

8. 'DONATE A TREE' SCHEME: BARBOUR STREET

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The purpose of this report is to inform the Board of the 'Donate a Tree' scheme in Barbour Street, Charleston. These works are intended to increase the amenity and environmental quality of the area.

BACKGROUND

The Charleston Neighbourhood Plan sets out a long-term urban renewal strategy for the neighbourhood. Developing the plan involved extensive public consultation and identified the need for trees in Charleston to create a lush environment.

Barbour Street is to be upgraded, with new kerb and channel works, landscaping and the undergrounding of remaining overhead cables. Ideally this upgrade would include providing grass berms and street trees on both sides of the road, but this is not possible along the west side of Barbour, between the railway lines and Charles Street, due to existing underground cables and the narrow footpath.

To assist in making this stretch of Barbour Street more attractive, as part of the Charleston Neighbourhood Plan, it was proposed to offer to donate trees for the frontages of houses and businesses where there can be no street trees.

As much of the survival of a tree depends on how it is planted, the 'Donate a Tree' scheme involves both providing the tree and having trained City Care staff plant and stake the trees on the home and business owners' behalf. It was made clear to the owners that the future maintenance of the trees would be their responsibility.

CURRENT SITUATION

The offer was first put to the home and business owners in February 2003. Eleven of the 19 eligible properties replied, yes, they'd like a tree planted in their frontage. Others replied, thank you, but they already had trees in their frontages and some didn't reply at all.

A Landscape Architect visited Barbour Street to assess which species of tree would best suit the property frontages, and whereabouts to plant the trees. Owners were then given a plan showing these details. They were asked to give some thought to the chosen tree location and species and whether they were happy with the Landscape Architect's recommendations. No owners replied that they were unhappy.

The choices of tree species came from the Plant List in the Charleston Neighbourhood Plan, which was initially drawn-up with local residents to achieve coherency in the planting throughout the neighbourhood. To achieve further coherency, the same Landscape Architect was used for both the Barbour Street 'Donate a Tree' Scheme and for the Barbour Street landscaping (as part of the street upgrade).

Residents were also given some notes on the care of their future trees.

NEXT STAGE OF THE PROJECT

City Care will plant/stake the trees in June, which is a suitable month for tree planting.

Staff

Recommendation: That the information be received.

Chairperson's

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