

Carlton Gardening Group – Annual Report to Carlton Parish Council

May 2017

c) Carlton Gardening Group

Franco Onesti (Chairman) had been unable to attend but had submitted a written report.

Membership and appointments

The CGG has 18 members. The Annual General Meeting was held at 77 Main Street, Carlton at 19:30 hrs on Monday 20th March 2017, and attended by 8 members.

Graham Jackson, Jeanette Knappett, Franco Onesti, Bill Sharp & Chris Peat were elected members of the Executive Committee. Councillor Ian Sarson is an *ex officio* member of this committee. Franco Onesti was elected Chairman, and Chris Peat was elected Secretary by members of the Executive Committee. Franco Onesti was appointed CGG representative on the Northfields Liaison Group.

Work carried out in 2016

During 2016, 13 members of the CGG provided a total of 85.5 man-hours of volunteer labour in the Carlton Diamond Jubilee Orchard (48 hours), and in the Churchyard and Cemetery (37.5 hours). No trees or shrubs had died, trees had been pruned as necessary, some tree stakes, ties and tubes had been removed, mature ferns (kindly donated by Market Bosworth Parish Council) had been imported, a holly hedge had been planted along the Nailstone Road boundary, a specimen holly had been planted at the southern end of the Barton Road hedge, and shrubs had been planted next to the boarded fences and marked by stakes.

The daffodils in the Nailstone Rd verge had turned out not to be the variety 'Carlton', and only about half of those planted had survived because of lorry damage.

A guided tour of the Orchard had been held at 6pm on Friday 10th June 2016, with a display of the wild flowers on the site. The event had been attended by 6 members of the CGG, but had been brief because of a torrential rainstorm which had begun at exactly 6 pm.

The project had come second in the RCC Village Achievement Awards competition.

NCHA was proposing to replace the three areas of wild flower planting at the Barton Road entrance to Northfields with beds of *Lonicera*, *Lavendula*, and *Viburnum davidii*.

The wildflower meadow areas had exhibited a striking succession of flowers and grasses from April to June, but the growth had been very vigorous and tall, and plants had hung over the paths. Mowing and raking up the clippings and disposing of them had proved very difficult because of the thick stems, wet weather and volume of material. The PCs maintenance contract had been revised for 2017 to include regular mowing of a strip along each side of the path, and spraying along the bottom of the boarded fences. It was hoped that the meadow would gradually stabilise and the amount of growth reduce as the turf developed and the soil became less fertile.

The north hedge had not been kept clear of weeds because volunteers had not been available when the weather was suitable for spraying. For similar reasons, weed growth in the woodland areas had not been controlled early in the season, making these areas look unsightly and neglected, and requiring the weed growth to be cut back in October.

In the Churchyard and Cemetery a top soil storage area had been installed, spoil moved and ground levelled, and overgrown and invasive shrubs and brambles cut back. The brambles were expected to try to grow back in the spring, and the new growth would need to be sprayed out before grass seed was sown.

Work in 2017 would be focussed on path surfacing in the Orchard and Little Lane, weed control in the Orchard, and bramble control and shrub management in the Churchyard and Cemetery.

Work programme for 2017

February

- Lay bark chips along box hedge
- Survey and clean Barton Rd and north hedges, plant holly in any gaps

March

- PC's contractor will mow path edges and grass under Shackerstone apple tree through year, and maintain weed-free strip along bottom of boarded fence
- Move hedgehog box and transplant ferns from corner of boarded fence adj no.10
- Transplant holly whips from gardens into gaps in Barton Road hedge.
- Spray out weeds around all trees, and in path and parking areas
- Cut brambles from under shrubs in Cemetery and then spray out new shoots

April

- PC to organise s106 funding and project to surface CDJO path, vehicular access and Little Lane path.
- Wildflowers in meadow flower April – June
- Carry out weeding as necessary in woodland areas
- Draft article about the CGG for May issue of Carlton News

May

- Spray around shrub and fruit trees
- Maintain weed-free environment along north hedge, Barton Rd hedges
- Repeat spray around shrubs and fruit trees as necessary
- Consider removal of all remaining stakes and tubes from woodland areas

June

- Consider repair of Nailstone Rd reptile & amphibian refuge
- Spray out weeds around all trees

July

- Second cut of wildflower meadows by contractor. CGG to rake up clippings.
- After this, meadow will be maintained by contractor at 25mm height for rest of season, with clippings removed to compost bins.

August

- Consider ordering additional bulbs - ? cyclamen under holly tree in Churchyard; ? snowdrops in highway verge
- under Nailstone Road hedge
- Inspect and weed if necessary, maintain weed-free environment round all trees
- ? pick first fruit and ?enter in Horticultural Show
- Treat park bench seat timbers and picnic table with tung oil
- Make display about work of CGG for Horticultural Show.

September

- Examine shrubs in Cemetery – remove/spray out any brambles, consider additional pruning

October

- Final cut of wildflower meadow to 25mm by contractor
- Tree planting – *Quercus petraea* in roadside hedges if PC grant application successful

November

- Trim Nailstone Rd and north hedges

This report was made to the Annual Meeting of Carlton Parish Council and is copied from Report 2017-09.