



Campsea Ashe Community Garden

Cared for
by Wild
About
Campsea



Summer
2021



Wild About Campsea was started during the pandemic by the Wilson Family who, inspired by the wildlife-friendly village initiative, urged fellow residents to improve biodiversity in Campsea Ashe by devoting 20% of their gardens to wildlife-friendly habitat. Using social media, posters and a leaflet drop, they invited neighbours to -

The Wilson Family



Become NIMBYs by encouraging “Nature In My Back Yard”

- ▶ As the group grew and social distancing was lifted, about 10 interested residents met on the recreation ground to discuss how we could take this initiative forward.
- ▶ Some of our number were keen gardeners and wanted to combine growing food with increasing biodiversity so we identified a need to demonstrate how both could be achieved, even in the small gardens which are a feature of more recent housebuilding in the village.



A Parish Council survey had already identified community interest in wildlife and in gardening, but we have no allotments and many have small gardens.

Improving
biodiversity



So how can we demonstrate

and
grow a
proportion
of our own
food?

The answer: A Community Garden



To feature:

Soil care

- Using organic approaches – no chemical fertilizers, no pesticides or weedkillers.
- Using no-dig methods to minimise disturbance to soil structure and microbes (and showcase labour-saving methods).

Insect care

- Encouraging pollinators and predators

Food production

Growing vegetables cheaply, even in confined areas

We also recognised the value of gardening together:

- ▶ Improved physical fitness
- ▶ improved mental well-being
- ▶ reduced loneliness
- ▶ improved social cohesion and community resilience
- ▶ in time, improved food sustainability



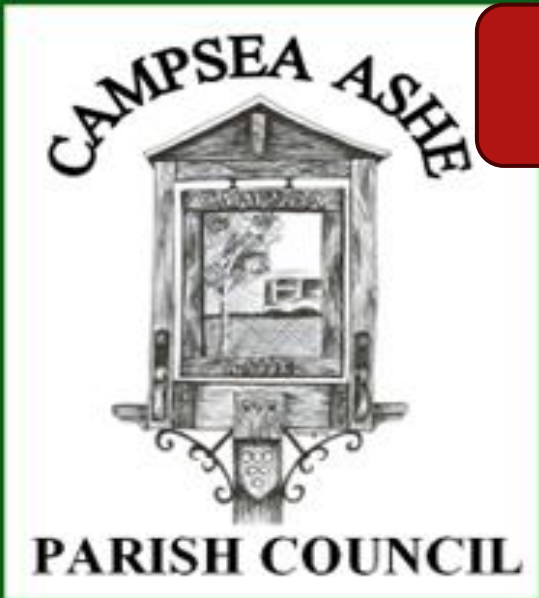
But where?

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The initial offer by the Parish Council of temporary use of an area of scrub on the edge of the village proved unsuitable as it was a nesting site for nightingales.

So we looked for a location nearer the centre of the village where visibility and security could be more easily achieved.

The answer was to use part of the village recreation ground, opposite the railway station and adjacent to the village pub.



Parish Council



And how?

Collaboration



Village Hall Committee



We are grateful to the Parish Council and Village Hall Committee who generously suggested that we locate a community garden on the village recreation ground.

The Plan



Spring
2022

Phase 1: Raised Beds



Funding: East Suffolk Council
Enabling Communities Budget



Phase 2: Cabin

Summer
2022



Funding: East Suffolk Council
Mental Health Booster Fund

Autumn
2022

Phase 3: Food Forest



Funding: Woodland Trust
and Parish Council

Spring
2023

Phase 4: Community Engagement

Growing Together Event



Funding: East Suffolk Council
Field to Fork Initiative

Ongoing.....Planned developments

- More growing space, cold frames, hot beds....
- More tree planting – especially orchard fruit and willow for crafting
- More composting (compost heaps and in-bed worm farming).
- Demonstrate money-saving, labour-saving and space-saving ideas e.g. vertical growing, re-purposed container growing, Square Foot Gardening, Jadam plant food fermentation.....
- More community involvement – especially children and young people. More interpretive signage, Social prescribing opportunities? Intergenerational skill exchange? Craft shed?

Overcoming barriers

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Problem:	Possible solutions
Lack of space	Collaboration with administrators of public spaces. Collaboration with landowners e.g. neighbours sharing, guerilla gardening, foraging, square-foot gardening/ containers
Lack of money	Funding applications, donations / crowd-funding, fund-raising events, re-purposing 'junk', freecycle etc.
Lack of volunteers	Publicity (TV, radio, parish news, newspapers & magazines, social media, posters and leaflet drops). Collaboration with other bodies for special projects. Special events such as seed, plant and produce sharing, community barbeques, open gardens.
'Red tape'	Collaboration with existing bodies – in our case the Parish Council - for banking, financial accountability, insurance cover, health & safety, safeguarding policy etc.
Damage / theft	Get the young involved. Show respect and give responsibility. Install solar security lights.



Interview for ITV News



We try to meet up on Sunday afternoons in spring and summer and have a rota for daily monitoring

Growing Togetherslowly but surely.

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“Look after the garden and it will look after you”