

Cripley Meadow and Cripley Island Allotment Association



View from Cripley Island to Port Meadow

Chair Wendy Skinner Smith
Vice Chair John Sivell
Treasurer Alison Campbell
Secretary Sheila Allen
Committee members
Tony Clear
Alex Hollingsworth
Jamie Forbes
Bernie Fry
James Allen
Donna Mann

Information to members

On 2 March 2008 we had access to the island for a brief visit. John Sivell, one of our most experienced gardeners, presented a report to the AGM 2008. This contained amendments to the orchard proposal published prior for AGM. The AGM voted by a clear majority for us to extend the association lease to the island if this was offered by the council.

We were offered the tenancy on 26 March and we received Heads of Terms in July. The terms were to take the island into our allotment lease as an orchard with supportive coppiced native planting. This has been discussed at length with OCC in the light of discussion at the AGM and with OCC Parks, the Tree Officer, and Estates. Following AGM direction we have accepted this offer and amendments were prepared for a new lease to incorporate the island as part of our allotment association site. The committee will work with and on behalf of our members to ensure a sustainable, productive, accessible and environmentally diverse future for Cripley Island. To meet this offer we worked

- to develop the orchard use as the primary function so that the island qualifies for our lease and public liability insurance
- to work with environment agency and OCC to clear Fiddlers Stream which breaches our security and Castle Mill Stream in the longer term
- to manage the green willow logs asap which are already sprouting and must be removed
- to retain the existing fruit and nut trees where healthy and viable and to manage

the native planting by pollarding and coppicing so that biodiversity is enhanced

- to assess changed light levels and to remove dead and unsafe trees in consultation with OCC tree officer (we met, on site, with Tree Officer in April 2008 and again in January 2009)
- for the island be included in the rent so all members will have shared access/responsibility for the orchard and to build management of the orchard into our donation/working party/mowing programme
- to make an application to The National Lottery Local Food project for start up funding
- to clear accumulated debris to allow for mowed paths /bridge for safe access and prepare areas for cultivation for fruit tree planting, bulbs and and managed coppiced areas to increase biodiversity
- to establish a clear pollarding /coppicing rotation to ensure willow management and maintenance of Castle Mill/Fiddlers Stream
- to use log stacking for beneficial insects and install bird/bat boxes
- and agree a planting plan and 'orchard rules' at the next AGM

The Island will be a great addition to the membership and a focus to promote 'local food and the biodiversity of native planting'