

Biodiversity Report, February 2020.

1. Trees.

The Woodland Trust has notified that our free trees will be delivered between 28th February and 13th March. Ideally they should be planted within 7 days, but can be planted later if properly cared for.

Unfortunately the planting scheme submitted to Cormac has been questioned as to the suitability of the suggested planting sites along the A388. The Arboricultural Officer commented that there are more suitable sites available in the parish. Regrettably, he did not specify where these sites are, and so a new email chain has now begun, asking where these sites are! We await a reply.

2. Grass Cutting.

Last year Cornwall Council issued a directive to Highways that grass would only be cut for safety reasons and not for aesthetic reasons. In view of this, BFPC asked Cormac if they would consider adopting a “cut and collect” system that is recommended by the national charity *Plantlife*. With this system, grass is cut once in early spring and again in late summer/early autumn. On both occasions the clippings are removed. By not cutting during summer, wild flowers have time to flower and set seed. This provides habitat for pollinators and enhances biodiversity, helping to make our local environment more able to cope with climate change.

In response, Cormac said that they are indeed considering trialling this approach in several areas, and will notify us of their decision. Several local authorities are using this system as it is a very cost-effective way of encouraging wild flowers to proliferate, with the attendant benefit for other wildlife. At times the grassed areas will look a little ragged, but this is surely a small price to pay for a profusion of our native wild flowers during the summer. After all, we don't complain about Bodmin Moor or Dartmoor looking untidy during the winter. The countryside is best left to its natural rhythms if we want it to be there when we most need it.

Cllr Malcolm Fletcher.