

Results of Wildlife Garden Consultation

Consultation Date	January 19 th – 31 st , 2023
Consultation method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online form – shared on the Parish Council Facebook page and the 2 local Facebook Pages and a press release on Fernwood Parish Council website. • Hand delivered letter to residents backing on to the area where the wildlife garden is planned.
Number of Responses	Total 24 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 emails from residents backing on to the area. • 21 responses via the online form. • 1 email from resident not backing on to the area.
Results compiled by	Marion Fox Goddard
Parish Council meeting when the Council will decide how to proceed	February 20 th , 2023

Introduction

Fernwood Parish Council bought the woodland behind Fernwood Day Nursery in May 2022. In July 2022, the Council held an open meeting for anyone wanting to get involved with the woodland. The idea of improving the area behind Marron Court was discussed and thought to be a good idea.

A designer was commissioned to produce plans for delivering a wildlife garden in the area. The Council considered the plans at the Parish Council meeting in January and agreed to conduct a consultation on them.

With the aim to plant hedges/trees for the garden before Spring 2023, the Council need consider the responses to consultation and decide how to proceed at the February Parish Council meeting.

Principles and Aims

The design for a wildlife garden was produced based on following broad principles and aims:

- Re-modelling of the site profile to create areas of higher ground that will create new habitat and enable all spoil from site to be used on-site rather than disposed of externally.
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- A good balance of tree planting in line with recommendations for more wildlife-friendly species such as rowan, cherries, hazel, and sloe.
- Creation of a better understory planting of shrubs to give areas suitable for bird nesting sites which will also provide food and shelter for most of the year.

- Utilising the sunnier and more open area to create both a high impact flowering meadow for maximum benefit for pollinators and less floriferous meadow to give a species-rich habitat for invertebrates.
- A dense native hedge would be created along the length of the pedestrian pathway to give security from trespass into the site. The hedge would allow access for maintenance but should provide a screen to the garden and a great habitat for wildlife.

Feedback Summary

Subject	Detail	Number of respondents	% of respondents
Generally Positive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great idea • Lovely idea 	20	83
Benches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It would be nice to have seating 	3	12
Antisocial behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs to be vandal proof/protect against ASB • High hedges make us feel unsafe. 	5	21
Mounds too high, fences should be shielded.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of privacy for homes behind • Potential nuisance behaviour 	2	8
Generally Negative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too complicated and expensive • Not needed, nothing wrong with natural open space 	4	17

A clear majority of respondents were in favour of the plans. A handful referred to the potential for antisocial behaviour and a handful suggested having seating in the area.

Detailed concerns were raised by residents backing on to the area and a meeting was held to discuss these issues and a way forward.

Changes to the specification following meeting with residents who back on to the area

Due to the tight timescales for delivery of the garden this winter, a meeting the meeting was held with concerned residents, soon after the consultation ended so the specification could be updated in order for contractors to quote based on the amended design. The following changes have been made to the specification:

- i. Mounds - The finished height of the mounds is to be no more than 0.7m and they are to be pulled forward from the fence line to give a clear gap of approximately 4m from fence to

mound. This may mean that excess spoil from the scrape of the meadow areas would need to be removed from site.

- ii. Extended Grassy Meadow Areas - The area to the rear of the mounds is to be planted with a grassy meadow seed mix to match the other areas on site.
- iii. Disguised Entrance to Site Using Overlapping Hedges - to keep the site as secure as possible from trespass it is necessary to create a concealed entrance using overlapping lengths of hedge line.
- iv. Tree Planting - The positioning of the trees will require verification at the time of planting – the *Acer campestre* should be a minimum of 6m from the fence line.
- v. Log Piles -The log piles should be constructed from brash branches and cut wood from the adjoining woodland area. They are not to be used as seating and should be constructed with this in mind.

Appendix 1: Raw Data – Online survey responses

	Timestamp	Please give us your feedback on the plans for the Wildlife Garden behind Marron Court
1	1/19/2023 13:16:06	I'm in favour of anything that will enhance the area for the existing squirrels and hedgehogs that live there.
2	1/19/2023 14:16:01	I like the plans but think it would be a shame to be hidden away
3	1/19/2023 14:24:23	I think it would be more natural sited near the woods on the meadow.
4	1/19/2023 16:24:53	A lovely idea. Just needs to be vandal Proof, low maintenance and not too expensive for future maintenance costs
5	1/19/2023 17:35:16	Looks great
6	1/19/2023 21:30:24	Great idea! Lots of birds etc already in the area would really benefit and encourage more
7	1/20/2023 9:10:45	I think this a great idea, would be nice to have some seating as well
8	1/21/2023 20:07:07	Excellent idea. Please make sure you protect against ASB. Consider CCTV.
9	1/22/2023 23:19:29	The plan for the wildlife garden looks very nice and pretty but it seems to be missing the most important element, a wildlife pond.every naturalist, conservationist or wildlife enthusiast knows that a wildlife pond is essential in every wildlife garden so why has one not been included. The pond could be fenced off to stop toddlers falling in and supervised pond dipping would give young children some hands on experience of the natural world which could set them on a path of being more understanding and sympathetic of the natural world in the future. a wildlife pond will benefit both humans and wildlife alike ...
10	1/23/2023 9:56:48	Good idea
11	1/23/2023 11:13:48	Great idea. Lovely addition to Fernwood and great for local wildlife and conservation.
12	1/23/2023 12:30:38	This is a great idea and really looking forward to seeing it. My only improvement to the plan is to have a nice water feature in the middle of the flower meadow where you can have sound of tricking water. A couple of benches would be nice close by so people can sit and look at it which is good for well being.
13	1/23/2023 15:47:19	Great idea as long as its maintained
14	1/23/2023 17:21:15	I think this is a lovely idea and would be welcomed.
15	1/23/2023 19:10:15	Too much too complicated and expensive. Some nice new trees and bushes so it's cheaper and easier to maintain. Who will be maintaining it. A sub contractor or volunteers
16	1/24/2023 8:04:41	Yes that sounds like a great idea
17	1/24/2023 10:53:13	I think it all seems like it'll be glorious. I would say I think it would be really lovely to have a bench or two either at the wildlife garden or further along the path somewhere where the woods are. I don't drive, and bring my two young children along here for a walk most days. And to be able to have a sit on a bench and have a cuppa would be amazing. I find that section with its nature and birdsong etc is so beneficial for my mental health, and is my favourite part of Fernwood. To be able to sit down and enjoy some time to stop here would be amazing.
18	1/25/2023 14:07:00	Excellent idea, we need more spaces for wildlife.
19	1/25/2023 21:04:04	I don't think any of this is necessary, there is nothing wrong with natural open space. Also, the high hedges around fernwood make my wife and daughter feel very unsafe when they can't see who is around at night so please do not plant any more. Planting new trees to replace the ones cut down is a good idea.
20	1/30/2023 16:42:34	Brilliant idea
21	1/31/2023 10:50:46	I really like the plans put forward, putting wildlife at the heart of it but also making it attractive to the local human residents some of whom wont be interested in the wildlife so need some persuading.
22	19/01/2023 Emailed response	I am liking the garden design but I would like to suggest adding some Corylus avellana (Hazel) for the squirrels and possibly an oak and/or pine tree, the squirrels have lost a lot of food trees and we have a good growing population of squirrels, also I would like to see some log piles/hedgehog houses over to the outer sides instead of in the middle with a bit of Bush for hiding. I'm looking forward to the finished article