

Planning & Environment Committee

Grass Cutting & Re-wilding

1. Tree Planting

- 1.1 West Swindon Parish Council has received a recent communication from Caroline Hunt, Projects Officer for Great Western Community Forest, Swindon Borough Council.

2. Proposal

I'd like to make you aware of new and exciting opportunities for the Great Western Community Forest programme in and around Swindon .

You may already know that the Government has pledged to invest £640m in woodland creation and peatland restoration, supporting a huge upscale in tree planting nationally over the next five years.

England's Community Forests have been tasked with putting together a 6,000+ hectare programme of new woodland creation schemes that could be delivered by 2024. This is a substantial opportunity to not only support carbon reduction in Swindon, but also reap the multiple benefits of trees.

Further information can be found here: <https://englandscommunityforests.org.uk/impact>

We would like to talk to West Swindon Parish Council with a view to identifying potential woodland creation sites, and are in the process of looking at sites for the second year of the programme.

Caroline Hunt
Projects Officer
Great Western Community Forest
PLACEmaking Team

3. Response to date

- 3.1 The Great Western Community Forest team are aware of the Parish Council's earlier work to identify spaces that would benefit from tree planting. These included:
- Toothill former play area sites (mini orchard planting)
 - Shaw Forest park
 - Boosting hedgerows Hay Lane, Cartwright Drive, Shaw Linear Park, Toothill park perimeter
 - Eastleaze field

- Tewkesbury Way Toothill – grassed area mini orchard planting
- 3.2 The Community Forest tree planting could assist the Parish Council with its aspirations to improve the backland and former play area sites. Future meetings should determine site suitability and permissions required from the landowner (Swindon Borough Council).

4. **Recommendations**

- 4.1 For the Committee to note the opportunity to work with the Great Western Community Forest and to agree the Backlands Working Party to take a lead on any detailed discussions required.

Paula Harrison, Parish Manager