

The proposal, with supporting map, was initially refused but following the intervention of the leader of DCC our case is being reconsidered. As this intervention was 20+ weeks ago the parish council have been asked to escalate this with NEDDC's head of planning.

Meanwhile, Ashover Parish Council have incorporated details of the application in a pending update of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Need to research perception that rivers have boundaries along bank-side which must be respected.

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

Highoredish. Update at next meeting.

Ashover Show-ground. The tree warden has carried out a survey of the Show field to plot what's there at the moment, showing the types of tree and current condition. Alongside the tree survey report this will help us shape a proposal for the land-owner and the Show Committee on what a programme of additional planting might look like. Carried forward for discussion in 2020.

Kelstedge. Nothing to report.

Fabric. A working party will be convened at some point to tackle self-seeded trees.

Great Eastern Plantation. Need for removal of self-seeded beech now added to working party activities.

6. Tree planting

We have placed separate orders for free trees through schemes run by the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust and the Woodland Trust (the latter being part of the Tree Charter initiative).

Suitable locations for the planting are being finalised and will include the bridleway between Demonsdale Farm and Hockley Lane, common woodland (e.g. Hill Top Road) and possibly Ashover church cemetery. There are also plans to plant hedging near Ravensnest to help break up arable land and improve habitat for wildlife.

An article, with photos, linking the planting with the Tree Charter, is to be developed for publication.

7. Working party

Thursday morning working parties have resumed.

Specific targets include:

- audit of common land aimed at producing a profile of each, identifying those suitable for tidy-up. Update at next meeting.
- Ashover show field (opposite health centre). The show's committee accepted our offer to clear ivy along the walls and removal of self-seeded trees along the field boundaries from the Black Swan around the corner up towards Far Hill. Options for clearance of heavy brambles growth are being considered.
- Hill Road quarry. A session with chain saws aimed in particular at thinning out the canopy from self-seeded sycamore took place on 31 October. Further sessions will be necessary.
- Removal of self-seeded beech on the slope opposite the Great Eastern plantation.

9. AOB

- The group's Chair / secretary invited someone else to take on the role(s) and in the absence of a response agreed to continue for another year.
- Schedule of suggested meeting dates for 2020 to follow.

Date of next meeting: to be advised

ATG/MT/27.11.19