

Bishops Lydeard and Cothelstone Parish Council
SANDHILL PARK WOOD WORKING GROUP

Second meeting, Wednesday 26 August, 6pm, Pear Tree Cottage, Bishops Lydeard.

PRESENT - Cllr Charity Hunt, Cllr Jane Warmington, Ian Myers, Chris Mckie, Neil Harper, Mark Welch (welcomed to the working group (WG) from Sandhill Park).

APOLOGIES - Cllr Patricia Bainbridge.

AIMS: Amenity - including improved access, increasing area of open water and enhancing wildlife.

Parish Council (PC) agreed at July meeting that the working group (WG) would get a minimum of three quotes from local contractors to clear the partially blocked path (over the arches, between solar farm and South Drive). ACTION WG Chris and Neil to contact contractors, show them what needs doing and report back.

WG recommend to PC to include removal of large limb overhanging iron railings and South Drive in this work (this tree dropped a similar limb last year).

To progress further, WG recommend to PC that an **environmental (wildlife) survey** and a separate **water supply survey** are undertaken.

Ideas about who to approach about these surveys were discussed. An initial approach to Somerset Wildlife Trust about an environmental survey (as a training exercise perhaps) ACTION WG Chris; and look into who might be qualified to undertake a water supply survey ACTION WG Ian (suggestion to include Theo Pike: tpike@wildtrout.org who completed the recent survey of the back stream in the village).

A plan of recommended works can then be drawn up from information garnered through these two surveys.

Discussion of desirable works included (i) **a circular walk within the wood** (probably around the firm edge of the original pond) from the well-walked whisky trail. (ii) **more open water in the pond** (addressing partially blocked water flows in and existing silt trap; some self-seeded sapling removal along the wet areas; silt removal along the edge to reduce further scrub/sapling encroachment into the pond); (iii) promotion of **new sapling growth on drier ground** (using temporary enclosures to take advantage of any natural regeneration of tree saplings to eventually replace the mature trees). (iv) **management of trees** (the wood has a woodland management plan agreed with the Forestry Authority by the previous owners; the WG needs to familiarise itself with this as responsibility for this passes (with

the wood) to the PC as new owner. (v) **public safety** (putting up a sign(s) at the entry points (currently two) making visitors aware of uneven ground, fallen branches, marshy areas and deep water throughout the wood; life-ring near to open water when any work starts (and access to water would therefore be easier).

Other comments and questions which came out of discussions were (1) whether the arches were self supporting, ornamental and came within the curtilage of the listed mansion (it was noted the grounds to the mansion were not registered, the garden equivalent of listing) ACTION WG Jane; (2) checking the land registry to be aware of adjacent land ownerships ACTION WG ?; (3) how and who to unblock culvert under South Drive which contributes to localised flooding ACTION WG Mark.

Thanks to Ian for his two papers on Sandhill Park Wood, Neil for the link to Lidar surveys and Charity for hosting again. Notes taken by Jane Warmington.

The meeting ended at 7.40pm.