

Shamley Green Environment Group highlights for 2022 (and a bit beyond)

We are a group of volunteers with an interest in improving the village environment. We work with the Councils and help to manage some funds in the Womersley Foundation set aside for improving the environment in Shamley Green.

We have advised the Parish Council on **mowing**, mostly to reduce it to benefit plants and wildlife, while respecting village needs such as footpaths, cricket and the fete that require areas to be mown. Blue Hearts have recently been placed on some areas that should not be mown.

Our **wildflower diary**, published on the website every quarter, charts the changing plant life of the village. We are monitoring our plant population and hope to see an increase in species over the years. There is anecdotal evidence that numbers of insects are increasing, but we plan to test this more scientifically in 2024 by asking an entomologist to update the 2020 survey.

Volunteers planted **bulbs** on Hullmead and Nursery Hill in 2022 and we will continue to monitor the results of our 2021 wildflower planting.

We have sought expert advice and facilitated the planting of new **trees** suggested by residents. Volunteers have maintained the new trees planted in 2021 and all but one have done well. The Parish Council and Waverley are responsible for trees on common land but we are helping them to monitor tree health.

The **toad patrols** by volunteers helped over 1900 amphibians on the main Woodhill Lane spring migration route. We also monitored amphibians in new areas of the village in 2022. The numbers are consistent with most previous years and show the population remains stable. Details are on the website.

The drought made for a difficult year for the village **ponds**. The Duck Pond dried out and the ducklings, sadly, did not survive. More positively we do now understand better the water level changes and the sources of water for that pond. And relevant ditches have been cleared. After a long search the Parish Council has employed contractors to work on both ponds and ditches, which should mean we are better placed for regular maintenance through the summer of 2023 and for action on invasive vegetation next autumn/winter.

2022 was a quiet year in terms of new species for our **bird** list. But we have helped the Swift Project with its programme to install nesting boxes around the village.

We have coordinated groups of **volunteers** to clear a footpath and to reduce highly invasive Himalayan balsam growing near Norley Lane.

We continued to liaise with both **village schools** and their environment teams, and Shamley Green Village Stores.

We provided **publicity** for our village initiatives and links to programmes run by the Guildford Environmental Forum. We publicised other environmental initiatives such as the national bird, butterfly and plastic counts. We ran a stall at the fete, presented at the Village Assembly and helped to welcome the Lord Lieutenant of Surrey to the village. We publicised our initiatives on our website. (<https://www.shamleygreenenvironment.co.uk>).

Group Membership. Lyn Barber stepped back and Sally Townsend-Smith took her place. We welcome new members. The only requirements are an enthusiasm for the environment, a bit of time and working well in teams of volunteers.