

OCTOBER 2020

HASSOCKS PARISH COUCIL, WEST SUSSEX

'Trees for Hassocks' are a group of volunteers who work with Hassocks Parish Council and West Sussex County Council to facilitate the planting of street trees in the village. Since the project started in 2008, 215 street trees have been planted in roads including Dale Avenue, Grand Avenue, Downs View Road, Clayton Avenue and Mackie Avenue.

The Village Tree Fund was set up a few years ago as a way for residents to directly contribute towards the funding of street tree planting, and the contributions to date have been greatly appreciated. Help is still very much needed to enable this project to continue as a long term investment in the environment of the village.

There is still much more tree planting that could be done and the more money that can be raised, the more trees can be planted. The need to plant trees as one element of tackling the challenges of climate change has been well documented in the press over the last few months. Here in Hassocks, we have had a specific initiative in place to plant more trees since 2009.

Since 2009, Hassocks Parish Council has funded the planting of 345 trees in the verges of the residential streets of Hassocks. This has also been generously supported by donations from a number of other organisations including the Hassocks Community Organisation, donations from residents via the collection tins around the village and personal donations from individuals. 2009 was the year when a small group of people decided to take forward the replacement of old trees and the introduction of new planting which was envisaged in the Parish Council's 'village design statement' document of that time. The group called itself 'Trees for Hassocks' and aims to do what it says on the tin! They do the following things:

- They coordinate with funding organisations to secure funding where we can for ongoing planting and aim to supplement this with contributions to the Village Tree Fund (which is held by the Parish Council) from individual donations to the fund and money raised through the green collecting tins you'll see at various businesses on the village high street.
- They identify possible potential planting sites with local residents. We started initially with specific planting schemes aimed at certain streets and now find that we have got to the point of filling gaps in verges and replacing trees as they die.
- They work with the highly skilled tree specialist at West Sussex County Council, Jim Mellor, who has a specific role to play in the next step, by

assessing suggested planting sites (not all of which are suitable for a range of reasons) and coordinating the tree buying and planting work itself, which is undertaken by the Council during the winter months.

- They then identify the residents' choices of trees from a list of specified street trees and place the order for trees with the Council
- They also try to keep people informed of the planting work through the Talk about and now on the Hassocks Uncovered Facebook page.

Has your council done something similar? Then get in touch by emailing Claire.goldfinch@nalc.gov.uk

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