**Whilton Parish Council**

**Monthly Inspection Report – For May 2022**

**Risk Assessment Report**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| S**ubject** | **Risk Issues and Comments** | **Recommended Action, Responsibilities and Time Scale** | **Status** |
| Signage: complete and in good condition? | **Yes** |  |  |
| Are fences fit for purpose? | **Yes** |  |  |
| Boardwalks : in good condition and free of trip-hazard overgrowth? | **Yes** |  |  |
| Bridges over ditches and runnels in sound condition? | **Yes** |  |  |
| Trees and shrubs: visually sound and stable, free of potentially dangerous overhang? | **See separate sheet** |  |  |
| Pond Area: is this visible and sufficiently clear of vegetation so hazard is obvious | **Yes** |  |  |
| Evidence of poisonous or irritant vegetation? | **No** |  |  |
| Commentary on NCC responsibilities – bridge over stream and stile, and the public footpath generally. | **None** |  |  |
| Commentary on any risk matters for the attention of the Pre-School group. | **-None** |  |  |
| Do any trees look dangerous | **See separate sheet** |  |  |
| Any other risk or housekeeping matters for report? | **No** |  |  |
| Actions from previous inspection complete? |  |  |  |

(Name, signature and date)

**Anthea Hiscock**

**28 May 2022**

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Original to be held by Hon Secretary

Actions to be notified to appropriate Group member or organisation, brought to Chair’s attention for committee review.

**TREES AND SHRUBS IN THE SPINNEY MAY 2022**

**Now that the trees are in leaf it is easier to identify some problems, as follows:**

**1.**In the centre of the Spinney along the lower path several **GUELDER ROSES**(viburnum opulus) have flourished in the past with white early summer flowers followed by bright red berries and later colourful foliage.

The ground is very damp there, but up to now it does not appear to have caused major problems. This year in two places several square metres are covered in dead branches and twigs. The foliage appears not to have returned this spring. Where there are a very few leaves on one plant, they have been turned into a transparent lacework.

This could be caused by aphids, but I suspect the problem is more serious. If this is *armillaria root rot*, I think these shrubs should be removed as they will not recover.

These guelder roses have always been a feature in the Spinney, so perhaps some more could be planted elsewhere. They are usually very tough and not too fussy.

**2.** Here are clear signs of **ASH DIE BACK** in both some of the very tall old ashes and in some self sown saplings. They have dead twigs and noticeably weak foliage. I guess these will have to be removed.

3. **LIGHT:** As the wood has grown, more and more light has been excluded from part of the Spinney. In these parts many of the shrubs and trees are under stress, dead or dying, including:

* + The large **GOAT WILLOW** by the pond
  + Many **BLACKTHORN** bushes along the top path
  + **VARIOUS SHRUBS** along the lower path and in the centre

The dead wood could be removed and incorporated into the “dead hedges”, but there needs to be a management plan to let more light into the Spinney, at least in places. One option I would suggest would be to keep most of the southern hedge (onto Roughmoor) at a much lower level, e.g. 10 – 12 feet to allow more light into the wood, but keeping a few taller standing trees.

I realise these are just my opinions, but hope this might be helpful

Anthea