

Chidham & Hambrook Parish Council

Terms of Reference for Parish Tree Wardens, Tree Warden Councillor and Parish Council

A General

1. Parish Tree Wardens are volunteers appointed by the Parish Council to assist the Council in improving and increasing the provision of trees and hedges in the Parish. The Tree Wardens, not necessarily Parish Councillors, work to the terms of reference delineated below.
2. There is a national feeling that we should plant more trees, hedges and woodland and protect those we have already. This would improve air quality, mitigate climate change, reduce flooding and erosion, support wildlife – and visually enhance the environment.
3. The Parish Tree Wardens are generally responsible to the Parish Council. Specifically, the Tree Wardens are responsible to a Parish Councillor (Tree Warden Councillor) elected for this purpose by the Parish Council or, in his/her absence, the Chair of the Parish Council.
4. Parish Tree Wardens must work in accordance with the Parish Council's *Volunteering Policy* (see Parish Council page on Village Website).
5. Tree Wardens, working in concert, discuss possible locations for new trees and/or hedges first with the landowner and then, with the agreement of the landowner, bring preliminary proposals to the PC for consideration.
6. Discussions with landowners necessitate a sensitive approach and it being made clear by the Tree Wardens that they have no power to agree actions on their own account but must first obtain the agreement of the Parish Council.
7. In addition to proposing new plantings, Tree Wardens maintain a watching brief on the trees and hedges in our Parish on behalf of the Parish Council including advising on TPOs.
8. Proposals for new hedgerows or improvements to existing hedgerows must take account of the habitat needs of wildlife.
9. Wherever possible, native plants will be used in planting schemes.
10. Any tree or hedge work undertaken by Tree Wardens must have the prior approval of the Parish Council.
11. Prior to any tree or hedge work being undertaken by Tree Wardens, the landowner must have confirmed in writing that no responsibility for maintenance will lie with the Parish Council.
12. Tree Wardens and the Tree Warden Councillor will investigate the possibility of obtaining grants for each scheme.
13. Trees and/or hedges may be planted by the Tree Wardens, themselves, or planted by others, as previously approved by the Parish Council.
14. The Parish Council budgets annually to meet the anticipated cost of funding the provision of additional trees and hedges in the Parish.

15. An important criterion used by the Parish Council when deciding on the funding of planting is that the trees and/or hedgerows must be visible from a public right of way.

B Procedure

1. Annually, the Parish Council will invite suggestions from residents, landowners, Parish Councillors and Tree Wardens for the planting of new hedgerows and/or trees.
2. Planting suggestions at other times of the year will also be welcomed.
3. At the appropriate time in the Parish Council budgeting cycle, all the suggestions received will be collated by the Tree Warden Councillor and perused jointly by the Tree Wardens and Tree Warden Councillor.
4. The Tree Warden Councillor will present to a full Parish Council meeting a short list of projects that might be achieved in the following year, with ball-park costings. Projects will be defined in terms of what the Parish wishes to achieve on behalf of the Parish.
5. The Tree Wardens and Tree Warden Councillor will jointly decide how best to achieve the Parish Council's desired outcomes and what each project would cost. In this process, account will be taken of the changing impact over time of trees and/or hedges as they grow, on both near and far neighbours.
6. A fully-costed Plan will be produced by the Tree Wardens and Tree Warden Councillor and presented by the latter to a full Parish Council meeting.
7. The draft Plan will be advertised in the Parish and residents will be invited to comment, if they so wish.
8. The full Parish Council will consider the draft Plan in the preparation of the Annual Budget and agree an Action Plan.
9. The Tree Wardens and Tree Warden Councillor will implement the Action Plan, with progress reports being presented to the full Parish Council as appropriate.
10. The Tree Warden Councillor will present annually to the full Parish Council a summary Report, to include suggestions, if any, for modifications to the Terms of Reference.

Agreed by the Parish Council on 6 June 2019