



Community Orchards Project Summary

Why did we plant orchards?



There is significant pressure to plant more trees, however in West Lancashire there are a number of issues which hinder large scale tree planting:

- We are already blessed with a large tree stock
- The west of the borough has large tracts of Peat (and salt marsh) and some of the best agricultural land in the country
- Residential areas provide potential issues
- Parks are all 'full' – over 8000 trees planted over the last few years, and further planting would have a negative impact on other habitats

So Orchards.....



So, orchards make sense – modest sized trees, in modest sized areas:

- help mitigate the effects of climate change,
- have a social value,
- provide free food,
- provide wildlife habitat,
- help struggling pollinators and are
- easy to maintain within current budgets

Sites shortlist



- We sent an email to all councillors asking for potential planting locations
- Site visits where we considered:
 - **Deliverability**
 - **Longevity**
 - **Proximity to the Community**
 - **Space available**
 - **Accessibility**
 - **Potential food poverty in the area**

We also looked at the location of peatland



Sites, Services and Spades



The sites chosen for planting were:

- The Community Garden – Elswick, Tanhouse
- Eskdale, Tanhouse
- Kiln Lane Playing fields, Skelmersdale
- Thompson Avenue, Ormskirk
- Cotton Drive/Tennyson Drive, Ormskirk
- Manor Road, Burscough

The sites were then checked for underground services and appropriate minor twiddles to location were made

And planting was then carried out by the Rangers, their regular volunteers and students from Pontville School



From this community consultation was carried out
With very positive results

QR codes were added to the tree stakes
These guide folk to the council website
where there is info on orchards and
what can be done with the fruit



Lessons and Legacy



- 95% success rate – very dry weather caused some trees to fail and one was snapped
- Replaced from existing spares
- The success of the scheme means that fruit trees are now considered in all planting and restocking schemes
- Especially valuable for small sites in built up areas – as you can select appropriate root stocks to limit the ultimate size of the tree