

Tree Warden's Report

February 2024

On 28th February around 150 trees and shrubs were planted at Wilmington Junction and Green as part of the Call for Nature scheme. The rain held off while the planting team worked, comprising villagers, an ecologist and others from Chaffins, Wealden Countryside Officer Jo Heading, Parish Councillor Claire Church and Tree Warden Alison Cotton.

Wealden have provided most of the trees and Chaffins kindly donated their time and labour free of charge. SDNPA provided 10 elms.

120 native trees and shrubs were planted in a triangular block immediately south of the Pegasus crossing, in order to provide screening, habitat for wildlife, and to mitigate noise and pollution from the road. Some of these will be coppiced as they grow, to prevent tall trees developing, and help produce a dense mixed shrub area rather than a formal hedge.

Trees were added to those planted last year, to fill gaps, and 10 disease-resistant elms were planted, as part of SDNPA's research project replacing lost elms that have been killed by Dutch Elm Disease. These will be monitored over time to find out if they really can withstand infection. Eighteen more elms have been planted at other sites in the parish in recent weeks, as part of the latest round of this initiative, including one by the road on the 'village green' in Milton Street, to replace a dying tree.

Over the coming months all these will need watering, and it is hoped that villagers will step up to look after the new trees and give them the best chance. The village whatsapp group will be used to co-ordinate watering.

Alison Cotton.