

## **Whittlesey Climate Leaders - January 2026 Report**

**Replaced 22 trees** in Platinum Wood following the dry hot Summer where some of the newest plantings in 2024 suffered. Some replaced trees have been re-planted so that if they recover – they can remain as part of the wood.

**Copsing** of selected Hazel and Willow trees to generate new growth and potential weaving rods, whips and withies for crafters, or to make fences, winbreaks. We have also harvested Willow cuttings to create Willow hedgerows across our Wildflower area.

**Pruning and Grafting.** Working with PECT we pruned Apple, Pear and Cherry trees to provide scions for their rootstock. The intention is to share successfully grafter trees across several community orchards in Peterborough and Fenland.

I attended a **Fens Perspectives workshop** in March 02-12-2025.

I attended a meeting with Cambridgeshire County Council to discuss **Community Nature in Fenland**.

**Eamonn Dorling**

***The following suggestion was shared with members of the Climate Leaders group: PTO***

## Growing Your Own Willow Hedge (Fedge)

Creating a beautiful Willow living hedge, or "Fedge," is a rewarding project. Here's a friendly guide to get you started:

1. **Plant on Site:** It's best to plant your new hedge directly in the desired location rather than starting elsewhere and then transferring it. If any rootless whips don't take, you can make free replacements the following year.
2. **Source Your Whips:** If you've trimmed Willow trees in previous years, you can use the resulting cuttings as whips. First-year cuttings are thinner, while second-year ones are ideal. Feel free to mix both for variety and flexibility.
3. **Timing is Everything:** Avoid planting during severe frosts, as frozen ground is challenging to work with. Wait until the weather warms up a bit, but make sure to finish planting before April.
4. **Spacing:** Plan to insert each whip roughly every four inches (about 100mm) along your hedge line.
5. **Teamwork Makes the Dream Work:** The process is smoother with two people. One person can "dib" with a large screwdriver or similar tool to make holes, while the other follows behind with whips, ready to insert them as the holes are drilled.
6. **Watering:** After the last major frost, water the whips well, repeating in April. Future watering will depend on the weather and your fedge's specific needs.
7. **Check and Replace:** In late autumn, review your hedge. If any whips didn't survive, look for donor trees to provide replacements at about the year's end.

Enjoy the process and watch your living hedge grow and flourish!

