

**To our Neighbours and surrounding Community:**

**RAF Croughton has, as you may have seen, undertaken some tree felling along the external fence line on the B4031.**

**Firstly, we would like to acknowledge we should have done a better job at communicating and informing our community of the visual change to the surrounding area. We will continue to work on channels of communications to allow us to work with our local community proactively in the future.**

**I can inform you that this project was requested by the USVF with the process being undertaken via the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO – The lead Ministry of Defence agency for planning, acquiring land and delivering maintenance /construction contracts for US Visiting Forces in the UK).**

**I can also reassure you the process followed the standard Forestry Commission practice for this type of application. As part of the application the Forestry Commission carries out various in-depth checks, including site visits, to determine the detail of what is to be removed and what level of permission is required. During this process It was determined these were trees, and not a hedgerow, therefore it was a Tree Felling Licence that was required, with no requirement for a planning application. This licence was submitted, and approved in Feb 2020.**

**The Forestry Commission do carry out their own consultation process when reviewing all applications. I would recommend contacting them for any specific request of information you may have reference the above.**

**It is also noted that as part of the agreement that we will “restock” (plant) an equivalent area of mixed broadleaf trees, by June 2025.**

**From the current state of play today (4 Nov 2020) we expect to see some contractual activity while the schedule of works is finalised and the area ‘neatened’ up.**

**We would also like to reassure you that RAF Croughton does take these issues seriously and are fully on board with protecting woodland where possible. We have an installation policy of replacing any felled trees with at least 2 additional trees in their place, as standard. This, as well as other planned woodlands expansions, has meant over the last 12 years RAF Croughton has planted over 800 trees on the base, and will continue to do so into the future.**

**If you should have any further queries regarding the above, or any other activities at RAF Croughton then please contact our Community Relations Adviser, Laura Haddy.**