



Chappel Parish Council

**CHAPPEL COMMUNITY ORCHARD
& WILDFLOWER MEADOW**

PROPOSALS

Summer 2008

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1. Chappel community orchard and wildflower meadow

The Chappel Community Orchard will feature around 80 trees of various local and heritage varieties including apples, pears, quince, hazelnut, medlar and walnuts. Alongside the Community Orchard will be a newly created wildflower meadow featuring plants including agrimony, black knapweed, meadowsweet, ragged robin and common toadflax.



The Community Orchard and Wildflower Meadow will be developed for the village to get involved with its management and care, and to learn about orchard management, fruit and food production and the biodiversity benefits of orchard and wildflower habitats. We will also be working with the local primary school to ensure that the younger children within the village and its environs learn about food production and understand the value of "growing your own."

The Community Orchard and Wildflower Meadow will be situated adjacent to the newly restored allotments alongside the A1124, to further make the link between the land and the table, making a very simple but effective environment for involving the community in the production of food, and enabling them to benefit from the environmental improvements, as well as the harvested fruit and nuts. The link between the allotments and community orchard will be a two-way street. For example, coppiced hazel from the community orchard can be used on the allotments to replace bamboo canes.

2. Why are we doing it?

As a Parish Council we are always seeking ways in which we can engage the community – from our website (www.chappel.org) to village events, fundraising opportunities and facilities for all ages including our play equipment and the allotments.



By planting a Community Orchard and Wildflower Meadow we will be able to increase the opportunities for the community and village to come together. Not only will there be the chance to join in with tree and meadow planting days, we'll be able to involve different community groups in education and learning. We propose working with the local primary school and environmental organisations like the River Colne Countryside Project and Essex Biodiversity to educate and involve the children in food production, healthy eating and biodiversity.

For the wider community we will also host days to cover maintenance of the orchard and meadow and education days on tree care and pruning, fruit picking, the history of old local varieties. By using the land creatively we can also create a space for social events such as the celebration of Apple Day in the autumn, wassailing, village picnics and barbeques.

We can also create opportunities for other community organisations to use the orchard and meadow – groups like the Women's Institute and the local churches. Given a good harvest, we might even persuade the WI to hold a jam-making day!

Chappel Parish Council sees the revitalisation of these currently unused fields as central to its role in bringing the community together and enabling neighbours and friends to get together in pleasant surroundings. The Community Orchard and Wildflower Meadow will also ensure habitats which are dying out across Essex are maintained in perpetuity for generations to come.



3. How will it benefit Chappel?

We see four functions or aims for the Chappel Community Orchard and Wildflower Meadow, which are not necessarily carried out in the village currently. They are as follows:

RECREATION

Enabling people to enjoy the countryside and come together as a community – in formal or informal ways. From family picnics, to solitary walks, education days to village events.

EDUCATION

Enabling the community of all ages to learn about habitats, food production and the countryside. We plan to work with the school and local groups to provide information and “hands-on” learning opportunities.

INTERPRETATION

By providing signage, a dedicated section on the village website, and literature, we will be able to help the community gain a better understanding of what the orchard and wildflower meadow means – looking at all aspects from heritage and old fruit varieties to wildlife habitat and food production.

PRESERVATION

Chappel Community Orchard and Wildflower Meadow will create and then preserve habitats that are disappearing fast from the Essex Countryside. It will become a haven for wildlife and by preserving the habitat we will be able help preserve species that would struggle in other environments.



4. What are the environmental benefits?

Our proposals will both protect and enhance the physical environment. The acreage of commercial orchards has declined rapidly. In 1970 MAFF recorded 62,200 hectares of orchards in the U.K. this declined to 46,600 hectares in 1980 and further to 22,400 hectares in 1997. This is a 64% decline in 27 years. Wildflower meadows too are constantly under threat from development and English Nature has estimated that, throughout the country, 97% of wildflower meadows, once described as the Gothic cathedrals of Britain's flora, had been lost by 1996.



Chappel's Community Orchard and Wildflower Meadow would create new habitat and protect and preserve it for future generations. The field is owned by the Parish Council and will always be maintained as open space. However, because the field is currently dormant, it isn't currently used by the community and this project will create a habitat which will not only be good for wildlife and biodiversity, it will also provide the village with a space where people can enjoy a leisurely stroll, rest and peace, as well as learn a little about orchards, trees, wildflowers and the heritage of rural Essex.

Rather than fields that are just "topped" once a year, it will become a productive oasis in the heart of the village – providing a little haven for villagers, visitors and wildlife.

5. How much will it cost?

We have used research and expertise from the River Colne Countryside Project and Essex Biodiversity to advise us on the initial stages of the project and to offer us advice on key suppliers.

By using the internet and speaking to suppliers we have established the costs for the project and ensure they are benchmarked against other projects in the area. We have also used volunteers and voluntary support where available to ensure the costs are kept to a minimum without jeopardising the quality of the project.

ITEM	COST
Wildflower meadow plants	£1,971
Hedging	£1,480
Volunteers	£1,820
Fruit and nut trees	£1,064
Benches and signage	£2,200
Tree planting equipment	£500
Contingency	£500
TOTAL COST OF PROJECT	£9,535

SOURCES OF FUNDING

FUNDING SOURCE	AMOUNT
Parish Council	£2,320
BTCV	£1,480
Essex Biodiversity	£1,064
Essex Environmental Trust	£4,671

6. How will the money be spent?

ITEM	QUANTITY	COST
WILDFLOWER MEADOW		
Agrimony	100	£83
Bedstraw, Lady's	100	£62
Bellflower	100	£83
Betony	100	£75
Bird's Fott Trefoil - Greater (Marsh)	100	£75
Buttercup, Meadow	100	£62
Campion, White	100	£62
Cowslip	100	£75
Crane's Bill Meadow	100	£83
Daisy, Ox-eye	100	£62
Hawkbit - Greater	100	£62
Knapweed, Black	100	£62
Knapweed, Greater	100	£75
Meadowsweet	100	£75
Ragged Robin	100	£62
Scabious, Devil's Bit	100	£98
Scabious, Field	100	£75
Selfheal	100	£62
St John's Wort, perforate	100	£75
Stitchwort, Greater	100	£75
Teasel	100	£75
Toadflax, common	100	£75
Vetch, Kidney	100	£75
Vetch, Tufted	100	£83
Vetchling, Meadow	100	£83
Wild Carrot	100	£75
Yarrow	100	£62
TOTAL PLANTS	2700	£1,971
HEDGING		
296 metres natural hedging	£5	£1,480
VOLUNTEER TIME (@ £6.50 p.h)		
Preparation and planning	40	£260
Tree planting: 6 volunteers two days @ 8 hours	96	£624
Wildflower planting: 6 volunteers three days @ 8 hours	144	£936
TOTAL VOLUNTEER TIME	280	£1,820

ITEM	QUANTITY	COST
COMMUNITY ORCHARD		
Apple trees		
D'Arcy Spice	7	£80
Nolan Pippin	7	£80
Grey Pippin	7	£80
Woodford	7	£80
Stanway Seedling	7	£80
Pear trees		
Johnny Mount Pear	7	£80
Suffolk Thorn	5	£57
Other trees		
Plum - Greengage	7	£80
Cherry - Polstead Black	7	£80
Walnut	7	£80
Quince	5	£57
Hazel	7	£80
Filbert	5	£57
Medlar	7	£80
TOTAL TREES	92	£1,049
DELIVERY		£15
Tree equipment including:		£500
Tree guards		
Stakes		
Matting		
Hose		
Furniture		
Recycled plastic benches	3	£1,200
Signage - design + production	1	£1,000
TOTAL EQUIPMENT & FURNITURE		£2,200

