

Agenda item 5

For Information: General update on FTC's wider work in the town, including Trees & Glyphosate

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Trees

Planting

We're currently ordering trees for planting in January and February:

- An avenue of red-twiggged Limes for the Showfield - *Tilia platyphyllos Rubra*
- Turkish Hazel trees - *Corylus colurna* - also for the Showfield
- Some 'candyfloss trees' *Cercidiphyllum japonicum*
- And a Pin Oak - *Quercus palustris*

We're also going to discuss tree planting along Stonebridge Drive & Brunel Way with Mendip District Council (MDC); with Somerset County Council (SCC); and with residents with front or side gardens along this road.

This is with a view to planting new trees in Frome's residential streets and areas, with FTC meeting the initial purchase cost of all the trees.

With agreements in place, this would see trees planted in spring 2017. And if the idea works well here then we'll look at more planting across the town in future years.

Tree Surgery

- The Council's Town Rangers have already completed works that have opened-up the riverbank along Henley Way – to overwhelmingly positive comments.
- These works are set to be complemented by specialist works across the FTC estate in January and February, including additional works at Henley Way; and works at the Old Showfield; Chateau-Gontier Walk; Weylands; and the path between Welshmill and Weylands.
- We will also be applying for permission for tree works around the Town Hall, including a tiered pollard for the London Plane in the corner of the car park; and coppicing and clearance works along the western boundary (shared with the church)

Other

We're developing three projects to mark and celebrate the felled Copper Beech from St John's churchyard:

- Cutting and preparing a cross-section of the trunk to be stored in the museum
- Moving the main section of the trunk to one of the town's riverbank green spaces
- A plaque to be attached to or near the remaining trunk

These projects are all expected to come to fruition in the new year – with moving the main section of the trunk particularly dependent on weather and ground conditions.

Glyphosate

Frome Town Council took the precautionary measure of banning the use of glyphosate-based products on its land.

The reaction to this decision was almost exclusively found on social media – with everyone who commented or posted in favour of the decision.

Other organisations continue to use glyphosate-based products, however, and FTC continues to receive queries and comments when weed-spraying works are undertaken in the town.

MDC's position continues to be that it will continue to use and permit the use of chemical weed-killers *"as long as it remains legal and there is a license permitting their use"*

Additionally, though, MDC has said that it would be willing to work with FTC on *"alternative arrangements"* but noting that *"MDC will not bear any additional costs that are associated with those alternatives."*

As such, FTC's next step is a detailed and costed review of the alternatives, including their suitability for the hills and streets of Frome. With this review to be presented to MDC and id verde (MDC's grounds maintenance contractors) for comments and questions in the hope that MDC might also choose not to use glyphosate-based products in the town.

Rodden Bridge

In conjunction with Network Rail, FTC contributed to pigeon-proofing works at Rodden Bridge – focused on removing places for pigeons to shelter over the footpath.

This work has recently been completed and is set to be monitored by Staff over winter and into spring.

Drains

In conjunction with SCC, FTC has contributed to additional gully works for the following roads:

- Christchurch Street West & Badcox
- Catherine Street
- Palmer Street
- Cork Street
- King Street
- Bath Street
- Market Place

All the drains and gullies in these roads will be thoroughly cleaned – either mechanically or by hand. This work is set to start in early December.