

Native Field Hedgerow planting in Wootton Bassett

Grounds staff at Wootton Bassett Town Council have completed work on a native field hedge at Showfield Play Park, having planted 200 native trees and shrubs.

The management of open spaces in the town sometimes calls for the removal of these plants. “However, any work like this is always done at the correct time of year,” reassures Head Groundsman Ralph White, “and in line with environmental best practice to have minimum impact on wildlife.”

Ralph and the team get great satisfaction from planting and maintaining the town’s hedges. “We like to plant new trees and shrubs when we can,” Ralph continues, “it is very satisfying and hedges are a beautiful part of the English landscape.”

Initially, all dead and dying plants had to be removed from the hedge to clear it and clean it up. The new trees and shrubs were then planted and the hedge relayed. This is an important part of the hedgemaking process whereby the stems are bent at an angle and intertwined. Laying the hedge benefits wildlife of all sorts, including birds, small mammals and insects, by providing shelter, nesting and food. It also encourages growth.

With 10 different species of native hedging plants used, including Hawthorn, Blackthorn and Crab Apple, the hedge will be covered in white blossom and flowers in Springtime and berries in Autumn. A post and rail fence has also been installed to protect the hedge, which will thicken out in the coming years and enhance the area.

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