

Where the Meadows Flower



A time-travel show for Pendock CE Primary School
by John Townsend in association with Worcestershire Wildlife Trust's
Oral Histories **Hardwick Green Project**



Scenes

Scene 1	Pendock – the present
Scene 2	In the fields – early 1950s
Scene 3	Pendock School - winter 1952
Scene 4	A cottage kitchen – evening
Scene 5	Pendock School - summer 1953
Scene 6	Blackberrying at dusk
Scene 7	Back to the future!

Speaking parts:

Present Day

2 'country bumpkins':	Yokel 1 & Yokel 2	Scene 1 & 7
2 school pupils of today:	Pupil 1 & Pupil 2	Scene 1 & 7

1950s

Mrs Granger (teacher)	Scene 1
Frankie schoolboy	Scene 2, 4, 6
Molly Frankie's older sister	Scene 2, 4, 6
Henry Frankie's older brother	Scene 2, 4, 6
Lena Molly's friend	Scene 2, 6
Jack Lena's little brother	Scene 2, 6
Ann Another school friend	Scene 2, 6
Sylvia schoolgirl	Scene 1, 3, 5, 7
Rex schoolboy	Scene 5, 7
Mr Baseley (headmaster)	Scene 3, 5
Child 1	Scene 3
Child 2	Scene 3
Ma (Mother of Frankie, Molly & Henry)	Scene 4
Charlie Wilcox – an older (naughtier) schoolboy	Scene 5, 6
Child A	Scene 5
Child B	Scene 5

Chorus: country school children of the 1950s	Scene 3, 5
school children of today	Scene 7

Scene 1

'The Archers' theme music. Two country bumpkins lean on gates at either end of the stage, staring contemplatively out to the audience. They pause a lot, with all the time in the world, and speak with very broad local country accents.

Yokel 1: Nice here, ain't it?

Yokel 2: Delightful

Yokel 1: Just watching the world go by...

Yokel 2: Yeah – as they all hurtle down the M50

Yokel 1: Or stagger up the Malverns

Yokel 2: Rural Worcestershire at its best.

Yokel 1: Do you realise you've got something very special on your doorstep?

Yokel 2: Not really. There's only a pair of wellies, an old milk bottle and next door's cat.

Yokel 1: I don't mean THAT doorstep. I mean Pendock's doorstep. You know, all round here. Our special rural doorstep.

Yokel 2: Oh yeah, very nice. Did you know Pendock comes from the old Welsh, *penn heddioc*, meaning 'head of the barley field'?

Yokel 1: Really? Well, it's the fields round here that are so special. Do you know Hardwick Green Meadows, by any chance?

Yokel 2: 'Course

Yokel 1: No, it's not at Corse. Nearer Eldersfield.

Yokel 2: Yeah – a nice little spot.

Yokel 1: It's a lot more than that. It's an SSSI.

Yokel 2: My neighbour had one of those

Yokel 1: You what?

Yokel 2: A Honda SSI. Sport Injected. Very nice.

Yokel 1: An SSSI is a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

Yokel 2: Oh, that. I've got one of those on my toe. They've been doing tests for athlete's foot.

Yokel 1: No, a Site of Special Scientific Interest is a unique habitat full of natural wonders and teeming with amazing life forms.

- Yokel 2: That's right – it don't 'alf itch.
- Yokel 1: Them meadows are well known for corky-fruited water-dropwort.
- Yokel 2: I went to the doctor with that as well once.
- Yokel 1: No, that's a special flower that grows in the marshlands here. That and the yellow rattle.
- Yokel 2: Sounds like my cousin's rusty old Mondeo.
- Yokel 1: Yellow rattle is one of our most important meadow wildflowers. They say when the yellow rattle is in flower, the hay is ready for cutting. Cows love it – it's the first thing they eat when they graze the meadows.
- Yokel 2: Grazing allows the rare great burnet to grow here, you know.
- Yokel 1: Grassland butterflies like meadow brown and common blue thrive on it.
- Yokel 2: Talking of grazing, I could stand here all day till the cows come home. No rush, eh? It must be getting late. Have you got the time?
- Yokel 1: Yep, all the time in the world.
- Yokel 2: No, what time is it? I ain't got a watch.
- Yokel 1: Nor me but we country folk can always tell. Just by doing this... (*stoops down and puts ear to the ground*). Ten to eight.
- Yokel 2: That's amazing, however does that work? Can you hear something ticking in the soil or something?
- Yokel 1: It's all down to the wind.
- Yokel 2: You can hear the time blowing in the wind?
- Yokel 1: Not really. It's just that when the wind blows and moves them branches over there, I can see right across the fields to Eldersfield Church clock! Eight minutes to eight now.
- Yokel 2: Eight minutes to eight? That's 19.52, if you're digitally inclined.
- Yokel 1: 1952? That was a long time ago. Quite a year in these parts, too – by all accounts. That's when my gran was a girl.
- Yokel 2: I wonder what it was like back then.
- Yokel 1: We could take a look if you like...
- Yokel 2: How can we do that?
- Yokel 1: By the power of imagination, a little sprinkle of Pendock Magic and an amazing script.

- Yokel 2: A Tardis might be better.
- Yokel 1: Well, it just so happens we have our very own Pendock Tardis.
- Yokel 2: Not the old phone box from the village?
- Yokel 1: Nope – a special book from almost 70 years ago... *(Enter two pupils)*
- Pupil 1: We found this old album of pressed flowers in the school attic.
- Pupil 2: It's full of pressed wildflowers from the local meadows.
- Pupil 1: Look, there's ox-eye daisy, lady's bedstraw and bird's-foot trefoil.
- Pupil 2: Adder's tongue fern, meadowsweet, buttercups and pepper saxifrage.
- Yokel 1: Since that book was made in the 1950s, England has lost 97% of its meadows. Floodplain meadows like Hardwick Green are very rare today.
- Yokel 2: That's why our meadowlands have to be preserved. Our small meadow is a delicate habitat - a corner of Eldersfield Marsh.
- Pupil 1: It says in here that long ago the children of Pendock School used to go on nature walks through the meadows with Mrs Grainger, their teacher.
- Pupil 2: Mr Grainger was the headmaster – and he was very strict.
- Pupil 1: I wonder what it was like back then.
- Pupil 2: We can soon find out. All we have to do is open the book at this special page and blow the magic from the flowers... *(Blows petals out of the book)*
- Pupil 1: Return to where the Malvern Hills
Stretched far beyond wild daffodils
- Pupil 2: Return to where the old church tower
Stood proudly where the meadows flower
- Pupil 1: Return to where the floodplains yield,
From Longdon Marsh to Eldersfield
- Pupil 2: Return and glimpse these wetlands when
Our world was very different then... *(Sound of wind/music – flickering lights)*
Doctor Who theme: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W4ZFfIEBQA>
- Children dressed as 70 years ago walk down the aisle, pointing out birds, flowers and butterflies on the way. Yokels and Pupils EXIT, leaving book behind. Birdsong*
- Mrs Granger: Listen – there's a lesser whitethroat and that's a reed bunting. Look, there's a grey heron and that blur through the grass is a brown hare. Longdon and Eldersfield Marshes were once Worcestershire's largest wetland; home of otters, bitterns, swallowtail butterflies and such rich flora.

Sylvia: Can we pick some flowers to go in the album, Mrs Granger?

Mrs G: (*Opening book*) Of course, Sylvia - but don't pick the corky fruited water dropwort. It's the white one by the brook, together with this rare fine-leaved water-dropwort. I always love to press some of the little wild daffodils in the Spring when the water drains from the meadows and we know summer is on its way. (*Audio clip 1: Reg Roberts 1 min of 2nd clip at <http://www.worcswildlifetrust.co.uk/blog/hardwickgreenmeadows/2018/12/07/memories-hardwick-green>*) (*They mime pressing flowers & exit as children run on, chasing & playing*)

Scene 2

In the fields

Frankie: I spy with my little eye something beginning with F.

Ann: The Future.

Henry: Don't talk daft, Ann. You can't see the Future from here.

Ann: I can imagine it. Lots of concrete – with the constant rumble of traffic.

Molly: That's just daft. There ain't no big roads for miles.

Ann: There could be here one day. My dad says everyone will have cars and the countryside will disappear. Huge roads will carve up the land.

Henry: Well what does your dad know? He's from Redmarley.

Jack: Staunton. (*Runs up bank*) You might see Staunton Court from up here. Is that your 'I spy' word, Frankie?

Frankie: Not 'S', Jack. My word's an 'F'. Something beginning with 'F'.

Lena: Fields. We're surrounded by fields. Or fruit. There's orchards over there. Or forest. Lots of trees about. Elm trees everywhere.

Frankie: Nope

Henry: Foal. There's a young horse down there in the meadow full of buttercups.

Frankie: Nope, that's not my word.

Molly: Food

Frankie: Nope. Anyway, we ain't got no food, Molly.

Molly: I might have a toffee. (*They all pounce*) But I ain't.

Henry: F. F. F? Mmm. F.

Ann: Fish. No, I can't see a fish. Anyone see a fish?

Henry: I caught an eel and elvers down Longdon Brook last week. They're fish. Or there's roach down Marsh Brook, some a foot long.

Lena: Yeah but you can't see them with your little eye now, can you?

Molly: F for flood? The meadows always flood in the winter. Or Frogs? You get lots of frogs down there. They have to drain that marshland, you know.

Frankie: But this is summer, Molly - when the meadows flower and the animals graze. Now all of you just stop and think and concentrate.
(They freeze as audio clip 2 plays: 30 seconds of John Humphrey's 2nd clip)
 Come on, I still spy with my little eye something beginning with 'F'.

Jack: Fire

Frankie: Nope

Lena: Well done, Jack. You got the right letter this time.

Henry: Flower

Molly: I can't see no flower.

Henry: Open them eyes, Molly. Look at all the daisies and buttercups. Hardwick Meadow's teeming with flowers: pepper saxifrage and water dropwort.

Molly: Fingers? Face? Freckles?

Frankie: You're getting warmer.

Jack: Fire

Frankie: Not that warm. *(They all giggle)*

Ann: Farm. There's farms all round 'ere.

Frankie: Nope

Molly: Fox? Ferret? *(pause)* Pheasant?

Frankie: Nope

Lena: I give up.

Jack: Fire.

Molly: NO, Jack.

Henry: Go on, Frankie - what is it? Tell us.

Frankie: Me.

Ann: Don't be daft.

Frankie: Me, Frankie. That's me, ain't it?

Jack: Fire

Ann: Will you shut your little brother up, Lena?

Lena: Hush it, Jack.

Frankie: Looks like I won that one.

Molly: Don't be daft. You can't spy yourself with your little eye.

Frankie: Yes I can. I can see my hands and feet and... look, I can see my face reflecting in the pond. That's F. F for Frankie. I win.

Henry: That's cheating.

Frankie: I didn't cheat. You're just jealous, Henry. (*They scuffle*)

Ann: You're just a big dafty pants.

Jack: Fire

All: Shut up, Jack. The game's over.

Frankie: It's my turn again. I spy with my little eye something beginning with S.

Jack: Fire.

Lena: No, Jack. Not F. It's S this time.

Henry: Skylark. Up there. Over the marsh.

Ann: I can see my dad on the tractor in the hayfield. I'd better go and take him his tea. (*Runs off*)

Molly: Hey, can you smell smoke?

Frankie: You got it! I spy with my little eye something beginning with S. It's smoke from the bonfire down at the farm.

Henry: That's no bonfire, you dandyprat. There's great big flames coming out the barn. The whole thing's ablaze!
(*They run off shrieking, leaving Jack*)

Jack: (*Mumbling to himself*). I tried to tell 'em there's a dirty great fire but they just think I'm bloomin' stupid.
(*He exits as audio clip 3 plays: Ann Heywood 2nd clip on web blog: 1 min*)

Scene 3

Pendock School - winter 1952

Mrs Granger rings handbell and all children file in silently, standing solemnly in a row

Children: (*chanting by heart*) One dozen is twelve. One score is twenty. One gross is 144.

Sylvia: Pendock School became very modern in 1952. Water and electricity arrived. Prior to this, the school had a pump outside the side door to get water from. There was an open fire in the main building for heat, as well as a little oil stove that was moved around. It could still be chilly, though.

Children: (*All shiver*)
Sixteen ounces are one pound,
Fourteen pounds are one stone.
112 pounds are eight stone.
Eight stone are one hundredweight.
Twenty hundredweight are one ton. *Freeze*

Audio clip 4: Sylvia White 21.06-21.40

Woman caretaker comes on, sweeping – children hold their noses as she sweeps round them and they lift feet, dodge & shuffle uncomfortably etc.

Children: Twelve inches are one foot.
Three feet are one yard.
Six feet are two yards are one fathom.
Twenty two yards are one chain.
Ten chains are one furlong.
Eight furlongs are 1760 yards are one mile.

Sylvia: After the Grangers left in 1952, Mr Baseley became the headmaster and other teachers taught alongside him – Mrs Ashman taught the infants. Children over eleven who couldn't get to the grammar schools in Newent or Tewkesbury stayed at primary school till they were fifteen.

Children: One God is Love
One Lord is King
One King is George
One George is Sixth.
God save the King.

Sylvia: It was in February when we all heard the news. The school sat in silence for the rest of the day.

All freeze during the BBC announcement: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Hj7YGRpQN0>

Child 1: Look outside - it's snowing.

Child 2: Let's hope it's not like 5 years ago.

- Child 1: That was the winter of 1947
- Child 2: When it snowed and it snowed and it snowed.
- Child 1: Freezing temperatures lasted from January to March.
- Child 2: The snow didn't melt on parts of the Malverns till May.
- Child 1: Pendock was cut off for weeks. The snow was so deep we had to walk on the hedges.
- Child 2: You name it, it was frozen solid.
- Sylvia: When the council men eventually came to clear the snow between Upper and Lower Pendock, they hung their jackets on the telegraph wires!
- Mr Baseley: Well it's not as bad as that now so let's go out and make the most of it.
All children put on woolly hats, scarves & gloves. They mime throwing snowballs, skating, slipping, having great fun in the snow. Freeze.

*Audio **clip 5** of Rex Bullock on skating on pond: 25.28-25.58*

All unfreeze and run off shivering, shouting, excited and exhausted!

Scene 4

A cottage kitchen – evening

The atmosphere is cosy around the kitchen table, in the warm glow from the lamps. Each person is busy, wrapped in their own worlds. Ma is kneading dough/baking, Molly sewing, Henry cleaning boots, Frankie drawing.

- Ma: There'll be a spot of bread and butter pudding shortly.
- Henry: Any jam, Ma?
- Ma: A scraping of blackberry left in the jar, Henry. Dripping in the pot.
- Molly: Are you all right, Ma?
- Ma: Just worn out, my love. You know how it is during haymaking. Your father and the men will be ravenous tonight and this bread needs baking.
- Frankie: Why don't they let me help? I'd get that meadow cut in no time.
- Henry: Oh yeah? And pigs might fly. When dad was a lad, it was all done with horses. The horse hay rake is still in Gilbert's field along with the old horse-drawn mowers. I could easily do the job with a tractor.

- Ma: You keep away from the workers and all that machinery, young man.
- Molly: Those meadows are said to make the best hay for miles.
- Ma: That's because of the flowers and herbs. It's a lovely feeding ground for cattle and sheep. Often you'd think there's no grass but the cows love it, ignoring the lush-looking fields next door. Lambs leap in the pasture there. So today it's a case of making hay while the sun shines.
- Frankie: But it's nearly dark out there.
- Ma: They need to get the job done before the rain. I wouldn't be surprised if there's rain on the way tomorrow. As my old dad used to say; when the stars begin to huddle, the earth will soon become a puddle. We don't want the meadows getting too wet this time of year.
- Henry: Charlie Wilcox caught a rabbit down the marsh this morning.
- Molly: I heard Charlie Wilcox got the cane off Mr Baseley for swearing.
- Frankie: He gets the cane most days. He missed school last week but he was seen under the market house in Newent. He got the cane for that, too.
- Henry: I wish I could go to Tewkesbury cattle market tomorrow.
- Molly: Gloucester market on Monday, Ledbury market on Tuesday.
- Frankie: Hereford Market on Wednesday, Upton on Friday.
- Ma: You'll have to clear the table for the men's supper shortly.
- Henry: Mr Baseley was telling us the Queen is getting crowned tomorrow.
- Frankie: Why's that? Have we got another queen now?
- Molly: It's the same one. The one who just died was her grandmother, Queen Mary. This one's Elizabeth 2nd.
- Ma: It's taken them over a year to sort out the coronation. It's a big do, by all accounts. Television cameras are showing it from Westminster Abbey.
- Henry: Mr Baseley's got a television. He said the Queen knighted the Prime Minister so he's now **Sir** Winston Churchill.
- Frankie: Charlie Wilcox said something rude about the Queen so he got the cane.
- Molly: Ooh, quick – here comes Dad – get the salads - supper time everyone...
*They freeze as audio **clip 6** plays: John Humphreys first clip on web blog*

Scene 5

Pendock School - summer 1953

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MIXgOQ9-Rl> plays in background (up to 1.50)

- Sylvia: For the Coronation, Mr Baseley sets up his television in the school room and invites everybody from all around to watch.
- Rex: I cycled to every house in the village with Reg (Mr Baseley) to give out invitations to the coronation party at Pendock school. I've never seen a television before. It's very small and in black and white. We installed a pole outside with a wind generator to make some electricity. Not much!
- Sylvia: Mr Baseley is very modern compared to the previous teachers. He even says we can call him Reg, rather than 'Sir'.
- Rex: He's a breath of fresh air to the village.
- Rex/Sylvia: But he's got a bit of a temper...
- Mr Baseley: (*fiddling with set/wires*) Don't touch! Charlie Wilcox – don't breathe! Coronation or not, I can still give you a good hiding if needs be.
- Charlie: (*To audience*) To be honest, I could do with something to warm me up! It's cold, dull, rainy and more like November – the worst June day for years.
- Mr Baseley: Gather round, everyone. Look, there's a picture. There's the Archbishop of Canterbury. There's little Prince Charles... ooh, we've lost him.
(*Hits TV, lots of oohs and aahs from everyone watching, then cheers*)
Here we go... Long live the Queen! (*Lots of reactions/mimes then freeze*)

Background music builds to crescendo, then TV clip <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LEDp34MRl20>

- All sing: God save our gracious Queen,
Long live our noble Queen,
God save the Queen:
Send her victorious,
Happy and glorious,
Long to reign over us:
God save the Queen.
- Mr Baseley: Who was singing the rude version? Charlie Wilcox, come here...
(*chases him off*)
- Sylvia: Later in the day there's a big party and races for the whole village.
(*Opportunity for mimes: tug-o-war, egg & spoon race, sports – maybe balloons & bunting and big party atmosphere*)
- Mr Baseley: Some of the children will now recite poetry from great English poets. Like us, many poets value the meadows of our glorious countryside...

- Child A: Weathers by Thomas Hardy.
This is the weather the shepherd shuns, And so do I;
When beeches drip in browns and duns,
And meadow rivulets overflow,
And drops on gate bars hang in a row,
And rooks in families homeward go, And so do I.
(All clap enthusiastically)
- Child B: He Hath Put His Heart To School by William Wordsworth.
How does the Meadow-flower its bloom unfold?
Because the lovely little flower is free
Down to its root, and, in that freedom, bold;
And so the grandeur of the Forest-tree
Comes not by casting in a formal mould,
But from its *own* divine vitality.
(All clap enthusiastically)
- Charlie: *(Steps onto platform cheekily)*
The boy stood in the meadow brook,
His feet were all in blisters.
He split his trousers down the back
And had to wear his sister's.

All laugh – Mr Baseley mutters crossly and fetches his cane
- Charlie: *(Continuing, undaunted)*
The boy stood on the burning deck,
The flames, he tried to swat 'em.
A spark shot up his trouser leg
And scorched him on the b...
- Mr Baseley: Charlie Wilcox, come here! *(flexes cane – all freeze)*
- Rex: *(Brings on a couple of old-fashioned microphones on stands)*
But none of this is half as exciting as when the BBC itself comes to
Pendock School. Mr Baseley's brother Godfrey, as the BBC's agricultural
producer in the Midlands, has created a new radio drama...
- Sylvia: It's all about everyday country folk just like us. It's called The Archers –
but I don't suppose it will ever catch on. They even came here to record!

Short Archers theme/first 30 sec clip from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Rq6jsCo97w>
- Mr Baseley: For the last couple of years The Archers, set in the village of Ambridge, has
been broadcast on the wireless and my brother plays a policeman. He's
going to move to Corse Lawn and call his house Ambridge. Voice test time:
- Child A: *(Into microphone)* One, two, three, four, five...
- Child B: Around the rugged rocks the ragged rascal ran..

Mr Baseley: Very good – you’ve got the part. Let’s read though the script....
(A small group stand at the microphone with scripts and mime a recording, with someone doing sound effects, as part of Rex Bullock’s Audio clip plays: clip 7 39.55 – 40.50 edit)

Mr Baseley: Cut! Who’s making that noise? I don’t believe it... Sally’s come indoors!

Sylvia: Sally is the school pig. Those of us in the Pig Club bought her and help to look after her and her piglets, even through the school holidays. Maybe Sally just wanted a starring role in The Archers.

Mr Baseley: Whoever let Sally out of her pen?

Charlie: *(From back of room)* Guess who!

ALL: Charlie Wilcox!

Blackout/all exit – sounds of owls

Scene 6

*Blackberrying at dusk
 6 children have baskets for fruit-picking*

Frankie: I spy with my little eye something beginning with P.

Ann: The Past. *(They all mime picking blackberries)*

Henry: Don’t talk daft, Ann. You can’t see the Past from here.

Ann: I can imagine it. Up here on Gadbury Bank is an ancient hill fort. Think of all the Iron Age ghosts out for a stroll tonight or stirring under our feet.

Molly: That’s just daft. There ain’t no such thing as ghosts.

Ann: There could be all sorts here. My mum says there’s lots of ancient spooky burial grounds all round these parts.

Henry: Well what does your mum know? She’s from Bromesberrow.

Ann: Exactly - berrow

Jack: Mr Baseley told us berrow means the same as barrow – which is a dirty great mound where ancient people were buried.

Lena: That’s true – my dad uses his barrow to bury things.

Jack: Not a wheelbarrow, stupid. I’m talking about a pile of buried bodies.

Frankie: I spy with my little eye something beginning with P.

Henry: You know what they say about Berrow village on the way to Birtsmorton?

Lena: (*Screams*) You mean 'Murder House Corner'.

Ann: Yeah – there's a corner between Upper Pendock and Ryecross where there was a house where a family was murdered.

Molly: They say it's been haunted ever since.

Jack: Mr Baseley told us it was in about 1780. One dark and foggy night the family was indoors and all four of them were murdered. The murderers were never found. They might still be around on the look-out for victims!

Lena: (*Screams*) Stop it, you're scaring me – and it's getting dark out here.

Frankie: I spy with my little eye something beginning with P.

Lena: Who's bright idea was it to come blackberrying at this time?

Henry: Mine. You'll thank me when we get paid. I've already picked loads.

Molly: Me too. I've eaten lots, too. I love brambling.

Lena: Not when it's getting dark.

Jack: Rex was up here last night after school. He takes a shortcut along here from Frogsmarsh to pick the plumpest blackberries you've ever seen.

Ann: Like us, he sells them to Mr and Mrs Hughes in Eldersfield and earns five shillings some nights. He bought a new smart coat with his earnings.

Frankie: I spy with my little eye something beginning with P.

Henry: Just think of all the jam they've made at Ledbury Preserves from us.

Lena: Ssshhh – what was that?

Molly: What was what?

Lena: I heard something. Like a wheezy sigh. Heavy breathing.

Ann: Rex always walks past here back home after dark.

Jack: Well it's not him unless he's been on the Woodbines. There again, it could be HER?

Lena: (*Really scared now*) Who? Who do you mean?

- All: The witch of Eldersfield.
- Henry: *(pointing)* And there's her creepy old tumbledown ruin of a cottage...
- Jack: Mr Baseley told us she haunts Gadbury Bank. Legend has it that she was put on trial by the ducking stall and her friends went and saved her. *They all freeze as we hear clip 8 Ann Heywood on witch of Eldersfield 1st clip* <http://www.worcswildlifetrust.co.uk/blog/hardwickgreenmeadows/2018/12/07/memories-hardwick-green>
- Frankie: I spy with my little eye something beginning with P.
- Molly: Panic. Is that what you can spy, Frankie? I can see it in Lena's eyes.
- Lena: No, it's all right now as I've just remembered about the friendly lady who once lived at Kitle Fort at Upper Pendock.
- Jack: Mr Baseley told us she haunts Kitle Bank and she's known as Betsy Kitle. She's meant to protect children from the Witch of Eldersfield.
- Henry: *(over-acting with a creepy voice)* Many a lone traveller through the marsh has felt the icy stroke of a bony woman's fingers clawing through their hair - or had a walking stick strangely wrenched from the hand by an unseen shivering power.
[They all giggle but suddenly, both they and audience should be startled by a cloaked figure springing up. They scream and run apart for Frankie]
- Frankie: I spy with my little eye something beginning with P – but I can't see it now. It was Pendock Moor somewhere over there but it's too dark to see anything. Now it's P for 'a presence'. Whoever you are, tell me your name.
- Charlie: *(‘The figure’ throws off the cloak with a scary chuckle)* Charlie Wilcox!
(Frankie runs off, dropping his basket)
Ha – that showed them. And now I've got loads of lovely blackberries.
(He is about to tuck in when he hears a noise behind. We hear a sinister cackle and he runs off, screaming).

Scene 7

Back to the future!

Enter Rex & Sylvia

- Rex: *(picking blackberries, wearing a mackintosh)* If it rains tonight I'll be all right in this.
- Sylvia: *(with the album of flowers)* Very smart. Did you buy it in the village?
- Rex: From Mr Gray at the garage. I bought it with fruit money. Cost me two pounds, nine shillings, and eleven pence. Nearly ten night's worth of picking.

- Sylvia: What would we do without our blackberries? I ought to press some blackberry blossom in the album. It would show people in the future what used to grow here.
- Rex: These brambles will always grow here.
- Sylvia: You never know. The world is always changing.
- Rex: I reckon everything will always stay just the same round here.
- Sylvia: I'm not so sure. It might be very different in another 70 years.
- Rex: Not as different as we'll be! Time will change us all, I suppose.
- Sylvia: Talking of time, what's the time by your watch?
- Rex: *(Looks at watch)* It's almost twenty past eight. Nineteen minutes past.
- Sylvia: Nineteen past eight? That's 20.19 on a 24-hour clock.
- Rex: 2019 – that year's a long way ahead. I wonder what it will be like then...
- Sylvia: Maybe it's time to find out... *(opens up album, blowing petals from inside)*
 Ahead to where the Malvern Hills
 Stretch far beyond wild daffodils
- Rex: Ahead to where the old church tower
 Stands proudly where the meadows flower
- Sylvia: Ahead to where the floodplains yield,
 From Longdon Marsh to Eldersfield
- Rex: Ahead and glimpse these wetlands when
 Our world might be quite different then... *(Sound of wind/music – flickering)*
Doctor Who theme: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W4ZFIfIEBQA>
They walk off through audience as Yokels & Pupils appear
- Yokel 1: Here we are again – back to the future.
- Yokel 2: That was a nice little trip down memory lane, eh?
- Pupil 1: Who could have imagined how the landscape has changed?
- Pupil 2: How thousands upon thousands of elm trees and hedges disappeared.
- Yokel 1: To say nothing of the motorway coming.

- Yokel 2: At the end of the 1950s the M1 punched through the Midlands from Watford to Birmingham. The new motorway system killed many of the railway lines with the huge rise in long-distance travel by road.
- Yokel 1: Ah yes, but our claim to fame is that work on the M50 began in 1958...
- Yokel 2: Even before the first motorway, the M1, was opened in 1959.
- Pupil 1: Junctions 1 to 4 of the M50 opened in 1960.
- Pupil 2: The section between the M5 to junction 1 near Ross opened in 1962.
- Yokel 1: And who was the first driver to be booked speeding down to Ross?
- Yokel 2: In his bright red Triumph Herald convertible...
- All: Charlie Wilcox!
- Yokel 1: And, just for the record... 50 years ago in 1969...
- Yokel 2: It was the year of the first moon landings and the investiture of Prince Charles, aged twenty, as the Prince of Wales...
- Yokel 1: But even more exciting for Pendock – the headmaster's brother, Godfrey Baseley, was the castaway on Desert Island Discs on the radio!
- Yokel 2: And he chose to have as his luxury item A BED.
- Pupil 1: Just right for dreaming about the future...
- Pupil 2: Like how things will be here in another 70 years
- Pupil 1: For OUR grandchildren!
- Pupil 2: I hope the meadows will still be here
- Pupil 1: If the wildflowers ever disappear, what will the children of tomorrow do?

The entire cast, now all dressed in modern clothes (maybe coloured tee shirts) sing:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mx8wfhON80Q>

Where have all the wildflowers gone?
 Long-time passing,
 Where have all the wildflowers gone?
 Long time ago.
 Where have all the wildflowers gone?
 Gone with the meadows everyone,
 When will they ever learn?
 When will they ever learn?

Where have all the meadows gone?
 Long-time passing,
 Where have all the meadows gone?
 Long time ago.
 Where have all the meadows gone?
 Gone with the insects everyone,
 When will they ever learn?
 When will they ever learn?

Where have all the insects gone?
 Long-time passing,
 Where have all the insects gone?
 Long time ago.
 Where have all the insects gone?
 Gone with the pollen everyone
 When will they ever learn?
 When will they ever learn?

Where has all the pollen gone?
 Long-time passing
 Where has all the pollen gone?
 Long time ago.
 Where has all the pollen gone?
 Gone with the wildflowers everyone,
 When will they ever learn?
 When will they ever learn?

Where have all the wildflowers gone?
 Long-time passing,
 Where have all the wildflowers gone?
 Long time ago.
 Where have all the wildflowers gone?
 Gone with the meadows everyone,
 When will they ever learn?

Yokel 1: Just imagine walking through Hardwick Green Meadow if all the flowers, insects and special habitat had gone.

Yokel 2: What a fearsome outdoor walk that would be. So much so, that we'd better spell it out...

Front row of cast (19 children) hold up letters to spell out:

FEARSOME OUTDOOR WALK

Yokel 1: This is where it gets clever – if they get it right.

Yokel 2: If not, it could all get very messy

Yokel 1: And our sponsors won't be impressed

Yokel 2: Let's hope they've rehearsed and Charlie Wilcox is well out the way....

Front row shuffles anagram to spell next message:

LOOK AFTER OUR MEADOWS

Yokel 1: If you thought that was tricky, just wait till the next bit

Yokel 2: Which needs 8 more letters and 8 more people

Yokel 1: To remind us that there's an organisation out there

Yokel 2: That works to protect habitats and even bring back species

Yokel 1: Yes, someone who....

Front row (now 27) hold up fresh letters (or shown on screen) to spell out:

RESURRECTS WORTHIEST WILDLIFE

Yokel 1: But they don't just resurrect the worthiest wildlife

Yokel 2: No, they'll shuffle around to do something else – if we get it right!

Yokel 1: It's an organisation that restores areas of wildflowers

Yokel 2: Or, if you want a posher word: restitutes....

Front row shuffles anagram to spell next message:

RESTITUTES RICHER WILDFLOWERS

Yokel 1: If you think that's amazing, wait for the last bit...

Yokel 2: Brace yourselves for the name of our sponsors...

Front row re-shuffles anagram to spell final message:

WORCESTERSHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST

Pupil 1: Yes, the WWT! So, together, we can all save our wonderful area

Yokels: Where the meadows STILL flower

Pupil 2: And may we keep enjoying for generations our WONDERFUL WORLD!

All sing, as local images show on screen

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vw3o6GQ2xe8>

I see trees of green,
Rich meadows too
I see them bloom
For me and for you
And I think to myself
What a wonderful world

I see skies of blue
And clouds of white
The bright blessed day
The dark sacred night
And I think to myself
What a wonderful world

The colours of the rainbow
So pretty in the sky
Are also on the faces
Of people going by
I see friends shaking hands
Saying, "How do you do?"
They're really saying
"I love you"
I hear babies cry
I watch them grow
They'll learn much more
Than I'll never know
And I think to myself
What a wonderful world

Yes, I think to myself
What a wonderful world

Last image:

70th Birthday coming soon!

