

Carlton Gardening Group

Annual Report 2023-24

The AGM of the Gardening Group was held on 30th March 2023. The Executive Committee comprises Mick Vann (Chairman), Graham Jackson, Bill Sharp, Jeanette Knappett, Ian Sarson (ex officio Northfields Liaison Group) and Chris Peat (Secretary).

The Group has 22 members who provided a total of 205.75 man-hours of volunteer labour in the Carlton Diamond Jubilee Orchard (29.50 hours), Churchyard and Cemetery (108.5 hours), Little Lane (21.50 hrs) and other places (46.25 hours) during 2022. Enid Morgan and Tania & Bill Sharp had kindly provided refreshments for working parties.

The activities in other places included cleaning and sealing the stone floor in the Community Hub, planting spring bulbs around the village, and putting up and taking down Christmas lights in the churchyard. The work carried out in the church and churchyard was reported to the AGM of the PCC.

Diamond Jubilee Orchard

The revised mowing regime had worked well, with fewer clippings requiring removal and disposal. The meadow areas had been cut at the end of June, and the dry hay had

been burned on site in July.

The specimen holly at the end of the Barton Rd hedge had been repeatedly cut off by the verge mower and was dead.

The grass strip between the hedge and the path had been mowed and this had improved the appearance of the area. Additional clumps of spring bulbs had been planted in this area, and were making a good show.

Bird spikes had been installed on the swing cross bar to prevent bird droppings fouling the swing seats.

Additional playbark had been laid in the TPA.

The seats and picnic table had been treated with preservative.

Horsetails in the hedge bottom had been bruised and then sprayed with Roundup, and this appeared to have killed them. The operation would need to be repeated at other problem sites.

The northern hedge had been laid in February 2022, and was trimmed by volunteers in February 2023. In future this hedge would be cut annually by the contractor.

The box hedge had been trimmed for the first time in February 2023 and was shaping up well.

Surplus soil from work in the churchyard had been used to level up a small area next to the Barton Road hedge.

Two sessile oak (*Q.petraea*) whips had been planted – one next to the northern hedge, one next to the Barton Road hedge.

Churchyard and Cemetery

The roots of the dead flowering cherry and rowan trees near the church gate had been removed.

The banks next to the church path had been graded and turfed.

Weep holes had been drilled in the western part of the churchyard retaining wall, and pea gravel and a field drain pipe had been laid behind the wall to introduce drainage and prevent soil heave.

Three trees - *Malus* 'Red Jewel', Japanese rowan (*Sorbus commixta*) 'Embley' and a Chinese hornbeam (*Carpinus omeiensis*), had been planted in the churchyard to mark the Platinum Jubilee. An article about the planting ceremony is available from the PC website.

The heap of spoil next to the new path in the Cemetery had been levelled and seeded. A new area of grave spaces had been laid out.

Little Lane

The wild cherry trees overhanging the neighbouring property had been cut back in May, and other low trees and shrubs cut back from overhanging the path.

Roadside hedges

The two oak trees and one promoted holly on the east side of Barton Road were healthy and growing on well.

One oak whip (*Q.petraea*) had been planted in the corner of the field next to footpath S47 at Harry's Grave by kind permission of the landowner.

Two yellow willow cuttings had been planted on the eastern side of Congerstone Road near the junction with Congerstone Lane (replacing two dead alder trees).

Carlton Green

There had been no work on Carlton Greens.

Other sites

A disused concrete water trough had been installed on the grass verge at the Main Street/Barton Road junction, planted up, and maintained.

The disease-resistant elm tree (*Ulmus minor* var *vulgaris* 'Upper Swell') next to footpath S69 had been kept watered during the drought and had survived, although it had not made any new growth. This tree will need monitoring for another year.

The Golden Jubilee Post had been treated with tung oil.

Mick Vann