



# **St Helen Without Parish Council**

## **Working for You**

### **St Helen Without Parish Council**

### **Community Orchard Working Party Meeting**

Held on Tuesday 2 June 2026 at 2.00 pm

Present: Cllr R. Bahu, Cllr P. Lane-Evans, Cllr M. Littleboy and Cllr S. Rusby

In Attendance: Laurie-Jane Cann (Clerk)

1. Cllr S. Rusby updated the group on her telephone conversation with Rachel Sanderson of Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment (TOE). The deadline for submission of the grant application is 6 July 2026. It was agreed that the Council should aim to submit the application by 30 June 2026.
2. Rachel advised that she would be happy to receive a draft version of the application prior to submission to provide feedback and request any further information required. This would ensure that, when the application is presented to the panel by Rachel and her colleagues, they are familiar with the proposal and able to answer any questions raised.
3. The group discussed the possible appointment of a Project Manager to support the Community Orchard project. Whilst the cost would not be covered by the grant, TOE may be receptive to a match-funding request from the Parish Council as part of the application.
4. It was proposed that the orchard occupy an area of approximately 30 metres by 50 metres within the recreation ground, forming an oval shape. It was further proposed that the orchard be enclosed with a picket-style fence and hedging, the costs of which could be included within the grant application. The area would accommodate approximately 30–40 trees.
5. Rachel advised that tools should not form part of the grant application, as volunteers are likely to be able to provide their own equipment. The storage of tools would require a shed, which may be vulnerable to theft or damage. The group agreed that this matter could be revisited in the future.
6. The cost of a water bowser could be included in the grant application. However, the ongoing cost of refilling the bowser would fall to the Parish Council and could amount to approximately £145 per week during the summer months in the first few years following planting.



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7. It was noted that watering the trees will require significant effort during the establishment period. The group agreed that a suitably located water bowser would provide the most practical solution.
8. It was agreed that the completed grant application would be submitted to Full Council for approval at its meeting on 22 June 2026.
9. It was agreed that volunteers would be kept informed of progress by email to maintain engagement and momentum.
10. Cllr S. Rusby will prepare the first draft of the application, including reference to the interest already expressed by 15 potential volunteers.
11. The Clerk will seek permission from Sandford-on-Thames Parish Council to share its experiences of establishing a Community Orchard and details of other potential funding sources.
12. Cllr P. Lane-Evans will obtain quotations for watering bags and hedging. As the anticipated expenditure is likely to exceed £1,000, three quotations will be obtained.
13. Cllr M. Littleboy will obtain quotations for fencing.
14. The following timetable was agreed:
  - Actions identified above to be completed before the Parish Council team meeting on 11 June 2026 at 1.00 pm.
  - Draft application to be completed by 15 June 2026.
  - Application to be refined and approved by Full Council on 22 June 2026.
  - Final application to be submitted to TOE by 30 June 2026.

Meeting closed at 3.20 pm

Signed..... Date.....