



Improving Gedling House Woods and Meadows

EnviroGrant Project Report

Lifting the crowns of meadow trees

The Friends of Gedling House Woods have now completed the lifting of the crowns of mature trees in our meadows. We used the EnviroGrant of £999 awarded by Veolia (Nottinghamshire County Council's waste contractors) to purchase a petrol-driven chipping machine. Volunteers from the Friends group removed the lower branches from the trees in the meadows during the dormant winter period. Once the wet winter was over, the group used the chipper to deal with the branches removed from the trees. The group used the chippings to improve the surface in gateways, which get very muddy in wet weather.

Before crown lifting – late autumn 2017



The meadows contain mature hawthorn and apple trees that, if allowed, grow down to ground level. Although the lower branches of the trees look quite open in the winter, nettles, brambles and other intrusive plants take over in the summer, reducing the area of meadowland like this.



We have discovered that the most efficient way of using the machine is to separate out the thicker and thinner branches for the two different ways the machine operates.

Chipping on a cold day in early spring



After removal of branches – spring 2018



The crown lifting, done mostly with hand tools, provided clear walking space to head height (approx. 2m) under each tree. It generated considerable amounts of brash, from small twigs to larger branches. Seen here, they look small but each heap is

about 1 metre high. The next stage, chipping the branches, was delayed. Firstly there was a wait for the chipping machine to be delivered, and secondly the wet weather meant we were not able take the chipper to the trees as there was too much mud to take vehicles onto the meadow. The chipping was completed at the beginning July 2018.

The last few branches in the hot summer of 2018



After chipping the heaps of branches – summer 2018



Now that the project itself has been completed, we will use the chipping machine in our ongoing work to maintain the woodland that adjoins the meadows.