

COPYTHORNE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING - SEPTEMBER 13TH 2022

Item 11 – To receive an updating report on the possible purchase of a replacement tree for the “Bartley Oak”

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

This report follows from a report delivered to the July 12th 2022 Parish Council meeting (Item 133/22) and should be read in conjunction with it.

The previous report detailed the following next steps and other issues to address:-

1. Clerk to continue to chase responses for e-mails above
2. Clerk to seek specific quotes once more details known.
3. Consider how the tree will be cared for as it becomes established (for example, how will it be watered in period of dry weather.
4. Source and amount of funds required to cover cost of tree; tree guard; and ongoing care.

The decision of the Council to the previous report was that the Clerk should continue to investigate the issues and costs associated with the idea and report again with an update to the September 13th 2022 Council meeting.

CURRENT POSITION

(As related to the steps above)

1. Below are the questions that I was asked to chase responses for, along with (where possible) the responses received:-

Questions to Clerk of Burley PC – June 22nd 2022

I am interested in knowing:-

The cost (and size) of the trees you have recently planted – CHASED BUT NO RESPONSE

The cost of the wooden frame to project the tree - CHASED BUT NO RESPONSE

Questions to Forestry England (“FE”) – June 28th 2022

I note from your reply below that we need to erect a tree guard, which you would give us the specification for. Please can you let me have that? – 2m SQUARE FRAME, 1.5m HIGH, MADE FROM POST AND RAIL WITH STOCK NETTING AT THE BOTTOM

Also, are there any costs associated with you obtaining (on our behalf) SSSI consent and consent from Natural England? – NO

2. Oak Tree – An 8-10cm girth tree of circa 1.5 -2m height is likely to cost around £100 (note: FE have suggested that give the location of the tree an alternative might be to consider planting a “whip” rather than an immature tree as this might help it to become established. The guard though would still need to be the same size.)
Guard - Online quotes for a guard of similar dimensions to that advised by Forestry England are for around £200.
(note: FE have provided details of the contractor that work with Burley PC and I am awaiting a quote from that contractor.)
Ancillary items – FE have suggested that watering pipes be installed to add the flow of water directly towards the base of the tree. The cost for simple piping would be minimal.

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3. The issue of how to ensure the tree (immature or whip) will be watered has yet to be resolved.
4. I estimate that the likely cost of planting the tree based on the above will be somewhere in the range of £300-£400. Given that the £1,000 budgeted for spending on the Platinum Jubilee will be spent on the "Jubilee Clock to install at the Parish Hall the funds needed for the tree will have to come from General Reserves. A further sum will need to be designated in the reserves to cover the potential cost of replacement etc during the ten years that the Parish Council will be responsible for the tree before Forestry England will adopt it.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

I met with a Senior Ecologist from FE at the site of the existing "Bartley Oak" on August 4th 2022. The most suitable location for the "replacement" based on the topography was identified by her and she has kindly prepared a draft submission to be sent to the Verderer's Court if the Council agrees to planting and maintaining the tree. In addition, if the Verderer's Court agrees to the request, FE will deal with arranging the licence for the tree between themselves and the Council; and obtaining assent from Natural England. A copy of the draft submission is attached.

NEXT STEPS

1. Council to decide if it wants to proceed (and if so address the outstanding issue of watering the tree)
2. Clerk to firm up on quotes above (working within a delegated budget of £400) and continue with the arrangements for obtaining consents and planting of the tree.

David Rigby
Clerk to Copythorne Parish Council
September 2nd 2022

Tree planting on lawn off Beechwood Road, Bartley

Submission on behalf of Copythorne Parish Council.

Copythorne Parish Council would like to plant one oak tree (*Quercus robur*) on the lawn just off Beechwood Road (see attached map) to replace an old oak tree that has died (see photo below). They would like to plant this tree for the Queen's Jubilee. This single oak tree would be planted nearby on an area of the lawn with no known rare plants, see attached plan. In order to protect the young tree from damage from browsing it is proposed to install temporary fencing around the tree, with a 2m square frame, 1.5m high, made from post and rail with stock netting at the bottom. This fencing will remain in situ for 10 years, allowing for the tree to reach suitable maturity to be resilient to stock. The oak tree will be sourced with guaranteed local provenance and be a *Quercus robur*. Planting will be carried out by hand, the turf and top soil will carefully be dug off and put to one side, whilst the hole is dug. The tree will be planted and soil will be returned to the hole and the turf will be replaced back around the tree so as to reduce any disturbance to any plant species. The tree location has been chosen as it is on a dry part of the lawn with no rare plants found there. The turf will be lifted and replaced so no loss or damage to the SSSI. The fence will only be left for 10 years and then removed, by which time the dying oak may have collapsed.

We are requesting the Verderers permission to plant this 1 oak tree and install a fence around to protect it. Copythorne Parish Council will have a licence from Forestry England to plant and install the fencing, the fence will remain Copythorne Parish Councils responsibility for the duration of the 10 years, after which time the fence will be removed and the tree will revert to Forestry England's liability. Forestry England will seek Natural England assent if the Verderers give their permission for this planting.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

Photo of the lawn



Habitats Regulations Assessment

Aerial image of lawn showing dead oak tree and location of new oak tree.

