

Report From Haughley Biodiversity and Wildlife Working Group

The group consists of 7 members of the parish and the parish council clerk and meets every other month to discuss relevant projects that may enhance both the wildlife and the quality of life within both the residential area and surrounding countryside of Haughley.

One of our main concerns was the loss of wildlife areas caused by the two new large house building schemes in the village and how we could replace some of this by altering the management of some of the green spaces in Haughley. Several of these areas had lost trees and many of them had no value to pollinator invertebrates, which in turn removes food sources for many types of birds including our lovely swifts. In many areas of the U.K. this problem is being addressed by reducing mowing of urban green spaces to allow plants to flower and adding additional small areas of pollinator plants. Our initial consultation with residents in several suitable areas met with mixed views which resulted in us focusing initially on a scheme involving St Mary's Ave and the adjoining grassed area of Fishpond Way.

The St Mary's/ Fishponds Way scheme is a tree planting project supported by Mid Suffolk Council who are providing the trees to us free of charge as part of their wider tree planting initiative. The first 15 fruit trees and 2 bird cherry trees were planted on the 30th January 2022 by local residents and their children. The rest of the tree planting will hopefully be completed in the autumn.

In April 2022 a small wildflower project was carried out on The Folly green which hopefully will give a visually attractive display and a very useful invertebrate food source.

The group have also taken an interest in the cycle path from Haughley New Street to Nareys Garden Centre as this has been evolving into a fascinating area for wildflowers and last year supported thousands of pyramidal and bee orchids. We have held discussions with the county ecologist team and highways department about the future management of the area.

Over the next few months we hope to enhance a small strip of land alongside the playing field hedgerow with some wildflower planting.

However, probably the most exciting potential future project is the adoption and management of the large meadow attached to the Eve Meadow housing development. This covers several acres and has been designated as a wildflower and pollinator meadow by the planning permission given to the development. This will obviously be a long term project but will be an exciting one for the community and wildlife.

There are many other great wildlife areas throughout the parish which I will briefly mention as they form part of our village biodiversity.

Gallowsfield Wood and adjoining wildflower meadow.

The Cricket in Haughley Green.

Dagworth and Spikes Lane.

Also worthy of mention are two roadside nature reserves. One is alongside Fishpond Way towards Tothill which supports a colony of one of the last remaining areas of wild cornflowers in East Anglia and the other reserve is the road embankment towards the Tothill Roundabout which hosts a huge number of orchids and other wildflowers.

It's also worth mentioning that during this period that several of the committee members formed the nucleus of Haughley Nature Watch which meets monthly, holds talks, walks and has an active WhatsApp group with approximately 30 users reporting their nature sightings.

I hope this report gives us all pride in what a small village can do to enhance the environment for both humans and wildlife.







Report presented by Gavin Deans (Chairman of Haughley Biodiversity and Wildlife Working Group)