



West Mersea
Town Council

Trees – Environmental Benefits

Everyone will be aware of the push to plant more trees as highlighted many times during the recent COP26 discussions in Glasgow. Whilst tree planting in itself cannot arrest climate change, it does enable partial mitigation of the levels of Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) in the atmosphere.

We must never forget how vital trees are to the planet's ecosystem. They have many attributes including: binding soil, keeping soil healthy (nutrient rich), reducing soil erosion and the prevention of flooding.

Undertaking a tree planting programme will enable us to increase nurture for nature, combat climate change, recover biodiversity and place ourselves and the planet on the road to recovery. Today we are enjoying the results of our ancestors in their management of our natural resources and the time has now come for us to continue that work for the enjoyment (and very existence) of our grandchildren and all the generations to come.

As it is so important to consider seasonal timing and matching the right species to an appropriate location. West Mersea Town Council is delighted to embrace an initiative that Colchester Borough Council has embarked upon, which is closely aligned to the Town Council's policy of managing and expanding its existing tree stock.

The Colchester Woodland Project is an ambitious project to plant a total of 200,000 native trees over a 3 year period across the Borough that will offset 32,000 tonnes of carbon in the lifetime of the trees. CBC's Woodland and Open Spaces Project officer, Mr Nick Day, (Mersea resident, no less!) has identified suitable locations on West Mersea including the Glebe, Willoughby Car Park, West Mersea Park and the two cemeteries off Firs Road. The intention is to undertake a 2 year planting programme commencing this November with 1000 whips at the Glebe; this followed next year at the other locations.

If you would like to assist, please make contact with Carol at our office or with Councillor Bob Jenkins. Telephone: Council Office 01206 382128 or email: cllr.jenkins@westmersea.org

A recent detailed survey of the Town Council's tree stock underscores the need to maintain a tree planting programme. Of the 360 trees surveyed most were found to be in a good condition but a small number are either dead or in extremely poor or dangerous condition – these will need to be felled. Where practical they will be replaced next year with semi-mature trees. There are number of trees that need some remedial work to preserve their life span; this work will be carried out in stages, as recommended by our consultants. In addition some 25 trees are in decline and will be monitored over the next 12 months – it is hoped they will recover.

Colchester Borough Council will, in addition to the Town Council's work, be planting a number of trees in the Avenues and along the Esplanade.

Hopefully all residents will agree that the tree planting programme will enhance the look of West Mersea and be beneficial to future generations. We ask everyone to respect these trees and to think of how we, ourselves, have enjoyed the fruits of the insight of previous generations who have given us the benefits of today's trees.