

# Report From Haughley Biodiversity and Wildlife Working Group

April 2023 - April 2024

The group consists of 5 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. We already have two large managed areas within the parish that are very important to the biodiversity of the parish, Gallowsfield Woods and The Cricket, and our aim is to add to these areas.

The St Mary's Ave / Fishponds Way tree planting project has been completed over the winter 2023/2024 with the planting of a large number of Daffodil bulbs around the base of the trees which have bloomed well this spring and hopefully will increase in numbers over the next few years. The fruit trees are now starting to blossom so it's a good time to assess for any non viable plants and it seems that we have only one apple tree that will need replacement. Not a bad result considering we planted nearly 40 apple, pear, rowan and hawthorn.

Orchards are now becoming recognised as important wildlife areas as the trees mature at a much earlier age compared to traditional woodland species and we are pleased that we now have 3 parish managed orchards. St Mary's/ Fishponds, The Allotment Orchard and the newly planted orchard at Gallowsfield Woods.

Other much simpler projects also had a meaningful impact. At the end of April we put up signs ( the second year that we have done this ) on the verge between the road and ditch at the junction of The Folly and Splashwood to request that the verge isn't cut during the summer months. This allows the Bee Orchids to flower which used to be mown down in previous years. The signs were then removed at the end of the year to allow the verge to be cut.

Some experimental projects didn't work out as planned such as the creation of three wildflower beds on The Folly green. The seeds sown were a very colourful mix of wildflower substitutes but these were far too vigorous especially when combined with the 2023 summer high rainfall. We decided to remove these beds and hand the area to the management of the parishioners living around the green under the supervision of the Parish Council.

In the year ahead we will hopefully take over the management of the new wildflower meadow that is been created next to the Bellway estate on fishponds way. However, the wildflower sowing that they have carried out so far doesn't look very successful so we expect that to be improved by the Bellway team.

Gavin Deans  
Chairman  
April 2024