

An earthy solution

RAMMED earth bollards are the latest innovation being tested by an enthusiastic Dwellingup work group.

The idea began when Lane Poole Reserve park ranger John Hanel began despairing over the high maintenance costs of replacing vandalised, uprooted and burnt wooden bollards.

"People are using them for firewood, splitting off bits for kindling or burning them whole," John said.

"We have some plans to overcome the firewood shortage in the valley, but in the meantime I had to do something about the bollards.

"The life of a jarrah bollard is 5-6 years but the rammed earth prototypes look promising and should last a lot longer.

"Production is still on a trial basis, so construction costs are not yet clear, but I estimate about \$10 each bollard—about double that of a jarrah bollard."

Allen Clarke and Keith Harris are the forest workmen working on the development of an efficient

by Tammie Reid

method of producing a top quality product.

"We're working smarter so we can bring the costs right down," said Allen.

"John, Keith and I designed and made the moulds but the first lot took us two hours just to get the cement mixture to come out cleanly.

"We're now making non-stick moulds, by lining them with Comprox gel.

Once loaded with Keith's "special bollard recipe" the cement mixer produces three bollards, with a turnaround time for another three, in 15 minutes.

Keith's recipe is four parts high quality Dwellingup dieback-free gravel to one part of cement plus a capful of iron oxide powder.

This mixture produces bollards with a natural Lane Poole lateritic soil-look, so they will blend with the surrounding site.

"We need to make some shorter sizes for those situations where we hit

rock and can't dig them in; using jarrah was no problem we just trimmed them with a chainsaw," Keith said.

The first trial is to use 100 rammed earth bollards to mark the entry and speed-hump system at Baden-Powell campsite.

Other sites targeted for the more robust, non-burnable bollard will be

Tony's Bend and Charlie's flat.

For more information or an update on this project please contact John Hanel or Mike Tagliaferi at CALM Dwellingup office on (09) 538 1078.

Orders can be arranged with the bollard mix and colour adjusted to suit other landscape colours and textures.

Tree tops tour



Premier Richard Court with a forest giant. Photo courtesy Gary Merrin, *The Sunday Times*

Allen Clarke, right, holds the funnel steady while Keith Harris loads one of the bollard moulds — a new idea aimed at stemming the cost of vandalism.

Photo by Tammie Reid

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