

NEWS FROM THE RECREATION GROUND

A tree survey was carried out last year on behalf of the Parish Council to assess the condition and safety of the trees in the recreation ground. The report identified work which needed to be done to remove dead and damaged wood from several trees.

In addition, a 3m crown reduction to a sweet chestnut tree which is in poor condition was advised. A local tree surgeon recently carried out this work, which has been done in accordance with the current approved practice of mimicking natural damage due to high winds, lightning strikes and general decay in suitable mature trees which are entering their final third of life. This is known as coronet pruning, and, whilst it will not prolong the life of the tree, provides valuable habitat for insects, wildlife and fungi.

A recent edition of the BBC programme Countryfile featured this technique, filmed in Sherwood Forest, and aired on the 2nd April. The relevant section of the programme was an eight minute slot, beginning 21 minutes into the programme, and can be viewed on BBCiPlayer.



The tree should produce good secondary growth below the cuts, and this drastic prune should be all the work this tree will require for the next twenty years at least.

The Parish Council is also gently relaxing the management of the recreation ground as a whole to encourage more diversity of habitat for wildlife in general. We already have a narrow strip at the allotment end of the field which was left unmown last summer, and a limited number of plants and seeds have been introduced including some fritillaries which will hopefully establish and self seed over time.



Another area of unmown grass is planned for the area around the sweet chestnut tree which has just been coronet pruned, and there are plans for planting more trees, and a low native hedge along the line of the existing concrete post and wire fence adjoining the car park and hall.

The hedge cutting will be maintained annually on the roadside aspects, but reduced to once every two years within the field, leaving a slightly wider margin of unmown grass than currently exists.

None of these changes represent a significant financial cost (if any) to the Parish Council, and can be modified or reversed without difficulty. They contribute to the commitment given by the Parish to awareness of climate change and the measures both large and small which will help to mitigate this over the coming years.

Please come along to the Annual Parish Meeting on the 31st May. We'd love to talk to you, and hear any ideas you may have!

South Hill Parish Council