

# Christ Church

## Environment Newsletter:

### Summer 2023



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# Introduction

## Editorial

The Environment Group decided to create a quarterly newsletter to update you on what Christ Church is doing to be more sustainable. So, with the help of our contributors, we've put together an 'environment newsletter', which not only tells you about the church, but also gives lots of ideas and activities for you to try at home. On the last page is a list of interesting things you can get involved with, including a film night, a carbon footprint survey and a wild challenge!

We hope you enjoy reading this and find inspiration to make changes to your life so our community is more eco-friendly.

Amelie Dobson



## Being Responsible Christians

Christians believe that we humans (in all our diversity and complexity) are, together with everything else in the universe, created by God. Right at the beginning of the ancient Hebrew scriptures of the Old Testament, there is the creation story in which everything is created by God and is GOOD. Humans are the pinnacle of creation, made 'in the image of God'.

Our role in creation (of which we are a part) should be as custodians and stewards. Whenever we participate in destructive, exploitative abuse of nature, individually or as part of our consumer-driven economies, we displease our Maker and ultimately shoot ourselves in our collective foot! Part of wrestling at Christ Church with what it means to live Jesus-centred lives includes taking responsibility for how we are looking after that part of God's creation in which we have been placed.

Reverend Len Abrams

# Eco-Church: What We're Doing for the Environment

## Beautiful Bee Orchid Spotted in New Wildflower Meadow!

In 2022, development of a wildlife area was approved by the PCC, at the East end of the garden. A section was dug over, edged, seeded with wildflower seeds, and monitored. A section of the lawn was also left uncut until the end of the growing season. Amazingly, this allowed a rare Bee Orchid to develop - so named because it mimics the female of a specific bee to attract male bees for pollination. Unfortunately the bee species is not resident in the UK, so our bee orchids self pollinate. Spare a few minutes to see what you can find there!



## A Right Royal Clear Up

On Monday the 8th of May, as part of the Coronation Weekend and the 'Big Help Out', 36 adults and 30 children spent the morning clearing up litter around our village. Fortunately, the forecasted rain held off until the end of the litter pick!

King Charles is well-known for his love of the environment, and the event was organised with this in mind. Nutfield Conservation Society and Tandridge District Council provided hi-vis jackets, litter pickers and rubbish bags. 33 bags were collected and 3 areas of fly tipping in Kings Cross Lane were reported. Well done and thank you to everyone who took part!

Tandridge District Council run a "Litter Angels" scheme all year round. You can get involved by visiting their website or calling 01883 722000.



# How to Garden for Pollinators

Our climate is becoming less reliable as a consequence of the increase in greenhouse gases in our atmosphere, and our pollinators are suffering from that as well as the insecticides and herbicides that are used on crops and in our gardens. This matters from the biodiversity point of view and from keeping the web of life that supports each of us on God's earth. So much of our food is fruit and vegetables that have been pollinated by insects, it is in the interest of all of us to value and care for our pollinators.

I like to have as many flowering plants as possible in our garden round the year. This means there should be something for the earliest bumblebee and the latest Ivy bee. Our soil is calcareous clay and we have a good population of slugs and snails, so the plants we grow have to be resistant to these, and hardy enough to cope with the winds that sweep across the fields behind us.



Importantly, stop using poisons in your garden, and increase the number and variety of flowering plants. This is easily achieved by not mowing the whole of your lawn during the summer, or by encouraging self seeding plants which will fill in the gaps very cheaply.

# How to Garden for Pollinators

The flowers need to be single rather than double, so that the insects can access the nectar and pollen, and a variety of forms will attract different species of bee, and butterfly depending on the length of their tongue. If the ground is covered with vegetation there will be less space for unwanted weeds to get established, and there are opportunities for many different creatures to make a living.



We have been rewarded by a wide range of bees, and an increasing range of butterflies, Cabbage whites, Orange tips, Brimstone, Tortoiseshell, Peacock, Red Admiral, Meadow Browns and Gatekeepers, Commas and excitingly, for the last two years a Hummingbird Hawk moth. We do get midges, Crane flies, Hoverflies and some Hornets and an occasional Dragonfly hunting, there is always something to watch for!



A check list of our plants by flowering season is available for those who would like more information.

Veronica Hamilton

*Images: Primrose, Violets and Love in a Mist; Orange tip and Tortoiseshell butterflies, Hummingbird Hawk moth, honey bee*

# Food: What's in Season?

## What Should You Buy?

In the Summer, the UK harvests lots of fruit and veg so it's not too hard to find local produce. However, when you're shopping, look out for these foods:

new-potatoes elderflowers  
tayberries beetroot lettuce  
raspberries carrots rocket  
cauliflower peas mangetout  
plums blackcurrants broccoli  
spring-onions  
leeks cherries  
garlic gooseberries  
rhubarb Kohlrabi  
tomatoes cucumber  
fennel broad-beans  
chillies

## What Should You Plant?

If you are thinking of planting your own vegetables, there are lots of plants you could choose from, including:

- Runner beans, French beans, Courgette, Turnip – Early Summer
- Cauliflower, Cabbage – Late Summer
- Pak Choi, Lettuce, Chinese Cabbage, Spinach, Swiss chard, Radishes – Any time in Summer



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# 5 Top Tips on Making a Mini Pond

Did you know that a pond is one of the best ways to attract new wildlife to your garden? You don't need to have lots of space though, an old sink, a washing up bowl, an old large plant pot or even a sawn off dustbin, can all quickly offer a home to a frog, a drinking spot to a hedgehog or a bath to a blackbird!

1. Choose somewhere to put your pond which gets some sun, but not all day. Away from overhanging trees prevents leaves dropping in. It can sit on the top of the soil, or you can dig it in.



2. Check it's watertight! A plug might be enough in an old sink, but some pond liner might be needed with other containers. You can keep it in place with some silicone based sealant if necessary.



3. Make sure your new residents will be able to get out - I've found putting in bricks and large stones I had around the garden, works well. If your container is on top of the ground, you'll also need a ramp from the pond to the outside surface.

4. Although it might take a bit longer to get going, let it fill up with rainwater or water from a water butt. Tap water has too many chemicals, and can also cause algae to develop.

5. Add 1-3 plants. It's a good idea to have one that reaches out of the water like a Flowering Rush and one submerged like a Hornwort. Here's some other ideas: Mini Waterlily, Water Forget Me Not, Lesser Spearwort, Arum Lily.

Now just watch for the wildlife to arrive!  
For more ideas this is a really good website to have a look at:



[How to create a mini pond | The Wildlife Trusts](#)

# Coming up This Summer:

## Join the 30 Days Wild Challenge this June!

The Wildlife Trusts are encouraging everyone to do one 'wild thing' every day. To find out more visit

[www.wildlifetrusts.org/30dayswild](http://www.wildlifetrusts.org/30dayswild)

## Find your carbon footprint!

The Environment Group would like to find the carbon footprint of our church congregation so please complete this quiz and contact us via [eco-editor-cc@tutanota.com](mailto:eco-editor-cc@tutanota.com) with your results:

<https://footprint.wwf.org.uk/>

## Come to a Film Evening at Christ Church at 18:00 - 20:00 on 11<sup>th</sup> June!

The film, called 'The Letter', is the account of Pope Francis inviting representatives of populations, who have limited opportunities to speak out on the world stage, to the Vatican. He wants to hear first hand their stories about the effect the climate crisis is having on their lives. Everyone is welcome to attend and entrance is free (although donations to the Church's energy funds would be gratefully accepted of course!)

This will be the first of a series of film evenings concentrating on issues around climate justice and the biodiversity crisis.

There will be an opportunity to discuss the film over coffee and biscuits afterwards in the church hall.

Veronica Hamilton

## The Great Big Green Week

Take part in the Great Big Green Week, 10<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> June

<https://greatbiggreenweek.com/>

## Want to help contribute to the next Newsletter?

Please contact Amelie and Nick Dobson, or email us via

[eco-editor-cc@tutanota.com](mailto:eco-editor-cc@tutanota.com)