

This Report will be made public on 16 November 2021

Report Number **C/21/49**

To: CABINET
Date: 24 November 2021
Status: Non key
Responsible Officer: Hazel Sargent
Cabinet Member: Cllr Lesley Whybrow

SUBJECT: The Queen's Green Canopy

SUMMARY: This report explores the opportunity to take part in a nationwide tree planting campaign, known as The Queen's Green Canopy. The purpose of this campaign is to mark the occasion of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee that takes place next year. It introduces the proposed donated tree policy and the resources necessary to deliver this.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

The Queen's Green Canopy is an opportunity for the Council and the District's citizens to mark an historical event and to show appreciation for the Queen's service. The recommendations will contribute to a legacy that will benefit the future.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. To receive and note report C/21/49.
2. To agree that the council:
 - a. Signpost individuals and community groups to the Queen's Green Canopy and the Woodland Trust websites to purchase individual trees, to apply for free trees and for aftercare advice;
 - b. To plant commemorative trees in Cheriton Recreation Ground and provide a plaque to commemorate the occasion;
 - c. To adopt the donated tree policy.

1. Background

- 1.1 Officially launched on Monday 17 May the Queens Green Canopy will mark 70 years since the Queen ascended the throne (22nd February 2022). To celebrate this occasion, there will be a tree planting campaign across the UK. The QGC is considered to be an opportunity to thank Her Majesty for her exceptional service and promote the importance of trees to the environment, through the encouragement of tree planting and tree preservation across the nation.
- 1.2 As well as inviting the planting of new trees, the QGC will dedicate a network of 70 Ancient Woodlands across the United Kingdom and identify 70 Ancient Trees to celebrate Her Majesty's 70 years of service.
- 1.3 The campaign suggests that tree planting may take the form of:
 - Individuals planting trees on their private land;
 - Businesses planting trees on their land and creating tree planting projects with employees;
 - Platinum Jubilee Community Planting projects for youth groups, Parishes and Residents' Associations;
 - A Platinum Jubilee Avenue of medium-sized or large trees ideal for cities, large estates, new housing developments and parishes;
 - A Platinum Jubilee Copse on private land or land allocated by the County Council or Borough/District Council; and
 - A Platinum School Tree on school grounds involving students and teachers
- 1.4 For individuals planting a tree in their own garden the QGC website provides information on planting and caring for trees. Schools are being encouraged to engage with the QGC and schools may apply for free saplings through The Woodland Trust from June 2021. These are available on a first come-first services basis. In addition to this, the QGC will make contact with as many state schools in the UK as possible to arrange free trees through their partner agencies. The number of free trees available will depend on donations received.
- 1.5 As part of the QGC, their Partner, The Woodland Trust, will be giving away 3 million saplings free of charge to community groups on a first come-first served basis. Information on how to apply for these free saplings was available through the Woodland Trust website from June 2021 <https://shop.woodlandtrust.org.uk/trees>
- 1.6 Villages, parishes, towns and counties are all encouraged to get involved by raising funds locally to plant significant trees, avenues or copses.
- 1.7 From October, the location of trees planted to celebrate the jubilee can be added to the QGC interactive map that will show the location of trees planted as part of this scheme.

2. Queens Green Canopy

- 2.1 The queens green canopy seeks to encourage the planting of trees and for organizations to help individuals where possible in doing this. Officers of the council have considered a number of options.
- 2.2 The QGC is keen for tree planting to take place in urban and/or deprived areas. The challenge is to find suitable areas and local community groups who would be prepared to maintain any trees following their planting. There is no point in planting trees without suitable aftercare and maintenance in place for them. There is concern that in planting trees on Council owned land there should be funding for adequate aftercare. The Council sent an email to some 700 community groups that included information about the QGC. This was to gauge interest and determine if any groups would be interested in caring for any trees planted as part of this event. Two organisations expressed an interest.
 - 2.3.1 The Council could take part in the QGC by assisting by providing trees to groups or individuals. This option has significant implications with regards to storing and safely distributing an unknown amount of trees as well as a financial burden in purchasing them to begin with (including care and maintenance whilst storing). This requirement is not something the current GM team has resource to commit too. The Woodland Trust have run such schemes for some time and are able to offer single trees for purchase. It is therefore suggested that for individuals the Council should signpost them to the Woodland Trust website where they are able to buy one tree if they wish.
- 2.4 It is proposed that twelve London Plane trees are planted in Cheriton Recreation Ground as an avenue with a plaque marking the dedication placed opposite the existing golden jubilee plaque on the entrance to the park. This recreation ground was dedicated to the Queen's Golden Jubilee. The cost of the planting will be approximately £200 per tree, this includes the cost of a tree 12-14cm in circumference and items such as guards and stakes. This upfront cost and the ongoing maintenance will be funded from within the Grounds Maintenance existing revenue budget.

By planting 12 trees as an avenue to one end of the park it will allow further donations in the future by the community (as part of the donated tree policy) to complete the avenue, promoting community engagement.
- 2.5 The Grounds Maintenance team will continue to work with the community to facilitate tree planting. For example the team has recently donated three trees to Brookland Church to replace trees that have had to be removed.

Proposed Tree Planting in Cheriton Recreation Ground



3.0 Donated Tree Policy

- 3.1 The Operations team manages a successful donated bench scheme throughout the district that allows members of the community to donate benches to the council. This policy has proven hugely successful and ensures the council's bench stock is kept to a high standard whilst minimising financial pressure on providing this amenity. This policy has formed the basis of the suggested tree policy.
- 3.2 The grounds maintenance team has planted a significant number of trees over the last five years, and uses a methodology of providing 10-20 trees per year throughout its corporate assets per year. This approach ensures the majority of these trees reach maturity and can be managed safely as part of the council's substantial overall tree stock.
- 3.3 Considering that the council plants significant trees per annum it is recommended that the council allows members of the public to donate trees to the council.
- 3.4 The policy would enable members of the public to apply for a tree to be planted in memory of a loved one or for dedication for another significant event. This service will be available at a total cost of £755 ex VAT. This amount includes not only the cost of the tree but its aftercare. No plaques will be allowed.
- 3.5 It is proposed that every year 10 trees will be available for the public to apply to have planted. A number of locations for planting were considered and below are the locations that were deemed most appropriate:

- Radnor Park, Folkestone

- Cheriton Recreation Ground, Folkestone
- Morehall Recreation Ground, Folkestone
- Lower Leas Coastal Park (Western end), Folkestone
- Hawkinge Cemetery Green Burial Plot.

The location of the trees will be chosen on a year by year basis from those locations.

3.6 Trees will be predominantly but not necessarily, native broadleaved, deciduous trees. Occasionally carefully selected non-native coniferous species will also be available. The policy includes a list of tree species from which people can choose. The policy is attached to this report as Appendix One.

4.0 Other Planting

4.1 There is the potential to explore further tree planting as part of the councils housing and regeneration schemes. However this would have to be considered on a case by case basis and within currently available resources. There would be a significant cost associated with the necessary aftercare of the trees. This could not be met from within the current Grounds Maintenance revenue budget.

5.0 Otterpool Park

5.1 Otterpool Park will be carrying out planting in advance of each phase of development. The first trees will be planted in winter of 2022/23. Early planting will be to mitigate visual impact rather than dedicated woodland, but in due course larger areas of tree planting will come forward, for example at the country park. In total it's estimated that 1 million trees and shrubs will be planted.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

6.1 There is not a great deal of risk management involved in either the QGC or the donated tree policy.

Perceived risk	Seriousness	Likelihood	Preventative action
Trees fail to reach maturity	low	low	Number of trees planted allows Grounds Maintenance Team to ensure a high level of aftercare. Vandalism may occur, but budgets allow for suitable replacement.

7. LEGAL/FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS/POLICY MATTERS

7.1 Legal Officer's Comments (NM)

The Council must ensure that where necessary, it complies with all laws and obtains all necessary consents to plant the trees.

7.2 Finance Officer's Comments (DH)

Should the request to plant 12 London Plane trees at Cheriton Recreation Ground be agreed, the cost for this (approx. £2400.00) can be funded from Grounds Maintenance revenue budget without having any financial impact on the service area.

7.3 Diversities and Equalities Implications (GE)

There are no equality and diversity implications directly arising from this report.

7.4 Climate Change Implications (OF)

There are no direct Climate Change Impact as arising from producing this report.

There is scope for positive impacts across the range of climate change implications including:

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions from travel, construction and buildings

The Queen's Green Canopy will result in an increase in tree cover across the District thereby reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Reducing waste – The proposal made mention of maintenance and aftercare of

planted tree which should ensure that any potential waste is reduced.

Water consumption - consideration should be given to water conservation methods in the maintenance and aftercare.

Conservation and wildlife – tree planting should help improve biodiversity and

consideration given to tree species that improve pollinators

Social and economic impacts - Overall the proposal will have positive impact on

the environment.

8. CONTACT OFFICERS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Councillors with any questions arising out of this report should contact the following officer prior to the meeting

Hazel Sargent – Planning Policy Specialist

Telephone: 01303 853318

Email: hazel.sargent@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Donated Tree Policy



DONATED TREE PLANTING POLICY

A selection of trees are available for donation to the council in order to commemorate a loved one or allow members of the public to make a dedication of their choice. Donated memorial trees can be placed in selected council owned parks and open spaces across the district.

New Policy

This new policy applies only to donated trees planted on Folkestone & Hythe District Council owned land.

Locations

There is a limited range of locations within the district where donated trees can be planted. Typical examples are listed below:

Radnor Park, Folkestone
Cheriton Recreation Ground, Folkestone
Morehall Recreation Ground, Folkestone
Lower Leas Coastal Park (Western end), Folkestone
Hawkinge Cemetery Green Burial Plot

Application forms can be downloaded from XXX and submitted electronically or obtained by contacting the contact center on 01303 853000

Third Party Memorial Tree Provision

Unfortunately we do not permit third parties to provide their own trees for planting on Folkestone & Hythe District Council land. There are several reasons for this;

- No guarantee of quality, size, provenance or relevant biosecurity or plant health checks.
- We aim to provide a selection of predominantly but not necessarily native broadleaved deciduous trees (along with the occasional, carefully selected, non-native coniferous species) across the District. If people start supplying their own trees we will have an array of poorly selected species and the possible creation of a monoculture.
- Trees will only be purchased from our preferred suppliers who have a proven track record on biosecurity and plant health checks.

New Trees

Trees will be predominantly but not necessarily native broadleaved deciduous trees (along with the occasional, carefully selected, non-native coniferous species)

supplied with a minimum stem girth of 12/14cm or above (when measured at 1.3 meters above ground level). Trees with a stem girth of 12/14cm or above typically measure between three to four meters in height (11ft to 15ft).

New trees will only be planted during the winter months (December to February) in order to ensure the best possible chance for them to establish and mature.

Due to resource constraints around watering and weeding of new trees, we will limit the number of donated trees to just ten trees per year.

Native Tree Species Choice

Field Maple
 Alder
 Silver Birch
 Hornbeam
 Beech
 Holly
 Scots Pine
 Black Poplar
 Aspen Poplar
 Wild Cherry
 Bird Cherry
 English Oak
 White Willow
 Whitebeam
 Wild Service tree
 Yew
 Lime

Please contact us directly on 01303 853682 if you would like to discuss the suitability of other non-native species.

Charges for each new trees

Item	Description	Cost
Individual Tree	Girth 12-14 cm supplied by Barcham Tree Nursery	£200.00
Ancillary Items	Stakes / Guards / ties / irrigation system	£55.00
Labour and machine hire		£150.00
On-going maintenance for 3 years	Watering, tree pit weeding, formative pruning, stake and tie adjustment	£350.00
Total		£755.00 ex VAT

Maintenance

New donated memorial trees will be maintained by the council's grounds maintenance department for a period of three years from the date of planting. Maintenance will include the regular watering of the tree between the months of

April and October (the regularity of watering will be dictated by prevailing environmental conditions and may increase during prolonged dry spells or decrease in the event of prolonged wet spells of weather); weeding of the tree pit in order to remove competition from grass and weeds as necessary to remove competition for available nutrients; the topping up of weed suppressant mulch as necessary; stake and tie adjustment as necessary. All stakes, ties and protective guards will be removed three years after the date of planting.

Vandalism and Damage

If the tree dies or is vandalised the council will remove it. No refunds will be given if the tree dies or is vandalised, however a replacement tree will be planted free of charge (for the first 5 years).

Waiting Time

Applications for donated memorial trees will be processed all year round (limited to ten per year), however tree planting will only take place between the months of December and February.

Conditions of Dedication

The council will try and accommodate the applicant's preference for the trees location. The council reserves the right to refuse an application if the preferred location is unsuitable and to offer an alternative site.

Once the tree has been planted it becomes the property of the council. The council then takes liability and responsibility for all maintenance requirements. No maintenance of any kind should be undertaken by the donor, their family or their representatives.

The District's parks, gardens and open spaces are there for the enjoyment of everyone and as such are not considered to be 'memorial' gardens and as such memorial plaques will not be permitted to be placed at the base of trees. In addition to this, floral tributes or any other memorabilia are not permitted to be left on or at trees location. Any such items found will be removed by the council.

It is the responsibility of the donor to notify the council if your address or contact details change.