

FEBRUARY 2020

EAST ILSEY PARISH COUNCIL, BERKSHIRE

On Sunday 19 January 2020 the village of East Ilsley transformed a plot of derelict land into a community orchard, a space for all to share and enjoy for many years to come.

With support from East Ilsley Parish Council, West Berkshire Council, East Ilsley Trust Fund and private donations: the villagers were able to prepare the land for planting, purchase 20 apple and pear trees and plant them on the new site during a community event organised by the Parish Council.

The idea for a community orchard in East Ilsley came from a local event held in the nearby village of Hampstead Norreys in September 2019 called 'GreenFest'. This was a one-day event held in various locations around Hampstead Norreys with speakers, forums, stalls and activities designed to inform and advise on all issues relating to becoming greener and more sustainable. Cllr. Carolyn Culver, District Councillor for Ridgeway Ward and Green Party Member in West Berkshire was a key organiser in the GreenFest event and lucky for East Ilsley, was also one of their Parish Councillors.

With Cllr. Culver's expert guidance the Parish Council was able to submit a bid to West Berkshire Council, to request funding to help set up the community orchard. West Berkshire agreed to help with the costs and East Ilsley were able to begin the preparations.

Cllr. Culver commented "Thank you to everyone who helped plant East Ilsley's new community orchard. Thanks to initial donations from East Ilsley Parish Council and East Ilsley Trust Fund I was able to secure match funding from West Berkshire Council. We look forward to watching the orchard mature over the coming years".

Has your council done something similar? If so, please contact NALC through the email address: Claire.goldfinch@nalc.gov.uk

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