



ORCHARD PLANNING AND MAINTENANCE SYNOPSIS

This is the proposed synopsis for the orchard planning and maintenance seminar we are proposing to run for the Cumbria Biodiversity Data Group this on February 13th.

The target audience comprises members of community groups across Cumbria (mostly in the north of the county). The session will cover the planting of new orchards as well as care of existing orchards and will include an indoor theory session and an outdoor practical session.

Note that, depending on weather conditions, the practical session might be run earlier in the day.

The benefits of attending the seminar should be reduced risk of failure through disease, damage or physiological problems and better quality and quantity of fruit.

Particular attention will be directed at the issues facing growers in the Cumbrian terrain and climate.

The course is divided into a number of small modules, each approximately 10-30 minutes long.

There will be ample opportunities to discuss specific issues with local experts.

Participants should research and bring background information for any specific projects that they have in mind.

This could include:

1. The type (apples/pears etc), number and size of trees at the site (or which they wish to grow).
2. To take photographs / make drawings of their site, including any surrounding trees and geographical features and orientation.
3. Dig a test pit 2ft x 2ft x 2ft and (a) check the depth of topsoil, observe structure and layers, and (b) fill it with water and observe how long it takes to drain (if at all!).
4. Take one or more soil samples from a depth of about 6 inches below the surface, sieve out stones and organic matter and dry it. Ideally carry out a pH test on the sample.
5. For a community orchard, a description of how the site is / will be managed.

A) WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION (10 MINS)

B) PLANNING NEW ORCHARDS (1 HR 20 MINS)

B1) SITE ASSESSMENT AND PREPARATION (20 MINS)

B2) TREE SELECTION, LAYOUT AND SPACING (40 MINS)

B3) PLANTING AND CARE OF YOUNG PLANTS (20 MINS)

BREAK (15 MINS)

C) ORCHARD MAINTENANCE (1 HR 30 MINS)

- C1) SITE ASSESSMENT (10 MINS)
- C2) TREE HEALTH AND MAINTENANCE (30 MINS)
- C3) ECOLOGY AND BIODIVERSITY (30 MINS)
- C4) HARVESTING, PROCESSING, AND USE OF PRODUCE (20 MINS)

LUNCH (45 MINS)

D) HANDS-ON DEMONSTRATIONS / PRACTICAL (1 HR)

- D1) ASSESSING TREE CONDITION
- D2) PRUNING
- D3) GRAFTING

BREAK (10 MINS)

E) MAKING IT WORK IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES (50 MINS)

- E1) COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND GOVERNANCE (20 MINS)
- E2) CASE STUDIES AND SHARED LEARNING (30 MINS)