



Southbourne volunteers begin work on village's Green Ring

On Friday 13th and Saturday 14th November, volunteers from Southbourne broke ground – literally – on the village's Green Ring. This long-term environmental project is a key part of Southbourne Parish's Neighbourhood Plan, approved by 87% of voters in a referendum on the 5th November.

400 native saplings provided by the Woodland Trust were planted in Southbourne's Tree Nursery in a corner of the recreation ground. Despite poor weather forecasts it turned out to be a bright couple of days and the ground was easy. 13 volunteers including a group from the Men's Shed came along to help dig, plant, tie off and erect the fencing, helped by Community Wildlife Officer, Sarah Hughes, and fed with flapjacks provided by Maggie Haynes of Tuppenny Barn.

In the years to come, the trees will be replanted at sites in and around the village, as per the Green Ring plans. The development of these are being led by Parish Councillor Bill Ferguson with the first part of the project's funding coming from a Community Ownership and Management of Assets from Locality, the charitable network of enterprising community-led organisations. The Green Ring is a long-term project which aims to safeguard existing sites of natural beauty, value and interest and to link them with natural 'wildlife corridors', footpaths and cycle routes. Local resident and nature enthusiast Elizabeth Medler praised the project, saying "there is a vision where the generation gap is bridged and communities strengthen, whilst increasing diversity for future generations to enjoy and love."

Much of the inspiration for this plan came from the volunteer-led environment focus group set up during the creation of the Parish's Neighbourhood Plan. The Parish Council are going to maintain this group to continue its work and welcome further input and offers of support. If you are a resident of Southbourne and would like to get involved, please contact the

Clerk of Parish Council on 01243 373 667 or info@southbourneparishcouncil.com