

Additional Information about the Recipients of the Community Biodiversity Awards

Site Award: Acle Lands Trust

The Acle Lands Trust was established in 1994. Among its first actions was to purchase Damgate Wood and to construct a boardwalk to improve access. The wood was also brought into active management, in order to enhance its biodiversity. Nearby Roman Wood was planted by volunteers. Over 1,000 native trees and shrubs were established, with rides and glades providing additional biodiversity benefit.

More information about the Trust can be found at:

<http://www.acle-village.info/landstrust.html>.

Education Award: East of England Apples and Orchards Project

The East of England Apples and Orchards Project aims to enthuse, inspire and inform the public about the rich heritage of orchards and orchard fruit in the region. The project – which is a registered charity – runs a series of workshops and day schools in order to help reverse the decline in the skills required for the management of traditional orchards. In addition, the project runs a series of “apple days” across the region each autumn; these have proven to be enormously popular, and in 2007, a total of 17 were held.

More information can be found on the project’s website:

www.applesandorchards.org.uk

Local Group Award: Southrepps Common Trust

Southrepps Common Local Nature Reserve is one of the few remaining river valley fens to have survived in Norfolk. The reserve constitutes 12.4 hectares of woodlands, reedbed and grassland, and is a site of both national (SSSI) and European (SAC) importance. It supports an exceptional range of species, including over 160 plant species, 42 bird species, 90 species of moths and a wide variety of dragonflies. Other species of interest include glow worms and water voles.

Southrepps Common Trust bears responsibility for maintaining the Local Nature Reserve. The Trust’s volunteers have been involved in a wide range of activities, including: mowing and scrub clearance; the control of invasive plants; the maintenance of bridges and boardwalks, ditch clearance; and the development of information boards. Access to the area has been improved dramatically to include wheelchair and pushchair users. There are also close links with the Southrepps and Antingham Primary Schools.

More information can be found on the Trust’s website at:

<http://www.southreppscommon.org.uk/on>.

Individual Award: Lucy Whittle – Kenninghall Lands Trust

Since the early 1990s, Lucy Whittle has dedicated hundreds of hours to the conservation and enhancement of the biodiversity of Kenninghall. By 1997,

she had collected a group of like-minded individuals to form the Kenninghall Hedgers. Several tree and hedge planting schemes ensued. Then, in 1998, an extensive exhibition highlighting the loss of biodiversity in the village was held in Kenninghall Parish Church. Negotiations with a local landowner resulted in the planting of the 5.5 acre Kenninghall community wood in 1999, along with a one acre community orchard.

In the spring of 2002, an opportunity arose to purchase 10.5 acres of adjoining land. Lucy worked tirelessly to raise the £35,000 required to complete the purchase. A meeting was held in April 2002, leading to the formation of the Kenninghall Lands Trust, to oversee the fundraising, purchase and future management of the land. The money was raised in just four months – no mean feat in a village of just 900! The new wood was planted in January 2003. All plantings and maintenance have been carried out by local volunteers.

Every year, Lucy organises a mid-summer woodland celebration, which attracts some 300 villagers. The celebrations include folk dancing, music, morris dancing, games, quizzes, a barbeque and bar. Lucy also organises the mid-winter wassail and other events throughout the year, and has established close ties with the local school.

More information about the Kenninghall Lands Trust can be found at: <http://www.kenninghall-landstrust.org.uk/background.html>.

Additional Information about Honourable Mention Winners

Honourable Mention (Site Category): Long's Wood (Dennis, Sally and Rachel Long)

At 87 acres, Long's Wood is the largest community woodland in Norfolk. Approximately 50 acres were planted in 1994, and the remainder in subsequent years. The planting is an early example of community involvement in biodiversity action planning. Local schools helped to plant the site, and now use it for many different activities ranging from teddy bear picnics to art work. The new woodland also provides an important ecological corridor, by linking the ancient woods of Ashwellthorpe and Hethel.

The woodland was originally the brainchild of Dennis Long, and is now enthusiastically carried forward by his daughters, Rachel and Sally.

Honourable Mention (Education Category): Dersingham Primary School

Dersingham Primary School has developed an excellent wildlife area on part of the school site adjacent to a woodland on the Sandringham Estate. It features a pond with dipping platform, a hide, meadow areas and disabled access path. It is managed by a very active School Nature Club.

Construction work was begun about two years ago. The main hard landscaping was done by trainees from the Construction Industry Training

Board College at Bircham Newton, with parents helping with the fencing. Parents and pupils raised money to help to finance the project. The school also received grants from various organisations, including a SEED lottery grant and a Norwich 21 grant (for the pond liner).

The new wildlife area is being well used, both in formal lessons and by the school's Nature Club. It is also used by the local Beaver pack. The next phase of the project will be to put a screen and DVD recorder into the hide for the nest-box webcams, introduce more butterfly-attracting planting and involve more outside agencies, such as the Norfolk Wildlife Trust, in working with the pupils.

Honourable Mention (Local Group Category): Bergh Apton Conservation Trust

The Bergh Apton Conservation Trust is made up of a group of enthusiastic volunteers and local people. The Trust owns two adjoining nature reserve sites: Church Plantation, a woodland site, and Valley Marsh, which contains wet grazing meadow, wet woodland, ponds and dykes. Valley Marsh was purchased in April 2007 by the Bergh Apton Conservation Trust, with help from the local community, and the Lottery 'Awards for all scheme'.

The Trust is engaged in a wide range of activities. It organises guided walks to observe birds, moths and wildflowers; carries out surveys of hedgerows and ponds in the parish; and manages a series of practical conservation workdays to encourage community involvement in the group's projects. A particular priority for the future will be the restoration of Valley Marsh; amongst other measures, this will require dredging of the site's extensive ditch network.

More information about the Bergh Apton Conservation Trust can be found at: <http://www.berghapton.org.uk/index.php/villorg/bact>

Honourable Mention (Individual Category): Bill Flynn

Bill Flynn has made an outstanding contribution to conservation in the county through his efforts to manage and restore Bawdeswell Heath, a County Wildlife Site. Working with a group of volunteers, Bill has carried out scrub and bracken clearance, and imported heather seed from Buxton Heath to aid restoration. He has also created a web page and display boards to publicise the work. Despite the importance of this site, Bawdeswell Heath was very neglected until Bill developed an interest in the area.

More information about Bawdeswell Heath can be found at: <http://www.bawdeswell.net/rtwebsite/villages/Bawdeswell/Heath.htm>