

Cuckoo Pen

A small enclosed green space between the Brook and St Helen's Allotments, The space is being brought back into public use for the benefit of the community. Opportunities for volunteers to get involved.

What You Will Find Here

- A very overgrown site, having recently been retired as a commercially-leased, privately run plant nursery.
- Legacy use means an abundance of old landscape fabric, with dense vegetation growing through, and some rubbish in boundary hedge.
- Two small open sided sheds, one very unstable
- A circular sweet chestnut structure with waist-height work benches.
- Espaliered fruit trees trained along the wooden structure.
- Water supply available on boundary with St Helen's allotments.

Technical Summary

Habitat: Overgrown site with dense vegetation including nettles which will have some wildlife value. Boundary hedges with mature willow which need pollarding. Some special features such as a hawthorn with bramble, providing valuable bird habitat.

Play and recreation value: Poor access - very overgrown with uneven surface and no seating or formal paths.

Management Summary

Designated as a Local Green Space in our Neighbourhood Plan. Recently taken back into Parish Council management, this site is being returned to public use, retaining the best of its features and reimagining it to provide an informal convening space and some starter allotments, an innovation to enable more to benefit.

Management Activities

- Removal of landscape fabric and remaining rubbish, establishing an even usable surface.
- Restoration of the circular sweet chestnut structure for use in hosting events
- Creation of 'starter' allotments in the western plot.
- Pollarding of the hedge trees to ensure they live long and useful lives
- Planting of more fruit trees and provision of seating in the main plot and mowing of triangle at eastern end.
- Creation of access from brook path to invite visitors and explorers of our green network
- Installation of interpretative signage as part of Benson's green network walk

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