

VICARAGE PLANTATION

Mendlesham's Woodland



**FOR FURTHER
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Vicarage Plantation Woodland is the property of the Parish Council of Mendlesham

The Woodland is open to the public but for reasons of safety, neither motorised vehicles nor horses are permitted

Dogs may be taken into the woodland. Dog owners are asked to remove dog mess from the footpaths

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To celebrate the Millennium of 2000, the parishioners of Mendlesham decided to create a woodland. A 12.5 acre plot, formally part of the vicarage farm, was acquired and tree planting commenced in the autumn of 2000.

Since Suffolk has lost some 98% of its meadowland, it was decided to retain some of the woodland as meadowland. The trees are all broad leaved trees consisting primarily of English Oaks and Ash trees. Some 80% of the woodland includes these trees. The remainder is made up of 20 varieties of other trees native to England.

The trees have all been planted by local people and the woodland continues to be maintained by the Parish Council. Many of the trees have been donated to the woodland by local people.

The 4 fields which make up the woodland have all been named: Oak Meadow, Cricket Meadow - which was once a cricket pitch, Water Meadow and Long Meadow. In Oak Meadow, the old oak tree in the centre is



450 year old Oak tree in Oak Meadow

estimated to be over 450 years old - possibly planted sometime during the reign of King Henry VIII!

The perimeter plantation, which contains a number of

Turkish Oaks, was

probably planted in the early 19th century by the vicar of St Mary's Church. Sadly, most of the Beech trees which were also planted at that time, have died.

THE TREES

The original trees in the perimeter plantation, planted sometime around 1810 to 1820 consist mainly of Limes, Turkey Oaks and Sycamores. The perimeter also contains Elm, Ash, Hawthorn, Alder, Holly, English Oak, Symphoricarpus, Holm Oak and Beech.



The Beech trees have, with only one or two exceptions, died completely within the last decade or so. This has provided the woodland with a marvellous and rare standing deadwood habitat for wildlife such as woodpeckers and wood and bark burrowing insects. Some of the invertebrate wood boring species and wood decaying fungi are amongst the rarest in Britain.

In addition to the Oak and Ash trees planted in the Autumn of 2000 and 2001, new trees include Field Maple, Hazel, Hornbeam, Spindle, Buckthorn, Guelder Rose, Dogwood, Small Leaved Lime, Cherry, Crab Apple, Wild Service, Wild Pear and Wayfarer Tree.

Many of the trees have been donated by local residents and organisations. The trees have been planted deliberately in rows to facilitate maintenance during their early years. After 15 years, the trees will be allowed to develop naturally - creating a wild woodland.

BIRDS OF THE WOODLAND

Vicarage plantation is home to many wild birds. Some, like the Greater Spotted Woodpecker are very elusive whilst others can be seen regularly.



Spotted Woodpecker

Listen out for the screech of its close relative, the green woodpecker, and you may catch a glimpse of its bright green wings as it flies from tree to tree. You should be able to see nearly all the members of the

tit family - great tits, blue tits, coal tits and long-tailed tits. You will certainly be able to hear them. If you are really lucky, you might catch a glimpse of a tree creeper as it makes its way upwards



The Green Woodpecker

around the trunk of a tree.

At night you will be able to hear the hooting or the screech of a tawny owl, but you will have to look very carefully during the day to catch sight of this bird as it rests.



The Tawny Owl