

Alderbury Parish Council – October 2024

Agenda item 122.24 a

Update on Proposals for Spider's Island

The good news is that we have been awarded a grant of up to £2000 from the King's Coronation Orchard fund to plant trees on amenity land at Spider's Island. I have worked closely with Naomi Styles, who has been extremely helpful, over the past two months to achieve this. The grant includes topsoil, mulching, water butts being fitted to no. 99 with the permission of the residents and that of Wiltshire Council and some special spades/ augurs. Our application needed some tweaking however, to fit the criteria.

The mix of trees now comprises two rowan, two wayfaring, three guelder rose, two holly, three spindleberry, two crab apple, a Marjorie Seedling Plum and old greengage (as plums were mentioned by local residents on consultation.) We also have the use of a digger for a day through a kind donation by a local resident which can be used both for lightly scraping the grass away ready for planting and if council agrees, to create a scrape no bigger than 1 metre x 1.75 metres in a slight dip which lends itself to this. This scrape would be very shallow to encourage house martins and swifts to find mud for their nests and would use a weighted liner. It would also encourage dragon flies, frogs, toads, birds and bees so fitting the aim of increasing biodiversity. Risks to the public would be minimal. £100 could be contributed by APC from the environmental budget to fund this but it can be funded by a private individual also.

The idea I had of dense underplanting with native hedging using the Myawaki method cannot be used as the grant is essentially for that of an orchard, so wildflowers would be added under the trees as this makes the perfect environment for nature.

However, it has not been possible to isolate our scheme for adoption as WC want us to take the whole piece of land so there are some small costs involved in grass cutting fortnightly and keeping the fenced boundary clear of weeds twice yearly. These would be removed initially then a compost area could be created for later use. I have had a quote from a local contractor who is keen to do this using a mulching method of grass cutting (which finely cuts and improves the soil), and Hurdcotts have also been contacted.

This is a visionary scheme to enhance our village, encourage wildlife and promote community involvement in an area which has been somewhat neglected so I do trust that APC will support it. I am asking for:

1. The adoption of the land from Wiltshire Council
2. The creation of a small scrape

Thank you.

Mel
29th September 2024