

Item 7i Agenda: Rhu and Shandon Community Council Meeting 21050211

Japanese Knotweed: Report for the year ending February 2015

Rhu and Shandon set up a Knotweed task force in December 2012 and since that time have been monitoring outbreaks of the weed. We have informed the landowners of outbreaks on their land and all have been very cooperative and have already started treatment or will do so in the spring. There are still a few unclaimed outbreaks which we will target in 2015. Our task force will continue to monitor the situation and we encourage all residents to be on the alert for rogue plants in their gardens or near their properties. Up to now, walkers, with or without dogs, have been amongst our best sources of information.

The outbreak which is causing most concern is the one along the Lochside. Here the knotweed and the self seeded scrub trees and bushes are damaging the sloping sea wall. Argyll and Bute have agreed to cut down the larger trees before the sap rises and then will spray the area later to stop re-growth. They also intend to spray the knotweed in May. It will take several years of treatment to eradicate it completely

It is my opinion that the dead knotweed canes should be burnt now. In places they are growing in dense clumps and if they remain, their presence will interfere with the spraying of the new growth. Argyll and Bute are not intending to do this; the officer pointed out, justifiably, that the canes are dead. This is true but their presence will render the spraying less effective as the spray will ricochet off the canes. Their continued presence will also make it more difficult to cut down the smaller trees and bushes which are growing in amongst the knotweed and whose roots, along with the knotweed roots are damaging the sea wall. In the past, residents have helped keep the scrub at bay by cutting it down, but in the past few years, in many parts, they have been unable to do this because of the knotweed.

If we continue to make the progress that we have this past year, it is not an unreasonable hope that Rhu and Shandon will be free of Knotweed before the end of the term of office of the current Community Councillors. Now that would be something to be proud of!

Jean Cook
February 2015

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