



QUARTERLY UPDATE

Spring brought us a wonderful display of flowers which must have been due to all the rain as weather fronts one after another swept through. The daffodil and bluebell profusions were some of the best I've ever seen on Widmer Fields and all we have to do is wait and they appear which must be the least effort of all the volunteers' activities on the fields!

Ash Dieback takes another Ash tree

The Grange Area Trust volunteers have not been taking it easy, as there is always work needing to be done on the fields, but for some tasks we need to bring in specialist contractors such as the tree surgeons.

In April we discovered that a mature ash tree had succumbed to ash dieback disease and was dead. As the tree was over the public footpath and Grange Farm's sheep field we needed to pay for the tree to be felled professionally.

A team of four set about climbing and cutting the tree in-situ with the branches and trunks cut away without damage to the surrounding trees and fences. We asked for the remaining trunks to be left standing at 8-10feet high so the ivy can grow over them to form wildlife habitats for birds and small mammals to use for nesting and shelter.



Some of the branches were cut up into some manageable portions and donated to Widmer End Community Combined School for them to use in sawing practice in their forest school activities. The donations that you make helps us pay for this type of specialist contractor work, as although the volunteers give their time and effort freely, they don't have the skills needed for some of the bigger jobs on the fields.

So, what have the volunteers been up to when they are not watching lumberjacks in action?



They've completed the maintenance of the equipment used on the fields, so the mini tractor got its 800hour service and the brush-cutter (a.k.a. "The Beast") had an oil and filter change all carried out by our resident engineering and mechanical genius, David. David also solved the Beasts' smoking problem as he discovered petrol had leaked into the oil sump and fitted a fuel valve to stop this reoccurring.

The never ending task of cutting back the brambles and blackthorn bushes that would take over the fields if left to themselves is underway with hedge trimmers and pole saws that have been wielded furiously at various times by Dave, Dave3, Sally, Nick, Tony, Carl, Luke, Colin and Brian. We've also been replacing some of the saplings planted that didn't make it through the winter as we noticed that although most, we planted in the new hedgerow with help from the school children have come into leaf some died or were broken off by dogs or eaten by deer.



Also the major beech hedge project we did for Grange Farm to replace a hedgerow removed decades ago has now come into leaf with few casualties and is set to be a great asset to join the hedgerows from the end of Green Street across to the mature hedgerow in the middle of the field. It is an amazing transformation from the muddy brown winter field to the verdant greens of early summer all done by hand, just a few volunteers with barrows and shovels digging away over many months to plant close to a thousand beech saplings.

I think the volunteers deserve a big thank you. Well done all!

Grange Area Trust Car Park Appeal



Last time, we announced that we are in process of buying the old pub car park on Grange Road for the benefit of the community.

Can you donate?

We will be out on the fields across the summer with a gazebo to ask you to donate and now have the ability to take a card/phone contactless payment.

You can also donate by bank transfer to the Grange Area Trust bank. Please include "Car Park" in the reference:

Sort code: 30-94-28

Account: 35631560

You can either make a one off donation or set up a standing order. We can also claim gift aid if you are a UK tax payer, which would mean the charity receives an extra 25% of your donation.

If you are able to help, please contact the Grange Area Trust Secretary, Joanna Davinson.

Email: honorarysecretary@grangeareatrust.org.uk |
Or call: 07970 056 903



It's taking longer that we had hoped to finalise the contract, which is in the hands of the solicitors, but we are confident that before the end of the summer we will complete and can start the activities to give the car park a make-over before the weather turns wet and muddy again.

If you haven't donated to the car park appeal fund then please do. We're only a quarter of the way to the target of £20,000.

Upcoming events:

31st August: At the end of the summer look out for the Grange Area Trust stall at the Hazlemere Fete on August bank holiday where you can meet the trustees and volunteers, get information on the fields, let us know what you think of the fields, sign up for the 2027 calendar and maybe make a donation or sign up for some volunteering activities.

Quiz Night: Look out for details of the quiz night in the autumn which is a fun night out and a big fundraiser for the trust.

21st November: Join us in Widmer End Village Hall for an evening of entertainment including live music. Save the date!



Early summer has seen plenty of butterflies on the fields with orange tips, blues, and whites in abundance and although there is likely to be the usual June gap when the early butterflies drop off before the later ones appear, we are hoping to see more than the eight species counted in last year's big butterfly count which we did at a number of places on the fields. I'm still hoping to see the elusive purple hairstreak, which lives in oak trees, and was seen last year by our water fairy, Jean.

As we exist to provide a local amenity for the Widmer End and Hazlemere communities we are happy for local schools and clubs to get involved and arrange fun events on the fields. We recently had a visit from the 3rd Hazlemere Brownies who wanted to plant some apple trees in our orchard area. The Brownies named the trees Bob and Jeffery, and we hope they will give us some delicious eating apples in the autumn. Thanks to Brown and Tawny owl for organizing. If you want to utilize the fields for your organisation, then get in touch with honorary.secretary@grangeareatrust.org.uk.



www.grangeareatrust.org.uk