



FRIENDS OF BUTTS CLOSE

AN OCCASIONAL NEWSLETTER

April 2020

Butts Close Hedge Planting, April 2020 – WE DID IT!

As you will know, we were successful in obtaining free packs of hedge saplings from the Woodland Trust, as part of their initiative to increase the number of trees nationwide.

We planned to build the hedge along a 35m section of the perimeter of the Swimming Centre complex, arguably the least attractive part of the Close (see photo below).



Andrew Mills, Greenspace Manager of NHDC, supported our initiative and arranged for the preparation of the site prior to planting.

We obtained 120 mixed saplings, together with supporting canes and spiral protectors. The saplings comprised Dog Rose, Elder, Hazel, Rowan, Blackthorn and Crab Apple, so all classic indigenous varieties.

We had organised a 'Hedge Planting Party', with willing families and children, to follow on from the Spring Big Hitchin Clean-up on Sunday 29th March.

And then the coronavirus struck, and we were all in a different world. Both events had to be cancelled.

But the saplings had already been delivered and we weren't going to let them rot.

Fortunately, lockdown still allows for individual daily exercise, and we thought that solitary sapling-planting would be just as healthy as a cycle ride.

We took sensible precautions, with antiviral wipes, disposable gloves and a rather pompous letter to hand to any Officer who wished to query why we were not working from home...

John Norris, Bill Sellicks and I set to, and we finished by Saturday afternoon, John returning on Sunday to give them all a good soaking.

Simon Maddison took the pictures - using a telephoto lens of course.



a small dance of triumph...

So now we wait. And wait. The saplings will grow about 40 – 60cm a year. In the future they will need pruning to maintain their spread and to keep their height at about two metres.

It was all a very satisfying endeavour, and merited a small dance of triumph at the end.

And Finally...

You may have noticed the new benches on the Close. Andrew Mills of NHDC identified some additional money and decided to purchase these fine specimens: the same design he said as those in the Royal Parks – a royal present for Butts Close!

Keep well, keep safe.

Tony Riley
Friends of Butts Close, April 2020



Contact Friends of Butts Close at buttsclose@gmail.com and Hitchin Forum through www.hitchinforum.org.uk