



BARWOODS

Botesdale and Rickinghall Community Woodlands Project

REPORT FOR RICKINGHALL PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL MEETING 2020

Members of the Steering Group of Barwoods are pleased to report continuing progress on the two sites that we manage on behalf of Rickinghall Parish Council.

The shrubs on Low Meadow are looking good and the triangular space is just waiting for wildflowers! We have talked about getting wildflower seeds from freshly cut hay but didn't achieve that this year. The good news is that the new hedge is growing well, much to our surprise as we didn't think the soil was good enough, and the leylandii trees have been removed so there is more daylight from the east. We purchased some nest boxes in April and put them up.

At Northfield Wood the work continues, trimming, tidying and some planting. We created a second path that allows people to walk a figure of eight instead of returning the way they came. The fact that the path is clearer indicates that people are using it and treading it in. (We have had a problem with people chucking dog poo bags into the long grass, not realising that we cut the grass and find them, not a pleasant find. We appealed via the magazine and it seems to have stopped.)

An American red oak tree was planted to celebrate a wedding and the steering group decided to be stricter in allowing only native trees to be planted as they better support native wildlife species; we already have one other non-native, a black mulberry. There is plenty of space in gardens for non-native trees. Some of our trees are growing quite tall. Silver birches obviously like the soil conditions and oaks and hazels are also doing well. Many of the others are slow growers anyway and are pushing up at their own rate. Spring flowers have been planted and add another feature to the wood. On a sunny day it is pleasant to sit on one of the benches and listen to the birds.

Unfortunately St Botolph's School was unable to invite us in the autumn; and they were not able to use some booklets on trees that we showed them (Hello Trees) - we thought they were delightful and just the sort of material that would help children to remember the names and characteristics of different trees.

We now have a new leaflet that goes into the Welcome Pack for new residents. The steering group of this organisation started with eleven people in 2006. This is a slow, long-term project and we are already seeing results, so it is satisfying. Please think about joining us. We do just what we can, so much and no more, and it is lovely to see other people enjoying Barwoods sites.

Rosemary Jones
01379 890238