

## **Natural Woodhurst**

### **Chairmans End of Year Report – April 2009 – April 2010.**

On 8<sup>th</sup> December 2009, 'Woodurst-in-Bloom' changed its name to 'Natural Woodhurst'. Caring for the environment is now a national theme and our new name is intended to show that we have embraced this. Our remit is to help maintain and improve public accessible natural environments around the village and encourage people to enjoy the natural environment around them.

#### **Committee**

Karen Holley – Chair / Treasurer (temp)

Gary Davies – Treasurer (retired)

Ruth Clarke – Secretary / Publicity

Phil Clarke – Conservation / Grants

Peter Colins – Parish Council Rep

Andy Notman – Parish Council Rep

Annabel Armstrong – Village Hall Rep

Sally Barratt – PCP Rep

#### **2009/10 Accounts**

See attached.

**Activities over the last 12 months** - The year's activities began in May with a very popular Dawn Chorus Walk, followed by the Planting Up Evening. Pond Dipping and Bird Box Building for younger residents. Garden Competitions during Feast Week. Seed Collecting in Butt Lane, and the Spring Walk. We have planted up various pots around the village and supplied plants to residents who maintain tubs around the village. Flowerbeds outside Church Bungalows tidied. Excess growth removed from front of Ridges Pond. Natural Woodhurst members helped with clearance work in the church yard. Over the winter months work parties continued in the Claypitts Conservation Area. Work began to transform the green opposite Swan Wier pond. Phil Clarke advised James and Avril on their pond issues. Preparation of a Grant Application to Awards For All. Consultation flyers sent to every household. Launch of new regular newsletter with diary dates, projects updates, local gardening news and wildlife notes.

#### **Plans for 2010/11**

**Conservation Area** - As you are aware The Parish Council has nominated Phil Clarke to manage the Claypitts Conservation Area. Phil has put together comprehensive 5yr rolling plan for the area and we are helping him to implement it. This project is included in our grant application. In order to get all the work done, we will be running a number working parties and employing contractors for heavy work.

**Butt Lane Regeneration** – A section of the tree line along Butt Lane has died. This area is of undetermined ownership, so we have put a project together to regenerate it. Left alone the trees will fall down. We have the opportunity to transform this dying area into a rich natural habitat. From the seeds collected earlier this year we are growing seedlings which will be replanted along with trees from the District Council and disease resistant Elm trees from Butterfly Conservation. This is a long term project with further areas to be cleared and replanted and hedge laying to be undertaken once the saplings are mature enough. This work is included on our grant application, enabling us to hire contractors to carry out heavy / specialist works.

**Green Opposite Swan Wier Pond** – Work has started on a 2-3yr project to revamp this area. The shrubs which were obstructing motorists' line of sight have been removed. The flowerbeds will be turfed over this spring. The new design creates a less 'managed' look, easier to look after and less water intensive. New shrubs and area of wildflower planting are planned towards the back of the area. To keep some colour at the front, low growing, native spring and summer flowers will be planted along the bank.

Engaging Village Youth – In an effort to try to engage more with the youth of the village, and tailor our activities to them, we are looking at taking on a Youth Representative on the committee. We have also set up a Facebook page as an further communication channel and one which younger residents are likely to use.

Anglia-in-Bloom Competition – having entered two years in a row (village awarded Silver, Silver Gilt) we are taking a rest from the competition! That doesn't mean that we will stop doing all the things we normally do just because we are not in the competition. There may be an opportunity to enter other competitions/awards, for instance the Green Flag Award, the Huntingdonshire Community Environment Award. When people from across the village get together to do something, it is good to celebrate what's been achieved.

### **Calendar of Events May 2010 – April 2011**

Activities happening once a month throughout the year.

May 8 <sup>th</sup>	Dawn Chorus Walk
May 13 <sup>th</sup>	Planting Up Evening with Plant Stall
June 12 <sup>th</sup>	Meadow Cut in 'Claypitts Conservation Area'
Feast Week	Garden Competitions
July	Swan Weir Pond Clear Up.
Augt	Bat Walk with Wildlife Trust - TBA
Sept	Grant Money due – can start booking contractors for Claypitts & Butt Lane & Pond.
Oct – Mar	Working parties (for the hardy!) plus an educational evening.
April	Spring walk /nature event.

From April 2011 we hope to engage the Wildlife Trust to run educational events for the Children during the school holidays as part of their 'Watch Group' activities.

Karen Holley

Chair – Natural Woodhurst

13th May 2010