

An New Elm Tree in Carlton

An English elm tree (*Ulmus minor var vulgaris* 'Upper Swell' = *U. procera*) has been planted just inside the Carlton Parish boundary at the side of the footpath between Saint Andrew's Church and Barton in the Beans, by kind permission of the landowner. Our hope is that this tree will establish and make a significant contribution to the local landscape as it grows and matures.

The planted sapling elm was micro-propagated from a tree in the Gloucestershire village of Upper Swell which had not been affected by Dutch Elm Disease. The pot-grown sapling was kindly donated to Carlton Parish Council by Goscote Nurseries, Syston Road, Cossington. This nursery carries a very good stock of ornamental and fruit trees and is well worth a visit.

English Elms are impressively rough and rangy trees, living for 250-300 years and growing 30m tall with a girth up to 7m. They were a major feature of the local landscape until almost all were killed by Dutch Elm Disease which took hold in the late 1960's. There

were once many elm trees in Carlton village, and at one time Main Street was informally known as Butt Lane because of the many stumps of felled elm trees along it. This was before infill development had taken place between Hall Terrace and Barton Road.

Carlton Parish Council tried to save a splendid elm tree at the corner of Main Street and Bosworth Road by pumping a fungicide into the trunk, but the treatment did not work. I remember the late Tony Cooper (PC Chairman 1968-91) telling me that they pumped until liquid squirted out of the ends of the branches, but to no avail.

Elm trees have always been closely associated with human settlements, and 'elm' is one of the commonest components of Anglo-Saxon place names. English Elm trees rarely produce viable seed in our current cool climate, and usually grow up from suckers. Elm is still very common in local hedgerows, but the plants are susceptible to Dutch Elm Disease and if allowed to grow up they become infected and die back when the trunks achieve a diameter of about 150mm. A longer version of this article was published in the April Issue of Aspect.



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Source: Carlton News, May 2021, p.4.