PRESTWOOD NATURE



ANNUAL REPORT 2023/24

www.prestwoodnature.org

Prestwood Nature is a registered charity (charity no 1114685) that engages local people to protect and enhance nature in and around Prestwood, Great Missenden and Kingshill.

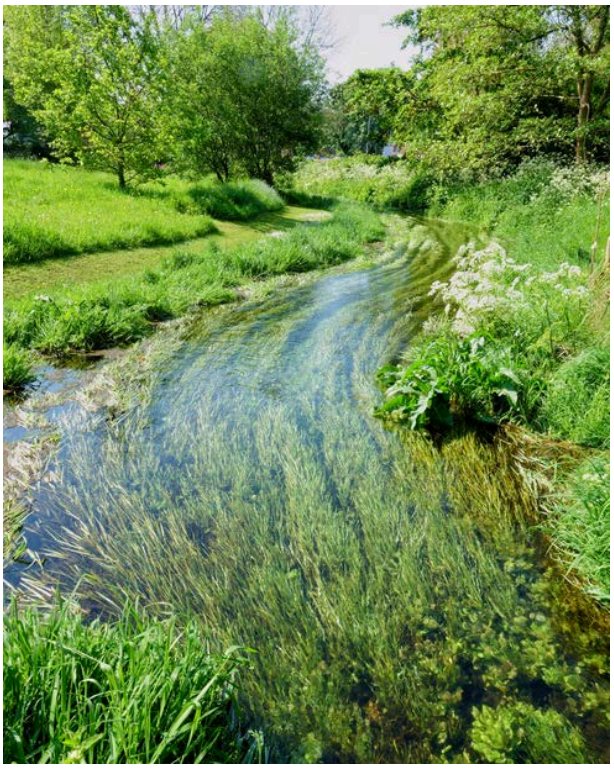
Prestwood Nature has restored and/or helps manage several local nature sites. We also engage local people with nature by organising guided nature walks, talks and other nature events. We survey and record local nature, such as butterflies, to see how the environment is changing and what can be done to protect it. Our members receive a monthly update email and a quarterly online member newsletter with lots of information about nature, upcoming local nature events and ideas on how to support nature in Prestwood and the surrounding area.

Our volunteer members currently look after three sites (Boug's Meadow, the Pollinator Friendly Garden and Kiln Common Orchard), organise walks and talks, and serve on our Council (aka Board of Trustees) which ensures good governance. We are funded by our small membership fees and occasional donations, fees from events, and fundraising. More information about Prestwood Nature can be found on our website (www.prestwoodnature.org) or via our social media accounts on Instagram (@prestwoodnature.org) and Facebook (Prestwood Nature).

This report shows the work we did from October 2023 to September 2024 and our financial statements for the financial year from April 2023 to March 2024. We report this way to provide the most up to date information on our nature conservation activities at our AGM.

1 OUR PROJECT ACTIVITIES IN 2023/24: SITES WE HELP MANAGE FOR NATURE

Prestwood Nature has helped to restore and look after a range of natural sites. It currently actively looks after three: Boug's Meadow, Kiln Common Orchard and the Pollinator Friendly Garden. The work at these sites is organised and carried out by our volunteers at regular work parties.



The river Misbourne in full flow at Boug's (Keith Tyrrell)

A) BOUG'S MEADOW

Boug's Meadow is a small field located next to the Link Road car park in Great Missenden. It contains a meadow, a part the Misbourne (chalk) river, a copse and a native hedge. It is managed for nature by a Prestwood Nature volunteer team which has worked on the meadow since 2005, restoring the field into a wildflower meadow, creating hedges and improving the woodland. The committed and energetic Boug's team (consisting of some 15 regular volunteers) holds monthly conservation work parties on the site, coordinated by Paul Heath. Boug's is used as a community asset by residents of Great Missenden who enjoy its natural beauty, peace and quiet, and use its benches and picnic table, making it an important community asset with a nature focus and increasing biodiversity.

The past year at Boug's Meadow has been dominated by the almost continual and sometimes mysterious flow of water in our stretch of the River Misbourne (which, being a winterbourne chalk stream, often runs dry). Missing only a few days in early September, the flow has been the longest in recent memory. The past year has also seen improvements in the meadow through the laying of the car park hedge, and for the community through the replacement of much of the meadow furniture. Several walks and events were held at the meadow this year, as is set out in the events section below.



Elephant Hawk Moth caterpillar (Colin Tyler)

Mysteries of the winterbourne Misbourne

Water flowing into the river bed at Boug's Meadow was first spotted by volunteers Hazel and Colin Tyler on 17 December 2023. Excitement soon turned to bemusement as the flow stopped; sleuthing by David Wildman showed that the flow was due to HS2 pumping water into the A413 storm drains which were overflowing. After involving various people and agencies it transpired that HS2 had a licence to discharge; this pumping has continued from time to time throughout the year but the water is filtered on site by HS2 and has been tested and shown to clear of sewage effluent. Nevertheless, overall groundwater levels in the whole Misbourne valley have been high throughout the year, with heavy rain leading to contamination as sewage systems leak or overflow. This has been particularly so in the Chalfonts and our local water flow issues pale in comparison.



View of the Misbourne (Hazel Tyler)



Happy craftsmen with the new picnic table (Paul Heath)

After the artificial (HS2) start of the flow to the Misbourne, the New Year brought proper groundwater flow which carried on until the end of August. Before the mud was dry, river flow restarted as the the weather dumped huge amounts of rain. We may be seeing a longer term effect in vegetation change around the river. Whatever the source of the river water, it was much appreciated by the local Heron, Mallards and Moorhen, with an occasional appearance from Grey Wagtails. Invertebrates started to appear again including Whirligig Beetles. Voles nested on the banks and Elephant Hawk-moth caterpillars were found there. The abundant water led to a huge increase in vegetation, beautifully captured in Keith Tyrrell's photo above.

Meadow furniture and Santa

In 2023,through the kind donation of a Great Missenden resident, we were able to replace the oft-repaired and slowly collapsing picnic bench in the meadow with a modern hand-crafted solid oak piece. We then started an appeal to replace the companion picnic table; Prestwood Nature also received a substantial donation later in the year which enabled us to install the new table, crafted in a similar style to the bench. Between the two installations, Boug's Meadow volunteers helped Santa collect for local charities during Great Missenden Rotary's house-to-house collections. The share for the Boug's elves has been reserved for future meadow furniture replacement.

We also installed some new furniture for our feathered friends: in Spring several new bird boxes were installed by David Wildman and Colin Tyler, with Glisglis protection to deter the inquisitive specimen that had been spotted in the Meadow earlier. The blue tits quickly took up residence.



Blue tit using new nestbox
(Colin Tyler)

Hedge laying

At the end of February 2024, in a rainy week, several trained Boug's Meadow volunteers, supported by members of the Rough around the Hedges team, laid the southern half of the Boug's car park hedge (see also page 14). The hedge had become overgrown and difficult to manage. The newly laid hedge reduces volunteer maintenance effort while contributing to habitat biodiversity and visibility into the meadow. Many of the hazel stakes and binders used in laying were sourced locally, including from the Missenden Walled Garden for which we are grateful. Interestingly, we saw a real increase in bird activity around the newly laid hedge with Blackbirds, Wrens and Robins terribly interested in the newly improved environment, eyeing up better nesting and feeding opportunities no doubt. More information about the Rough Around the Hedges project is on page 14 below.



The laid hedge at Boug's (Paul Heath)



Visiting Heron (Colin Tyler)



Redwing in the copse at Boug's (Colin Tyler)

The Meadow in Midsummer

At our Midsummer in the Meadow event (see page 9 below) the meadow showed us its brilliant best. The partner organisations and our visitors who came for the event were able to enjoy our precious Pyramidal Orchid which showed again. Yellow Rattle was still in flower with Meadow Cranesbill, Oxeye Daisy, Dark Mullein, various Knapweeds, Scabious and others adding to the colour. The weather sadly suppressed the invertebrates somewhat, but at least one Large Skipper butterflied in. We know that this beauty of the meadow is appreciated by the community – with regular visitors spotted using the benches and the Amersham Eco-Church coming all the way to Boug's to hold its annual picnic in the meadow.



The meadow in summer (Hazel Tyler)

B) KILN COMMON ORCHARD

Kiln Common Orchard is a community orchard planted by Prestwood Nature in 2008 next to the allotments on Greenlands Lane in Prestwood. The heritage fruit trees exemplify what used to be grown in the area. The trees and the meadow below also provide shelter and food for birds and invertebrates. The orchard is open to the local community and the fruit can be picked by local residents. Prestwood Nature volunteers mow the orchard and prune the trees, coordinated by Karen van Oostrum and James Appleby.



Blossom in the orchard (Marieke Bosman)

2024 was the second year of blossom monitoring in the orchard. The blossom arrived much earlier this year in all the varieties of trees, likely as a result of the heavy rainfall experienced throughout the year. The fruit harvest was poorer than in previous years. This year the plums have gone straight from being underripe and dry to overripe and rotten, while staying on the tree. Once again, the 'Bazeley' apple enjoyed a prolific harvest – this tree is proving to be remarkably productive! A couple of further varieties did relatively well, but other than that apple harvest has been unspectacular, with small fruit blemished with black marks, and windfalls that are easily bruised and taken by wasps. This year may well have been a good year for the fruit-eating insects, but not so much for fruit loving people!

One of the 'Black Eagle' cherry trees died and will be removed. This will not be replaced because the orchard will benefit from the space, and another tree of the same variety continues to thrive elsewhere in the orchard.

In July an orchard assessment was carried out by Andy Howard of the 'Heritage Fruit Tree Company'. His overall impression was that the orchard is looking good and represents an excellent collection of old, local varieties. He has suggested a programme of renovation work, most of which can be carried out by our own volunteers. No major works are required at this time.

C) THE POLLINATOR FRIENDLY GARDEN

The Pollinator Friendly Garden is a small garden next to Kiln Common Orchard. It shows what gardeners can do to encourage pollinators in their own gardens and is maintained by Prestwood Nature volunteers. The work is done through monthly work parties of some 10 regular volunteers and coordinated by Karen van Oostrum.

Our focus on reducing the dominant species in the beds at the Pollinator Friendly Garden has paid off, and this year we have enjoyed a pleasing diversity of flowers. Another wet year meant more vigorous growth, but sadly very few pollinators around to benefit. It wasn't until our August workparty that we finally noticed the background buzz of insects, and were able to watch a significant number of pollinators at work. Our group of enthusiastic gardening volunteers has grown a little this year, which has made a significant difference to the garden. The edges of the beds have been re-defined, and it all looks very smart. An interpretation panel explaining the garden to the community has been designed and will soon be delivered and installed at the site.



Soldier Beetle on Daisy
(Karen van Oostrum)



The garden in summer (Karen van Oostrum)

2. OUR WORK IN 2023/24: COMMUNITY NATURE EVENTS

Each year Prestwood Nature organises a number of nature events for the local community this year managed by volunteers Marieke Bosman and Helen Matthews. We hope our events engage local people with local nature and encourage them to value and protect it. Attendance at our events is free for members and we charge a small fee (or ask for a donation) for most of the walks and talks which helps support our work for nature.

In 2023/24 we organised 12 events, walks and talks, attended by over 300 people. We held five talks; the first presented the work of Prestwood Nature's over the past 20 years and was held at our AGM in November 2023. In partnership with Wild Amersham we organised three online talks over the winter: 'Migrating birds near you' with Simon Nichols; 'Nature in Winter' with John Tyler; and 'Mending the Misbourne: reviving a Chiltern chalk stream' with Alan Beechey. Anne Evans, our Treasurer, who also coordinates the Prestwood Nature Butterfly Transect held a talk and walk about the Transect at the Prestwood Nature Reserve in July.



We took the community on four nature walks. Three of these were led by botanist Karen van Oostrum. Her walks focus on local plant life in various habitats and seasons. The first was held in October 2023 and the other two in April and June 2024, both starting out from Boug's Meadow. John Morris led a woodland walk around Angling Spring Wood in March.

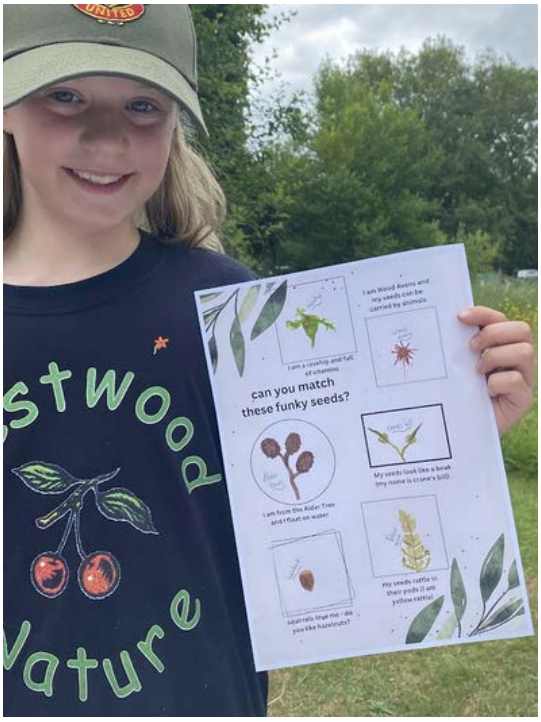
We also organised three nature workshops and events. In June, the Boug's volunteer team transformed annual 'Meadows Day' into the first 'Midsummer in the Meadow' event, with the meadow's brilliant display well appreciated by visitors.

Wildflower walk (Marieke Bosman)

The event hosted stalls from partner nature organisations such as Butterfly Conservation, Priestfield Arboretum, the Bumblebee Trust, and the Leather Lane Bat and River Misbourne Action groups. Children participated in nature activities such as wildflower identification and painting on stones.

In August, volunteers Marieke Bosman and Adrian Porter held a workshop on nature journaling at Boug's Meadow, and in September the meadow hosted Julie Hopton, who engaged excited local children in a 'Creatures of the Night' event, looking and listening for bats, moths etc.

Prestwood Nature also participated in the Holy Trinity Charity Bazaar and contributed a naturally decorated tree to the Great Missenden Church Christmas Tree Festival.



Children's activities at Midsummer in the Meadow (Marieke Bosman)



Nature journaling workshop (Marieke Bosman)

3. OUR WORK IN 2023/24: RECORDING LOCAL NATURE

As part of its mission, Prestwood Nature also aims to monitor and record local wildlife, to see how it is changing, whether for the worse because of climate change and other threats, or because of positive action through work such as that of Prestwood Nature. This project is coordinated by Anne Evans. The key projects include the Butterfly Transect and iRecord.

Butterfly Transect

Prestwood Nature has taken part in the UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme organized by Butterfly Conservation since 2006. The standardized methodology enables year-on-year comparison with walks carried out each week, weather permitting, from 1 April through to the end of September. This year, 16 Prestwood Nature volunteers, including two new volunteers, walked the transect. All weeks were walked (with the exception of two where the weather conditions did not meet the minimum criteria). No problems were reported by transect walkers except for particularly lush growth blocking the footpath in section 8 which required an emergency work party to clear the way.



Bee on Bistort (Karen van Oostrum)

In total, 2532 butterflies were recorded on the transect in 2024, although over half of these were Meadow Browns. This compares to an average of 2395 butterflies per year in the last 10 years. Twenty-five different butterfly species were recorded.

Butterfly Conservation has recently declared 2024 a national 'Butterfly Emergency', with results of their Big Butterfly Count showing a marked and hugely concerning decline in numbers, with the worst summer in the Count's history for Common Blue, Holly Blue, Green-veined White, Small White, Small Tortoiseshell and Painted Lady.



Common Blue (Anne Evans)

Although the total number of butterflies recorded in the Prestwood Nature transect this year approximated to the average count for the previous 10 years, counts in the spring and early summer were much lower than average, probably due in part to the unusually wet conditions. Counts did improve for the second half of the transect year, but the majority of butterflies recorded belonged to the subfamily of 'Browns' as evidenced by the top five shown in the table below. (Note that, despite the name, the Marbled White is a member of the 'browns' (the Satyrinae) rather than the 'whites' (the Pieridae).) However, counts for the Common Blue (27 vs a 10 year average of 112), Small Tortoiseshell (2 vs a 10 year average of 23) and Small Copper (1 vs a 10 year average of 6) in particular were much lower than usual.

Species	2024	Average from 2014-2023
Meadow Brown	1329	1017
Marbled White	318	253
Gatekeeper	208	158
Ringlet	157	277
Speckled Wood	78	79

Prestwood Nature iRecord Activity

The Prestwood Nature iRecord Activity is an initiative set up in 2022 to make our records immediately accessible at a local and national level, thus ensuring the greatest visibility for our records.

The data is kept secure and regularly backed up by the Biological Records Centre. There are currently 750 records submitted to the Activity up to 31 August 2024, representing 426 different species which have been entered by 9 recorders. The breakdown of these records by taxon group is shown below.

Taxon group	Numbers of different species recorded
Insect – moths & butterflies	221
Insect – true fly	49
Insect – true bug	27
Insect – wasps, bees & sawflies	27
Insect - other	18
Beetles	31
Flowering plants	22
Spiders & harvestmen	12
Birds	9
Fungi & slime moulds	4
Mammals	3
Amphibians	1
Mollusc	1
Springtail	1
Total	**426**



Pine Hawk-moth (Anne Evans)

Most of our records have photos attached and it is always a struggle to pick any of them out for this report. Have a look at Merodon equestris. No, it's not a bumblebee, although it does a very good impression of one! It is in fact a hoverfly which has a number of colour forms which mimic different bumblebees. Its larvae develop in Daffodil bulbs, hence its common name Narcissus or Greater Bulb-Fly, but it can also breed on Bluebell bulbs. Also shown is a Pine Hawk-moth on a plain background. A master of disguise, it is very hard to see when at rest on a tree trunk.

Creation of the Activity has the additional benefit of enabling us to view and explore dynamic maps of all records within the Prestwood Nature area that have been deposited by people outside of the Activity. This includes the butterfly transect data (which is entered through the UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme portal). Currently, over 22,000 records representing over 1800 species have been input by 527 recorders.

However, records entered into iRecord outside of the Activity can only be viewed online, whereas records entered via the Activity can be readily downloaded to add to Prestwood Nature's database.



Merodon equestris aka Narcissus Bulb Fly (Anne Evans)

4. OUR WORK IN 2023/24: COMMUNICATING ABOUT NATURE

Prestwood Nature uses various channels to tell people about its work and to engage them with local nature. Our members receive a monthly email update and a quarterly digital newsletter with information about our events and those of other organisations, and interesting articles about local nature. We have a website and are on Instagram and Facebook. We also publish articles in local newspaper the Source. Our comms work is coordinated by Alice Griffiths, Frank Rickett and Christopher Black.

No Mow May survey and certification 'event'

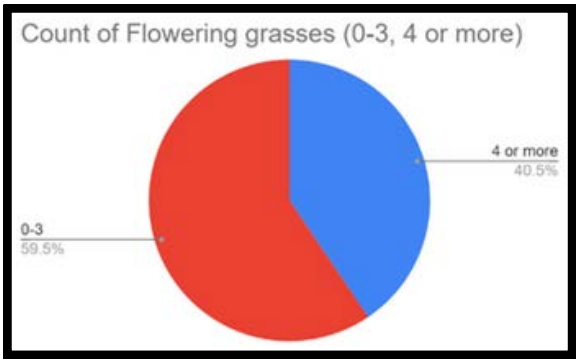
The Comms Team developed a new idea for 2024. The Prestwood Nature's No Mow May event in May 2024 was designed to encourage a wider audience in the Prestwood region (online and on the ground) to not mow their lawns so as to enhance plant and pollinator life in their gardens, in line with Plantlife's national 'No Mow May' campaign.

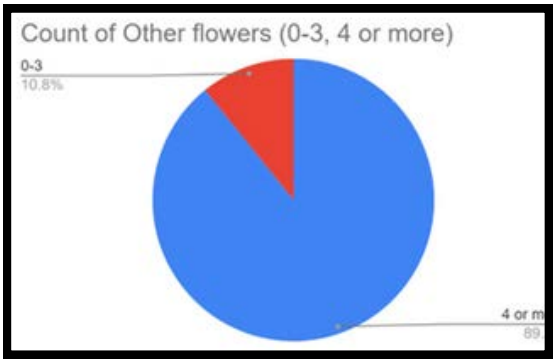
The Prestwood Nature campaign took the form of an article in The Source newspaper (for HP16) and a total of eight social media (Facebook + Instagram) posts about a certification scheme for households taking part in No Mow May. A detailed survey of the villages of Little Kingshill and Prestwood was undertaken to establish how many households were taking part during the week commencing 27 May. This was done by assessing front gardens, using a visual guide to aid with the identification of different grasses. The survey found evidence of 30 households in Little Kingshill and 12 in the Prestwood area observing No Mow May based solely on their front garden, visible from the road. Of those, Prestwood Nature's certificates endorsed by Plant Life were given out to 25 households in the Little Kingshill area. Numerous online and offline conversations about local conservation were begun as a direct result of this contact. Invitations to the Midsummer in the Meadow event were provided alongside the certificates.



Woodland walk (Helen Matthews)

While it is difficult to judge the impact of Prestwood Nature's campaign (based on social media, an article in the Source and engagement as a result of certificates handed out), this 2024 project did lead to topical conversations about No Mow May in the local area, and about managing gardens to support wildlife and biodiversity more generally. It also provided an opportunity for Prestwood Nature to identify and engage with local nature enthusiasts. To that end it is judged to have been a success, worth repeating next year.





Survey results: Of the 37 households surveyed observing No Mow May in Little Kingshill and Prestwood during the last week of May 2024: 40% had four or more flowering grasses growing in the lawn of their front garden. 89% had four or more 'other flowers' growing in their front lawn. Of the 25 Little Kingshill households surveyed, a third had eight or more different varieties of flower observed at that time.

The comms volunteers also put together 12 member emails, coordinated the writing of four seasonal newsletters, and redesigned parts of the website. Prestwood Nature's Facebook page now has 534 (up from 475) followers with 477 page likes this year and 270 likes or shares for our 44 posts this year. We now have 88 Instagram followers who gave us 110 likes for 18 posts. Over the 2023/24 period Prestwood Nature also contributed five articles to the Source, the community newspaper for the HP16 area, and developed five posters and a poster template.



Mushrooms at Boug's (Hazel Tyler)



Geraniums and Oxeye Daisies at the Pollinator Friendly Garden (Karen van Oostrum)

5. OUR WORK IN 2023/24: OTHER NATURE PROJECTS

Rough Around the Hedges

The Rough around the Hedges volunteer group was formed in early 2023 by Paul Heath. Sponsorship contributions from Prestwood Nature and the Chiltern Society released major funding from the Chalk, Cherries and Chairs landscape partnership. This support enabled the group to train existing Boug's and other volunteers in hedge laying skills, to acquire good quality tools and to rejuvenate a number of mature, overgrown native hedges in the Central Chilterns area.

Between January 2023 and October 2024, the Rough Around the Hedges project trained 52 volunteers in hedge laying skills, performed 700 + hours of volunteer hedge work and laid over 370 metres of hedge on various conservation sites. As the Chalk, Cherries and Chairs landscape partnership is winding down in 2024, the Rough around the Hedges group will become a volunteer group within the Chiltern Society, so that its benefit to the environment, biodiversity and wildlife support can continue. The team is grateful for the seminal support given by Prestwood Nature and look forward to an association long into the future. Several Boug's Meadow volunteers have been trained and contributed to the activities of the group.

Volunteers tackling the hedge at Boug's Meadow (Colin Tyler)



Part of the car park hedge at Boug's has already been beautifully laid and more work will be done before Christmas 2024 so that the hedge will contribute to the appearance and biodiversity of the Meadow.

Sheepwash

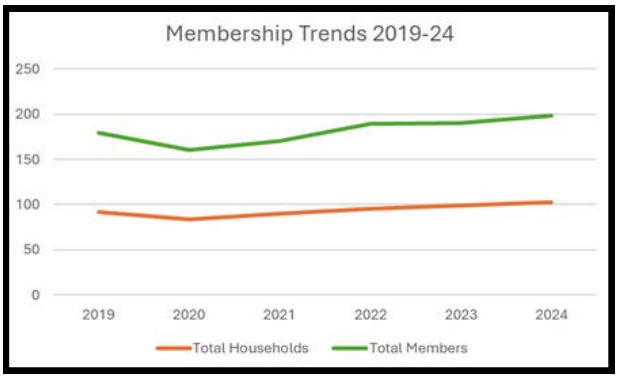
Sheepwash is a local pond which was restored many years ago with support from Prestwood Nature but it has recently been suffering from silting up and vandalism.

Following a visit to the site, the Prestwood Nature Council took the decision that in the absence of a project leader and a team of volunteers to co-ordinate and plan the necessary work on the Sheepwash site, Prestwood Nature would need to pull out of active management of this site. We notified the Parish Council of this and are taking steps to remove the Prestwood Nature information board. However, this is not necessarily the end of the story - see below under challenges and plans.

6. PRESTWOOD NATURE MEMBERSHIP

Prestwood Nature is a membership organisation; members pay a small membership fee, and these fees, their ideas and the hours of volunteering they put in make Prestwood Nature's work possible. Prestwood Nature household membership (family and individual subscribers) has increased again slightly from last year, following a dip in 2020, and is now slightly higher than before the pandemic.

The breakdown of membership is given in the table below. Note that the timing of the membership year changed following the 2022 AGM. The membership year now runs from 1 April to 31 March in line with the financial year so that income and membership figures are reported for the same period. 2023 was a transitional year with membership running from 1 January to 31 March 2024. The 2024 figures quoted able are for the 12 months ending 31 March 2024. Membership for the 2024/25 year stood at 99 households and 196 members in October 2024.



Category	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Total Households	*92*	*84*	*90*	**95**	**99**	**103**
Total Members	*179*	*160*	*170*	**189**	**190**	**198**

7. PRESTWOOD NATURE GOVERNANCE

Prestwood Nature is run by a Council comprising four officer posts plus up to eight ordinary members. In 2022/23 the membership was as follows:

- Helen Matthews (Chair)
- Vice-Chair (vacant)
- Marieke Bosman (General Secretary)
- Anne Evans (Treasurer)
- James Appleby
- Christopher Black
- Catherine Bunting
- Alice Griffiths
- Karen van Oostrum



Volunteers raising funds (Paul Heath)



Large Skipper (Colin Tyler)

8. FINANCIAL REPORT

Prestwood Nature has low running costs thanks to the hard work of its many volunteers and the kindness of event leaders who often charge no fee or give a discount. Our income is mainly from membership fees, occasional large donations, and small sums from event fees charged, as well as the sale of plants, cards and cakes at events.

The financial report for 2023/24 (kindly examined by Steve Adkins, pro bono) is set out below. Income for 2023/24 was £6,085 and outgoings were £3,784. We received a generous corporate donation from the Lancashire Foundation, a charitable foundation run by the Lancashire Group, a financial firm. We also received a generous donation from a Great Missenden resident which covered the cost of the picnic bench at Boug's. In addition to the day-to-day running costs, we spent a larger sum on the replacement of the Boug's furniture. We are in a healthy position with the funds available at year end being £8,869.03. Part of this will go to the costs of the interpretationboard at the Pollinator Friendly Garden and the pruning of the Orchard. Further suitable natureprojects are being considered for the future.



Volunteers at work in Boug's Meadow (Hazel Tyler)

Prestwood Nature Financial Report 2023/24

Prestwood Nature- Conservation Group for the Prestwood Region
Receipts & Payments Report for the year ended 31st March 2024

Receipts for the period	2024 £	2023 £	Expenses for the period	2024 £	2023 £	Outcome 2024 £ S/(D)	Outcome 2023 £ S/(D)
General Income			**Governance and General Expenses**				
Membership subscriptions	890.54	901.26	Public liability insurance	131.04	131.04		
Donations misc	198.25	150.49	Website & hosting costs	30.82	30.82		
Donations (Speakers & Eventbrite)	526.98		Zoom	143.88	143.88		
Gift Aid	261.95	169.34	Online Membership system	75.00	75.00		
Map sales	20.00	34.00	Council review (inc.survey, hall hire)	0.00	166.51		
T Shirt sales		20.00	Sumup card reader	46.80			
Plant sales	185.85		Misc stationery & display items	15.00			
Cake & Egg sales	112.71		Card materials	68.65			
Card sales	54.16						
Seed sales	4.88			511.19	547.25		
Boug's furniture donations	1,829.67		**AGM expenses**				
Donation (Corporate)	2,000.00		AGM hall hire	35.10	63.80		
			AGM refreshments	0.00	0.00		
				35.10	63.80		
TOTAL GENERAL	***6,084.99***	***1,275.09***		***546.29***	***611.05***	***5,538.70***	***664.04***
			Events & Education				
			Talks & Speaker fees/expenses	662.81	128.00		
			Return of Hall hire deposit (from 21-22)		- 100.00		
			Tables & Banners	391.80			
				1,054.61	28.00	(1,054.61)	(28.00)
			Kiln Common Orchard & Pollinator Friendly Garden				
			Seeds/Plants		107.00		
			Manure		45.00		
				0.00	152.00	-	(152.00)
			Boug's Meadow				
			Plug plants, Bulbs, Seeds & Trees		110.50		
			National MeadowDay expenses		30.00		
			Furniture	2,023.50			
				2,023.50	140.50	(2,023.50)	(140.50)
			Chalk, Cherries & Chairs projects				
			Hedge-laying project (from 2022/23)	160.00			
				160.00			
TOTAL RECEIPTS FOR YEAR	6,084.99	1,275.09	TOTAL EXPENDITURE FOR YEAR	3,784.40	931.55	2,460.59	343.54
Surplus/ (Deficit) for Year	**2,300.59**	**343.54**					
Funds brought from Previous Year			**Funds carried forward to Next Year**				
Bank	6,568.44	6,224.90	Bank	8,869.03	6,568.44		
Cash/imprest		0.00	Cash/imprest	0.00	0.00		
	6,568.44	6,224.90		8,869.03	6,568.44		
SUM	**12,653.43**	**7,499.99**	**SUM**	**12,653.43**	**7,499.99**		
			check total	*0.00*	*0.00*		

I have examined the Recepts & Payments report for the year ended 31st March 2024, together with the underlying details. I have found the accounts to be properly compiled and in good order. The funds carried forward represent 3.7 years average expenditure.

Steve Adkins. Qualified Management Accountant.

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Steve Adkins. Qualified Management Accountant.



Wildflowers grown in a garden as part of No Mow May (Alice Griffiths)

9. CHALLENGES AND PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

Nature remains under severe threat from climate change, pollution, habitat loss and fragmentation, and other problems. The low numbers of pollinators seen following the wet spring of 2024 demonstrates the fragility of our environment. It needs all of us to band together to protect it. Prestwood Nature remains a very small organisation. As it is entirely volunteer run, we can only do what our volunteer numbers allow us to do.

We therefore seek to work with other groups where we can. Although we have stepped back from management of the site for the time being, Sheepwash remains a challenge. Talks have commenced with the new Prestwood Community Association which is launching at the end of October with a view to forming an action group for Sheepwash, involving various local groups and community members, including Prestwood Nature. We also aim to work closely with the new Community Association to feed environmental considerations into their plans and utilise additional publicity through their channels. We also aim to foster closer links with the Chiltern Society, particularly in relation to the Prestwood Local Nature Reserve.

Ash dieback is a concern, particularly in Angling Spring Wood, where we are seeking information from Buckinghamshire Council about its management plans.

Ensuring the continuity of Prestwood Nature through the recruitment of new trustees remains a constant concern. We have fortunately had nominations for two positions on the Council. Recruiting more Trustees will be important as the current Chair will complete her term as Chair next year when she will be stepping down, having served seven years in total on the Council.





Prestwood Nature Christmas tree with handmade natural decorations (Alice Griffiths)

10. THANK YOU!

Our slogan is: working together with nature. Nature is in a dire state, but when we work together, we can make change. And we are very grateful for all the people who worked together with us and nature to make the work of Prestwood Nature possible. Thank you to all our volunteers who come again and again to look after our three sites. Thank you to everyone who attends our events. Thank you to all our members who contribute ideas, photos, articles and – importantly - their membership fees to cover our running costs. Thank you to all our partner organisations who provide speakers (often for free or for a small donation), help run or attend events, publish information, give advice or practical tools and materials, and so much more. And thank you to our Council for all the hard work they do in planning, coordinating and often implementing the work Prestwood Nature does.





Volunteers at Boug's Meadow (Hazel Tyler)

We can only do this work together. Please consider volunteering at one of our work parties, becoming a Council member, making a donation, or writing articles for the newsletter or posts for our social media. You can contact us through the links below. We look forward to working together into the future for the protection and restoration of local nature in Prestwood and the surrounding areas. Join us!

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