**TREE WARDEN INDUCTION REPORT 5th Feb 2024**

**The Parish Council’s recent call for people to come forward as tree wardens has resulted in three residents expressing an interest. Volunteers are insured by the PC if all contact details are provided.**

**Myself and 12 others including Ken Carly attended a Tree Induction online training run by the Tree Council in conjunction with Wiltshire Council’s tree co-ordinator, Naomi Styles.**

**The first part described why trees are important (see our Tree Policy for full details on this) and the need to plant more since the great tempest of 1987 destroyed 16 million trees overnight. In 1990 the Tree Warden scheme was launched with variable success and has recently been relaunched in Wiltshire after a gap of about four years.**

**The Tree Council works in partnership with schools, science/research institutes, and communities through Tree Wardens, can provide funding (eg Coronation Fund) for public hedges and/or tree planting. Tree growers guide plus other resources on their website.**

**Naomi supports us with developments in newsletters, training, health and safety/ insurance matters for volunteers. Certificates of attendance at this training will go to the PC.**

**THE TW ROLE**

1. **Eyes, ears and voice of the community regarding trees / hedgerows.**
2. **Identify opportunities for planting locally - regular inspection, planning, preparing proposed sites, maintain aftercare.**
3. **Where possible maintain a local seed bank for germination within a local allotment - trees grown in your own area will adapt to village conditions best.**
4. **Mapping tree canopy cover so a tree inventory is available to PC - potential gaps noted. Hedgerow surveys. Cllr Alex Wilkinson is working on digital mapping.**
5. **Tree health monitoring, pests, diseases reported.**
6. **Links to planning applications - Tree Preservation Orders, Conservation Orders, development plans.**

**THE ROLE IS NOT ABOUT**

1. **Providing advice on safety of trees - individuals doing so would be liable if wrong and a trained arboriculturalist is required.**
2. **Handling tree disputes - refer to Shane at WC.**
3. **Entering private land without the owner’s agreement or undertaking practical work without permission from landowner or without insurance or beyond your skills.**
4. **Wielding chainsaws without training and insurance. Weed control needs a certificate of training done.**

**THE ORCHARD PROJECT**

**The same day I attended online training about orchards (five or more trees are considered an orchard) and their aftercare with Waleran Close in mind. This revealed that orchards are a unique eco system being the most bio diverse for species providing blossom for pollinators and fruit for many types of animals. Underplanting with wildflowers increases this mosaic habitat. (Even more if there’s a pond, woodland.)**

**Pruning in the first years is important and mulching - cutting out 20% of the tree and to a goblet shape to let in sun, air and reduce disease, removing all fruit for first 3 years then 50% for up to 5 years. The Tree Wardens will address this in 2024 as we did not do this last year. Pruning for apples and pears takes place in winter, for plums, cherries etc it is summer. Mulching to one metre around the trees, leaving a gap around the trunk to prevent rotting, creates a fungal dominant soil.**

**There were many more details but reading time is precious!**

**Mel Lawrence**