

## **Climate Change Group – Annual Report 2024**

35 trees were planted over 2023/ 2024 bringing the total to 140 new trees planted in the Parish over the past couple of years. Once again we've been lucky that organisations donated most of the trees whilst others have been kindly donated by residents.

10 trees in the Jubilee Copse died after being flooded several times but fortunately we had 10 rowan and 10 cherry tree whips donated by the Woodland Trust so planted half of these near the Jubilee Copse but on higher ground. The other 10 trees were planted in Webber's Meadow south field to improve the scrub habitat along the southern edge.

Three trees, donated by East Devon AONB, were also planted in Webber's Meadow south field. As this area floods most years trees such as Alder were especially chosen as they'll tolerate wet ground.

The Parish Council set a new policy to replace any trees that die so they obtained a Lime tree from Devon Wildlife Trust to replace a tree killed by a mini-tornado in Venn Ottery Green. It has to be a 'Landmark' tree so a commemorative event needs to be chosen. Bowhayes Farm also donated three beautiful Whitebeams which VOSRA planted on Venn Ottery green.

Three trees were planted as memorials to Councillor Val Ranger, all donated by residents. A (disease resistant) Elm Tree donated by Anita and George Kemp was planted in Webber's Meadow, a pink flowering Prunus in Harpford Churchyard using funds raised through GoFundMe and one of the three Venn Ottery Whitebeams donated by Bowhayes farm is also dedicated to Val.

The CCG and Year 6 pupils planted six new cherry trees (donated by the RSPB) in the school field. Altogether 12 trees in the school sportsfield were protected with football resistant stakes and guards bought from Parish funds.

Ted continued planting willow whips along the River Otter to help protect the banks from eroding, but it's one step forward and another back as quite a few were munched by beavers!.

As well as new tree planting there's been a lot of effort put into watering, weeding and re-mulching the trees and hedging which were planted last year to give them the best hope of survival.

The CCG also gathered up many chunks of concrete dumped in Webber's Meadow to create a new wildlife habitat and planted bulbs and flowers in St. Luke's cemetery to improve biodiversity. Additionally the CCG have worked with the Parish Council on the new Grounds Maintenance Contract. As well as CCG members other volunteers also helped with the planting and maintenance so a real community effort.

In December 2023 the Parish received an award from 'Wild About Devon' for our work towards improving the bio-diversity in the parish and the CCG are now working with Devon Wildlife Trust and East Devon District Council on exploring further tree planting opportunities next year.