

TEACHER Support Sheet 6A

CARE & MAINTENANCE

AN CHOILL
BHEAG

Some of An Choill Bheag trees will grow more quickly than others:
Alder, Birch, Elder will grow quickly - **Holly and Oak** will grow more slowly.

Some Care and Maintenance Tips:

- 1 For the first few years, there will be very little maintenance, aside from the jobs listed below.
- 2 Do not be afraid to do some appropriate pruning when required!
- 3 If there are any branches that *are sticking out into the path/walking area*, simply cut them back cleanly to the main trunk. Ideally this is done in winter, when trees are dormant. But do it at any time of the year if needed.
- 4 If there are any branches that are **damaged, dead, diseased or dangerous**, then simply cut them back cleanly to the trunk also.

Annual maintenance:

- ➔ Get the students out to trample any grass that is growing around the trees. This means you hold the tree with one hand and trample/flatten any grass growing up against the trunk with your feet. – good exercise! Add another layer of cardboard only if required, if grass is growing up through mulch. Cover any cardboard with grass clippings, leaves and bark mulch
- ➔ Strim or mow the grass in the circular classroom area
- ➔ Strim or mow around the edges of the perimeter of the woodlands (or logs if they are there)
- ➔ Do not strim next to the trees as they can get ring-barked and this will kill them
- ➔ See calendar of care and maintenance (*Teacher Support Sheet no. 6B*)
- ➔ Mulching – use grass clippings, leaves and bark to mulch the area. Whatever you have easy access to
- ➔ Do not spray any chemicals in or around An Choill Bheag (and preferably the entire school grounds)
- ➔ Let the students do the work – with mulching and other jobs that can be done as a class, with buckets and wheelbarrows

Health & Safety when caring for An Choill Bheag:

- 1 When shown how to use tools properly students can learn the skills to use them safely.
- 2 Give clear instruction and demonstrate the job first
- 3 Use a clean sharp secateur, loppers or saw, depending on the size of the branch to be cut and under supervision
- 4 Always use common sense when working with tools!

Tools Required for Pruning Branches:

- Secateurs (Snips)
- Loppers
- Folded saw (for cutting small branches)
- Hand Saw (for cutting larger branches)
- Gloves