

Appendix C

Shaftesbury Town Tree Plan 2024–2029



Adopted: October 2024
Review date: October 2027

Aim

The aim of this plan is to establish a healthy spread of native/appropriate trees and hedges throughout the parish over the next five years to help counter effects of climate change and biodiversity loss. A key component of this plan is to establish Shaftesbury as the UK's first 'Nature-friendly Town' as well as a recognised 'Orchard Town' (see *Appendix 1: Making Shaftesbury an Orchard Town*). The group hopes to continue to provide information and ideas on the management plans for each of the open spaces owned by the town through the Sustainable Shaftesbury Action Plan 2024-2031.

Rationale

Trees and hedges are needed more than ever to combat the effects of climate change, to provide shelter and shade for people, habitats and food for wildlife. In addition to taking care of our trees, especially old ones - the most valuable for wildlife - we shall need to plant trees that are best adapted not only to increasing temperatures but also to extreme variations in the weather, from very dry to very wet, hot to freezing, and to howling gales.

Review of tree and hedge planting 2020-2024

In January 2023, Shaftesbury Tree Group (STG) volunteers completed a programme of tree and hedge planting on town council land with approximately 80 trees planted and many metres of hedges. Most of the trees planted have survived but for logistical reasons not enough water was able to be provided to many hedges and some were flailed inadvertently.

Wincombe Park
planting



In autumn 2023 STG assisted Shaftesbury Primary School in Wincombe Lane with their plan to plant over 600 trees/hedges in their large school playing field during winter of 2023-24. Planting advice has been given by BE to assist private landowners on the north- western side of town for amenity, shelter, screening, and biodiversity enhancement which can act as exemplar for the town's edge.

As well as planting, numerous tree walks, talks, hedge surveys and particular actions have been organised.



Boundary Oak - STG successfully applied to have a Tree Preservation Order

Future Planting Plans for Trees and Hedges

Road verges: Subject to consultation between the town council and Dorset Highways tree officer, there is scope to plant trees along more road verges, especially in the Sweetmans Road area where there are wide grass verges and at least 13 possible planting places. Information on appropriate climate resilient trees will be constantly monitored and the most up-to-date information will be made available to planters when and where needed.

Fruit and nut trees: The planting of fruit and nut trees, including wild fruit trees such as crab apple, bullace, wild pear, and cherry, will be encouraged in gardens, allotments and other open spaces, where appropriate; also fruit, including soft fruit, and nut hedges around allotments. (*See Orchard Town Appendix 1*).

Town tree nursery: A tree nursery has been established at Shaftesbury Home Grown in Breach Lane, Enmore Green, and is being used by Joe Hashman to grow on and establish fruit trees to help the creation of Shaftesbury as an 'Orchard Town' (*see Appendix 1*).

The Orchard in The Park: In 2009 St James Park was planted with apple, plum, damson, pear and nut trees by STG and these now need to be revealed from the brambles and cared for as part of the new management plan for the park. Work by volunteers to clear paths and brambles from around the trees will start in autumn 2024, some trees may need to be replaced.

Landmark trees at the county and parish boundaries: The idea of this scheme is to mark the 'gateways' in and out of town at the parish and county boundaries, with oak trees for the county boundaries and small leaved limes for the parish boundaries. A start was made in 2019 at the parish boundary on the A350 to the south with two small-leaved limes stand surrounded by smart metal tree-guards on each side of the road.

When mature, these trees will become landmarks, marking our green credentials and adding to the town's local distinctiveness. Our aim is to plant at least one pair of trees with tree-guards at other parish/county boundary locations each year as appropriate and/or possible (*see Note a*).



A350 South 2024

Provision and dissemination of information: Shaftesbury Tree Group will continue to provide information via Shaftesbury Town Council and Planet Shaftesbury websites and also with leaflets and the reprinting of the two Shaftesbury Tree Walks maps, plus a new Shaftesbury's Trees leaflet (*see Note b*).

Monitoring: The group will also continue its work monitoring planning applications and other developments where they relate to trees and hedges and pose a threat to the town's biodiversity and its natural environment (*see Note c*).

The Programme

Year 1: 2024-25

- **Autumn 2024:** Start work on clearing the brambles from around the fruit trees in The Park with volunteers.
- **Autumn 2024:** Develop proposal for Shaftesbury to become an Orchard Town
- **Winter 2024-25:** Reprinting of Town Tree Walks maps 1 and 2.
- **Winter 2024-25:** Plant two 'landmark trees' at one location on county boundary or parish boundary as agreed by STC.

Costs:

(i) Tree Walks reprints x2: 6,000 copies £597, 10,000 copies £709.

(ii) Replacement trees for the Orchard in the Park: (see Appendix 1)

(iii) Landmark Trees (two trees at one location on county/parish boundary) either/or :

County: English oak (light standard 6/8) x2 at £86 each: £172 inc VAT

Parish: Small-leaved limes (light standard 6/8) x2 = Rootballed £72 plus VAT; bareroot £58 plus VAT.

Metal guards: 4ft tall, 20+in diameter, 10in ground spikes x2: cost (TBC)

Year 2: 2025-26

- Progress plans and implementation for the Orchard Town (*see Appendix 1*)
- Continue work on the planting of Landmark Trees at the parish and county boundaries and along road verges.
- Publication of new leaflet '*Shaftesbury's Trees*'
- Create pages with information about the work of Shaftesbury Tree Group and how to be involved on Planet Shaftesbury and Shaftesbury Town Council websites.

Costs:

Landmark trees: *See 2024 estimates*

Shaftesbury's Trees leaflet: New leaflet (A4 folded to DL): x500 = £162, x1000 = £238*

**2024 estimates*

Years 3-5: 2026-29

Future plans include the publication of a leaflet on hedges in Shaftesbury and further publications on Orchard Town. Further planting of boundary trees and planting where land becomes available.

See Appendix 1 - Making Shaftesbury an Orchard Town.

NOTES

(a) Landmark Trees

County boundaries: Major roads cross from Dorset into Wiltshire at two locations - on the A30 to the east and on the A350 to the north at Littledown. But further research is needed to see if safe space can be found at either location.

Parish boundaries are crossed by major roads at 3 places:

- on the A350 southbound (two small-leaved limes were planted here in 2019)
- on the A30 west at Long Cross
- on the B3081 north to Gillingham near Hawkers Hill Farm.

The parish boundary crosses smaller roads on French Mill Lane, Gascoignes Lane, Anketils Farm, Foyle Hill Church Farm, Calves Lane (Long Cross) and at Motcombe Lane.

Total all trees: 22 (x4 oaks, x18 small-leaved limes)

(b) Shaftesbury Tree Group publications

Shaftesbury Tree Group's first leaflet *Shaftesbury's Trees* was produced in 2006 and reprinted in 2009. STG is now updating *Shaftesbury's Trees* and will be working on a leaflet about town hedges and their care.

Two other STG publications *A Walk among our Trees* (2018) and *A Longer Walk among our Trees* (2019), with illustrations by Gary Cook, are very popular with locals and visitors and are available from the library, the Abbey, the Grosvenor Arms, the health centre, the tourism hub and a number of the town's cafes, pubs and shops.

A smart portable wooden display stand made for STG by John Nelson, with tree photos by Christina Strickland, is available and was first used during 'Great Big Green Week' in 2023.

Publishing history

Tree Walk 1: Around the top of the hill (A3 folded to DL; first edition April 2018) 3,000 copies distributed in 15 months.

Tree Walk 2: Around the bottom of the hill (St James to Enmore Green)

Tree Walks 1 (reprint) & *2*: 10,000 copies printed July 2019 and distributed 2019-2024.

(c) Monitoring of landscape schemes

STG chair Bernard Ede continues the monitoring of current developments (such as by Redrow at Littledown and Persimmon, south of the A30) to ensure their compliance with planning approvals. Current concerns (2024) are listed below:

Current concerns:

(i) Street planting and the extensive amenity woodland planting within the new public open space within the Cranborne Chase National Landscape (former AONB) at Blackmore Down is of concern. The long-term landscape scheme, including roadside trees along the A350 frontage north of the site entrance, has also to be implemented during autumn 2024 to be compliant with planning conditions.

(ii) The building by Persimmon of 115 dwellings immediately east of their current development south of the A30 is also of concern, particularly at the limited space for sustainable tree planting along roadside frontages.

(iii) STG has also objected to the detailed application for 7 dwellings on land by the A350 south near Lower Blandford Road, including the threat to the existing hedgerow containing oaks and a field with established spontaneous oak seedlings.

(iv) There is concern at the negative impact upon perimeter native hedges and fine specimens of mature oak from the detailed application for 23 dwellings expected at Enmore Court.

With special thanks to Bernard Ede, chair of STG; Julian Prichard, treasurer; Robin Walter, for his invaluable help with tree planting; Joe Hashman for his aspirations for an Orchard Town, Richard Thomas, and to Brie Logan, Town Clerk, for facilitating liaison with STC for the tree planting programme. SC/AK (STG) 23/9/2024

Making Shaftesbury an Orchard Town

Recommendation:

That **SuSAC** supports the initiative of Shaftesbury Tree Group in wanting to establish Shaftesbury as an **‘Orchard Town’** and recommends that Shaftesbury Town Council supports and endorses that ambition in keeping with the Sustainable Shaftesbury Action Plan and the Council’s complementary support for Shaftesbury becoming a Nature Friendly Town, agreed in August.

Shaftesbury Orchard Town will encourage the planting of fruit trees within and around Shaftesbury, to enhance already existing orchards and fruit trees in private gardens and on public land so that, in time, an all-embracing mixed orchard is established and becomes integral to the town.

Rationale:

Dorset Council has declared a **Climate and Ecological Emergency**, and states, *“There is clear scientific evidence to show that climate change is happening and is due to human activity. Whilst this is a huge global challenge, many solutions are local.”*

Orchard Town offers a positive and appropriate response to the above from Shaftesbury itself, offering benefits to the environment, people and wildlife.

Fruit trees are *trees*. They have the additional benefits of beautiful blossom and edible fruits for us and for nature.

The idea of Orchard Town supports the **Sustainable Shaftesbury Action Plan 2023-2031** to increase biodiversity as well as tree cover in the town and to encourage local food growing and consumption. It is part of **Shaftesbury Tree Group’s latest five year tree and hedge planting plan (2024 - 2029)**.

Orchard Town accords with every point raised on **Shaftesbury Town Council’s own Sustainable Shaftesbury Biodiversity Checklist (2024)**.

Aims:

To make Shaftesbury an even more beautiful place: known for its spring blossom, summer and autumn fruits, concern for wildlife and the wellbeing of its people. Orchard Town will enhance the town, bringing aesthetic and wildlife

interest. Spring blossom could become a tourist attraction in the same way as snowdrops.

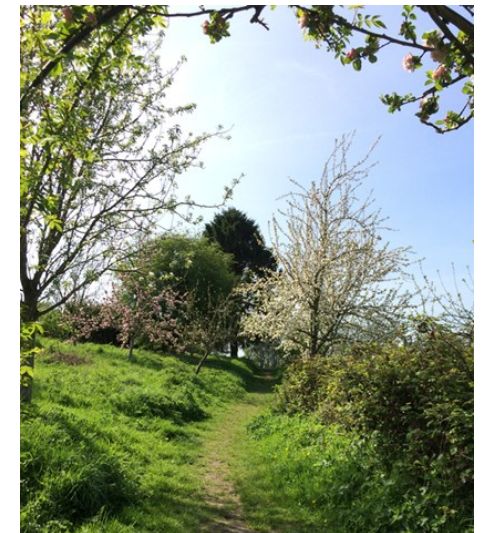
To encourage and enable cross-pollination between different areas of the town in terms of sharing produce, resources, husbandry and culinary skills, experiences and knowledge, and turn, to help cultivate feelings of togetherness, pride, a sense of ownership and continuity.

To offer myriad cultural opportunities for a wide range of creative artists to document and celebrate Orchard Town as it establishes and grows in spontaneous actions, organised exhibitions, collaborations and competitions.

Orchard Town aims to help provide Shaftesbury residents with increased local and home-grown food from fruit trees in private gardens, public areas, workplaces, schools, places of worship.



Wild Cherries in the Park



Apple Blossom Donkey Field

Background:

Across the country, every farm once had an orchard. Towns too grew fruit: Norwich was described in Tudor times as *“either a city in an orchard or an orchard in a city”*.

Orchards could have included varieties of apple, pear, plum, damson, cherry, medlar and cob nuts. Damsons added to the local distinctiveness of Westmoreland; huge old pear trees [they can live longer than 300 years] punctuated Gloucestershire; cider orchards dominated much of Wessex. In Dorset orchards including cider apples were widespread.

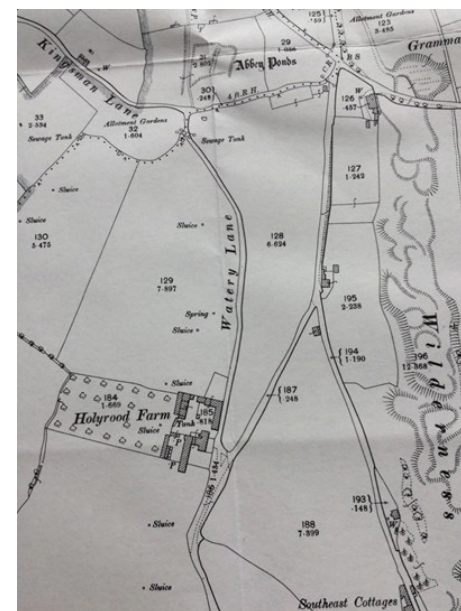
But by the 1980s most traditional orchards of tall trees had been lost or grubbed up. To counter this, the arts & environment charity Common Ground* encouraged the saving and planting of orchards in the 1980s, alerted people to the richness of county varieties and created Apple Day October 21st – now celebrated internationally. Since 1988 Common Ground has promoted the idea of Community Orchards nationwide, to help save old orchards, nurture new ones and help people exchange knowledge and practice. Hundreds have been established up and down the country and in different parts of the world.

In Shaftesbury Donkey Field Community Orchard was established in 2005 on Town Council land below Enmore Green Allotments, and fruit trees were planted for the Orchard in The Park on the slopes below Park Walk in 2009.

The map of Shaftesbury by Upjohn [famed for his early maps for the landed across England – this one for the Earl of Shaftesbury dated 1799] shows two orchards on the steep slope above Tanyard Lane. The 1900 OS Map has an orchard beside Holyrood Farm.



Upjohn 1799



1900 OS Map

Our team already includes Joe Hashman (apple grower/breeder, gardener, environmentalist) whose idea this is; Angela King and Sue Clifford (founders of Common Ground and also STG); Dave Godden apple identifier grafter and pruner. We hope others will join us.

Year 1 Plans

- Create a basic information leaflet, distribute and promote the idea.
- Ask townsfolk to share information about the fruit trees already growing in their gardens and allotments for a Fruit Tree Map of the town and gazetteer of varieties, to provide information on gaps and opportunities.
- Identify planting sites, liaise with landholders and locals.
- Identify blossom walks for future (existing and planned) guided walks. Create links with the wellbeing agenda and medical centre etc.
- Order a number of apple trees for new year planting - nursery grown whips of appropriate varieties. We would like to offer these trees at half price; approximately £13.
- We will concentrate on apples in Year 1 and other fruits in subsequent years. And assist with planting and advice on after-care.
- Purchase rootstocks and start grafting from local fruit trees to grow on.
- Take and strike soft fruit cuttings.
- Use and maintain the Tree Nursery at Home Grown.
- Produce 'Encouragement Packages' for private gardens.

Plans for Years 2 to 5:

involve developing and continuing work undertaken in Year 1, with the intention of cultivating and propagating everything within Shaftesbury so that there needs be no financial outlay, only investment in time.

Budget & Financial Implications

Year 1

Promotion & publicity leaflet A3 folded, 500 colour; approximately **£200** (Blackmore Press)

12x apple trees on M106 rootstock (Semi-dwarfing apple) @ £26 each = **£312** (Walcot N)

12x grafting rootstock, M25 (Standard apple) @ £2.60 each = **£31.20**

12x grafting rootstock, M111(Half-standard apple) @ £2.60 each = **£31.20**

12x grafting rootstock, Pyrus Kirchenstaller (pear) @ £2.60 each = **£31.20**

Grafting strips, 3 packs of 15 per pack @ £1.50 each = **£4.50**

Grafting sealant = **£8.50**

Six replacement trees for the Orchard In The Park (Walcot and Keepers Nurseries) = approximately **£160**

TOTAL = £778.60

Orchard Walk and Talk



Notes

Donkey Field Community Orchard established in 2005

The Orchard in the Park planted 2009

*Common Ground has worked to encourage care for our ordinary surroundings by local people stimulated by imagination and the whole range of the arts. Moving from Covent Garden to Shaftesbury in 1998 their office moved on from here in 2013, but its founders remain....

Apple Day celebrations - October 21st nationally.

Orchards - A Guide to Local Conservation. Common Ground, 1989.

Common Ground *Community Orchards Handbook.* Green Books, 2011

Some Dorset varieties of eating and cider apples: Melcombe Russet, Buttery D'or, Golden Ball, Iron Pin, Profit Apple, Puddletown, Tom Putt, Warrior.

Liz Copas with Nick Poole *The Lost Orchards : Rediscovering the forgotten cider apples of Dorset.* Little Toller Books, 2022

NB The nuns of Shaftesbury planted pear trees across their territory from the south coast to Bradford-on-Avon. Pear trees can live for 300+ years - at Limpley Stoke the churchyard pear tree (still traditionally replanted) is nurtured in their memory... where are Shaftesbury's pear trees?

Websites: Dorset Council; Planet Shaftesbury; Common Ground; PTES

JH/AK/SC

apples blackberries cherries chestnuts cobnuts currants damsons elder

figs filberts gages gooseberries grapes pears plums quinces walnuts



Donkey Field Apple Day

Based on research, liaison, survey, discussion by members of the Shaftesbury Tree Group 2019/2024:

primarily Angela King (environmentalist).

Robin Walter (forester)

Bernard Ede (landscape architect)

Sue Clifford (environmentalist)