

Waldringfield Church Field Trust Report to the Parish Meeting 2016



Waldringfield Church Field Trust was established in 2003 to manage the Church Field, an area of 5.2ha which was given to the village by the late Dr Tom Waller. The field has a maintained open grass area for activities such as football and kite flying, different habitats for wildlife including hedges, shrub and tree plantations and grassland and maintained short grass pathways for walking or jogging. There are three picnic tables and several benches, some sponsored by individuals from the community.

There is a junior size practice goal for football and a basketball practice area which was enlarged in 2012-3 and the post replaced with a stronger model. This was funded by Suffolk Coastal District Council Sports Fund.

The field continues to be used by Waldringfield School for cross country and by the football club organised on Saturdays by Duncan Andrew. It is also frequently used by villagers for walking and jogging.

In May there were swifts swallows and house martins to be seen and skylarks were singing and probably nesting on the field. The bluebells planted by children from Waldringfield school have developed into small pools of blue now after several years. Evidence of badgers visiting the field was seen from their excavations of ant mounds and other diggings.

Plenty of people made use of the field during the summer and the wildlife group enjoyed their summer picnic there. There seem to always be skylarks singing - even in November - and the kestrel is often about.

In November an all - weather information board was installed near the entrance to the field at the lower end by the car park. This was financed by Suffolk Coasts and Heaths AONB Community and Conservation Fund. The board was made with the help of local designer Chris Saunders and Ipswich firm Signs for You. It gives information about the field and different wildlife you may see there.

The AGM was held at the beginning of December with lots of mulled wine and numerous mince pies. Your village representative Trust members are now Helga Balham, Betsy Reid and Christine Fisher Kay. The parish councillors are Janet Elliott and Serena Gold and Rosa Waller kindly agreed again to be minutes secretary. We thanked all those who have helped by volunteering their labour through the year one way or another. As usual we would have liked to see more villagers at the AGM.

On 2nd February a work party involving members of the AONB volunteers was successful in clearing a large amount of evergreen honeysuckle from the hedge where it was swamping the hazels, blackthorns, dog roses and everything else - this will have to be kept at bay in future. Several other tasks were completed and a good time was had by all on a very pleasant bright day.

Now that the skylarks nesting season is beginning again it would be nice if people kept to the required behaviour of keeping dogs on leads as **over 82 dogs** visit the field regularly (information from the Parish Plan survey). Also, obviously, clean up after the dogs and make use of the dog bin.

On a brighter note, a song thrush is singing up there regularly and the gorse is flowering brilliantly at the moment so do get up there and enjoy it.

Thanks are due to all the trustees for their assistance with many different tasks, including maintenance of prickly hedges, and to Rosa Waller for acting as minutes secretary, Stan Baston for doing the accounts, Duncan Andrew and friends for running the football club and Paul Barrell and Duncan for grass cutting. Thanks again to Allan Parkin for cutting hedges, verges and the long grass areas. Anyone who would like to become involved in the running of the field or help with maintenance is welcome to contact me or any other trust member.

Christine Fisher Kay
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