

SHEARSBY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN: THE PRESERVATION OF NATURAL AREAS.

THE FIRST SPINNEY AND THE SECOND SPINNEY ON THORPEHILL FARMLAND.

Two spinneys were planted by John Burton, a keen conservationist, with the intention of encouraging birdlife and wildlife onto his farmland. For the most part, the spinneys are left untouched, and the Burton Family ask that both be included in the Neighbourhood Plan so that they remain natural green areas in perpetuity.

The FIRST SPINNEY, nearest the farmhouse and seen to the right of the Leicestershire Round footpath as one walks towards Bruntingthorpe, was planted in 1980. It has a variety of indigenous trees including ash, sycamore, holly, poplar, larch, apple and oak. It is bounded by a thorn hedge and fencing to keep stock out, and as far as possible remains untouched to provide a good habitat for wild birds and other small creatures. On the south side, nearest the footpath three beehives are usually seen.

The SECOND SPINNEY, farthest away from the farmhouse, was planted in 1979, mostly with ash trees. There are also large willow trees at the side of the stream. This small area of woodland is to the left of the Leicestershire Round footpath immediately before the bridge over the stream, as one walks towards Bruntingthorpe. It is bounded by the stream on one side, and hedged and fenced to keep stock out.

A small area nearest the footpath and measuring about 30 metres by 20 metres, was under-planted with snowdrops and aconites, and makes for a beautiful sight in early spring. This spinney, left untouched provides habitat for a vast variety of wildlife. Tawny owls can be seen as well as a great variety of other birds, including woodpeckers, chaffinches, wrens and robins. Any dropped branches are left as they provide cover for small animals including rabbits, squirrels and hedgehogs.