

PARISH ENVIRONMENT GROUP
2024/2025 Update by Wickham Market Parish Environment Group
(Tree Warden and Green Gym events)

We have continued to organise small work parties (green gym) during the last year.

We are always in need of more support from local people for all environmental projects, helping to enhance the village and do our small part in nurturing wildlife.

The work carried out helps to enhance both the village landscape and its biodiversity. The events are also a great way to meet new people and have time to socialise in the fresh air.

This report highlights the **key** ongoing project areas and work undertaken in 2024/2025.

1. SPORTS FIELD, THONG HALL LANE

The west boundary tree/hedge line alongside field continues to be tended with more mixed native species trees added each winter. The planting here is looking really good and is now providing valuable landscape greenery and wildlife corridor linkage to/from the village. Most trees are local grown and come at no cost to the parish.

2. WICKHAM MARKET CEMETERY

We continue work in the cemetery to keep it looking beautiful, work parties take place generally every last Thursday of each month and amount to approx. 15 hours each month. Jobs over the last year have included tree management and planting, removing redundant plastic tree tubes and adding to the bulb population. Rabbit and deer numbers are still problematical. They cause damage to trees, headstones/kerbs, flowers, grass sward and bulb areas. Litter, broken receptacles, faded and stray tributes are collected up each month. A beetle log heap was created in summer 2024 to support stag beetle and other invertebrates.

The snowdrop and daffodils have been wonderful this year and were supplemented by a further 250 snowdrop bulbs funded by donations from events in 2023 (Pightle) and WAW in Spring 2024.

3. CHAPEL LANE

We have managed our new planting project of 22 oak trees with field maple, hazel and hawthorn along the track across to Sandy Lane. Funded by SCC and ESC and supported by James Hayward, Landowner. These small tree groups will provide a high tree line visible from various parts of the village; BUT patience will be needed!

The new spinney was managed and supplemented in the southeast field corner, with a further 20 native trees, oak, lime, hornbeam, hawthorn, field maple, cherry, dogwood, and hazel, mostly home grown and supplied by Tree Warden and helpers. This should help towards natural flood management as advocated by SCC and EA in the Floods report published in August 2024.

4. HIGH STREET SOUTH OF THE VILLAGE INTO PETTISTREE

The avenue of mixed trees is being tidied up with tree tube removal still to complete. These trees are generally maturing well and are ever more important as development pressure on the area increases.

5. JAVA LODGE ROAD SPINNEY, PETTISTREE

A new spinney or small woodland was commenced in early 2023, located at Java Lodge Road north of the pylon line in Pettistree. Working with Pettistree PC and funded in part by ESC. Approximately 150 native trees have been planted to date. Issues with deer may result in the spinney being fenced for protection.

6. CHURCH PIGHTLE GREEN SPACE

Several new trees (prunus, rowan, guelder rose, hazel, ironwood, plum) added along with the Kings Coronation Lime tree in 2023. The bulbs display has been colourful this spring with residents carrying out their own enhancements too. A beautiful space.

7. SUFFOLK TREE WARDEN SCHEME

We are supported by the Suffolk Tree Warden Network in terms of specialist support, training and materials. Cllr Creasey has recently collected a good number of small free trees to grow on for later 2025 plantings. Most (approx. 80%) of our trees are free through the scheme or locally grown.

8. BIRD BOX PROJECT

Sonya Exton is continuing to monitor and check some 45 bird boxes. Barn owl boxes also inspected each summer.

9. COMMUNITY CLEAN-UPS

Sonya Exton has been organising occasional village **Community Clean-ups** with Cllr Dempsey Gray. Green gym events also focus on litter in the area in which we are working particularly within the Parish Cemetery.

10. Updated Discover Suffolk Walks around WM, Pettistree and the River Deben

This has been produced working a small local team working closely with SCC (myself, Mary, Archive centre, Simon and Steve), funded by ESC and published by SCC. Leaflet now widely available both in venues and online.

11. Biodiversity mapping and pledges to be 'part of the plan'

Sonya is leading on this mapping work and liaising with the public at events. Next event will be the ESC initiative 'Wild about Wickham' on **Saturday 17th May** in the village hall.

12. Grant: 2025 we have secured a small grant from ESC Nature First for some basic tree planting materials and wildflower seed.

Can you help us with any of these activities or projects, either out in the field or behind the scenes? PLEASE come forward!

Offers of funding for future plantings welcome too, many thanks to those who have supported the work this year.

Anne Westover ennaoverwest@btinternet.com
Mob: 07586 266553
and
Sonya Exton

Wickham Market Tree Wardens 8th April 2025