East Woodhay Parish Council

Nature improvement in the Parish Field

As part of our strategy to improve nature and continue with the management of water within the parish field East Woodhay Parish Council have applied for, and been awarded a grant from Hampshire Forest Partnership, of 5 disease resistant elms and 450 hedging canes.

The hedge is being planted along the surgery end, and the trees by the Church Road side of the field.

Last year as part of this strategy, we introduced the specific trees Crategus Lavelle, Amelanchier Lamarkii and Malus Evereste in two groups near the surgery end of the field as well as three oaks nearer the south western part of the field (near Church Road).

Parish field looking towards the Downs taken by Andy Midwinter

Elms were once so common across our landscape, but Dutch Elm Disease decimated the population and selecting these disease resistant elms is part of a nationwide initiative to reintroduce them. At times during the year our weather is tending to become both very wet and extremely dry. Consequently, when deciding on the specific elms, the variety Ulmus minor Ademuz was selected, as they are fast growing and thrive in both drought, and waterlogged soils.

The hedge near the surgery is made up of: Hawthorn, Blackthorn, Field Maple, Hazel, Dog rose, Dogwood, Crab apple and Privet.

At the time of writing this, planting is being planned for January involving the local school.

As well as helping to absorb the excess water within the field a vitally important factor of this initiative is its positive impact on nature.

These plants will help support a wide variety of native invertebrates including the White-letter Hairstreak butterfly which have been seen making a comeback in locations where elms have been planted as they feed exclusively on elm leaves and seeds.

We are grateful to the Hampshire Forest Partnership for awarding this grant, which enables East Woodhay Parish Council to enhance our parish field with disease-resistant elms and new hedging. This support strengthens our commitment to nature improvement bringing lasting benefits to our local community.