

A report from the Tree Wardens

1. What is a tree warden?

The term “tree warden” makes us sound highly organised, and suggests that we carry some sort of authority. In reality, we are a group of Cuddington residents who have an interest in the trees around the village and have agreed between us to do what we can to promote awareness of the benefits that trees bring to village life and of their importance to the environment in which we live. The idea of local tree wardens has been promoted by the Tree Council and you can read more at <https://treecouncil.org.uk/tree-wardens/>.

2. Who are the tree wardens?

We are a small group: Paul Ridout, John Allen, Andy Devey, Jessica Ecott and Doug Kennedy.

We are not the only people in Cuddington who are involved in this sort of thing: a number of residents have done their own thing, planting trees in gardens and in fields around the village, the Parish Council has organised the planting of a field maple on the playing fields to mark the Queen’s platinum jubilee and has also coordinated some maintenance work on trees around the village, and of course we have seen volunteers turn out in force to plant saplings around the margins of the playing fields.

3. What do the tree wardens do?

With a lot of other calls on our time, we have not met as frequently as had been envisaged when we first gathered, and so a lot of what has happened has been on an individual basis:

- You may have seen things we have written in the Village Voice from time to time.
- We have been involved in discussing tree planting and maintenance with the Parish Council (particularly looking at trees on the Aylesbury Road edge of the playing fields) and with Rectory Homes (about planting around their development at Swan Hill Lane).
- We have monitored applications for permission for tree works on the Bucks Council’s planning portal (permission being needed for major tree works within the conservation area)
- We have spoken to residents of other villages in Buckinghamshire to share experiences of trying to promote the planting of trees in verges.
- We continue to experiment from time to time with mapping the village’s trees.
- We have phoned/texted/emailed each other when we hear the sound of a chainsaw echoing round the village.

Over the last year our main focus has been caring for two new mature trees that arrived in the village just over a year ago: a walnut on the corner of Bernard Close and a hornbeam on the Upper Green, both of which made it through their critical first year and are now producing fresh buds. The tree wardens, helped by other volunteers, watered these trees through their first growing season and we shall continue to keep an eye on them.

4. What next?

I still like the idea of organising a group walk to visit a selection of the trees that help to make our village environment so special; perhaps as the days get longer and the weather improves, we will see this happen.

If you have any ideas about how we can better promote awareness of trees in Cuddington, we would love to hear from you.

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