

Lagoon View Community Orchard Association

A Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Report 2023

The Orchard was created from very overgrown land which was intended to be a children's play area, in the original planning consents for Lagoon View. Through community action, the site was recovered and a range of fruit trees were planted in 2014. The land was intended to become a community asset but ownership has been retained by the developer. Attempts to transfer the title to the Fremington Parish Council were unsuccessful and the developer has stated long-term aims to develop the site. However, the orchard association has become fully constituted and negotiated a seven year lease with the developer which ended in 2023.

The last year was one of consolidation, with a new three-year lease being agreed with Pearce Construction. We live in hope that the long-term uncertainty about our tenure of the orchard can be resolved by the end of this period.

Yelland lacks much in the way of community facilities. Unlike neighbouring villages, it has no village hall or anywhere to hold community events. The Orchard has, to some extent, provided a focus for bringing people together. A number of locally organised events have been held and the site has many regular visitors and supporters. Events have included wassailing with Morris dancers, BBQs, apple pressing and table top sales. At some events we have over eighty people attending. As Remembrance Sunday came round, knitted poppies were strung in trees and over the arch to create an impressive display.

A circular sealed path is wheelchair accessible and provides a safe practice area for children on a variety of wheels. There is a children's playhouse, a community BBQ facility and a woodland walk. Children

are encouraged to explore their environment through a bug hotel, bird and bat boxes, with magnifying glasses available on site.

At the end of last year, our secretary organised a visit from RHS Rosemoor. The two arborists gave us a great deal of help and knowledge about how best to prune our trees. This is taking place during the winter while the trees are dormant.

Thanks are due to the dedicated team of volunteers who work to maintain and develop our cherished green space. Clearly, we would welcome greater involvement and support from the Parish Council in securing the future of this valued community asset.