Report to the Colwich Parish Council Environment Committee 9 November 2026

Update report from the Help Nature Thrive Group

1. **Purpose**

This report from the Help Nature Thrive Group updates the committee on progress and 2026 priorities and to follow up on the opportunity to access FiPL (Farming in Protected Landscapes) grants.

2. **Update**

2.1 Wildflowers

Further plug plants, raised over the winter by Upper Moreton Farm Rural Activities CIC, were introduced into St Michael's Churchyard, Back Lane, the Remembrance Garden and the bank outside the allotments.

The extreme summer weather will have had an effect on the success of this work which will be apparent next spring.

Existing priority areas have recently been surveyed using the i-Naturalist software and all are showing signs of increasing wildflower populations.

2.2 Local Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) projects

As a landowner, the Parish Council is eligible to apply for FiPL Grants and Karen Davies, the Project Officer, attended a previous Environment Committee meeting to give Councillors an overview of the FiPL programme and to explore whether the Parish Council might benefit from this funding[1].

Since that time reps from the Help Nature Thrive Group and the Head Lengthsman have undertaken a walkabout with Karen to identify potential opportunities such as:

a. Jubilee fields

- Plant suitable trees to create shade for users enjoying the benches
- Introduce further bulbs along the bank
- Close gaps in existing hedging with suitable species
- Develop a planting scheme for the border with the Ring
- Install Bug Hotels, nest and bat boxes
- Provide quality signage and information about the work being done

b. St Mary's Rec.

[1]FiPL Grants cover 100% of agreed expenditure, however the landowner must fully fund the initial work , ensure the agreed works are to specification agreed and once approved, reclaim the grant in full.

- Introduce wildflower plugs into the unmown areas.
- Bulb planting for early flowering nectar plant eg bluebells
- Close gaps in existing hedging with tree planting in front
- Introduce a dead hedge where previous hedge has failed
- Signage to inform residents of species in the area
- Provide further benches for residents to relax in the area for well-being
- Nest boxes

c. Garden of Remembrance

- Planting of plug plants
- Signage display boards
- Bird and bat boxes
- Purchase a water bowser for use by the Parish Council (and the In Bloom Group?)
- Unblock the culvert for better water flow to avoid flooding of the footpath
- Replace /upgrade the associated “foot bridge” and replace the stile with an accessible version

d. Improving the Footpath Network

- Replace older and broken stiles with more accessible versions

It is intended to bring a detailed report with costed proposals to the Environment Committee on 10th December.

2.3 Refresh of Green Infrastructure Plan

The Help Nature Thrive group will have input into the refresh of the plan with a particular emphasis on protecting and improving biodiversity.

Authors: Help Nature Thrive Group 3 November 2026