

Kempley Parish Annual Meeting : DyFRA REPORT 7.6.22

I'll not go over the objectives of DyFRA but to say that from our large subscriber base we have written every month for the last 18 years in the parish magazines, producing a clear chronicle and record, more so than any other grouping in Kempley, Dymock, Oxenhall, through to Redmarley and Upleadon – now known nationally as The Golden Triangle.

This year we trumpeted our success for our verge management regime granted by Glos County Council in 2008.

Matched with a 10 year formal relationship with Forestry England, West of England we have finally succeeded in a contiguous flowering of daffs in road verges from Shaw Common to St Mary's Church – creating in ecological terms a wildlife corridor to mitigate climate warming.

We will feature as the longest-standing Conservation Road Verge in the 2023 verges database of the Glos County Council. This is the fundamental basis on which to create wildflower corridors to mitigate climate impacts.

It is individual villagers that make this happen, and they deserve a name check here...

Mark Samuel for Folly Lane, and strimming the graveyard section

Churchwardens Reg, Denise and Lyndon for *No Mow May* in the rest of the churchyard, (On June 1st 2022 a tractor topper came in to decimate the natural wildflower lawns of nectar-bearing flowers. Thankfully though, the arisings were collected and taken off site, denitrifying the site)

The Langston twins – keeping the southern entrance of *Leylandii* trees under control as topiaried hedges.

Ricky Goodwin and myself for the Wantridge lay-by to the village hall, and footpath stile.

Richard Kinsey for the village hall lawns and hedges, and the road to St Edwards.

Jeff Manns for his work at the Centenary Memorial wildflower strip.

Will and Kate Blandford at Friars Court for the wide road verges around St Mary's; Calvin and Rachel Pugh's section at Kempley Court.

Maggie, my wife (stepping in for my ill health), has continued the resurrection of the Beech avenue from the FE car park to Woodcocks – particularly with the absence of Community Payback Volunteers and students due to Covid restrictions. This section is the lauded Daffodil entrance to the village of Kempley

Finally, and of longest service

Jane, Clare and William Kerr of Matthews Farm for the outstanding, and best Daffodil SSSI meadow in England, at Camomile cottage on the Dymock Road. This is a demonstration plot of how all the Public Owned Estate could look in *The Golden Triangle*, within 10 years, if we implement a strategy of regular co-ordinated attention.

DyFRA's last 'live' meeting in Kempley Village Hall was on 28 February 2020, attended by 60 delegates to listen to forestry and wildflower restoration experts who discussed the subject of *Biodiversity Management in Public Lands*.

The symposium resolution was blown off course just 22 days later by the first Covid lockdown...

The 2020 Daffodil Festival events of the area were prudently cancelled, and by the end of the month any further voluntary work, under the supervision of the Forestry Commission and West Midlands Probation service was cancelled.

The hiatus of these lost years of regular maintenance is all too clear to see, and has been remarked on this year by walkers on the Daffodil Way. Waymarker posts are rotted off while the heavy foot traffic of people relieving the lockdown blues has created very muddied paths at the pinch points of gates, bridges and road exits.

Database of supporters

Our online network expanded (540+) over the lockdown to feature local parish and district councillors and officers, plus the statutory agencies of water, forestry and highways.

Nature Recordings

DyFRA as an umbrella grouping of NGOs is encouraging the maintenance of data sets for this exemplar area spanning the Golden Triangle and River Leadon catchment, for example:

Three 50m transect recordings of the flora of The Glade and St Edward's churchyard as a baseline for reviewing future species change

Moth recording over 3 years now, with results forwarded to the Herefordshire County Recorder

May 2022 A fascinating illustrated talk by Gareth Jones about the future, in a warming world, for goshawks. The success of these and other raptors as the apex species of the Dymock Forest is a vital indicator of our habitat protection strategies. Founded on longstanding data collected from bird-ringing and satellite monitoring by the Gloucester Raptor Monitoring Group is an important part of DyFRA networking information.

Mapping

Production of the Centenary Walks in Dymock Forest cemented a formal climate change statement from Forestry England, and the first updated re-issue of the beautiful illustrated maps of Barbara Davis, one of DyFRAs founding members

Our latest map shows the catchment area of the River Leadon to the north and west of Dymock, where these tributaries regularly flood. Our landscape recovery strategy is centred on creating wildlife corridors, along road verges, renovated hedgerows, and with hope a nature network of buffer strips of herbaceous and buffer strips linking the ancient woodland, copse areas across the Golden Triangle of Newent Division of Glos CC.

Funding and awareness-raising

Our mission statement refers to delivering economic benefit and enhanced landscape to the local community who live and work in these woodland parishes and whose forestry credentials go back a thousand years.

Coppice woodland is the model for forest products, the output of which is air-dried, seasoned and split providing local hardwood logs that are delivered within the Golden Triangle.

The popular Daffodil Confetti product, sold at the Kempley Produce Market added to a large donation at its closing in 2020, funded the purchase of a modern hover mower for keeping grass sward and daffodil rich meadows at their prime condition.

Newsletter

The DyFRA newsletter published more than thirty issues over this period with contributions from several writers. Please sign up to our database for regular mailings, and notification of practical action that we hope to pursue now that Covid lockdown has passed.

Let 2022 renew our resolve to extend the wildlife corridor network across the Leadon catchment – and get down to renovating the 10 mile Daffodil Way in its 35th year of existence. Our new horizon has to be the Kempley Brook and soil retention and habitat along its banks and footpath.

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