

Biodiversity Report, September 2020.

Hatt Roundabout Management.

As outlined earlier this year, BFPC engaged with CORMAC and agreed a management plan for the roundabout that will ensure a greater diversity of local flora there. This is in line with Cornwall Council's "Grow not Mow" policy, whereby the number of cuts to grass verges is generally no more than two per annum. In May the contractor carried out a 2m cut around the perimeter. Two further 5m wide cuts were made along the north-south and east-west diameters of the roundabout to ensure good visibility for pedestrians using the crossing places. The perimeter and diameters have been cut each month since then.

The four quadrants remaining on the roundabout were left uncut to allow wildflowers to flourish. Throughout the summer a succession of wildflowers, including cuckoo flower, oxeye daises, knapweed, and vetches were able to bloom, providing valuable sources of pollen and nectar for the country's endangered pollinators. The wildflowers in the quadrants were left to set seed naturally. Now that process has been completed the contractor cut the whole roundabout on 12th September. All the mowings will be removed to prevent further enrichment of the soil, which would in fact be to the detriment of the wildflowers, as they prefer relatively poor soil. Once the removal has been completed, it is intended to use some of the funds kindly collected by Cllr Ellis on a voluntary basis to buy a wildflower mix to sow on the quadrants to add to the flora already there. A final cut to the perimeter and diameters will be carried out in October should it be necessary.

When the current maintenance contract comes up for renewal in March 2021, the intention is to continue the same mowing regime as this year.

Tree Guardians.

The vast majority of The Woodland Trust tree whips have been successfully coaxed and nurtured through their first growing season. This has been thanks to the hard work of a few Parish Councillors and local residents. In order to spread the workload in future years, and to engage and gain commitment from the wider community, the Parish Council put out a call for a group of Tree Guardians recently. There have been some encouraging responses, especially from families with children.

In order to comply with the new Covid 19 guidelines, the initial meetings of the Guardians will have to be limited to six people outdoors on the tree site. Once constituted, the immediate task for the Guardians this autumn will be to help to put mulch mats around each tree, topping them up with bark mulch. This will do much to suppress weeds and conserve moisture in the future.

In next and future years the Tree Guardians will be supported to:

- monitor the growth and health of the trees
- undertake any necessary weeding
- monitor and record wildflower growth in the area
- monitor and record pollinator activity.

The new management regime for Hatt roundabout and the tree planting will enable BFPC to say that our community, though small, is making its contribution to mitigating Climate Change through promoting biodiversity.

Cllr Malcolm Fletcher.

September 2020.