



# Christ Church Environment Newsletter

## Spring 2024

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## The resilience of God's creation – Spring follows winter

*“For behold, the winter is past; the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land.” - Song of Solomon 2:11-12.*

The seasons remind us of the ebb and flow of nature. As the light returns to our days, we experience the renewal of life all around us. The balance and rhythm of God's amazing creation surrounds us, of which we are part. As we awake each day in this amazing world, let us treasure it and look after it.

*“The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.” - Lamentations 3:20-24*

Revd. Len Abrams



## Pledge Tree

Some of you may have noticed that at the back of the church there are branches with fig leaves hanging from it. You are invited to spend a few moments reflecting on the responsibility of all of us to do what we can to help to care well for our beautiful planet, and to make a pledge about what we ourselves might do to help.

When you have decided what you would like to do or pray for then write your pledge or prayer-ask on one of the fig shaped labels and tie it to the fig tree at the back of the church, as a symbol of your commitment to caring better for the planet.

Kate Evans





## Wildlife Garden - Latest News

Sue Fairclough has cordoned off a small section of grass where it is believed the bee orchid will be appearing - please do not cross the string.

A "Blue Heart" with 'Wildlife Welcome' message has been installed.

During the recent storms, a tree fell behind the Thompson room. This has been cut up and the bulk of the wood utilised in the wildlife garden to construct a substantial 'stumpery' and the earth close-by and packed between the logs seeded with a native wildflower mix. The smaller remaining wood has been stacked as a small invertebrate habitat behind the Thompson room.

Chris Fry





## A Review of the Film, “Racing Extinction”

*On the 21<sup>st</sup> January, there was a showing of ‘Racing Extinction’ after the service. Find out more about this powerful and moving film:*

This film still has the power to shock although it is 8 years old; the destruction of populations of sharks for shark fin soup, sometimes the fishermen just hacking off the fins and leaving the sharks to die slowly, unable to swim, followed by the slaughter of Manta Rays for traditional medicine.

There were some positive notes with the successful undercover work to bring the size of the problem to public attention and discourage the eating of these threatened species. The Manta Rays are now protected and the village in Indonesia, whose sole occupation was to kill them, have been encouraged to take tourists to see these graceful creatures.

However, the underlying story was that humans are the cause of huge emissions of carbon dioxide and methane which are driving the 5<sup>th</sup> great extinction, and we were left being asked to do “Just one thing”.

What shall we do? Some, who talked after the showings of the film, have installed solar panels, some are eating plant-based diets, some are growing their fruit and vegetables.

What will you do? Buy second-hand clothes, Go EV, write to your MP?

“Better to light a candle than to curse the darkness.”

Veronica Hamilton





## Learning new Environmentally Friendly and Health beneficial skills at Breakfasts at Christ Church (by Veronica Hamilton)

We are planning 2 breakfasts in the Community Centre with talks during the Spring, with the intention of sharing knowledge within the community, and having a positive effect on our carbon footprint.

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On **Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> March** at **9.00 am** we will have a talk from Veronica Hamilton on Simple Chemicals for Greener Housekeeping. After breakfast we will have a practical opportunity using those things round the Church and Church Centre as part of the first Spring Clean Day. Please, if you would like to attend the breakfast, sign up on the sheet at the back of Church.

There will be no charge for this, as we are hoping you will be able to put your energy into cleaning!

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On **Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> April** Lucy Austin will give the breakfast talk on Plant Based Cooking, with practical demonstrations and tastings of a variety of dishes.

There will be a charge for this talk to cover the cost of the ingredients.

Please contact Lucy Austin if you would like to sign up for this.







## **Wildlife Corridors**

At Top Nutfield from the marsh across to Redhill is an important piece of land for wildlife. It is part of an access corridor linking Redhill to the surrounding countryside beyond. The aim of wildlife corridors is to separate human activities and structures such as roads and housing from habitat which connects wildlife populations.

It allows an exchange of species between populations which can prevent the negative effects of inbreeding that can happen with isolated populations and can help re-establish populations that have been reduced. Urbanisation such as the proposed development by NGP for 166 houses and a retirement village on this land could affect this important habitat areas, causing animals to lose both their natural habitat and the ability to move between regions to access resources. This is an ever-increasing threat to biodiversity.

Kate Evans

## **Mending that Fence ?**

Fixing a fence following the recent storms ? Spare a thought for the hedgehogs we are fortunate to have in our village. Hedgehogs are in national decline for many reasons, and they do need to be able to roam freely to forage and find suitable daytime/hibernation habitat. Please think like a hedgehog (!) and provide a suitable access point in barriers such as fences, either by providing a 13cm x 13cm hole, or digging out a small trench. Good fencing contractors should be able to incorporate a hedgehog hole if asked, and these can be labelled for awareness of others. More info:-

<https://www.hedgehogstreet.org/help-hedgehogs/link-your-garden>

<https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/actions/how-create-hedgehog-hole>

Chris Fry



## Food: What's in Season?

It's important to buy food that's 'in season', because it can be locally and naturally produced. In Spring, there are quite a few vegetables that are in season, including these:



## Growing Your Own Food

Often, people see growing your own food as hard work that only experienced gardeners can do, but that's not the case. All you need is some plant pots, soil, seeds and a sunny windowsill. Or, if you want to try large vegetables, a space in your garden or an allotment. Most vegetables can be planted in Spring, so your options are wide open.

Growing your own food not only feels rewarding, but it's also good for the planet. By producing food at home, you will dramatically reduce the greenhouse gas emissions from transporting it. Often, supermarkets sell food (for example, beans, which we can grow at home) from countries like Brazil and Guatemala, which means it has been transported over 5,000 miles to get here! As well as its carbon footprint, you will also cut down on plastic packaging. According to *wrap*, the world produces 141 million tonnes of plastic packaging per year! Food grown at home will be fresh and won't need to be wrapped in polluting single-use plastic.

Amelie Dobson



# Coming Up this Spring...

- Hustings - local candidates for the May election will discuss their green policies on climate and biodiversity to residents – more information about this will be shared closer to the date.



- Energy Questionnaire – A questionnaire regarding the choice between solar panels and a heat pump will soon be shared. There is also information on the boards in the corridor.

	Heat Pump	Solar Panel
Principle:	Replaces gas boiler with hyper-efficient electric system	Generates electricity used immediately or stored in batteries
Initial Cost	£8,000 - £10,000 Risk that radiators and insulation need upgrading	£10,000
Change to energy bills per year	Somewhere between costing an extra £200 to saving £300	£400 to £800
Cost impact over 15 years	Low: £4,500 cost High: £12,000 cost	Low: £2,000 saving High: £4,000 cost
Carbon impact over 15 years	40-50 tonne saving	20-25 tonne saving
Confidence	Low	High

- Film Showing – the next film showing will be on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> April after the service. The film, ‘The Seeds of Vandana Shiva’ is about a formidable lady who battles against the big corporations selling GM seeds and buying up heritage seeds and the problems this is causing to crops. Everyone is welcome to attend, and entrance is free (although donations to the Church’s green energy funds would be gratefully accepted of course!) Afterwards there will be an opportunity to discuss the film with a light lunch. For more information, ask Veronica Hamilton.



- Simple Chemicals for Greener Housekeeping Workshop on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> March– please fill out the forms at the back of church if you are interested



- Plant Based Cooking Workshop on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> April – please contact Lucy Austin if you are interested.



- Care for Creation – we are in the process of organizing this and we will provide an update soon.

- Want to help contribute to the next newsletter? Please contact Amelie or Nick Dobson or email us at [eco-editor-cc@tutanota.com](mailto:eco-editor-cc@tutanota.com)