

## Strumpshaw Parish Council

**Buckenham Wood Project Committee meeting Friday 13th January 2023, 4.15 p.m., Strumpshaw Community Hall**

**Parish Council meeting 17th January 2023, 7.30 p.m., Strumpshaw Community Hall**

### **Agenda item: Buckenham Wood Project Committee - quotation for works**

#### **1. Introduction**

1.1. At the Parish Council meeting on 15th November, the Council decided to ask Eastern Landscapes and Fencing to undertake the following work:

- 1.1.1. A solid fixing for the litter bin by the Wood Lane entrance
- 1.1.2. The provision and fixing of an appropriate latch for the pedestrian gate.
- 1.1.3. Railing off the gap between the main gate and the adjacent brambles.
- 1.1.4. Draining and then extending the western path for 15 metres from the top of the new path towards the central glade using crushed concrete and Bredon gravel.
- 1.1.5. Providing a 6 metre handrail on the north eastern side of the western path going south from the bench.

1.2. The Parish Council asked the Buckenham Wood Project Committee to consider the provision of a crushed concrete and Bredon gravel platform adjacent to the bench at the northern end of the slope; an extension of the crushed concrete and Bredon gravel platform to the north of the new western path and the replacement of the two steepest step platforms on this path with several level steps.

1.3. On 7th December 2022 Gavin Rushworth of Eastern Landscapes and Fencing told the Council that his company had ceased trading. The effect was that the work that had been ordered could no longer be carried out.

1.4. I contacted Matt Davies, the Project Officer for the Norwich Fringe Project, who told me that he thought that his project could complete the work that was still outstanding, including quoting for the additional work described in paragraph 1.2 above.

1.5. Matt Davies visited Buckenham Wood with me on 16th December 2022 and brought a trailer full of wood chippings with him. He and I laid these on some 13 metres of the muddy section of the western path going south from the new Bredon gravel path. These chippings should provide a better surface for this area of the path until more permanent improvements can be undertaken.

#### **2. Specification discussed with Matthew Davies**

##### **2.1. Wood Lane entrance**

2.1.1. Matt Davies suggested that a post and rail fence should be installed from the eastern and western ends of the new gates, about 2.3 metres to the east and 3.6 metres to the west, into the brambles. He proposed to fit the litter bin to one of the uprights of the eastern fence. He proposed installing an industrial spring to keep the pedestrian gate closed when it is not in use and a galvanised latch for the main vehicle gate.

2.1.2. We discussed the ground level in the pedestrian entrance where a large puddle forms after heavy rain. Matt Davies proposed digging a French drain alongside the

eastern side of the entrance way and adding hoggins to the ground level inside the gateway. These measures should mean that the puddle would not then form.

## 2.2. Western path through the dip

2.2.1. Matt Davies and I spent some time looking at the western path. Matt Davies proposed that the handrail on the north eastern side of the path should be about 15 metres long starting close to the northern end of the path. That would take it from the top of the bank to the level step at the bottom of the bank. He also proposed providing 8 level steps within the area occupied currently by the three steepest steps.

2.2.2. We looked in detail at the position of the current bench at the northern end of the western path. Matt Davies proposed that a new oak bench should be provided to the east of the northern end of the path, in the area in which he is standing in the photograph. The old bench should be removed. The new bench would be similar to those already provided this year at the western side of the central glade. The flooring by this bench would consist of a hard surface about 5m in length west to east and 1.5 metres in length north to south. The hard surface would require about a 50 mm excavation to avoid damaging any roots. The surface would be feather edged rather than held in place by wooden battens.



Proposed general location of a new bench

## 2.3. Southern extension to the new hard surface path through the western dip

2.3.1. The muddy section to the south of the new Bredon gravel path, where the tree chippings have been placed, would have a French drain dug to the east to allow water to drain into the adjacent dip. It would then have the path extended the south by 15 metres of crushed concrete and Bredon gravel into the central glade by the stand of buddleias. The path would be 1.8m wide by 150mm deep with feathered edges.

2.3.2. Eastern Landscapes and Fencing left a section of metal fencing and some old materials near the southern end of the new western path. This is unsightly. Eastern Landscapes and Fencing have been asked to remove this material but no reply has been received.

## 2.4. Eastern path

2.4.1. Matt Davies was concerned that a chestnut paling fence along part of the top of the old quarry may be visually too intrusive. He was also concerned that driving posts too close to the top of the old quarry could cause the bank to collapse. He suggested that the Parish Council should rethink the idea of moving some sections of the path that currently run close to the quarry top about 1 metre further away from that drop. He also suggested that some of the hazel trees could be coppiced, some dead trees removed and some areas of the drop protected by dead hedges and/or by post and single, half round rails.

2.4.2. We noted that there are bluebells growing next to the current path. Matt Davies suggested that he meets Alasdair Fraser and other members of the Buckenham Wood Project Committee on site while the bluebells are in bloom to work out the detail of which path sections could be moved and any consequential work.

## 3. Norwich Fringe Project quotation

3.1. All prices include material and labour costs and exclude VAT.

### 3.2. Wood Lane entrance

3.2.1. The cost of installing the post and rail fencing to either side of the gates, latches on both gates and a spring on the kissing gate, re-laying the ground in the kissing gate entrance with a type one granite aggregate, creating a French drain on the eastern side of the kissing gate enclosure and repositioning the litter bin onto the new post and rail fence comes to £872.28.

### 3.3. Western path through the dip

3.3.1. The cost of providing up to 8 additional, level steps using black recycled plastic edging boards, steps and stobs to secure the steps plus installing 15 metres of post and rail handrail on the steeper part of the path comes to £2,092.87.

3.3.2. The cost of installing an approximately 5m x 2m hard surface pad to the east of the northern end of the western path, installing a new bench similar to the ones installed in the central glade in 2022 and removing the existing bench at the northern end of this path comes to £2,077.40.

### 3.4. Southern extension to the new hard surface path through the western dip

3.4.1. The cost of creating a 15 metre southern extension to the new hard surface path, including a French drain to the east, would be £3,100.50.

3.4.2. The cost of removing and disposing the redundant temporary fencing and materials near the southern end of the western path amounts to £250.

3.5. The quote includes a 10% contingency which is costed at £839.31.

3.6. The quote asks the Parish Council to consider using less expensive surfacing materials for the paths than the Bredon gravel. This will be considered by the Buckenham Wood Project Committee.

3.7. The maximum cost amounts to £9,232.36. The Buckenham Wood Project Committee intends to meet prior to this Parish Council meeting to consider the options for the materials for the paths and to consider the quotation. An oral report will be given.

#### 4. Financial implications

4.1. The amount remaining in the project fund is £9,812.14.

#### 5. Recommendations

5.1. Wood Lane entrance, western path through the dip and the southern extension to the new hard surface path through the western dip

5.1.1. The Parish Council is **recommended** to consider the views of the Buckenham Wood Project Committee in relation to the quote from the Norwich Fringe Project.

5.2. Eastern path.

5.2.1. The Parish Council is **recommended** not to pursue installing the chestnut paling fence along the top of the old quarry and to ask for a further report in the Spring.

Hilary Hammond  
Chairman, Buckenham Wood Project Committee