The Norley Memorial Garden, Post Office Lane

HISTORY

On Tithe maps this area of common land was designated Sandybank Waste, meaning it was of such little economic value that it wasn't enclosed. Little was known of it until after the Great War 1914 - 19, when it became the Memorial Garden. But it wasn't until the 1990's when the Women's Institute took it over that a concerted effort was made to tidy it up, plant flowers and put in the crazy paving path. It became known as the WI Garden. Most of the daffodils were purchased using the monies from the sale of Dr. Gladys Archer's book*, "NORLEY, a village alive.....".* The WI continued to care for the Garden for two decades. The bench was provided by Mr and Mrs Brian Burgess in memory of their son Roger who tragically died in 1991.

In 2015 a Memorial plaque for Second Lieut. Roland Beazley was installed by the Norley Wildlife Group (NWG) as part of the Norley Wildflower Memorial Walk and wildflowers including poppies were sown around it. Then in 2017 NWG took over the garden to give it a greater value to wildlife. A Wildflower meadow, snowdrops and cyclamen soon followed. In 2018 having cleared huge amounts of rubbish and debris at the back of the garden, a new circular path was put in. Additional wildlife features such as nettle patches and a log pile have been introduced and brash hedges have been laid in the lower area.

However, due to many reasons, the maintenance of the wildflower garden has proved difficult over the last few years and has attracted some adverse criticism. Over the last couple of years renewed effort has been made to establish smaller wildflower areas around the central path particularly linked to the establishment of Yellow Rattle to control the grass and allow wildflowers to grow. This appears to have been successful as the Yellow Rattle returned this year and seeds have been spread over the area for 2027.

NEW PLANS 2026

This year we are thrilled to announce that we have drawn up a new plan for the garden with the introduction of additional planted areas and features to be implemented over the next few years. Our first addition, which some of you may have seen already, is the installation of 2 wigwams, which will provide both plants and wildlife somewhere safe to grow whilst also looking fantastic. The areas will be separated by mown grass paths to make the garden more open and inviting. We also want to make the garden educational to show how easy it is to create wildlife rich areas in your own garden, no matter what the size. Plus, our plans hope to include other community groups in and around Norley to increase the knowledge and use of the area for all.

We have a fabulous team at NWG but our plans at the Garden will include regular maintenance requirements where we will be seeking additional volunteers to assist NWG. We have a schedule of the jobs that are needed which we will begin to promote as we move forwards, so anyone with a spare hour can potter in the garden rather than waiting for an NWG Workday.
In addition, some repairs are needed which will require the use of contractors: the circular path was closed due to slippage, posts at the roadside need replacing, trees and shrubs need inspecting and cutting back. We will be seeking funding in collaboration with Norley Parish Council and with the help of Gillian Edwards. The Memorial bench will also be repaired by our volunteers.

We really hope our village will get behind the plans and help where they can, this will protect this space for future generations of Norley residents as well as its wildlife friends.

NORLEY WILDLIFE GROUP

Memorial Garden Plan

2026



WEBSITE: www.WildNorley.com

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