

Carlton Gardening Group

Annual Report to Carlton Parish Council

AGM and membership

The CGG now has 22 members. The Annual General Meeting was held at 77 Main Street, Carlton at 19:30 hrs on Thursday 5th March 2015, and was attended by eight members.

Graham Jackson, Jeanette Knappett, Franco Onesti, Bill Sharp & Chris Peat were elected members of the Executive Committee. Franco Onesti was re-elected Chairman, and appointed CGG representative on the Northfields Liaison Group, and Chris Peat was re-elected Secretary.

Work carried out during 2014

The purchase of the site by the PC had been completed on 23rd July 2014 and the Northfields development had been formally opened on 12th September 2014. A display about the work of the CGG had been prepared for the Horticultural Show on 30th August, and displayed in the church at this and subsequent events. Regular reports had been published in Carlton News, and the CGG now comprised 22 members. The Executive Committee had met and discussed issues on site as they arose, rather than holding formal meetings, and this had worked very well in practice.

During 2014, members of the CGG provided a total of 249.5 man-hours of volunteer labour to the Carlton Diamond Jubilee Orchard Project. CGG volunteers have planted all of the trees specified in the approved planning application, cut the Barton Road hedge and pruned the trees in it, planted up gaps in the northern hedge, weeded and levelled the site, made a base for the picnic table, built the path, cultivated part of the site and planted the central part of the wildflower meadow, planted the shrub areas and additional trees, imported and stacked dead wood for invertebrates, and reconstructed the two reptile and amphibian refuges. The stakes and tubes for the shrub plantings have been donated by a parishioner. A plan of the site has also been drawn up.

The construction of the path was the biggest and most difficult project undertaken by the CGG, and was completed between 16th and 19th September using hired plant. The path was kindly excavated by Mick Pointon, and the stone was kindly supplied at cost by Breedon Aggregates Ltd. The hired plant was also used for ground works and site levelling between 20th and 22nd September. The path construction and associated ground works had required 123.5 man-hours of volunteer time. Chris thanked all of the volunteers and the catering support team for their willing hard work and support through this period of intense activity.

The Nailstone Rd end of the wildflower meadow had become waterlogged in September, and WD had kindly provided an excavator and decompacted the subsoil which had improved the drainage. WD had also broken up the concrete base of the site

sign. St Andrews PCC had kindly donated three lengths of trunk from the horse chestnut tree felled in the churchyard, and these had been delivered to the site by Mick Pointon. Local residents had kindly donated three plastic compost bins to the Project.

The picnic table and park bench seat had been delivered and were awaiting installation. The PC was planning to install play equipment for toddlers between the picnic table and the parking area.

Forward programme

The agreed work programme (listed below) is on schedule. The picnic bench and park bench seat have been installed, tree plantings completed, and a detailed article about the project published in the May issue of Carlton News. The wildflower meadow areas have been cultivated, weeds will be sprayed out shortly, and the areas will be seeded around the end of May.

Work programme for 2015

February

- Plant self-set holly plants from parishioners in hedges
- NCHA landscape contractor to plant T5 and Nailstone Rd hedges
- Look out for cheap crab apple trees in local supermarkets and plant in shrub areas and at site entrances
- Monitor previously waterlogged area behind 11 Northfields – if still wet consider installing field drain
- Adjust level of rodding eye near to 8 Northfields
- Survey and clean Barton Rd and north hedges and beat up

March

- PC to agree final design for Toddlers Play Area – decide on neighbouring planting and location of big chestnut logs
- PC's contractor to install park bench seat
- Install picnic table; peg down compost bins to stop them blowing over
- Begin to collect materials for creation of bug hotel
- Burn brash on Barton Rd wildflower meadow area
- Attempt manual weeding and cultivation of Barton Road wildflower meadow area
- Spray out weeds – unsown meadow areas, along path, between shrubs, along both sides of North hedge if agreed with adjacent landowner; hand weed north hedge if necessary
- Cultivate and level Nailstone Road wildflower meadow

April

- Wildflowers in meadow flower April – June in second year after planting
- PC's contractor to mow meadow to 25mm when grass reaches 75mm high and repeat through season, collecting all clippings and leaving in compost bins

May

- Article about bug hotel in Carlton News
- Sow remaining wildflower meadow areas
- Spray around shrub and fruit trees
- Maintain weed-free environment along north hedge.
- Repeat spray around shrubs and fruit trees as necessary

June / July

Installation of Toddlers Play Area

Reinstatement of path and parking area around Toddlers Play Area, remodel path edges if necessary, level and cultivate border between play area and gate

PC to consider laying fine surface on path

Consider re-use of redundant water trough from Cemetery Field

August

Summer school holidays – involve children in creation of bug hotel

Order bulbs for planting in meadow areas

September

First planting of bulbs - ? village event

Survey and decide on replacement of any dead trees and shrubs and plan perennial plantings

? Path surfacing works

October

Review northern hedge and decide management for next year – leave/trim/leave to grow with a view to layering after 5 years

? final cut of wildflower meadow to 25mm

Begin plantings of perennials

Plant hedge (? holly) between play area and car park

November

PC to consider seeking quotation from grounds maintenance contractor for mowing of wildflower meadow during 2016 only

Franco Onesti

12th May 2015