

# MARKET LAVINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

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## Community Orchard in Community Park:

A lot of research has been undertaken, with support from the Tree Council, Wiltshire Council Tree Warden department, and specialist suppliers to choose the trees for the Orchard. The Orchard will comprise of 19 fruit trees, 14 of which will be planted parallel with the fencing on the right-hand side of the site, 5 metres apart, across 3 rows, with a central space in the middle for possible seating, picnics etc. The remaining 5 trees will be planted in a row on the Canada Woods side of the site adjacent to the footpath. The Orchard will consist of a variety of fruit trees from semi-vigorous rootstocks, including pears, plums, cherries, Asian pears, eating and cooking apples, and gage. As they grow the trees will be carefully pruned to maintain their shape, height and spread (somewhere between a maximum of 4 to 5 metres tall). There will still be plenty of un-used open space on the left-hand side of the site for children to play and other recreational activities, and the young trees will be protected with stakes and wire, to ensure that the area around the trees themselves will also be accessible and usable.

## Current proposed site layout:



## Explanations behind the design of the proposed site layout:

- 1) Why are the fruit trees planted in this staggered pattern?** – To give the most light on the ground around each individual tree. The group planting of the different fruit trees will help with pest

control, pollination, providing natural habitat for beneficial insects, maximise use of the space and increase crop productivity.

- 2) **Why are the fruit trees positioned on that side of Community Park?** There is too much shade on the other side of the site. It is considered visually and aesthetically better, and it will take less work to level the other side of the site for ball games, and/or any other future activities. The rows would be shorter on the other side, as it is narrower, so there would need to be extra row/s extending further into the site.
- 3) **Why are the rows in that direction?** The trees are planted north to south to make the most of the sunlight.
- 4) **Are the trees too close to the footpath?** Over the years the footpath has deviated from its original designated line due to existing tree growth and usage. The proposed trees are therefore well away from the designated line of the footpath.
- 5) **Why can't the trees just be put around the edge?** The trees need the best light, and north to south in staggered rows will achieve this.
- 6) **Can the trees not just line the footpath?** No, because mostly, they need to be planted north to south. Cooking apples are slightly less demanding which is why they are currently proposed to be planted on the footpath line.
- 7) **Can we reduce the number of trees?** It may be possible to remove a couple of trees from the planting schedule, but any more than that, and the Tree Council may not be happy.
- 8) **Why are the trees 5 metres apart?** The rootstocks chosen dictate the planting distances, and all the rootstocks used have a recommendation of 5 metres.
- 9) **Will the trees shade Beechwood property gardens?** No, because the shade from each tree would be no more than 5 metres from the garden, and the gardens are further away than that. Fruit trees are pruned for an 'open aspect.'
- 10) **Don't cherry trees grow very big?** The colt bush rootstock chosen for the cherry restricts height to 4 metres, and the tree can easily be reduced to less than 4 metres in height by correct pruning.
- 11) **How high will the trees be?** The trees chosen have a restricted rootstock, meaning they will only grow to up to 5 metres in height, and careful pruning will ensure an open canopy.
- 12) **How long will it take for the trees to get to full height?** On average 7 – 10 years to get to 5 metres if we let them grow to 5 metres.
- 13) **How are we going to water the trees?** Initially from the river, but grant funding for rain traps may also be investigated.
- 14) **Is the site sufficiently well drained?** We have already spoken to contractors and building product suppliers about this. Last February was the driest on record, this year the wettest. Drainage could be installed at any point in the future (with grant funding) as there is room between the tree rows to do so. We could also add some grit to the planting hole to assist with this.
- 15) **Why are the holes that have been dug out 1 metre square?** The metre square is not the planting hole. Grass will compete with the fruit trees so for the first couple of years they need to be weed free, and mulch will be used to fill the space around the trees. Eventually the grass will be encouraged to grow back.