



Dear BCOG Volunteer,

The Community Orchard Management Committee believe it is incumbent on us all to do everything we can to follow the lockdown guidelines in order to at the very least slow the rate of Covid infections. The lockdown combined with the vaccination programme is reducing the level of infection and enabling our health services to better cope with the numbers of serious infections, but sadly that does not bring to an end the risk of becoming infected. As we move towards the the easing of lockdown restrictions, past experience tells us that we still need to be on our guard. As a result we are once again erring strongly on the side of caution at all times with regard to the maintenance programme in the orchard.

**We have decided to not hold a work formal work session in the St Mary's Field Orchard this month.**

Thanks to the efforts of numerous individuals, the orchard continues to be in very good shape. The winter pruning has been completed, as has the first mowing of the grass. Brambles around the pond have been cut back and numerous other little tasks have been addressed.

More significant projects that have been completed include the construction of the polytunnel, installation of a new noticeboard and information board, and the installation of new benches and seating. The sycamore tree and other vegetation in the southern boundary hedge has been removed and replacement native hedge saplings planted. The first phase of the replacement of rotting pallets in the compost bays has been completed.

Do feel free to pop in and tackle the odd job, just to keep the site ticking over until we are able to gather again in larger groups:

- Trim and weed grass around the tree
- Maintain a clearly defined edge to the pond
- Catch goldfish in the pond and re-home them
- Turn compost in bay 2 into bay 3. Turn compost in bay 1 into bay 2
- Keep on top of the weeds in the pollinator beds
- Cut back vegetation obscuring the view of the bug hotel.

Once again, a big thank you all for your amazing support. It has been challenging but as always you have more than delivered.

All the best and keep extra safe.

**Ian**