

Ham Green Conservation Group

Annual Report – April 2018

Group Status:

- Group membership is currently strong at around 17 people, with attendance at the monthly work days averaging between 8 and 12. However, we could do with a few younger (and stronger) members!
- The Group is reasonably well funded at the moment, thanks to the annual sponsored walk that the Group organizes and, the very generous contributions that we receive from Village Fete revenues. This has helped us to cope with needing to replace both of our mowers in the last year!
- We would also like to thank the Parish Council for their continuing help and support – it is much appreciated.

Main Activities Completed:

- Ongoing maintenance of the ancient woodland, including regular mowing and cutting back along the bridleway and footpath edges, and careful management of scrub and invasive species. We also clear fallen trees and branches, which have been relatively few, despite the frequent strong winds during the year.
- The hedge-laying carried out near the Stockers Down bridge is now well established and is regularly maintained. We have also created some dead hedges and planted new living hedges, along the North side of the Glade area and further down the footpath, near the old bench facing the Village.
- We now have three cross paths linking the bridleway and footpath and, these have proved very popular with walkers.
- Coppicing has been carried out in the area of Hazel at the Eastern end of Ham Green, and also just behind the car park.
- The Flora Surveys carried out during the Summer period, show that we are achieving good results in several areas, where we are encouraging the diversity of wild flowers and feeding plants, for the birds and butterflies.

Future Activities:

- We will continue to improve the Glade area, with selective planting of specimen trees and, encouraging the growth of clumps of nettles, burdock, thistles and dog's mercury, to provide food for birds and butterflies, and cover for small mammals.
- During the Summer we plan to improve the amenity value of Ham Green, by installing a few benches and stools in carefully selected areas.
- Later in the year, we would like to improve Winter access by hard surfacing the worst of the muddy areas along the bridleway. This would be a major project, requiring some outside assistance, with the appropriate machinery.

Finally, we would like to again thank all those who have sponsored or donated to us during the year, and especially the Parish Council and Village Fete for supporting us so well – without all of your help, we would probably not be able to continue the good work that we do at Ham Green Common.

Thank you all very much.

Terry Dunn – Group Leader