

### Bridgnorth Town Council Working Group - Summary Document

#### Green Spaces Working Group

**Attendees** Cllr Rochelle; Baines, DLF- Barry Ince and Jo

Janet Cobb- Verges – Restoring Shropshire’s Verges Project –(RSVP) John Cobb. Kate Jones – Bug life, Helen Beevers – Bridgnorth Litter Pickers and gardening group, Catherine Brown – Community Garden.

**Apologies** Cllrs: Chetter; Neal, Linda Harris – Apley Estate

**Authority:** Town Council minutes

**Background:** Following on from the acceptance of the TORs of the green spaces working group an initial discussion group was held to share ideas and gain a greater understanding of current work and potential schemes that could be done in Bridgnorth. With local volunteers, DLF and councillors

#### Meetings / Discussion

26/10/21 Meeting of the Working Group took place in Town Council Annex 7pm -8.45pm

#### Introductions

##### Presentation by RSVP – Jan Cobb-

PowerPoint can be shared, very impressive work that has been carried out in Shropshire.

Barry confirmed he has had approval to contract out for someone to cut and collect next year (this is essential for verges to be productive) So far BTC only have approval in the budget for cut and collect on Well Meadow and the Lodge Lane open space. Verges are a separate issue as we currently cut 1 meter only using a ride-on mower with mulcher blades.

RSVP met with Shropshire County Council highways discussed KPIS for bio- diversity, Dean Carroll is portfolio holder. Also, Keir have highways contract.

Agreement was made in the first year for a late cut of the verges and only 1<sup>st</sup> metre. Volunteers collected up clippings to prepare for seeding, learnt that you must use UK seeds to flourish. Yellow rattle seed of choice. – parasitic plant reduces grass growth

With funding they had been granted they paid a botanist to survey the verges – this is important, so you don’t destroy existing species (they had zero tolerance for hogweed)

Funding from National lottery heritage grant, must capture before and after pics, also can provide cost benefit analysis with savings in labour.

Cuttings could be taken to bio digester facility – there is a bio diversity officer in Shropshire County Council Dan Wrench

Contact

[janet@jan-net.co.uk](mailto:janet@jan-net.co.uk)

for more information

**Restoring Shropshire's Verges Project will host its inaugural conference on Saturday 13th November 2021. 14:00 – 17:00 GMT [Add to calendar](#)**

Speakers will include representatives from RSVP, the Stepping Stones Project, Shropshire Council, Herefordshire Verges Group and Don't Mow Let It Grow.

There will also be stands from related organisations, opportunities for informal chatting and networking, and light refreshments.

**The event will be followed at 5.15pm but the RSVP AGM which all attendees are welcome to stay for.**

**FREE EVENT for tickets register HERE <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/rsvp-2021-conference-tickets-166034007185>**

Anyone wishing to join the RSVP board should get in touch with Charlie Bell.

For more details, or to request a stand for your organisation, please

email [charlie.bell@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:charlie.bell@nationaltrust.org.uk)

RSVP have a safety checklist re working practices they will share.

There are 36 mini sites around Shropshire and 2 schools interested.

Discussed environmental maintenance grant as a source of funding.

Keir deliver safety training to volunteers at a cost.

Also worked in churchyards with [Caring for God's Acre is a charity that specialises in the preservation of wildlife and the heritage of burial grounds, graveyards and cemeteries \(caringforgodsacre.org.uk\)](http://caringforgodsacre.org.uk)

Jan has some signs we could use to inform public of the wildflower schemes.

Kate Jones – described Bug life work and the [B-Lines - Buglife](#)

- We have some funds left in the budget this year that we would like to put towards wildflower habitat creation before the end of March 2022. If you have a site that is on the B-line and that you can commit to management for 10 years then we would be interested in helping kickstart the creation of that habitat – the standard process is that you would deliver the ground preparation work with our advice and support, we would provide the wildflower seed/plug plants and furnish you with a 10 year management plan. If you have any sites that fit the bill please do get in touch with me ASAP. N.B. We are open to funding community projects that are creating spaces that aren't necessarily meadows but are still good for pollinators and provide opportunities for local engagement, such as community gardens.
- I am building a project for next year and will be looking to put a funding bid in before Christmas – so again if you have any sites that are on the B-line then and you would like to include them in a project next year please do contact me. The focus area is pictured below, namely from Telford and then on the two arms running to Craven Arms and Stourport, this will likely be a cross border project with Herefordshire as we do have some interested parties down there.
- Finally, we're looking to complete the work at Well Meadows on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> November starting at 10am and working for two/three hours. Any help would be much appreciated, I can promise a cup of tea and some choccie biscuits. If you would like to come along drop me an email and let me know.

Discussed length men agreement and you can apply for £1500 to be match funded from Precept or alternative funds grant.

Discussed option of Stanmore straight (presume it is Worfield) suggested Kate talks to Stanmore country park group. [Friends of Stanmore Country Park \(Shropshire\) | Facebook](#)

Cllr Luke Neal was unable to attend but did ask that the below was discussed / noted

- The barrier to getting meadows created in green spaces and managing verges better is having the correct machinery to cut and collect grass. Barry Ince has indicated that BTC owning such machinery is not the best plan due to it being unused for most the year and requiring maintenance. I would like to explore the option of coming to an arrangement with Apley estate who may have the correct equipment. (see note above re contracting this out)
- Positive verge management might be expanded / enabled by taking up Shropshire Councils offer of the 'lengthsman' arrangement discussed on Monday.
- Funding to create meadows, and other biodiversity improvements (Japanese knotweed on the river bank) is potentially available through the Severn Trent Biodiversity Improvement Fund, if we could get broad support for a project between Shrop Council (the team we met on Monday), town Council and Apley with the support of BugLife then Shropshire Wildlife Trust could be the lead body to manage the funds. (funding to 2025).
- I have spoken to Barry Ince's no2, Jo, about creating management plans for the green spaces and she is very keen as there are no plans currently in place - I will start with Crown Meadow, this will give us a template to work on for other spaces.
- I have not ordered trees for the Crown Meadow but I will and community planting day is set for late Feb / March 2022.(gardening group keen to help with this)

Discussed volunteers working around Bridgnorth- Barry happy with process that Helen ensures H and S documentation is signed by all volunteers and copy sent to DLF.

Catherine Brown would like to set up a community garden area – Barry suggested a couple of areas – along side youth club and alongside the low town community Hall – Need to liaise with Low Town Community Hall Committee- Cllr Connie Baines is on this. Or near Hazeldine foundry plaque.

Barry suggested some help with eradicating Himalayan Balsam – not near riverbanks as that must be done by trained DLF.

Helen Beevers reminded people of the Queens trees initiative [The Queen's Green Canopy \(queensgreencanopy.org\)](#) Harry Thackeray on 07817791482 or [Tree.planting@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:Tree.planting@shropshire.gov.uk) or do we go direct to website and get tree for crown meadow [Free Tree Packs Application Form - Woodland Trust](#)

### **Actions**

Contact Tom re his audit for national trust (Luke do you have details)

Contact Apley to see if still want to be involved

Look at available grants

Jan to send further info as detailed above  
Progress lengthmen process  
Progress Severn Trent Biodiversity Improvement Fund  
Follow up on Queens jubilee trees

**Initial recommendations:** Council to receive notes from working group meeting

**Officer Comments:**

**Review by WG members:**

**Recommendations for Full Council:**

**Supporting Documents:**