

Waldringfield Church Field Trust

Report to the Parish AGM

The Church Field Trust was set up in 2003 to look after and maintain the 2.22ha of land given to the parish by the late Dr Tom Waller. Initially there were many discussions, meetings and ideas put forward for this land and the Trustees had to decide on how to best act to make a useful facility that all could enjoy. This was described in the Trust deed as a recreation ground but it was understood from early days that recreation while including lively sports like ball games and running would also include quieter recreation of observing nature and pursuing hobbies like bird watching and 'quiet contemplation' .

The field now has different areas used for various pursuits including ball games, a hard basketball area, a football practice goal, various paths some easy and open, others more exciting through scrub and woods where more wildlife may be spotted. There are picnic tables and benches where you may sit and admire the view of the river.

The AGM is always held in late November or early December with a presentation of photos of the field through the seasons and some of the activities that have gone on. An account of doings through the year is presented and proceedings finish with seasonal refreshments. All are invited.

The Trustees attended committee meetings, in March and on 1st October. There were also several meetings on the field to discuss maintenance issues.

This year the wildlife group arranged two further activity mornings with the wildlife explorers led by Charlie Zakss of Suffolk Wildlife Trust, with the help of parents and other volunteers. This activity was open to children from the village. An impressive bug hotel was made and on another occasion a variety of smaller homes were made for wildlife. Another activity organised by the Waldringfield wildlife group was a walk around the field with a herbalist (Rachel Boscobey) who identified plants and explained their historic uses.

Waldringfield school have also been to visit this year to see the stag beetle stacks and we hope to see them making use of the field more in future.

In July the Wildlife group held their annual picnic on the field preceded by a butterfly walk and id session aided by Peter Maddison. The species recorded were: Large White 6, Red Admiral 3, Common Blue 1 male and 2 females, Brown Argus 2 or 3, Meadow Brown 30+, Gatekeeper about 50 [PM]

There have been several work parties the largest being a combined effort with the Suffolk Coasts and Heaths volunteers which took place in February.

The owl box was restored by Peter Maddison and John Gladwin and another couple of young barn owls fledged. Individual Trustees have done all sorts of maintenance jobs which are essential to keep things in good repair.

Major work to cut the hedge and the verge along Mill Road, and to reduce the longer meadow areas of the field with the annual winter cut, was carried out by Allan Parken which we are very grateful for. The larger sports area and the many footpaths have been kept cut by Martin Spall so we are extremely grateful to both of them. The mower purchased by subscription continues to work well with some maintenance by Martin.

The Trustees would also like to thank all who came to help with the work parties and we hope you enjoyed it as we did – whatever the weather you soon get warmed up and it is very pleasant (usually) to be outside working at a lovely place like Church Field. We are also grateful for continuing support from Waldringfield Parish Council.

The six Trustees this year have been:

Parish councillors: Janet Elliot (treasurer), Serena Gold (vice chairperson)

Peter Maddison (representing the wildlife group)

Elected members: Betsy Reid, David Eaton (minutes secretary)

Christine Fisher Kay (representing the tennis club) (chairperson)

Christine Fisher Kay

21st April 2026

