



**ADOPTED AT THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING ON 22<sup>ND</sup> AUGUST 2022 (Minute 95/22/23)**

## **ACTION FOR TREES IN CHARLTON KINGS**

Carbon Neutral Cheltenham's ambition for 2030 contains a commitment to plant one million trees, and while locking-up carbon is a critical role, trees are a key element of any wider climate change strategy. When considering tree planting, although "The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago; the second-best time is now", the most important thing is to identify the role we want each tree to play – 'Right tree, right place, right purpose'.

### **Greening our built environment**

Within the 25% of Charlton Kings parish that is built-up, space is at a premium and thus only a relatively small number of new trees can be planted. They will provide fewer ecosystem services than extensive areas of woodland but do contribute significantly to human health and wellbeing.

Research shows that:

- Trees increase a perception of beauty and promote feelings of well-being
- The shade provided by trees can significantly reduce our 'physiologically equivalent temperature' - how warm we feel our surroundings to be.
- Gaseous air pollution is reduced – trees remove carbon, sulphur, and nitrogen dioxides.
- Some plantings can reduce noise pollution.

### **Improving the ecosystem services provided by highway verge trees**

Gloucestershire Highways is responsible for the planting and management of trees on highway verges. There are some 6,500 highway verge trees in Cheltenham, with perhaps 500 in Charlton Kings, so GH has a significant responsibility to address the reasons for planting particular species and varieties of tree. The Parish Council has started to recruit volunteers to a Tree Guardian scheme, that will monitor the health of all street trees and actively support their welfare. It seems as though over the years, larger highway verge trees in Charlton Kings have either been removed (as along Copt Elm Road) or replaced with small-growing ornamental species such as flowering cherry, wild service tree, hawthorn, crab apple.

### **Goals:**

- Develop the concept of 'Tree Guardians' for every street, who can monitor the condition of each tree, make recommendations, and look after 'their' trees.
- Engage with GH Trees Officer to discuss the County Council's current strategy and any modifications we may suggest to new or replacement plantings and maintenance schedules.

### **More trees in our public green spaces**

Charlton Kings is favoured by many green spaces, most are public recreation fields – The Beeches, Grange Field, QEII field, Old Pats' playing fields, and Newcourt Green also has the distinction of being recognised as a Public Green Space in the Cheltenham Plan. However, the total area of these public green spaces is not large, and they have to accommodate many, often conflicting objectives – recreation, games, trees,

wildflower planting. Some have a wide range of tree species, to which the Parish Council is adding an annual increment of new, unusual, and disease-free specimen trees.

**Goal:**

- .Cooperate with the Borough Council’s Senior Trees Officer in sustainable tree planting for CK public green space

**Making the most of our private gardens**

If 25% of the parish is ‘developed’, then at least half of that area must be taken up by gardens, small and large. Mature garden trees can make for uncomfortable neighbours with houses, but they add immensely to the character of our urban environment, as well as providing a range of ecosystem services.

**Goal:**

- We will engage residents to promote the retention and planting of trees in private gardens, compatible with the safety of houses and people, and the enjoyment of views and light.

**Maintaining CK Trees**

CKPC has an interest in the trees in the following areas within Charlton Kings: Grange Field, St Mary’s Churchyard, the Allotments and Ravensgate Common. They are very different environments each with its own requirements, and they need CKPC to support their maintenance including removing those that are diseased e.g. by ash dieback, and to consider where there may be suitable opportunities for planting/replanting.

**Goal:**

- We will work with the community, partners, and CBC to maintain trees and the surrounding environment to engender healthy growth and provide benefits for local residents.

CKPC  
CK Futures  
August 2022



**CK futures is Charlton Kings Parish Council’s response to Cheltenham Borough Council’s declaration of Climate Emergency in 2019 and its commitment to a carbon neutral Cheltenham by 2030.**