

MAKING SPACE FOR NATURE

Addingham Environment Group shows what is possible with ideas, volunteers and enthusiasm.

Mark Twain said, 'There's no such thing as a new idea...' and there doesn't need to be if we share the great ideas and examples of inspirational practice that are already out there.

This was the premise behind our community event in July, *Making Space for Nature*, run in collaboration with the progressive Addingham Environment Group. Set up in 2016 by the village civic

society, its principal aim from the outset has been to protect, enhance (and, in some cases, restore) the natural environment of the village and surrounding countryside. It also aims to help the local community look after its natural environment and work towards a sustainable lifestyle.

Participants at the event came from a wide range of village communities and local environment groups, all keen to learn more. The event opened with an informative introduction led by our Vice President, Professor Rick Battarbee, one of the founding

members of the group. Following this there was the opportunity to join one of two comprehensive walks: Making Space for Nature in Green Spaces led by Jan Hindle and Making Space for Nature in Water led by Professor Battarbee.

With more than 300 members and 100 active volunteers, the group has already made a significant difference to the nature and biodiversity around the village. These pages show some of the group's inspirational achievements:

1 Memorial Recreation Ground

- working with the parish council to improve wildlife habitat
- planted over 150 native trees and shrubs (birch, field maple, hazel, rowan, guelder rose, elder and dogwood)
- created a small orchard of apple and pear trees
- changed the mowing regime to create areas of wildflower grassland around the edge of the recreation ground and football pitch



2 Church Field

- working with St Peter's Church to monitor water quality, fish and invasive signal crayfish populations in Town Beck
- planted alder and willow saplings along the banks to improve riparian habitat and create shade for brown trout
- working with the church to manage the field to allow wildflowers to grow and set seed followed by grass cutting and removal in late summer



3 Ferryman's Green

- working with residents to create a wildflower-rich verge. Cutting regime changed this summer to one late cut, with grass paths mown through



4 Suspension Bridge, River Wharfe

- working with the Yorkshire Dales Rivers Trust to monitor water quality in the River Wharfe
- surveyed for nutrient chemistry, faecal bacteria, diatoms and invertebrates



5 Olicana and Wine Beck

- working with Olicana Caravan Park to improve wildlife habitat and water quality
- removing invasive Himalayan balsam to allow native wildflowers to flourish
- monitored faecal bacteria populations in Wine Beck





6 School Wildflowers

- working with primary school and the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust to establish a mini-wildflower meadow
- children helped sow the seed and planted plug plants during a whole school 'Pollinator Week'
- autumn term enrichment activity delivered on the wildlife value of traditional meadow management, including demonstrating use of an Austrian scythe



7 School Jubilee Wetland

- working with the primary school to create a wetland nature reserve
- established eight wetland scrapes and two wildlife ponds, including a safety fence around the deeper pond
- built a wildlife hide and tables for pond-dipping studies



8 Old First School Site

- monitoring wildlife populations in the former school site, now rewilding
- counting bee and butterfly numbers monthly throughout the summer. Sightings include the rare white-letter hairstreak

9 Methodist Church Graveyard

- working with the Methodist church to create a wildflower meadow and wildlife-friendly margins
- planted native oak and beech saplings to replace ash trees suffering from dieback



10 Craven Crescent Green

- working with residents, Incommunities and Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust to establish a people- and nature-friendly village green space
- planted 50m of hedge with a mixture of native species including hazel, hawthorn, field maple, holly and honeysuckle
- sowed wildflower seed, including yellow rattle, and planted plug plants
- created a small wet meadow area
- grass paths and a picnic area cut through the summer

11 Town Beck Riparian Zone

- working with residents, created a small riparian zone
- surveyed freshwater invertebrates
- planted hawthorn, alder and birch

12 Old Station Way Meadow

- working with Bradford Council to create a wildflower, pollinator-friendly meadow
- sowed wildflower seed, including yellow rattle, and planted plug plants, such as cowslip, red campion, ox-eye daisy, knapweed and betony
- monitoring bee and butterfly populations
- Bradford Council cut the meadow and remove the grass in the early autumn and mow the margins and grass paths through the summer.



Victoria Benn, Membership & Events Officer, and Professor Rick Battarbee, Vice President

For further information about how to set up and structure an environment group or how to involve your local community, you can download Professor Battarbee's Making Space for Nature presentation at: friendsofthedales.org.uk/events/archive

