the soil allowing the trees to thrive in nutrient poor soils. On reclaimed sites the native alder (*Alnus glutinosa* sometimes does not thrive because site conditions can be too dry but Italian alder (*Alnus cordata*) and red alder (*Alnus rubra*) can both thrive in dry conditions and would be ideal for planting on this site. Aspen is another pioneer species able to colonise and thrive in poor site conditions and is known to absorb high levels of pollutants and is therefore an ideal species for land reclamation. Other species such as rowan, whitebeam, field maple, Corsican pine and hawthorn are also tolerant of reclaimed land and would be suitable for planting in The Children's Wood. Holly and hazel should be planted to help create an understorey in existing woodland areas. All new planting will require a high level of aftercare to ensure establishment including watering during extended dry periods.

Trees should be planted as 60 – 90cm forest transplants into pre-prepared cultivated beds in accordance with the specification in Appendix 3. It may be possible to establish trees without importing top-soil as specified in Appendix 3. If top-soil is not to be imported to the site, smaller planting stock should be used (1 + 1 <60cm forest transplants).

Seed sources for larger secondary species are likely to be lacking in the wider area and site conditions will be too harsh at this stage for trees to establish. It might be possible, however, to pit-plant some larger species (such as oaks) planted as advanced stock provided that they receive a high level of aftercare. Planting of some large feature trees within the meadow area or near the entrances would be appropriate but this is an expensive option that is not guaranteed success so should be limited to a few feature trees at this stage. A specification for planting advanced stock in this location is given in Appendix 4.

There are opportunities to undertake further planting of fruit trees to expand and enhance the orchard area. Pit-planting is also recommended for establishing orchard trees although smaller stock such as whips (100-125cm) or feathered whips (up to 175cm with side branches) would be appropriate planted into smaller pits

(about one third larger than the size of the trees roots), single staked with stakes no more than one third the height of the tree (and at least 60cm below ground) and backfilled as per the specification in Appendix 4.

There are significant opportunities throughout the site to enhance the biodiversity value of the woodland. Efforts should be made to introduce more plant species that benefit pollinating insects as well as species that provide winter cover and foraging habitat for birds and small mammals. Invertebrate interest could be enhanced through the development of a deadwood management plan where deadwood habitat can be safely created (see http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/FCPG020.pdf/$FILE/FCPG020.pdf and http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/content/learn/conservation/2544404/LAN_-_the_treatment_of_deadwood.pdf).

The Committee should consider the development of a formal biological recording and monitoring system to clearly identify species present on site and use the information to demonstrate how the value and interests of the site change and develop over time. The Committee should liaise with Biological Recording in Scotland for more help and information (see http://www.brisc.org.uk/). Established volunteer programmes and citizen science initiatives could potentially assist with site monitoring and recording e.g. BTO's Birdtrack (http://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/birdtrack/about), The Bumblebee Conservation Trust's BeeWalk (http://bumblebeeconservation.org/get-involved/surveys/beewalk/) etc. There may even be opportunities for a long-term study monitoring and assessing the rate and extent of the recovery of the site.

Rhododendron ponticum is becoming established within the site and should be removed. Removal of non-native invasive species should be an on-going management objective of site management. See http://www.nonnativespecies.org/home/index.cfm and

http://www.plantlife.org.uk/our_work/campaigns/inns/ for more information on how to recognise invasive species and best practice methods for their control.

Specific Management Recommendations by Compartment (refer to Drawing Number 2016/001/01):

Area W1

W1 should be managed as an amenity woodland. This attractive birch copse is well sited, providing a natural extension to the existing woodland on the adjacent site and providing separation between the community garden and the adjacent flats. Management should include the removal of some of the suppressing ground vegetation (particularly the ivy) along the northern boundary. The establishing holly should be encouraged to develop along the boundary and any encroaching laurel and *ponticum* from the adjacent site should be cut back.

Ash regeneration should be removed or thinned out so that only a few groups of stems are retained (which can eventually be thinned out in favour of the better stems left to develop into standards). The birch should be thinned out in favour of better stems to allow development of the crowns of the trees.

Young birch regeneration should be thinned in favour of single, straight stems located in more open parts of the site (e.g. the woodland edges) where they will not be suppressed by other trees and will have adequate space and light for development. Some understorey planting would be appropriate, particularly of hazel.

Soil improvement through gentle cultivation with hand tools (avoiding damage to any roots) followed by mulching should be undertaken annually to improve soil conditions.

Photograph 3: *W1 with community garden in the foreground*

The ground vegetation in area W1 is becoming rank and dominated by aggressive weeds. The sward would benefit from some weeding, seeding and the introduction of a mowing regime (similar to that proposed below for the meadow). Some planting of (native) bluebells and snowdrops would be appropriate, particularly along the northern and western boundaries once the ivy and bramble is under control. Care should be taken to ensure that only native bluebells (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) are planted and not the invasive Spanish bluebell.

The path network should be rationalised so that compaction and trampling is minimised and the areas no longer used restored through cultivation and seeding or planted with understorey species.

Area W2

For the purposes of management this compartment has been divided into 3 sub-compartments (see Drawing Number 2016/001/01 for approximate boundaries).

Compartment W2a

This area of woodland is on and below the bank running along the southern boundary and extends north into the former pitches. The woodland is dominated by widely spaced young birch and willow regeneration with thicket stage ash and sycamore regeneration along the eastern boundary adjacent to the tenements. The bottom of the bank appears to represent the southern extent of the blaes pitches and it is likely that the soil depth and conditions are more favourable on top of the bank and along the eastern boundary.

Trees growing along the eastern boundary fence should be removed to prevent further damage to the fence and the fence should be repaired. The ash and sycamore regeneration within this part of the site should be thinned in favour of the better ash specimens.

The garden escapees (particularly the *Lonicera nitida*) should be removed from the eastern strip of the site and supplementary planting should be carried out with hazel, holly. Several of the established birch trees within this area have developed stem sweep and should be removed once the ash saplings are more established. The aim here should be to encourage the development of low-growing woodland with occasional large trees so that the woodland does not become so dense that it causes excessive shading of the adjacent flats.

The ash, birch and willow regeneration along the edge of the bank should be thinned out and managed as coppice as it is likely to be vulnerable to windthrow. A coppice cutting cycle of about 7 years should be suitable and will guarantee a steady supply of woodfuel, arisings for deadwood management etc. The birch and willow on the former pitches is widely spaced in W2a and the area is clearly well-used for activities and events. This part of the site should be managed to encourage development of mature birch standards in groups with some willow with maintained open space between the groups to accommodate on-going recreational