

Volunteer agreement

Sustainable Thornbury Orchard Group

Agreement expires on 31 March 2018

South Gloucestershire Council recognises the valuable contribution made by various voluntary groups to the wellbeing of people and communities in South Gloucestershire.

The **Sustainable Thornbury Orchard Group** is a group of volunteers who wish to help maintain **Thornbury Community Orchard and Morton Bridge Wildflower Meadow** for the benefit of its wildlife and the community.

This Volunteer Agreement describes the ways in which the **Sustainable Thornbury Orchard Group** can help fulfil the expectations of the current site management plans, in particular, listing tasks that are scheduled to take place between the period **1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018**.

The following list, which has been agreed by Council staff from the Community Spaces team, is not exhaustive but includes those tasks that can reasonably be undertaken by the group. These tasks may be amended and additional tasks may be added subject to an amendment to this agreement by both parties.

These tasks include:

Physical Works (on Council owned land only)

- Litter picking
- Pruning and cutting back of light vegetation (including shrubs and trees) with hand tools within the orchard and wildflower meadow
- Collection of rubbish and notification of StreetCare for removal
- Cutting back of light vegetation around the litter bins, signs, benches, and gates
- Installation of bird boxes without nails or screws into the tree (SGC Tree Officer can advise on the installation)
- Monitoring and cleaning of bird boxes.
- Planting species appropriate to the setting including wild flower meadow
- Usage of steps and ladders on trees – following guidance in Sustainable Thornbury Risk Assessment
- Propping of leaning trees where appropriate to avoid risk of damage to tree and or public
- Removing prunings from site if they are diseased
- Maintaining small wood piles plus compost areas within orchard and meadow to recycle grass, wildflower cuttings, small prunings and non invasive weeds
- Adding compost around fruit trees and bushes and applying grease bands
- Monitoring of orchard signs and, where necessary, cleaning or replacement of same
- Using brushcutters by volunteers who hold the appropriate training qualification or have attended Council organised courses.
- Using scythes by volunteers who have received appropriate training from trained volunteers or have attended Council organised courses.

Public Rights of Way & permissive paths (on Council owned land)

- Cutting back of encroaching undergrowth / light vegetation from edges of footpaths and trimming back of overhanging vegetation using secateurs, loppers or saws
- Cutting back of encroaching vegetation to increased grassed areas

- Monitoring of way-marker signs and, where necessary, cleaning or replacement of same
- Monitoring of finger post signs, cleaning as necessary and reporting of damage to appropriate officers

Monitoring & Reporting

- Conduct flowering plant / invertebrate surveys throughout the year
- Record observations on birds, moths, fungi, butterflies and mammals, engaging with local experts if necessary
- Monitoring of fly-tipping and reporting locations to StreetCare
- Monitoring (ONLY) of Japanese knotweed (photographs) and reporting to Streetcare
- Reporting the location of dangerous or fallen trees to StreetCare
- Reporting any blockages of waterways to the StreetCare helpdesk
- Monitoring of graffiti / vandalism / damage to facilities and structures and reporting to Streetcare
- Reporting any hazards encountered to relevant officers.
- Liaising with Streetcare Ground Operations team eg cutting schedule, removal of waste and care of footpath area between Orchard and Wildflower Meadow.
- Liaising from time to time with Council's Community Spaces Team.

Report issues to the Streetcare Helpdesk

Email: streetcare@southglos.gov.uk

Telephone: 01454 868000

Guided walks and small scale events (on Council owned or managed land)

Leading organised walks and events on site, on subjects relating to the site. Events must be registered with the Community Spaces team well in advanced of the event. Please email communityspaces@southglos.gov.uk for details on booking events in. Please note volunteers are covered as if they were employees of the Council, members of the public or other guests are not covered by the insurance policy per se however, the Council's public liability policy covers the Council in the event of claims for damage and/or injury occurring to members of the public/guests attending events as a result of negligence.

Equipment

- Prior to practical works starting on site a tool safety talk should be given to ensure all tools are checked and that guidance for their safe use is given to volunteers
- Power tools (eg. strimmers and brush cutters) may be used where appropriate to supplement/replace the use of hand tools. Power tools must not be used by volunteers unless they have received recognised training and have a current accredited training certificate. Permission must be sought from Community Spaces team officers before power tools can be used on Council owned or managed land
- Other tools (for cutting and striking etc) may be used for specific tasks such as fencing, hedging and tree felling.

Leadership

The Council expects that the Group has at least one competent volunteer who will be responsible for overseeing the activities list above. Such persons should be experienced conservation volunteers with sound knowledge of health and safety issues and safe handling of tools. The Council will offer training to volunteers to ensure Friends Groups have a sufficient number of members competent to lead activities.

Risk Assessment

No works will be undertaken by the **Sustainable Thornbury Orchard Group** until all the relevant generic risk assessments, or task specific risk assessments have been reviewed and acted upon by competent and trained members of the Group.

First Aid cover

The Council advises that a suitably trained first-aider will be present on activities where sharp tools are used and this person will be equipped with suitable first-aid materials. The council recommends that the Group has at least two members trained in Emergency First Aid course (6 hour) and other members where possible should attend an Essential First Aid course (3 hour course). Training courses will be organised throughout the year.

When a task has been assessed and no first aider is needed, the minimum requirement is to appoint a person to take charge of first-aid arrangements. The roles of this appointed person include looking after the first-aid equipment and facilities and calling the emergency services when required. They can also provide emergency cover, within their role and competence, where a first-aider is absent due to unforeseen circumstances. To fulfil this role, appointed persons do not need first-aid training. However, emergency first-aid training courses are available.

Insurance cover

This Volunteer Agreement ensures that individual volunteers are covered by the Council's insurance policies whilst undertaking tasks listed above. The Group as a whole is not covered.

No insurance cover is available from the Council for any activities other than the above unless previously agreed in writing. The Council cannot cover the Group for activities not directly associated with the management of the site. For example Bat walks would be covered but Group fund raising events would not.

Insurance cover is only provided on works undertaken on land owned or managed by South Gloucestershire Council.

This agreement can be terminated at any time by the Council if the Group does not comply with it.

In return, South Gloucestershire Council, through its relevant officers, agrees to support, guide and to provide training and advice to ensure members have a good understanding of management techniques related to the community space (e.g. habitat management, visitor management, health and safety issues).

Signed: _____ Position: Chair Sustainable Thornbury

Dated: _____ Group: Sustainable Thornbury

Signed: _____ Position: Secretary Orchard Group

Dated: _____ Group: Sustainable Thornbury Orchard Group

Signed: Position: Partnerships and Delivery Officer

Dated: Community Spaces Team, Streetcare, SGC.

Copies of signed document held by South Gloucestershire Council Community Spaces Team and Secretary of **Sustainable Thornbury Orchard Group**.

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Contact:

Community Spaces team

☎ 01454 863581 or 01454 863572

✉ communityspaces@southglos.gov.uk

Updated: 23 March 2017 To be reviewed: January 2018