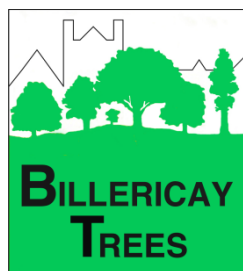


The Mayflower Pilgrim 400 Apple! – The Billericay Tree Warden Group (BTW)
On Sunday the 4th April the following tree planting event was undertaken at the Festival Gardens



Recently by chance, we learnt about such an apple tree from the Plymouth Tree Group who then put us in touch with the tree nursery down in Tavistock Devon that had cultivated them. They had produced forty trees that were



mostly distributed in the Plymouth area for schools and community groups to plant but luckily they still had a few left in stock. We then approached our Town Council to see if we could plant two of these trees to further celebrate the 400th anniversary of last year. Enthusiasm for the idea ensued and it was agreed that the trees would be planted in **Festival Gardens** where there is ample space. The BTC has been pleased to fund the project. The Pilgrim 400 Apple is a maiden tree that will produce a fruit that is round and rosy, culinary and sweet as it matures. It is known that apples formed an important part of the early colonists' diet. In 2017, DNA tests confirmed that the tree was unique and in 2018 the Pilgrim 400 Apple was officially registered as a local cultivar and has been provided with a **Certificate of Provenance**. The idea was originally born out of a conversation between a Celia Steven of Plymouth, the granddaughter of a nurseryman, and John Stirling of Nottinghamshire a horticulturist. The two metre high bronze sculpture of the Mayflower and the Pilgrims is by John Doubleday (the same artist who sculpted the Lake Meadows "The Child in the Park") and is featured in the **Jim Shields Garden** at the intersection of the High Street and Western Road. Protocol dictated that a BTC Councillor was unable to attend because of the forthcoming May elections. However, we were joined by Brian Hughes, the Chairman of our town's BMTA Mayflower 2020 Committee, Julian Whybra also of that Committee and wife Pat. The photograph shows from left to right, Nathan Hume, the BTW's ecologist, Julian, Pat, Brian and John Smart, the Chairman of the BTW. Photograph by Neil Sumner, BTW member and local naturalist. Planting had been delayed until after March 29th to keep in line with the Government's Covid-19 lockdown rules.

The Billericay Tree Wardens are a subgroup of the Billericay Town Council – Our monthly News-sheet is published on the BTC's website - BTW contact = billericaytreewardens@gmail.com

