

Proposal to cut back overhanging hedges.

FC25: 94

1. Background

- 1.1. There are two hedges in Wickham Market that are significantly overhanging well used accesses.
- 1.2. This is an initial proposal to explore whether or not the Council has an appetite to manage these hedges. If agreed, quotes will be obtained for the work.
 - The first is the hedge between the Village Hall access and the Co-op. This is on the village hall side of the Co-Op fence and therefore falls to the Village Hall to manage. It is so overgrown that it will brush against many vehicles using the Village Hall car park.
 - The second is FP009 between George Lane and King Edwards avenue spur. In places this hedge overhangs the tarmac path by over two feet making it very difficult for mobility aide or children's pushchairs to pass. This is a route to school. This hedge is on the allotment side of the boundary fences for properties on Fir Close. Historically, it is likely that this hedge formed the northern boundary of the land that is now Glebe allotments. I have been unable to obtain the lease to confirm this however, if this is the case, the Parish Council are likely to be responsible for it.

2. Considerations

- 2.1. Recognising that hedges are an important habitat, work should only be carried out in the late autumn or winter.
- 2.2. Neither of these hedges appear to carry much fruit which could supplement winter food for birds.
- 2.3. While Ivy is considered to be a late source of nectar, it continues to grow vigorously and will recover quickly in it's new shape
- 2.4. While public footpaths are the responsibility of Suffolk County Council. When I reported this overhang last year the response was simply that they mow twice per year. Boundary hedge management is the responsibility of the land owner.
- 2.5. The parish Council should manage its paths responsibly for the benefit of both residents and wildlife

3. Proposal

- 3.1. To obtain quotes to cut the overhanging portion of these hedges back to the edge of the access that they border.
- 3.2. Once quotes are received, the council will be asked to approve the most appropriate one.