

Walmer Tree Project

October 2015. Funding proposal to Finance Committee from A and E.

The Walmer Tree Project has reached critical point at which approval is required for funds to be allocated. Eighty eight consultation letters went out to residents in Dover Road in the last ten days and up to 15th October a 53% response rate has been achieved. There were only two responses that were negative.

This is an extremely positive response from Walmer residents which, combined with the onset of the tree planting season has clarified a demand for planting which this project aims to meet.

KCC Officers have identified 18 possible planting sites on the Dover Road with an additional 14 sites on Warwick Road. This includes three tree stumps that are currently in situ. This is a total of 32 trees.

Proposal

That the finance and general purposes committee authorise the necessary expenditure to cover the planting of 32 trees in Dover Rd and Warwick Rd. Walmer.

Funding required

1. Funding requested of £17,600 to cover the planting of 32 trees at 2015 planting costs of £555 per tree.
2. Funding will be requested from KCC members and other interested bodies which, if available can be put against the sum allocated by WPC and could then be used in future planting schemes or put back into reserves. No funding from external sources is guaranteed.
3. If the money is not approved at this Finance Committee then the planting season is over until November 2016. (Planting season November- end of January as advised by KCC) and planting costs could increase because of KCC's announced spending cuts.

Background

This type of project is strongly supported by 'The Environment of Walmer' study which was produced by the Walmer Environment Study Group. (Section 11 Project Initiatives, Gardens, Parks and Open Spaces)' A comprehensive tree planting programme is prepared covering all areas of gardens, parks and open spaces in Walmer'.

This project benefits all the Parish and we suggest will enhance WPP's reputation amongst residents.

Numerous other benefits have been already outlined in the start up documentation first placed before Council in November 2013, (minute 4079) and also quoted in 'The Environment of Walmer' study (Page 9) This type of expenditure is a highly visible and beneficial way of spending public monies which has already been given to us for use within the Parish and has sat for many years virtually untouched. The number of positive replies from the Consultation letter have given the Committee a mandate to proceed with this project.

The initial project was for Memorial Trees. Research has shown that many local councils do offer Memorial trees and it will be the Committee's proposal that these newly planted trees could be offered to the Public as an alternative to benches.

Adopting a tree will also be investigated and both these 'mini' projects could generate monies for future planting or to be put back into reserves. A small brochure can be produced 'in house' which would outline these methods of remembering loved ones. The Office time to administer this scheme would be very small.