



PRESS RELEASE

Liss Parish Council joins new partnership to create a Community Orchard

Liss Parish Council will be busy planting a new community orchard with local volunteers in a grass area along Mill Road, in the heart of the village. The planting of 20 fruit trees will take place on 14th February and will include a range of half standard apple (early and late season eaters and cookers), cherry, damson, mulberry and plum fruit trees. Wildflowers will also be later planted beneath the trees, further enhancing the site for biodiversity.

The Parish Council has been working with Hampshire County Council as part of ambitious plans to plant one million more trees in Hampshire by 2050. The activity forms part of the County Council's newly created Hampshire Forest Partnership which aims to work with people and organisations to plant more trees to enhance and protect the environment.

The Community Orchard forms an integral part of the Mill Road Community Garden which is being created to provide residents of all ages with an accessible green space to come together to play, socialise, relax and enjoy nature.

It is a key objective of the Liss Neighbourhood Plan to enhance the green and open character of the village, contributing to the quality of the built environment, whilst enhancing community life and protecting landscape and wildlife. Cllr Tordoff and Cllr Olley, are the environmental and sustainability champions for the parish council, leading on the green space projects across the Liss parish.

Cllr Tordoff from Liss PC said, "We recognise that Mill Road and other sites within the village could contribute to nature recovery across Hampshire through a change in land use or management. This project will help us to deliver on this as well as contributing to climate mitigation through the carbon sequestered by the trees as they grow".

The Mill Road Community Orchard project has also been developed in partnership with The Tree Council, who have joined the Hampshire Forest Partnership to deliver tree planting projects across Hampshire as part of Hampshire County Council's new tree strategy.

"This project is much more than just an orchard" Jon Stokes, Director of The Tree Council explains. "Not only do we hope to provide a resource for the local community, the trees will provide a whole ecosystem; fruit for people, birds and insects, a new wildflower meadow to encourage pollinators, shelter for wildlife and a place for people, especially children, to come and connect with nature and enjoy each other's company."

Cllr Russell Oppenheimer, Hampshire County Council's Executive Member for Culture, Countryside and Communities will be attending to help on the day and explains, "Working with local communities and parish councils to develop tree planting plans is a primary aim of Hampshire County Council's Hampshire Forest Partnership and we are pleased to be joining forces with Liss Parish Council and The Tree Council. In order to deliver on nature recovery and climate change, we recognise the need to develop integrated approaches, partnerships and strategic vision to address these challenges holistically. The Hampshire Forest Partnership will be integral in moving this forward for the county and we invite others to join us and become part of our growing partnership. We cannot do this alone."

For further information on the Hampshire Forest Partnership, visit the website [Hampshire Forest Partnership | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk/hampshire-forest-partnership) or email treeplanting@hants.gov.uk

Cllr Olley of Liss PC says "We realise that working together with other organisations is a powerful way to make change and thank the support of the Hampshire Forest Partnership and The Tree Council in developing this project. We have also received fantastic support from volunteers, community groups, scouts and local business including Chris Gray, Arborist & Tree Surgeon of C Gray Ltd. We would also like to acknowledge the help we have received from Rake Village Community Orchard and the engagement from district councillors".

Volunteers from the local community are invited to come along on Tuesday 14th February at 1030 to help plant the trees. LPC is also looking for volunteers to help water, weed and care for the trees for the first few years until they are well established. Please enquire, or register your interest by emailing projectofficer@lissparishcouncil.gov.uk