



## Report to Witham Town Council of the Group's activities – 2017/18

Another busy year of activity by the Witham Tree Group marred unfortunately by further acts of vandalism. One of the first trees planted by the Group, a Pin oak which we dedicated to Jane Coleman former Deputy Town Clerk who had helped us so much in the early stages, was one of the victims, but with a bit of TLC and a splint applied expertly by Dr Teverson, the tree appears to be pulling through and is budding up nicely.

Long warm dry periods are no friends of newly planted trees and our bowser was in regular use throughout the summer. To the list of trees planted by the Group we added, for watering, trees planted by Kings Nursery on the Humber Road Estate under a scheme funded by money secured by local residents under the Tesco Big Bag Drop scheme

Our stock of trees for this year was once again obtained at good prices from Barcham of Ely thanks to the Town Council for making available to us its tree budget. Twenty two quality good sized trees were purchased which we planted, in the main, in open areas. The choice of areas was discussed with and approved by Shaun Taylor, Landscape Officer at Braintree District Council.

In **Honeysuckle Way** where the road dissects greensward running south toward Bramble Road we planted five Limes, two on the northern side of the road and three on the southern side creating a short avenue effect. In **Bramble Road** either side of the bus stop we planted three Oaks and a Field Maple. In the open area behind the bus stop we planted a London Plane and a Hornbeam.

Alongside the footpath running **between Town End Field and Brook Walk** a row of Alders was planted three years ago. We were able to add to this row a further six Alders. In the centre of the greensward towards Brook Walk we planted a Crimson Maple an Elm and a Red Oak.

All the above trees were planted with the support once again of volunteers from Cofunds.

A single London Plane was planted to fill a gap in the row of trees along the western boundary of **Humber Road**, and, at the top of **The Avenue**, by its junction with Avenue Road, we planted a single Lime to replace a very elderly Lime that had fallen victim to last winter's storm.

The Willow and Alder whips planted last year at the **northern end of the River Walk** have established well. This encouraged us to plant further Alder and Willow whips in this wet location. In addition, two young Black Poplar whips were planted to extend a line of poplars we planted last year.

An elderly resident living in **Old Magistrate's Court** contacted BDC to seek permission to have a tree, inexpertly planted by the developers, removed from his garden, where it had been planted too close to another tree, to a neighbouring garden where a tree planted by the developers above a slab of concrete had, not surprisingly, failed to establish. Shaun Taylor BDC approved the transfer and sought the help of the Tree Group. The Group happily obliged. The resident in whose garden the healthy tree now sits is an invalid and another neighbour, a retired member of BDC's grounds maintenance team, has very kindly offered to water the tree.

This was the Tree Group's third active season and we are learning all the time. One lesson learned is to plan early. We are currently looking at suitable sites for next year's plantings.

Attached to this report is a record of the trees planted to date by or in conjunction with the Tree Group. It is our intention to maintain this as a permanent record for future reference.

The Tree Group is also in the process of setting up a website through which we hope to spread the word of our activities and grow our membership.

Allan Waight  
Deputy Chairman  
Witham Tree Group

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