

Agenda Item 7

Works Programme Spring 2009

May/June:

- Continue work on the kitchen area at the Council Office. **Ongoing**
- Tidy hut at Pasture Lane. **Ongoing**
- Removing Winter Planters. **Ongoing**
- Power washing planters. **Ongoing**
- Collecting Summer Plants. **Ongoing**
- Planting summer displays. **Ongoing**
- Posting Meeting Notices. **Ongoing**
- Mowing Pasture Lane. **Ongoing**
- Water supply at Pasture Lane no.2. **First Phase Completed**
- Water supply at Pasture Lane no.2. **Second phase Awaiting field above allotments to dry out.**
- Resurfacing Track Pasture Lane No.2. **To be started after completion of water supply work.**
- Routine allotment work including weed spraying weather conditions and growing conditions permitting.

All items highlighted in Green have been started.

The Handyman & the Clerk met a field worker from the Wildlife Trust and inspected the wildlife area at Pasture Lane to discuss the needs and merits of the area.

Report on the Wildlife Area at Pasture Lane

The recent inspection of the Wild Life area raised the following points and recommendations.

Plus Points:

- The area has a diversity of habitats including trees (although the majority of mature trees are non native sycamore)
- Glades with underplanting.
- Water in the form of a stream running through the site.
- A variety of native and non native flora.
- Established wood piles for insects and small mammals.
- Habitat used by a several species of birds.

Minus Points:

- Entrance to site anonymous and unappealing.
- Paths and handrails have an uncared for look about them.
- Bramble taking over some areas of the site.
- Shrubs and self seeded small trees not maintained.

Recommendations:

- Entrance made more appealing with possible additional signage and better promotion of site.
- Paths need clearing and topping with bark chippings.
- Handrail and seat need painting.
- Shrubs near entrance need pruning back to near ground level.
- Area of hazel trees gone leggy and need coppicing to help improve the habitat quality.
- Weedkilling an area in one the glades to encourage new growth of slower growing indigenous plants which are easily choked out by bramble and creeping buttercup.
- Removal of numerous ash and sycamore saplings.
- Introduction of bat and bird boxes to help compensate for the unfriendly nature of sycamore bark.
- Introduction of native woodland flowers although given the current mixed planting the introduction of a few buddleias would prove useful to the insect and butterfly population if allowed to mature into shrubs.

Implications & Funding:

Barrowford Parish Council as owners of the site need to be mindful of implications of not maintaining the paths and handrails at least up to an acceptable safe standard the other work is optional but necessary to the improvement of the habitat within the wildlife area and could be funded and carried out in a variety of ways. These could include voluntary participation in the work, applications for grant funding towards the costs, to the work being carried out by the handyman and funded by the parish council or a mixture.

The Clerk recommends that Parish Councillors consider the long term future of the wildlife area and the level of work and expenditure needed to maintain the site in future years and considers whether a friends group or volunteers could be found to assist with the maintenance needed and what funding streams are available to help meet the cost of implementing the recommendations. The Wildlife Garden could be added to the June agenda for further discussion.