

**REPORT FROM:** ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES MANAGER  
**TO:** CLIMATE EMERGENCY WORKING GROUP  
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**Report Author:** Phil Riley  
**Tel. No:** 01282 661587  
**E-mail:** Philip.riley@pendle.gov.uk

**FOR INFORMATION**

**CLIMATE EMERGENCY WORKING GROUP UPDATE 2022**

**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. To inform the working group of progress made with respect to Tree Planting, Differential mowing, Herbicide usage and battery power tools.
2. To request suggestions for additional tree planting locations and Differential mowing locations.

**Tree Planting**

Tree planting at Alkincoats, Colne and Pasture lane, Barrowford will proceed in winter 22/23 as part of the HEAL planting scheme in partnership with the RRT (Ribble Rivers trust),. Approx. 4850 tree whips will be planted.

Within the footprint of Alkincoates woodland nature reserve in Colne approximately 240 tree whips have been planted so far this season. It is anticipated that this will increase to 500 by the end of March 2023

Within the Levelling up parks fund, £19,000 is allocated for tree works. This will predominantly be used planting mature street trees along the Netherfield road / Sagar street corridor, but any surplus remaining funds can be used elsewhere within the Borough for tree planting schemes.

No other mass planting schemes are proposed for this winter. Some tree planting will be undertaken with our volunteers but this will be mostly on existing sites that need whips replacing following vandalism or plant failure following the summer heatwave.

At the CEWG meeting of 14<sup>th</sup> July 2022, members suggested a number of sites for tree planting as below

- Poets estate, Colne – Cllr Cockburn Price in negotiation with Together Housing/LCC
- Byron Road community Centre – An amount of 240 trees were planted by CYAG with assistance from PBC , local school group and corporate time given by XLCR, along the boundary of Byron road community Centre and the rear of David Fishwick
- Laneshawbridge Recreation ground – This land is leased from LCC and has recently been taken over by Laneshawbridge parish council. Discussions can be held with the PC to explore interest in this scheme
- Tree corridor along the canal – Most areas of canal bank are currently wooded, schemes are underway in conjunction with the Super slow way project to develop the canal, including tree planting. An update on this scheme will be presented on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> December.

Members should note that there is a limit to the amount of PBC land that can be planted up as woodland. It is not widely appreciated by all members of the public due to perceived aesthetics and historical land usage. It should also be noted that tree planting is likely to create a financial burden to the borough in 10 years plus time as both inspections and physical management such as thinning out and pruning are required. Plantations that were planted across the borough in the last 30 years are all suffering from a lack of management due to staff availability and current funding constraints.

### **Herbicide usage**

No further developments have been made in regards to Herbicide usage, Following up to date news in the industry there is no clear way to eradicate the use as yet. Within PBC we are using the minimal amount possible, and only where it is absolutely necessary.

### **Differential mowing**

Differential mowing schemes within Pendle are continuing to be expanded in our major parks such as Ball grove and Victoria, with special emphasis on areas around tree roots to assist with preventing soil compaction.

Other areas including Hodge House and Marsden Park will see peripheral areas of mown fields no longer mown during the summer months.

Areas within the town green at Barnoldswick are to be included in the 2023 mowing schemes, leaving patches unmown until autumn. Initially this will be on a trial basis which can be reviewed dependent on public reaction as it is a very visible site

In the autumn these sites will be reviewed and plans made to expand further each year.

As part of the levelling up parks scheme, it is expected some tranches of wildflower will be incorporated in the new landscaping scheme.

Three LCC roundabouts on Manchester road, Skipton road and Netherfield road were sown during April 2022 with wildflower seeds as a trial to review performance and feedback. The perennial nature of these plants mean the growing season of 2023 should start producing the desired results

### **Landscape maintenance Machinery**

Trials and demonstrations have now been undertaken with 5 leading manufacturers of professional landscape maintenance tools. One more is due to give us a week-long trial early in the new year. Milwaukee in particular has been working with us to refine and develop their battery mower to suit our needs following extensive feedback.

It is likely that it will be best suited having one brand for battery mowers and one brand for power tools such as strimmer's and hedge cutters. Following a detailed report being written in spring 2023, PBC will then look to integrate a small range of battery tools, as part of routine replacement schedules, suitable for various tasks based upon physical tool ability, vibrations and noise levels. It has been initially noted that not all battery power tools have sufficient power or length of battery to be viable for all tasks. If the usage is successful then a capital bid would need be made for larger scale investment in replacement battery equipment

Larger ride on mowers as well as cut and collect flails have been trialled but these have not been successful within the brands ranges so far , mainly due to lack of speed or lack of power which has resulted in machinery clogging up and increased downtime.. Combined with costs of 2-3 time more than equivalent petrol versions. It should be acknowledged that although improving at a rapid rate, battery equipment is still in its infancy of development.

## **IMPLICATIONS**

**Policy:** None

**Financial:** None currently, Heal and PlanT tree planting projects come with maintenance funding for 3 years. Tree planting schemes from 20/21 and 21/22 in 5-10 years will start requiring maintenance funds as the sites develop. Some of this will be offset by reduced mowing schedules

As differential mowing techniques are expanded further, investment may be needed in additional machinery for collecting the cut grass

**Legal:** None

**Risk Management:** Proposed planting sites will be added to our normal risk management procedures.

**Health and Safety:** All activities associated with trees and tree planting and physical grounds maintenance tasks are adequately risk assessed.

**Sustainability:** Tree planting and mowing regimes should play a part in the Council's response to the Climate Emergency. With trees and meadow acting as a source of carbon storage as well as providing food resources to wildlife.

**Community Safety:** None

**Equality and Diversity:** None

## **APPENDICES**

### **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**