

Greener Ettington: Wilder Communities project



Dunsmore
Living
Landscape

Wilder Communities



Empowering schools
and communities
for nature



Warwickshire Wildlife Trust (WWT) has secured 100% funding to create wildflower areas, improve hedgerows and establish a community orchard in Ettington, under its current Wilder Communities partnership with Severn Trent.

This follows an approach made by Greener Ettington to WWT for advice about how the village could be made more wildlife-friendly. An assessor visited the village earlier in the year and met Councillor Hawksworth and a group of Greener Ettington members.

This benefit can only come to the village if Ettington Parish Council, as landowner, enters into an agreement with the wildlife trust and Greener Ettington. There is limited time to do this in order to secure the funding and ensure the necessary works can take place at the ideal time, in the autumn of this year. A substantial delay could result in funding becoming unavailable.

Requested actions for July 2021 meeting:

1: Greener Ettington asks that the parish council agrees, at its July 2021 meeting, to add the Wilder Communities proposals to the agenda for its August 2021 meeting as a priority item, with a view to making a formal decision at that meeting on whether to sign up to the project.

2: We further ask the council to appoint one or more representatives to work with Greener Ettington to examine the Wilder Communities proposals in detail, in order to be able to make a recommendation to be considered at the August meeting.

This would enable the council to clarify details, address concerns, and gauge the level of community support and potential for volunteer involvement.

It is not necessary to consider the proposal any further at the July 2021 meeting of the parish council. However, outline information about the project and the proposals for Ettington is provided on the following pages.

The Wilder Communities project

The offer of funded works has been made under the wildlife trust's Wilder Communities project, funded by Severn Trent. The aim is to transform the environment we live in, restoring, recreating and reconnecting wildlife-rich spaces for the benefit of nature and people.

Cost

In principle, the proposals do not involve cost to the parish council or the wider community. However, there is a potential cost if it becomes necessary for the council to pay its contractor to carry out ongoing maintenance if there is insufficient volunteer support. It is a condition of the funding that the council and Greener Ettington commit to maintain the wildlife features created for an initial period.

The level of funding available for Ettington is not disclosed: it depends on the extent of the work agreed. Any funding would be paid directly to the wildlife trust to enable it to pay for seeds and trees, and to carry out the initial works to establish the new wildlife features.

Community involvement

On the day works take place, members of the community will be actively involved where possible, to help create a sense of ownership and pride. A detailed management plan will be presented, to ensure the sites continue to be managed as havens for wildlife and as valuable community assets. This management work would fall to members of the community and it is a condition of funding that the maintenance is carried out.

The proposals

Wildflower strips

Proposed for Ettington recreation ground, in the areas that have been left unmown this summer, and along sections of verge on Halford Road and the old Warwick Road

The proposal for most sites is for a mix providing wildflowers throughout the season from April to September, attracting pollinators and birds, with five native wildflower species to give colour in the first year while perennial species become established.

Summer wildflowers are also proposed for the bank alongside the parish churchyard, to come into flower when the existing spring flowers have gone over.

The mix for the Old Warwick Road will depend on ground conditions, which are uncertain.

Hedgerow restoration

Native trees (70% hawthorn) would be planted to fill existing gaps in the hedgerow running along the southern edge of the recreation ground, continuing around the corner alongside the football pitch. The suggestion is that this hedge should be laid once established, and then allowed to grow to at least two metres high, with cuts every two or three years. There would be a requirement for ongoing maintenance by the community.

Community orchard and/or wildflower meadow



This is proposed for the area between the multi-use sports court and the football pitch, previously used for cricket nets. If this were to be unacceptable, Greener Ettington would ask the parish council to explore other possible sites for a community orchard on its land. The Severn Trent funding cannot be used on privately-owned land.

An orchard would be the most expensive part of the Wilder Communities project in Ettington, and should only be embarked upon if the council is confident that the required maintenance can be carried out, by community volunteers and/or the council's own contractor. Any decision to delay this component of the project is likely to result in funding being unavailable, because of competing demand across Warwickshire.

Orchards are valuable for wildlife because fruit trees age quickly, creating ideal habitat for invertebrates and well as providing a food source for people and wildlife.

An online booklet explaining the Wilder Communities project can be found at:

[https://online.pubhtml5.com/opdy/hduy/ - p=1](https://online.pubhtml5.com/opdy/hduy/-p=1)

Introducing Wilder Communities

Wilder Communities is a new project, run by the Dunsmore Living Landscape Partnership and funded by Severn Trent as part of their Great Big Nature Boost scheme.





Over 2021/22, we're going to be giving nature a boost by creating and enhancing habitats across education grounds and community / public green spaces, helping to transform the environment we live in: restoring, recreating and reconnecting wildlife rich spaces for the benefit of nature and people.

The project plays a vital part in Warwickshire Wildlife Trust's strategic plans for a wilder future, whilst supporting The Wildlife Trusts' 30 by 30 campaign. This aims for at least 30% of our land and sea to be connected and protected for nature's recovery by 2030.



© Kieron Huston

We can provide schools and communities with:

-  100% funding
-  Expert support and advice tailored to meet organisation needs, priorities and challenges.
-  Guidance to ensure that management is incorporated into routine practices of grounds maintenance.
-  Guidance in how to make best use of these spaces as a resource for learning and exploring nature whilst fostering pride, belonging and involvement in the community.



© Peter Cairns/2020VISION

