Ide Community Orchard

Management Plan

[Draft #2 produced by Jess Paine 4 January 2025]

Author	
Date adopted	
Date of next review	

DRAFT

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1. Introduction

The acquisition of Ide Community Orchard by Ide Parish Council completed in April 2022, following a period of three and a half years, from September 2018, when it was rented it from the Church Commissioners. The land, approximately 3.5 acres, lies to the south of Ide, opposite Pynes Farm. It holds 14 mature apple trees - three or four are cider varieties, the rest are eaters and cookers, which make great juice. An additional 68 apple and 4 pear trees were planted as bare rooted whips in January 2020 - a mixture of traditional heritage Devon varieties.

The Orchard is open daily from dawn until dusk for walking and reflection and plays an important part in the Parish Council's vision to create Green Spaces for Ide.

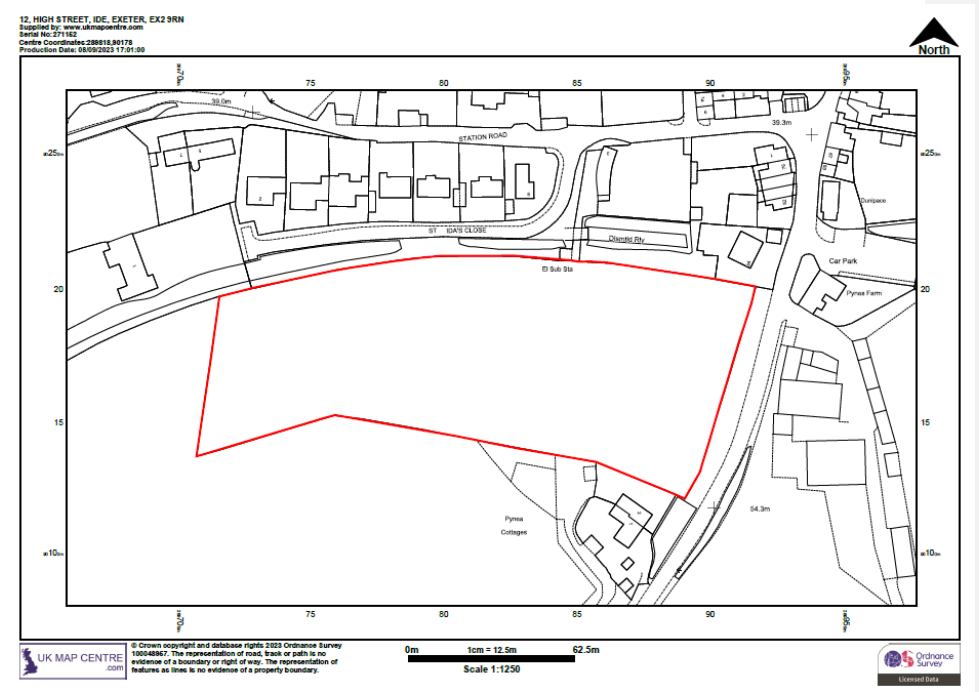
The Orchard had been used for grazing horses for 50 years. The ground was pitted, the trees and hedges neglected. This Management Plan outlines a longer-term regeneration programme as well ongoing management.

Management of the Community Orchard is overseen by Ide Parish Council with day-to-day responsibility delegated to the Ide Community Orchard Management Group.

1.1. Site

Outline site maps are shown on the next pages. Two detailed site maps with corresponding tree references are reported in Appendix 1.

Address: High Street, Ide, EX2 9RW (west of Pynes Farm)
What3words: ///cotton.loving.blame


12, HIGH STREET, IDE, EXETER, EX2 9RN
Supplied by: www.ukmapcentre.com
Serial No:271162
Centre Coordinates:289818,90178
Production Date: 08/09/2023 17:01:00
North
STATION ROAD
ST IDA'S CLOSE
Chimney Fly
Sub Sta
Car Park
Pynes Farm
Dunipace
Pynes Cottages
39.3m
54.3m
75
80
85
90
25
20
15
10
UK MAP CENTRE .com
© Crown copyright and database rights 2023 Ordnance Survey 100048957. The representation of road, track or path is no evidence of a boundary or right of way. The representation of features as lines is no evidence of a property boundary.
0m
1cm = 12.5m
62.5m
Scale 1:1250
Ordnance Survey
Licensed Data

Google

1.2. Responsibilities

Day to day management of the Orchard is overseen by the Ide Community Orchard Management Group (ICOMG) which is a working group of Ide Parish Council.

Useful contacts and sources of information are below:

Website:
Facebook:
Chair of Ide Parish Council: Nick Bradley (nickbradley.ideparishcouncil@gmail.com)
Chair of ICOMG: Mark Thomas (markideparishcouncil@outlook.com)

ICOMG consists of nine members with a diverse range of skills and knowledge. The Group meets every two months and provides regular reports to Ide Parish Council. Informally ICOMG members will meet to discuss specific task, plan events and to hold working parties.

The Orchard has become neglected and therefore an Action Plan has been produced to regenerate the soil and hedgerows to protect and enhance biodiversity, which runs alongside the routine Management Plan. Annual objectives have been agreed and are outlined in this document.

Ide Community Orchard is afforded certain legislative and planning policy protections through its historical context as an area of traditionally managed orchard habitat and protected species already present on site; as well as locally through the Ide Neighbourhood Plan where it is a designated area of Local Green Space, a community orchard and village amenity. The interest of the local village has and continues to be evident by regular visitors and support at key events. Successful events so far include Wassail, Apple Juicing, Christmas Lights, RSPB bird talk and volunteer working parties.

2. Management Plan

2.1. Scope

This document has been produced to provide a long-term vision for the management of the site and its habitat, as well as providing an over-arching strategy document to return the neglected traditional orchard habitat into a management regime that delivers biodiversity and cultural benefits for the village of Ide.

The Plan is an iterative document that will require review and revisions subject to the progress and success of the objectives set out and how the site responds.

2.2. Vision

To run a vibrant, sustainable community orchard where people of all ages can connect with nature and foster a sense of shared responsibility for the environment. Through events and working together we want to encourage individuals to contribute to a healthier, more resilient community, and enjoy the beauty and bounty of locally grown fruit.

2.3. Objectives

The main objectives of the Management Plan are as follows:

- To provide a functional area of **recreational open space** for the residents of the village of Ide, in which they can partake in physical exercise, **community** events, and reflection and relaxation;
- To protect and enhance the remaining valuable mature and young **trees** present on the site, through supplementary planting of native, locally sources stock to increase coverage and re-constitute orchard habitat;
- To reduce the loss of mature orchard trees and;
- To promote a management structure for the site in which those retained **habitats are enhanced** in a manner that both increases their inherent **biodiversity** value whilst also providing a coherent management strategy in continuity with the other cultural functions of the site as promoted within the Ide Neighbourhood Plan.

The objectives will be reviewed regularly and progress monitored. The Work Plan outlines how the ICOMG will work towards these objectives over the next two years. These will be reviewed by the ICOMG at least once in each calendar year and adapted if required every two years.

Amendments to objectives will be documented through an updated Management Plan. Achievement against each objective will be documented and published in January of each year.

3. Work Plan and detailed objectives

3.1. Recreational Space and Access

Aim: By 2025, develop and maintain accessible paths and seating areas to encourage community use, ensuring at least 80% of visitors rate the orchard as 'accessible' in annual surveys.

Owner: TBC

Action	Timeline	By whom	Measure of Success
Design and install accessible paths	Complete by Dec 2025	Contractors	100% completion of pathways; 80% positive visitor feedback
Smarten up the seating and picnic areas with sowing/planting	Complete by Jun 2025	Working parties	All seating areas complete with new plants established
Regular maintenance of paths	Quarterly, ongoing	Working parties	Paths clear and accessible throughout the year
Create and implement online survey (using Microsoft Forms for example)	Complete by Dec 2025	ICOMG Member	Survey created and sent to a sample of visitors willing to participate and give feedback

3.2. Biodiversity

Aim: Increase biodiversity by establishing at least 10 new wildlife habitats and identifying at least five new species annually through organised surveys by 2026.

Owner: TBC

Action	Timeline	By whom	Measure of Success

Install and improve wildlife habitats (e.g. bird boxes, flowers for butterflies)	Jun 2026		10 new or improved habitats for wildlife implemented, with wildlife survey undertaken in summer 2026
Regenerate existing hedgerows with native plants	Annually	Contractors	At least one hedgerow regenerated per annum
Planting of hedgerow at main entrance	Jun 2026	Working parties	Plant with native saplings the hedgerow by the new pedestrian gate.

3.3. Tree Health and Growth

Aim: Reduce the loss of mature orchard trees and nurture young fruit trees to ensure their long term viability.

Owner: TBC

Action	Timeline	By Whom	Measure of Success
Conduct annual tree survey	Summer 2025	ICOMG Member	Baseline survey undertaken, year on year improvement in tree health demonstrated with future surveys
Training of ICOMG and volunteers	Dec 2025	Contractor and trained ICOMG/volunteers	Training updates regularly shared with ICOMG members at meetings and working parties
Regular and timely pruning of mature and young trees	Completed by Dec 2025	Working parties	
At time of pruning, clearing 1m diameter round bases of young trees, re-staking trees and guards, and mulching	Completed by Dec 2025	Working parties	All young trees have been correctly maintained

3.4. Community Engagement

Aim: Host at least four community events annually, to build local support and involvement in orchard activities. Events can be continuation of established events already in the Calendar or new events identified.

Owner: TBC

Action	Timeline	By Whom	Measure of Success
Organise and host at least four community events	Dec 2025	ICOMG	Events hosted and recorded in Calendar of

			Key Events of the Management Plan; Aim for minimum 100 participants annually
Partner with schools for projects	*Begin 2026*	*ICOMG Local Schools*	*At least two school projects completed annually*

Commented [JP1]: May be ambitious at this stage!

3.5. Ecological Management

Aim: Improve soil fertility by implementing composting programs to encourage wildflowers and help manage the grass. Individual trees to be individually mulched, managing grass and weeds which may hinder their growth.

Owner: TBC

Action	Timeline	By Whom	Measure of Success
Conduct soil fertility tests	Biannually starting 2025	Contractor	10% improvement in soil nutrients by 2026

4. An outline to the year

The aim over the next ten years is to establish an effective community action group, hold two-three working parties each season to help maintain the orchard and its community links, as well as holding at least two community social events.

Additional volunteers and community engagement outside of the ICOMG may be beneficial to maintaining the orchard.

Key:

Tree Management	Paths and Access	Hedges	Grass Management	Harvesting	Events

Spring (March – April)	Summer (June - August)	Autumn (September – November)	Winter (December – February)
Grass management – mowing or grazing by sheep.	Monitor irrigation systems and watering. Summer pruning to reduce leafy growth	Harvesting fruits	Winter pruning of young trees for form and shape. Restorative pruning of old trees.
Preparing soil and mulching	Weeding and mulching to conserve moisture and improve soil health. More grass management.	Organising community events, harvest festivals etc	Structural repairs or upgrades to infrastructure e.g. paths and gates
Early pest and disease management using organic methods	Maintaining paths and infrastructure	Planting new stock in late autumn or early winter	Restoring mulch/compost heaps

	Ongoing monitoring for pests and diseases		Planting new stock late autumn or early winter
			Bulb planting to pathways

4.1. Tree Surveys and Management

Frequency: Annually

The orchard should be surveyed and the number of dead or partly dead trees recorded. The health of the trees should be recorded using the below scoring system:

Table 1: Tree Health Scoring Matrix

Score	Description
0	Tree completely dead and no signs of life
1	Tree life present but more than half the tree with dead major branches
2	Between 50-75% of tree growing but with significant dead shoots and branches present
4	More than 80% of tree healthy with new growth being produced, few or no dead branches visible

Dead trees should be removed within the year and before the next tree survey. Tree removal can be achieved by chain saw cutting the tree down in several stages or mechanically by tractor power to winch out the tree. 25% of the dead tree material should be retained to provide habitat, especially for invertebrates. The overall target is for up to 25% of dead wood in the orchard but this can take the form of both dead trees and dead branches within trees that are retained. Dead trees provide habitat for wildlife and would be a typical feature of traditional orchards.

Commented [JP2]: As per advice given in A Traditional Orchard Generic Management Plan, by Kent Orchards for Everyone Project.

Within two years of the removal of a dead tree a replacement new tree should be planted. Trees can be purchased from professional local nurseries and should be native or of heritage type, alternatively in the future, trees could be produced by grafting.

All new trees (whether replacement or new) should be propagated on a vigorous rootstock. The varieties chosen should reflect the list below:

Table X: Variety Choice (listed in ripening season groups)

Commented [JP3]: Need some help to provide list of trees planted and when they ripen

Early Season	Mid Season	Late Season

4.2. Grass and Boundary Management

Area/Habitat	Management Action/Frequency	Frequency	When	Notes

Grass	Cutting	Annual	July	Where possible, cut grass to be removed upon cutting.
Hedgerows	Cutting	Biannual	February October	Roadside hedges should be maintained in accordance with DAERA
Scrub	Maintain through cutting/strimming	Annual	July	Maintain bramble patches for habitat preservation. Monitor to ensure it does not become intrusive.

Closer mowing of paths and community areas will be required to ensure access remains safe for the community.

4.3. Harvesting

Regular harvesting of fruit encourages balanced growth within the tree. The majority of tree stock is still young so further consideration will be needed in the future to manage the harvest of the newly planted stock.

Current stock harvests are utilised by the local community and at the annual Apple Juicing Day organised by the ICOMG.

4.4. Ecology and Diversity

Ide Community Orchard presents considerable diversity and protected species including the Hazel Dormouse. These have been identified as present in key areas of the hedgerow as noted in Appendix 2. Other identified species include the Redwing and Fieldfare.

Commented [JP4]: Get locations/map image from Julian

Over the first five years a base survey should be undertaken to support our understanding of the orchard. Annual updates could be undertaken by encouraging local interested groups (e.g. Ide Primary School) or through events organised by the ICOMG to complete ad-hoc surveys to monitor:

- Butterfly counts
- Bat walk
- Moth trapping
- Lichen

4.5. Record Keeping

A diary of management such as key dates and contact details for grass and hedgerow maintenance as well as pest and disease management should be held and maintained by TBC. This would include key dates for community events and will create a valuable database to inform future decisions.

5. Regeneration Work Plan

5.1. Hedgerows

The hedgerows have been neglected. Each hedgerow should be cleared and laid, with new native saplings planted to replenish and regenerate.

The hedgerow at the main entrance should be re-planted following the installation of the new pedestrian gate.

5.2. Grass and soil

Significant areas of bramble and perennial weeds (e.g. dock) have colonised the grass in areas and whilst some areas are helpful for conservation larger areas may be in danger of becoming too large affecting access, management and recreational use for the community. Spot treatment of these areas may be initially required to prevent the spread of these areas withing the orchard with any regrowth treated following mowing. Treatment may be required for a minimum of two seasons to achieve control of problem areas.

Soil analysis may be undertaken in the future and used to support any manuring or fertilising programme that may be required. Thereafter analysis would only be required every five years, unless recommended differently by the supplier.

6. Calendar of key events

January • Wassail	**February**	**March**	**April** • Blossom Day??
May	**June** • Solstice	**July** • Big Butterfly Count	**August**
September	**October** • Apple Picking Day • Apple Juicing Day	**November**	**December** • Christmas Lights

7. Finances

7.1. Annual budget

In advance of each financial year the ICOMG will submit to IPC a proposed spending budget for maintenance and capital works.

Expenditure against the budget will be monitored through the Receipts and Payments Report and included as a standing item for each meeting of the ICOMG. Predicted and incurred overspend against the budget will be reported to IPC via the Clerk.

7.2. Fundraising and other income streams

Current income streams include:

- Tree sponsorship
- Grants for eligible projects (e.g. Viridor)
- Regular giving by direct debit by individuals
- Ide Green Spaces community events – e.g. concert, Revel, Fashion Show, Pancake Breakfast, Burns Night, juice sales

Other sources of income need to be established to ensure funds are available in the future for routine maintenance.

8. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Tree maps and references

Locations and identification of mature trees

Locations and identification of new planted trees

Tree reference	Family	Rootstock	Species	Sponsorship status and notes
1	Apple	MM106	Suntan	Sponsored
2	Apple	MM106	Lucombe's Pine	Sponsored
3	Apple	MM106	Ashmead's Kernel	Sponsored
4	Apple	M25	Blenheim Orange	Sponsored
5	Apple	MM106	Ashmead's Kernel	sponsored
6	Apple	MM106	Lucombe's Pine	Sponsored
7	Apple	M25	Ashmead's Kernel	
8	Apple	MM106	Farmer's Glory	
9	Apple	MM106	Ashmead's Kernel	sponsored
10	Apple	MM106	Lucombe's Pine	sponsored
11	Apple	MM106	Blenheim Orange	sponsored
12	Apple	MM106	Cornish Aromatic	sponsored
13	Apple	M25	Blenheim Orange	sponsored
14	Apple	MM106	Cornish Aromatic	sponsored
15	Apple	M25	Hangy Down	sponsored
16	Apple	MM106	Farmer's Glory	sponsored
17	Apple	MM106	Bramley	sponsored
18	Apple	MM106	Bramley	sponsored
19	Apple	M25	Bramley	
20	Apple	MM106	Farmer's Glory	sponsored
21	Apple	M25	Bramley	
22	Apple	MM106	Farmer's Glory	sponsored
23	Apple	MM106	Rosemary Russet	sponsored
24	Apple		Jonagold	sponsored
25	Apple	MM106	Ashmead's Kernel	sponsored
26	Apple	M25	Hangy Down	
27	Apple	M25	Hangy Down	sponsored
28	Apple	MM106	Rosemary Russet	
29	Apple	M25	Hangy Down	
30	Apple	M25	Teign Harvey	sponsored

31	Apple	MM106	Blenheim Orange	sponsored
32	Apple	MM106	Lucombe's Pine	
33	Apple	MM106	Rosemary Russet	
34	Apple		Elstar	Planted new March 2023
35	Apple		Sterappel	Planted new March 2023
36	Apple	M25	Teign Harvey	Sponsored
37	Apple	M25	Upton Pyne	Sponsored
38	Apple	M25	Whimple Wonder	Sponsored
39	Apple	M25	Whimple Wonder	
40	Pear	-	Conference	
41	Apple	-	Gloster	Planted new March 2023
42	Pear	-	Conference	sponsored
43	Apple	M25	Upton Pyne	sponsored
44	Apple	M25	Upton Pyne	sponsored
45	Apple	M25	Sunset	sponsored
46	Apple	M25	Rosemary Russet	sponsored
47	Pear	-	Conference	sponsored
48	Apple	M9	Cornish Aromatic	
49	Apple	M25	Upton Pyne	sponsored
50	Apple	M25	Sunset	Sponsored
51	Apple	M9	Devonshire Quarrenden	Sponsored
52	Apple		Idared	Sponsored
53	Apple	MM106	Rosemary Russet	
54	Pear	-	Williams	Sponsored
55	Pear	-	Beth	
56	Apple	M25	Whimple Wonder	
57	Apple	MM106	Ashmead's Kernel	
58	Apple	-	Cox's Orange Pippin	Planted new spring 2022
59	Apple	MM106	Blenheim Orange	
60	Apple	M25	Bramley	
61	Apple	M25	Whimple Wonder	Sponsored

62	Apple	MM106	Ashmead's Kernel	
63	Apple	M25	Whimple Wonder	
64	Apple	MM106	Farmer's Glory	
65	Apple	MM106	Farmer's Glory	
66	Plum	-	Victoria	Planted new Nov 2021
67	Apple	-	Gloster	Sponsored
68	Apple	MM106	Cornish Aromatic	Sponsored
69	Apple		Granny Smith	Dedicated
70	Apple		Elstar	Platinum Jubilee tree
71	Apple		Jonagold	
72	Apple	M25	Teign Harvey	Sponsored
73	Apple	M25	Teign Harvey	Sponsored
A	Apple		Bramley	Mature original
B	Apple		Unsure	Mature original
C	Apple		Bramley ?	Fallen – Storm Ciaran 2023
D	Apple		Unsure	Mature original
E	Apple		Unsure	Mature original
F	Apple		Unsure	Mature original
G	Apple		Unsure	Fallen – Storm Ciaran 2023
H	Apple		Unsure	Mature original
I	Apple		Bramley	Mature original
J	Apple		Bramley	Mature original
K	Apple		Bramley ?	Mature original
L	Apple		Bramley	Mature original
M	Apple		Cider apple	Fallen – Storm Eunice 2022
N	Apple		Unsure	Mature original
O	Apple		Cider apple	Mature original - red and sweet
P	Apple		Traditional variety	Mature original - partly fallen but still fruiting
Q	Apple		Traditional variety	Mature original - partly fallen but still fruiting
R	Apple		Cider apple	Mature original - pale and very dry
S	Apple		Bramley	Mature original

Appendix 2 – Location of protected species

Commented [JP5]: Need to obtain this information