

From: Mike Francis (personal) mbpfrancis@ltsbroadband.co.uk

Subject: Local Green Infrastructure Projects

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To: Laura Burley laura_blackstock@hotmail.co.uk, Jill Cheney jill_way@yahoo.co.uk, Robert Willoughby Boweswilloughby@aol.com, Paul Brooks bronzcaster@yahoo.co.uk, Roseanne McConachie rmmccconachie@googlemail.com, Ali Cargill alicargill@yahoo.com, Judith Roberts judith@judithandadrian.me.uk



Following the request at last night's Parish Council meeting regarding Local Green Infrastructure Projects and the Landscaping Institute, I repeat the URL which our Clerk circulated by e-mail on 3rd. August 2016 -

http://www.landscapainstitute.org/PDF/Contribute/LocalGreenInfrastructurewebversion_002.pdf .

I would welcome colleagues thoughts on whether the scheme that the Institute outline would be appropriate as a Community Project for Given Dale.

My initial concern is the area of wood behind the Church, which is famous for hosting Spring Snowdrops and Winter Aconites amongst later Summer flowers such as the rare and ancient White Comfrey. Over the past 4 years, the numbers of these plants have noticeably reduced, and this has been commented on to the Church Wardens by visitors. A contributory reason is thought to be that those entitled to use the Public Bridleway, which skirts the wood along a broad track, are often riding down the slope into the wood, destroying the plant life and the undergrowth habitat, as well as damaging exposed tree roots.

A solution may be to extend the existing fencing to the southern side of the track up to the track bend, and then angling the track back to the gate to the churchyard. With the positioning of 2 pedestrian gates into the new fencing at either end of the existing Public Footpath, Rights of Pedestrian Access would be maintained through the wood. Also, the line of the new fencing would allow cattle and sheep to use the Bridleway to gain access into the field of Church Dale and the pond field at the head of Given Dale.

Improvement work could also be done to the Bridleway after the bend, which has become very rutted and collects a lot of water.

Other projects within the Dale could be:-

- Restoration work to the Viking Carp Ponds and other wildlife habitats, to bring them back to the standards achieved since the JSR Farms EU Funded projects since 1974.
- Work to the Victorian Sheep Dip and Watercress beds.
- Upgrading to the lands surrounding the Scout Hut.
- Improvements to the woods on the slopes of the Dale if required, one of which I think has SSSI status.
- Archaeological investigations of the Roman Mill site at the junction with Whitekeld Beck.

Through JSR Farms, the area is already in the Higher Stewardship Scheme. All the land is owned by The Earl of Halifax Estates; I have spoken to David Lord who, in principle, thinks the Estate would give their approval and support.

If you think this is something the Parish Council shouldn't get involved in, don't worry!!

Best wishes,

Mike.