

2017 Work News.

Burning of brash, cut and collected during the autumn of 2016 between Puckland and Dexbeer kept us busy in the first two weeks of **January**. (photo 1.)



1 - Cutting, stacking and burning brash



2 - Half gone

This was followed with a heavy commitment of the work schedule during this and the following two months being concentrated in the area of the Holsworthy branch. Contracted work started right at the beginning of the year to cut down the fir tree plantation known as Brendon Wood on the adjoining land, and by the third week half of the trees had been removed. (Photo 2.) Unfortunately this coincided with a weekend of strong south westerly winds and with much of the protection previously provided by the plantation trees having been removed, it proved too much for many of the remaining trees on both the edge of the plantation and alongside the footpath. (Photo 3 & 4.)



3 - Other small trees



4 – Also across the path and canal

Various trees were identified as being at high risk and following discussions with the contractors and DCC P3 footpath officers, actions were put in place with the contractors and our volunteer hedge layer to resolve the created problems between us whilst enjoying the opened up views.



5 – Warning notices each end



6 – And again, logged up



7 – More from marked trees



8 – New Countryside view

(Photos 5, 6,7 & 8.)

Many years of excess growth, mainly of willow trees were removed to prevent damage to the fence alongside the far end of the Permissive path followed by a burn up. (Photo 9.)



9 – Burmsdon cutting and burning

Into **February**, and work continued in the area of the Aqueduct Bridge, clearing vegetation through and beyond Burmsdon Bridge although a mower cut is required as soon as the weather permits. (Photos 10 & 11)



10 – Aqueduct bridge cleared of vegetation



11 – Waiting mower cut

The old South West Water pump building was found to have been damaged, creating access into the building which had a fragile floor over old pipes and several feet of water. Steps were taken to re-secure the building (Photos 12 & 13.)



12 – View inside door



13 – Resealed door

March came in like a lion and more tree damage at Brendon wood had to take priority (Photo 14)



14 – More trees cross footpath

The decision was made to lay as much of the whole length of threatened trees and saplings whilst leaving as many individual larger ones as possible after reducing the number of branches on the footpath side of their main trunks. (Photos 15, 16 & 17)



15 – Laying main stem



16 – End of season hedge laying



17 – View looking south

A burn up of the majority of brash was completed on the last week and although the hedge is looking sparse at the moment new leaves are all ready starting to show. (Photo 8.)



18 – Clearing the brash

The accumulated silt in the drainage ditch between the footpath and the plantation due to a lack of fall along its length has been kindly dug out by a contractor on behalf of the forestry management creating access to the outlet end of the damaged section of culvert (believed to have been made from a hollowed out tree trunk.) Further investigations will be made whilst cleaning out silt from the pipe and possible repairs to the exposed rotted section, two feet below the surrounding canal bed level.