

Report from the Spinney Working Group

The Spinney Working Group has met twice to consider ways in which the Spinney, a small area of mature woodland, together with an adjacent triangle of grassland, might best be managed for the Community.

Advice has been sought from CWaC (*Landscape Architect*) and Cheshire Wildlife Trust (*Ecologist*) to consider ways in which a nature-friendly design might be implemented. Pre any design process, an ecological survey of both the woodland and the adjacent grassland is necessary. Such a survey would reveal where new footpaths and seating might best be located, as well as identifying which trees require careful management. **This report requests the support of the Parish Council to undertake such a survey.**

The Spinney Working Group has also considered ways in which 'open space' in Tattenhall might be managed in the future. The current revision of the Tattenhall and District Neighbourhood Plan has highlighted the value of 'open space' in our Community and, importantly, the significance of land in the centre of the village devoted to nature conservation. At a time when we are constantly encouraged to consider the impact of climate change, the increasing impact of flooding, the dramatic loss of biodiversity, the decline of pollinators and the need to promote health and well-being, there is an exciting opportunity to enhance, improve and extend the green heart of our village.

In this respect, it is proposed that Tattenhall develops a 'Nature Park'. Whilst similar schemes exist elsewhere in our district (*e.g. Caldby Valley Nature Park*) they tend to be located on the fringes of local urban areas. To create a 'Nature Park' in a rural setting would be unique in Cheshire and will not only promote our 'green credentials' but will demonstrate our local response to some of the most pressing environmental problems facing us and future generations. Apart from obvious biodiversity benefits, the 'Nature Park' would provide a source of environmental education and engagement for the entire community, an opportunity for physical activity and a means to tackle nature deficit disorder.

To achieve this ambition, the 'Nature Park' will connect conservation sites already identified in the Neighbourhood Plan* and include other small, but important, sites in the village. Over time, other sites might be brought into public use as changes to be introduced in the new 'Agriculture Bill' and the forthcoming 'Environment Bill' will see public access to the countryside extended and the farming community rewarded for managing land appropriately.

A **first stage** will be to undertake an ecological survey of the Spinney and adjacent triangle of grassland owned by CWaC (as above). The **second stage** will be to investigate funding opportunities to support the development of the "Tattenhall Nature Park. The **third stage** will be to develop a 'master plan'. The **final stage** will be to complete a funding application which, if successful, will achieve our ambition in creating the 'Tattenhall Nature Park'.

* *Currently, the sites include Glebe Meadow, Barn Field, the Spinney, the Mill Brook and adjacent land, Jubilee Wood and the Flacca wetland*