

TRULL'S LONG-TERM TREE VISION



KGV leaves ablaze in autumn – *Liquidambar styraciflua* near The Bell House in 2023

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TRULL'S LONG-TERM TREE VISION

Background and context

Trull is justifiably proud of its green spaces. Of these, the King George V Playing Field (KGV) is the one most frequently visited by parishioners. The northern half of the field (i.e. that nearest to Church Road) was gifted in perpetuity as one of 506 King George's Fields, which are protected forever with Fields in Trust “to ensure they will always be there for communities as places for sport, nature and play”.

The more recent, southern, half (together with the nearby Queen Elizabeth II community field) came into village ownership in around 2015 as recompense from the company granted permission to build the new housing development at Amingford Mead. Public consultations were duly held by the parish council early in 2016 about how the extended KGV space could best serve the whole community.

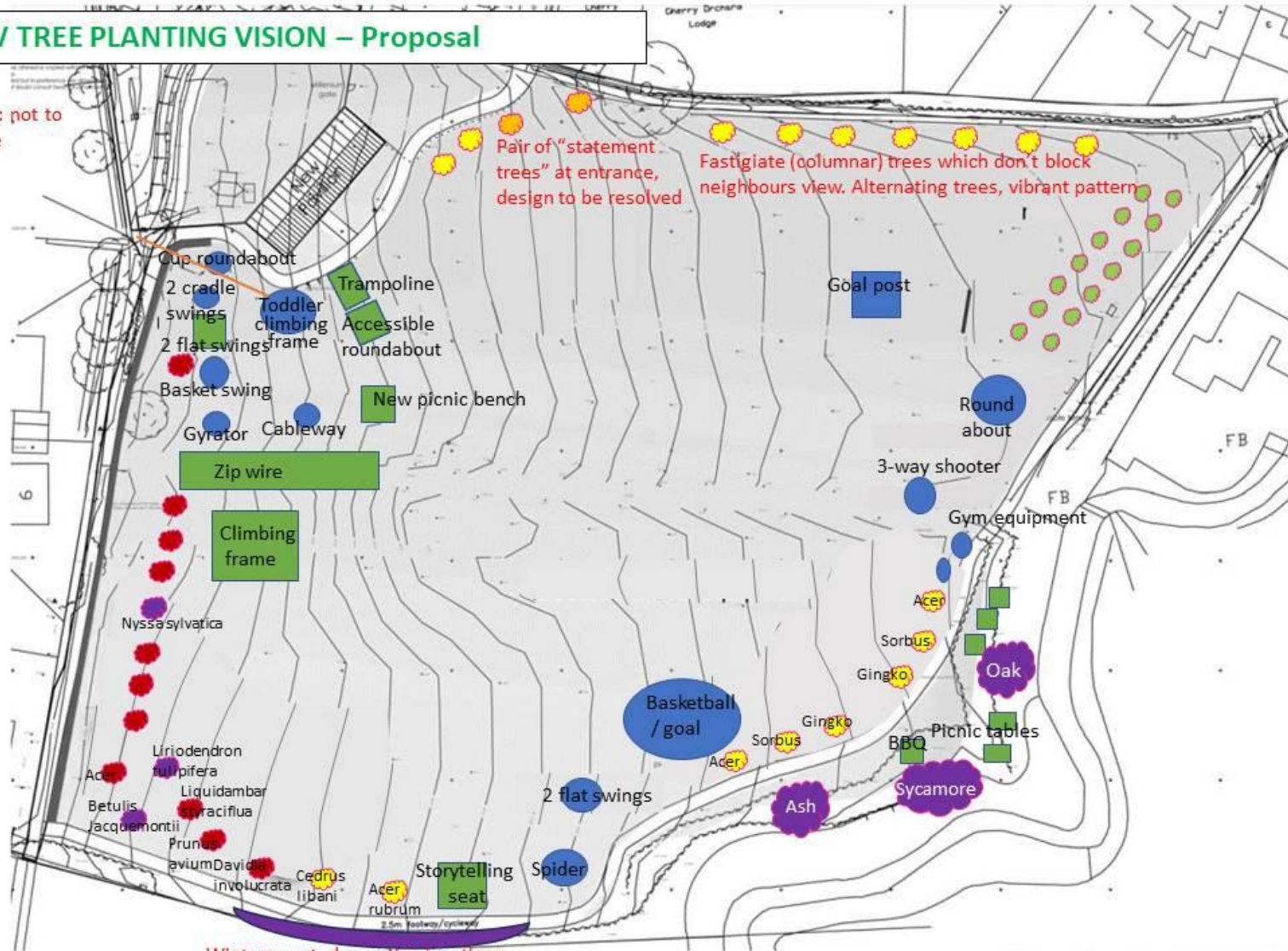
In recent years, the Playing Field Management Committee (PFMC) of Trull Parish Council has been approached on an ad hoc basis for permission to plant new trees in the extended KGV. Whilst ornamental plantings have been well received, they have led to a growing realisation that a longer term vision is now needed for how this green area should look in 25-30 years' time. Once agreed, such a long term vision would equip PFMC with a planned lay-out allowing individual requests for tree planting to be promptly approved/more suitably directed/denied, and community grants for trees to be readily accepted if compatible and declined if not.

The Trull Tree Maintenance Working Group (TMWG) has therefore been busy reviewing the existing plantings and giving thought on behalf of PFMC to how further trees of specific, uncommon types could best enhance the KGV for parishioners of all ages and abilities who use the field for exercise, play, recreation, time in nature, rest, solitude, or passing friendly conversation, as well as those able to participate in more active sports. Compared with King George's day, communities now have a commitment to inclusivity, and understand the importance of supporting people's mental as well as physical health.

This illustrated paper contains the TMWG's carefully considered recommendations. In considering individual tree varieties we have excluded any where there is a known risk of branches cracking, of disease, from fruit being poisonous, or need for pruning/tying in above head height. More obvious factors have been tree size and shape, whether they have uncommon leaves or bark, the season when they are at their best, their need for shelter and their tolerance of shade vs sun. We have considered and documented each obvious section of the KGV perimeter separately.

KGV TREE PLANTING VISION – Proposal

Note: not to scale



OVERVIEW

North: Single line of trees beside path, not encroaching on playing area, leaving a space for the existing oak canopy. Consider impact on householders and sports attendees / supporters. Two "statement trees" framing the entrance from Memorial Hall, and more screening trees near the "service end" of pavilion.

South-east: Single line of trees delineating the more intimate picnic space, with a gap indicating an entry point. To the south, two trees linking to the existing planting on the south-west side.

West: Existing planting in good heart; central pine tree to be replaced by tupelo.

Purple areas: Opportunity for future development: trees to be removed/replaced, Bell House hedgeline to be maintained or planted, and trees to have large branches removed in picnic area.

Key

- Existing trees
- New trees
- Cherry trees
- Existing equipment
- New equipment
- Trees requiring removal / work

KGV top avenue – western perimeter

Here are representations, once mature, of the large trees along the row, with a central Tupelo (*Nyssa sylvatica*) replacing the outsized Monterey pine (ultimate height 30m) if it would cope in that situation.

A very early flowering cherry is likely to be substituted if not.

The 6 youngest trees in this top avenue were planted in December 2020, at the height of the Covid-19 pandemic.



Norway maple
Acer platanoides "Drummondii"



Walnut
Juglans nigra



Tupelo in autumn
Nyssa sylvatica



Swedish whitebeam
Sorbus aria "Lutescens"



Oak - longstanding
Quercus: unknown variety

Below are some of the features of seasonal interest interspersed along the row



Norway maple
showing variegated leaves



Juglans nigra
with walnuts



Sorbus "Joseph Rock"
autumn yellow berries



Malus floribunda
blossom in April-May



Sorbus aria "Lutescens"
grey leaves, white blossom



Sorbus hupehensis
'Pagoda Pink' berries



Prunus subhirtella rosea
blossom Nov-Feb.

The Bell House/ SW corner of the KGV



The Bell House corner



Norway maple in KGV



Norway maple when mature

This dark corner has been lightened in summer by the white-edged foliage of a Norway maple (*Acer platanoides* 'Drummondii', middle above in 2022). The Monterey pine is to be removed (ultimate height 30M), We recommend a multi-stemmed white birch (*Betula utilis* 'Jacquemontii' left below) for all year round lightening there, and a variegated tulip tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera* variegata, 2nd left below). If there is room, we are also considering a Callery pear (*Pyrus calleryana* "Chanticleer", far right) or an early pink cherry such as *Prunus* "Collingwood Ingram"



Betula utilis Jacquemontii



Liriodendron tulipifera variegata



P. "Collingwood Ingram"



Pyrus calleryana in blossom

KGV Southern perimeter



For the unsightly gap on the horizon between the spider on the left above, and Brian's Handkerchief tree (*Davidia involucrata*), the Wild Cherry (*Prunus avium*) and the Sweet Gum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*) pictured to the right, we recommend:

1. **Acer rubrum**, seen on the left below here with its new summer growth, and then beside it, in autumn colours
2. **Blue Cedar of Lebanon** (*Cedrus libani glauca*)



Acer rubrum – first in summer, then in autumn



Cedrus libani glauca



Davidia involucrata



Prunus avium



Liquidambar styraciflua

KGV Picnic Area



Acer "Brilliantissimum"



Swedish Whitebeam – leaves and emerging blossom



The picnic area panorama



Ginkgo – unusual fan leaf shape

The TMWG recommendation for the picnic area is to use a 'mirrored' set of seasonally interesting trees, spaced in 2 sets of 3 to create a distinct entrance, visible against the dark backdrop of the native oak, sycamore and ash.

As PFMC already know, the lower branches of the existing oak, ash and sycamore require removal.

Pictured from the left:

- Acer pseudoplatanus "Brilliantissimum", with its shrimp coloured palmate spring foliage
- the Swedish whitebeam, Sorbus aria "Lutescens" with its striking white/grey new leaves and white flowers in April/May, plus red berries in autumn
- the narrow (fastigate) form of the maidenhair tree, Ginkgo biloba, with its distinctively shaped green leaves turning yellow in autumn



Acer "Brilliantissimum"



Swedish whitebeam



Ginkgo biloba



Ginkgo biloba



Swedish whitebeam



Acer "Brilliantissimum"

KGV Northern perimeter



The panorama against which these trees would sit is shown above, with our proposed set of trees below.

This selection provides a variety of form and seasonal colour, unusual leaves, and year-round interest.

Slender “fastigate” trees used to avoid blocking neighbours’ views where needed.

Dark foliage for contrast is viable along this sunny path, but would ‘disappear’ into the shade elsewhere.



Acer “Crimson
Sentry”



Paperbark maple
Attractive bark



Fastigate
Liriodendron



Prunus cerasifera
Small white flowers in February



Fastigate Liquidambar
Stunning in autumn



Cercis siliquastrum
Purple flowers in May



Fastigate Hornbeam
“Frans Fontaine”

The border between the KGV southern path and the Bell House garden.

This overgrown and unsightly border was a field boundary, one of many local ones, before being inherited by the parish only recently. Although it's narrow at its western end (nearest the Bell House gate), it is several feet deep before it reaches the picnic area, and can be seen in winter to contain dead branches and several dead trees (currently still standing) and rampant undergrowth of ivy and brambles.

As part of a long term vision for the field, this border represents precious space which, in the event of there being monies to have it cleared, could be sensitively replanted to serve particularly well those with failing eyesight or reduced mobility. Ours is a parish which has long been characterized by a higher than average proportion of elderly residents.

We have carefully recommended only trees of a certain minimum size and longevity in this document, but there are other attractive smaller or shrubby tree species which would suit well along this shady boundary, whilst still providing cover and hedgerow fruits for birds and other wildlife. The nearness of an all-weather path makes this an ideal border to offer human interest all year round if carefully planted for perfume and fruits as well as for blossom, foliage and flowers.

Our brief being trees, we can see how small/ shrubby trees such as white or mauve lilacs, the double pink and white hawthorn (producing haws), crab apple trees chosen for conspicuous fruit as well as flowers, mimosa (*Acacia dealbata*), the perfumed viburnums *bodnantense* and *carlesii*, *arbutus* (with strawberry-like fruits), purple elders (producing elderberries as well as flowers), and dwarf almonds (spring blossom) could be under-planted with the likes of brightly stemmed dogwoods (orange, red, yellow), snow berries, winter honeysuckle, *garrya elliptica* (evergreen with very long silk-like catkins), *sarcococca* (evergreen with heady perfume in February), wintersweet (*Chimonanthus praecox*) and witch hazel for winter interest and perfume, plus pink and white dog roses (producing hips), *escallonia* (evergreen with pretty little bell flowers), and green or red 'smoke bushes' (*cotinus*) – none of which require regular pruning.

A long term vision for Trull's green spaces opens up the possibility of bequests being left for the further enhancement of these public areas by grateful residents. It is striking that permission for tree plantings have been requested in the wake of PFMC sanctioning an initial avenue of ornamental trees at the top of the KGV in 2020.

The Wider Context

The Queen Elizabeth II Field

We have been pleased with how good the copse looks now that its young trees are growing up and the dense undergrowth choking them has been cleared. We anticipate that TPC will continue to receive requests for permission to plant trees unsuitable for the KGV in the QEII instead, and would be pleased to review, on behalf of the parish, which and how many tree varieties would enhance, rather than detract from, the emerging character of the QEII field. The current openness of the space has its own appeal as well as accessibility for mowing, and some of the young trees already installed there e.g. the cluster of beeches and limes, plus the Jubilee red oak and the imminent copper beech, will in time all become very large.



TMWG recommend 2-3 fastigate hornbeams (*Carpinus betulus*), as seen here, for a shapely statement along the Amberd Lane perimeter of the QEII community field, where disease susceptibility prevents the direct replacement of lost horse chestnut trees.

Trull Green

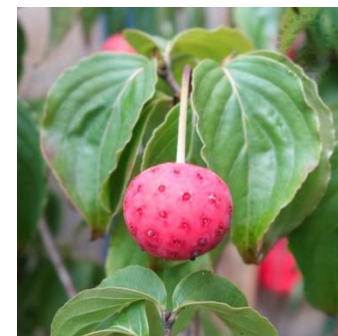
An expert eye also needs keeping on the nature of Trull Green tree plantings, to ensure they continue to be well thought through as well as complying with regulations and remaining healthy. The red oak there, like the 3 native trees in the KGV picnic area, needs its crown lifting when there are funds to pay for the necessary work. The 2 striking low-growing cornus varieties below might be suitable to sit amidst a patch of spring bulbs on Trull Green.



Cornus contraversa variegata in late spring/early summer



Cornus kousa "Miss Satomi" in June-July. Colourful in autumn.



Fruit of *Cornus kousa* 'Miss Satomi'

Final comments

The principal focus of this document is to propose a vision of what the King George V Playing Field could look in two or three decades, through the careful planting of just 17 new ornamental trees. The document also touches on other areas where the TMWG can contribute ideas and ultimately deliver a more attractive tree planting environment around the village.

In TMWG's first year, we have been learning where best to purchase young trees, and that careful liaison with nurseries is advisable. Our knowledge bank can therefore be helpful, especially in the provision of advice to future donors, or to the PFMC when future funding or grant money becomes available. We recommend that offers of tree donations should routinely include the cost of protective framing to the prevailing standard design.

The idea behind this document is to propose, for the PFMC's consideration, a long term plan for trees in the playing field and elsewhere. In relation to the King George Playing Field, it incorporates a planting layout, maintenance suggestions such as the picnic area tree pruning and longer term project work such as The Bell House border clearance and renewal. We are excited by the possibility of introducing tree trails in the KGV, together with maps and signage boards, and children's leaflets inviting them to go and look for different or matching leaf shapes, blossom, fruit and tree barks. This document is not about imposing a cost and manpower burden on the PFMC, since funding and volunteer labour may be forthcoming over time. This is intended more as a suggested long term management plan, proposing a direction of travel towards a yet more beautiful, educational and engaging playing field for all.

Tree Maintenance Working Group, 9th November 2023

