

## Cheveley Parish Biodiversity Audit 2015 - 2016

Here are some suggestions for continuing biodiversity work within The Parish:

- Continue an interest in biodiversity and reflect that interest in The Parish Council's work and decision making
  - Rather than regarding the Biodiversity Audit as a one-off fulfilment of a Statutory obligation, the Parish Council could consider biodiversity as a matter of continuing interest and standing as an example to adjoining Parishes
- Provide ongoing support and encouragement to the Biodiversity Group and make use of its knowledge and enthusiasm
  - With the right kind of interest and encouragement from The Parish Council, the Parish Biodiversity Group (a combination of local volunteers and the Cambridgeshire 'expert network') could become a valuable resource to The Parish.
- Maintain links with CPERC and through them, specialist wildlife recorders
  - The Biodiversity Group has enjoyed a very positive relationship with CPERC and through it, the acknowledged wildlife recorders. By maintaining this relationship, The Parish Council would derive ongoing benefits to its knowledge and therefore informed decision making.
- Promote an annual wildlife recorder event within The Parish focusing each time on an aspect of biodiversity where records held by CPERC are still sketchy e.g., bats, small mammals, winter birds, pollinators, fungi and so on
  - Timing and demands on the availability of wildlife recorders has meant that the Biodiversity Audit has benefitted greatly from botanical experts. Other experts are around but in great demand. With good forward planning it would be possible to persuade others with, for example bird, bat, invertebrate and small mammal to spend time in The Parish to improve local knowledge, acknowledge the good work of land owners and boost the record tally of The Parish for future enthusiasts and experts to build upon in coming decades.
- Recognise the interest in biodiversity shown by local residents and seek to provide opportunities for that interest to be built upon
  - The Parish is blessed with knowledgeable and enthusiastic champions of wildlife as evidenced by the responses to The Cheveley Garden Wildlife Survey. Activities and projects supported by The Parish Council could build upon this interest.
- As so much of the land area and land use (the economy) of The Parish is focused on the horse racing industry, use this audit report as a vehicle to seek greater engagement with stud owners and The Jockey Club to increase awareness of biodiversity issues and knowledge sharing related to studs and gallops.
  - During the course of The Biodiversity Audit, stud managers were all contacted and invited to share their wildlife records. This met with a very modest response and remains an area that should be further explored with the active support of The Parish Council, focusing on giving full credit to stud owners where their management practices are benefitting local wildlife.
- Given that the audit has revealed that there is already a good set of records of trees, explore the concept of an '*urban arboretum*' covering the whole Parish. The purpose would be to improve even further the tree record on private land and sponsor and develop tree planting schemes
  - It is widely acknowledged among the arborist community that many of the trees that bring aesthetic pleasure, including noise reduction, improved air quality, shade and mitigating flooding, so called *ecosystem services*, exist in urban and sub-urban areas, not just in forests and woods. With the records that we already have for Cheveley Parish there is scope for a specific project to record the trees that we know about on '*A Parish Arboretum Map*', for information, posterity and as a spur to new tree planting initiatives.
- Sponsor an annual Cheveley Guest Lecture by, for example, a wildlife, geology or climate expert
- Promote Bioblitz events (identifying as many species as possible in a short space of time – involving experts and the public) at The Recreation Ground, The Cemetery and other local sites including studs if access can be negotiated
  - Bioblitz is an established methodology for expanding records and using citizen science or just good old fashioned fun, to increase local awareness. This type of event needs good planning to ensure access and availability of '*participating experts*' to help and guide the proceedings.
- Allocate space for Bio-diversity information on The Parish Council's website
  - To The Parish Council's great credit some welcome progress has been made already with allocating space on their website to Biodiversity. Once The Biodiversity Audit has been received and digested there is a risk that this area of the website will be left wanting for new and topical, locally relevant, content. Without making it too onerous, The Parish Council might consider inviting periodic contributions to the Biodiversity space on its website.