

Feedback from two site sessions held at Community Park to give members of the community the opportunity to talk with us about the Community Orchard

Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> April 2pm to 4pm – Parish Council representatives: Colin Osborn, Chloe Stevens, Jay Roberts, Carol Hackett (Clerk) – 17 members of the public

Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2pm to 4pm - Parish Council representatives: Colin Osborn, Chloe Stevens, Laura Turner-Scott – 8 members of the public

<b>Comments made</b>	<b>Parish Council initial response for further discussion at Parish Council meeting 16/4/24</b>
Lots of positive support for the Community Orchard proposal, and it being a pleasant area	
Concerns regarding steep bank surrounding the site and safety of children	Whilst the bank of brambles have been removed from around part of the site to make way for wildflowers, nettles cover the banks down to the river, which are likely to deter children from climbing down the banks. This has always been an amenity area, and we are not aware of any incidents regarding children's safety
Questioned why it was cheaper to level the other side of the site	If you look at the topography you will note that it would be easier to reduce one mound of soil than import soil to level the eastern end of the site
Some concerns raised about position of the trees adjacent to the footpath – need to ensure they are far enough away from the path so that roots don't cause damage to the surface, or drop fruit – one suggestion was to position them at the end of each row on the riverbank end	The trees would be positioned 5 meters away from the 'footpath' and the roots or branches would not grow further than that. The soil at the end of the rows is full of nettle roots. There is also a question as to whether there is enough room
Concern about the trees being damaged	The saplings will be protected by wooden stakes and wire, which will help prevent them from being damaged
Concerns about suitability - better places, concern about trees not thriving	The Tree Officers at Wiltshire Council approved of the site as being suitable. There is no accounting for the extreme weather we have had this year. There would be opportunity for the Community Group to apply for grant funding for some form of drainage should it be required
Comments about there being too many trees	Diversity and variety are the key factors here. Some fruit trees are not self-fertile so require trees of the same variety to be included nearby
Request for bee/insect hotel station (community project/involvement)	Some timber was saved from Canada Woods for these types of projects, and the tree wardens will be planning community events in the orchard, one of which could certainly be to build a bee/insect hotel
Concern would encourage misuse of the area	
Grass cutting and general maintenance concerns raised	The previous external contract was for 9 cuts of this area at £37 per cut, but this was removed from the contract for 2024/25 (dates cut in 2023/24 - 01.04 / 21.04 / 13.05 / 30.05/ 04.07 / 31.07 / 14.08 / 29.08 / 12.09). Handyman Contractor to be tasked with

	cutting the grass for the initial cut this year, after which the situation would be reviewed.
Comments about access	Improvements to length of footpath from Grove Road to the Community Orchard already being investigated with an application for funding to LHFIG approved at February Parish Council meeting. Other sections of the footpath hope to be improved as and when funding allows