

# Community Engagement Officer Culmers update report

## **Culmers woodland:**

The trespassers have now left the area, their belongings were removed by TDC, which then showed how drastic the destruction of the woodland was.

The trespassers had created a bank within the woodland by digging out shrubs, bulbs and cutting down 10 trees (We later counted). See the attached pictures (Paul for scale of the bank depth).



The Gardeners, Vanessa, Collin, and Graham kindly flattened the area so new trees can be planted again. Paul, Neil and I then spent some time removing the trees that had been cut down and other areas of kindling they had stored.



As part of the rewilding planned for Culmers, we were hoping to order some new trees to replace the vandalised trees. The Gardening Team and Neil our Woodland Officer have agreed with me that this should be a native species.

This can include Hazel, Hawthorn, Crab Apple, Rowan, Blackthorn, Dog Rose, Wild Cherry, English Oak, Field Maple, Grey willow, Elder, Alder, Birch. and many more.

The Woodland trust sells several “Tree packs” that would work well, they come in small packs or larger packs too, if we over order, we could give away some trees to volunteers as an incentive to help us plant.

**Here is one option:**

Pack of 105 small trees: £115.00

<https://shop.woodlandtrust.org.uk/working-wood-tree-pack>

**If we wanted to go down the route of standards (larger trees) these are more expansive:**

Single stem Oak tree, 150-200cm- £80 <https://www.ornamental-trees.co.uk/collections/native-trees/products/quercus-robur-tree>

Silve Birch Standard tree, 8-10cm girth, 3.5-4.5m- £200 <https://www.ornamental-trees.co.uk/products/betula-pendula-tree>

I would like to get the tree replanting underway, as well as the planting that was already planned and agreed by CT10 charities and council. Ideally this should be completed ASAP within the next few months before the weather gets hotter. I would like to organise a BIG PLANT WEEK as I had previously scheduled before the campers. This will be using the Tree Planting budget that will renew in the new Civic year and remains untouched. Currently at £5,000.

This will be working with local schools and community groups as previously planned.

Officers would like to create some deadheading using the trees that had been cut down. This would then close off the pathway into the wood area while the new bulbs and trees settle in and establish. As we will be closing off the area using dead hedging, smaller trees would be okay to plant.

**Recommendation:**

**That Council consider use of the tree planting budget for officers to purchase replacement trees that are appropriate for the area.**

**That Councillors Share big plant week advertisement between their networks, when it is shared with the public.**

## Notice Board update:

The New Notice Board has been delivered, it holds 9 A4 portrait posters, as discussed previously this will have information about the meadow, planting, CT10 charities and information supplied by RSPB.

It is to be installed in the coming months close to the pathway as requested by CT10 Charities.

## Meadow:

The original meadow is sprouting really well and as it should be for this time of year. When it is full bloom this year there will be more perennials than annuals so there will be a great contrast between the new and old meadow.

You may have seen the new meadow is not sprouting as we hoped and the grass has taken over again; this is due to a very wet winter when we seeded. So, this will be reseeded by the contractor again in the coming weeks with no further cost to the Council.

## Recommendation:

**That the Council consider the Community Engagement Officer creating the artworks for and installing some temporary education signs to the meadow area similar to those seen at Leeds castle (see below). These would be put in and taken away at the end of the season and used as a find the flower activity to offer free nature activities for passersby.**

