

RAWCLIFFE COMMUNITY ORCHARD

"TREMENDOUS" York / "Friends of Dormouse Orchard"

"TREMENDOUS" York has been working closely with the "Friends of Dormouse Orchard" to find and develop sites in the Clifton/Rawcliffe area for community fruit tree planting, following the project at the "Dormouse" pub on Shipton Road, where it is hoped to regenerate this historic orchard.

A site behind the Clifton/Rawcliffe Primary School has been identified as a suitable site. It is at present owned by City of York Council (CYC) and leased to the Clifton with Rawcliffe Parish Council (CwR). It is an area of rough grass at present used by dog-walkers.

The proposals have been discussed with representatives of the school. These proposals would be supported in principle, and would be regarded as a valuable learning resource for the pupils and staff. Pupils would be supervised by staff when on site, and it was thought that several staff and parents would be interested in being involved in site management.

The proposals have also been reviewed by CYC Property Services, Parks and Open Spaces and School Services Teams, and are supported, subject to various caveats:-

- a- that access for grass cutting by CwR outside the site area is maintained.
- b- that tree maintenance and other management costs do not fall on CYC or CwR.
- c- that householders on Greystoke Road are not disadvantaged.
- d- that the school MUGA is not affected.
- e- that dog walkers are still allowed reasonable space to exercise their animals.

It is considered that these requirements will be met.

THE PROPOSED SCHEME

The total site area is approx. 1.3 acres/0.53ha. of which 40% would be retained as open space and 60% allocated for the orchard.

30 fruit trees would be planted, individually protected by cages against rabbit attack and possible vandalism. Parts of the area around the edges would support low level fruit bushes, easily accessible by pupils, and a wildlife area would be developed along the Greystoke Road boundary.

The orchard would be protected by a substantial stock-proof fence, with a narrow leaf field gate for general access, and a wide single leaf field gate for occasional machinery access.

All implementation and management costs would be the responsibility of the "Friends Group".

It would be important to provide a Community Notice board, describing the project, how the community should respect it, and become involved if they so wished.

It is suggested that part of the open space be defined as a community activity area, with public benches and close-mown grass, even a sculpture or other marker identifying the project as being of particular significance and importance for the community as a whole.