

Consultation on Establishing a “Hay Meadow” at the Community Orchard

The Baslow & Bubnell Parish Council wishes to consult further on the possible establishment of a “hay meadow” at the Community Jubilee Orchard.

The Orchard Group's initial experiment with establishing a meadow this summer was adversely affected by the extremes of weather during the year. An earlier consultation with the public attracted mixed responses to the experiment: two-thirds of the respondents were in favour but those against tended to be the residents closest to the orchard site. Further development would be more carefully planned and managed, and reflect consultation feedback.

Responding to these comments, the Orchard Group have submitted a further, more detailed proposal for a hay meadow of significantly smaller area than was attempted this year. They feel that establishing wild flowers will have a positive impact on the local ecology and the environment. It would support another important local initiative - the “Pollinating the Peak” programme run by the Bumblebee Conservation Trust, in partnership with the National Trust, Derbyshire Wildlife Trust, Chatsworth and others.

The Parish Council is sympathetic to the Orchard Group's case but must also reflect the views of the wider local population and especially those residents near to the orchard. Hence, they wish to adopt the following position, subject to this further consultation:

1. That the Parish Council supports the principle of establishing a “hay meadow” in view of the environmental and ecological benefits.
2. That the area to be developed is reduced even further to that initially proposed by the Orchard Group.
3. That the position is reviewed after a period of time sufficient to judge the outcome (2-3 years during which the vigour of the grass should be suppressed and flowers should become established).
4. That in this period the Council regularly inspect the area and takes action if necessary - either to abandon the project or allow its further development.

The Council is interested in your views.

The other side of this leaflet includes a summary of the proposed development, including a map. More detailed information can be found on the Orchard Group's website at:

www.baslow-orchard.org/hay-meadow/

Please send your comments to the Clerk to the Council, Sarah Porter, at clerk.baslow.bubnell@gmail.com

Summary of the Proposal:

Some areas of grass around the trees will be managed in the manner of a “hay meadow”. The grass will be left to grow during the spring and summer, then mown and the hay removed. Active measures will be taken to introduce flowers and reduce the vigour of the grass. Paths will be mown around the edges and through the meadow area.

Map:

The image below is a map of the proposed development.

- ◆ The white lines are the borders of the orchard, bounded by the hedges and footpath.
- ◆ The four orange dots on the perimeter show the position of gates from neighbouring properties.
- ◆ The yellow-bordered areas on the top edge and in the bottom left corner are the proposed meadow areas.
- ◆ The blue lines show the position of paths that will be mown from the gates, through the meadow area, and between the meadow area and the hedges.
- ◆ The large area in the middle is the existing closely mown area, which will be maintained unchanged.
- ◆ The red-bordered area in the bottom right hand corner has not been agreed with the Parish Council as part of the proposed meadow. It could possibly be added, either in the initial scheme, or at a later time if the meadow is considered a success. We would like to know whether including or excluding this area changes your opinion on the project.

