

Hoyle copse and orchard report

The volunteers typical meet from October through to April or May depending on workload. During the summer break a bat survey has been taking place in the copse as part of an ecology masters degree Abbie Woodbridge is undertaking. Detected to date are Common Pipistrelle, Noctule bat, Lesser horseshoe bat, Greater horseshoe bat, Serotine bat, Barbastelle bat, Grey long eared bat and Brown Long Eared bats. Also in just one lunchtime visit, one of our volunteers observed Blues, Holly Blues, Wall Brown, Meadow Brown, Gatekeepers Large White's, Peacocks, Red Admirals and Small Tortoiseshells butterflies. And finally, we had over one hundred pyramid orchids in the copse meadow.

The PC owned wheeled strimmer had a problem with the belt drive. I have taken it, along with the PC owned handheld strimmer to Shinnars Bridge Garden Machinery for repair and servicing. As soon as the strimmers are serviced, I will collect and call the first volunteer meeting of the new season.

I have requested through two FOC tree schemes 100 hazel and 45 mixed broadleaf trees for planting in the copse this winter. The hazels will be planted in the heritage hazel area that was decimated when the juvenile ash trees that had overrun this area were felled. The broadleaf trees will be planted as general infill as required.

You would have seen Aran Kimberlee's email and quote to undertake the tree safety survey dated 15/9/23 of £495+VAT. As requested, I have instructed Aran to proceed and I'm awaiting a date when we can meet. Please note I have requested Aran to survey the copse, orchard and the footpath adjacent to the new Millpool development. Adjacent to the Millpool development is a tree a parishioner has specifically requested is felled as they consider it dangerous. If Aran agrees, I will get a quote from a tree surgeon to fell as it is too close to adjoining properties for the volunteers to undertake.

We have two trees in the village orchard that are in terminal decline: the Royal Legion's cherry tree and the plum tree adjacent to the main path and opposite the new story telling chair. I will plan to fell and replant this coming season. Michelle for the PC (or myself on your behalf) will have to apply for permission as the trees are in the conservation area. The Royal Legion in Stoke Gabriel has disbanded but I have informed Dave Wilkins and Roger Baron on the status of the cherry tree, and both said they will leave it to me to decide etc. I will ensure the plaque is kept and mounted in an appropriate place.

Phil Bolt