



HASLEMERE TOWN COUNCIL

Grover's Garden – Laurel Management

BACKGROUND

In August last year, the committee agreed the following work to be done as outlined in the Biodiversity Audit report the Council had commissioned in 2024.

1. To reduce rhododendron and laurel growth within Grover's Garden.
2. To instruct the Council's contractor to undertake a hard cut-back of the inner area referred to for the purposes of this paper as "**Laurel Island**" (see overleaf).
3. To manage the two outer areas marked **Clump A** and **Clump B** through a Councillor / Biodiversity Group / volunteer-led activity, with ongoing monitoring.
4. To allocate up to **£2,000** for the hard cut-back of Laurel Island, funded as follows:
 - £1,000 from the Biodiversity Audit Budget
 - £1,000 from the Ad Hoc Maintenance BudgetAny underspend to be used for topping out taller laurel and rhododendron specimens.

Progress to Date

Commercial Grounds Care (CGC) was able to cut back approximately one half of the total area of Laurel Island for the agreed budget. The arisings were chipped on site by the Project and Amenities Officer (PAO). Clearance and removal of remaining material is now reliant on local volunteers, who have assisted the PAO for approximately two hours on a Saturday morning once per month.

Request for Further Works

Given the progress achieved and the positive feedback from the volunteers, it is proposed that the process be repeated in order to try and clear the remaining area of Laurel Island. The PAO would again arrange for chipping on site, with volunteers assisting with the clearance at no cost to the Council.

Future Management

Looking ahead to the next financial year, the Council may wish to consider allocating further expenditure for the removal of laurel stumps from the ground. As the laurel clearance progresses, it is exposing the area currently used by CGC for depositing green waste. Given that CGC are not contracted to remove green waste from the site, alternative arrangements should be explored. One option is to construct a leaf cage and compost bays towards the edge of the site, near the electrical substation. This would provide a designated area for green waste management and support ongoing site maintenance.

RECOMMENDATION:

To allocate up to **£2,200** for the hard cut-back of Laurel Island. To be paid from the biodiversity audit budget (£1,800) and the balance from the Amenities budget.

Results of Field Survey - Grovers Gardens (Site B)



- Essential Secondary Codes:**
 32 - Scattered trees
- Additional Secondary Codes:**
 108 - Moen
 217 - Woodland open space
 509 - Acidic substrate
 516 - Active management
 524 - Invasive non-native species
 526 - Accessible natural greenspace
 532 - Scattered grass
 847 - Introduced shrub

Client Name:
 Haslemere Town Council

Project:
 Haslemere Biodiversity Audit

Figure Number:
 Figure 2b

Version Number: 001

Date: 30.07.2024



Inaugural implementation work by volunteer community groups (selected, localised laurel removal), during late Sept.



Habitat locations and extent are approximate.
 Basemap taken from Google Earth Pro.

- Key:**
- Approximate Site Boundary
 - g1d - Other Lowland Acid Grassland
 - w1h6 - Other Woodland: Mixed; Mainly Conifer
 - u1b5 - Other Developed Land
 - h2b - Non-native and Ornamental Hedgerows
 - Target Note