



Greening Wymondham

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Spring 2021

Chair's Introduction - AGM - May 8th 2021 7pm (Zoom)

Ann Rostron

We are now 5 year's old and we would love to see you at our AGM on Zoom this year. The AGM will be held on May 8th at 7.00 pm and you will need to email us at greeningwymondham@gmail.com before Friday 30 April so we can send you the link to join the meeting. You will be welcome to speak at the AGM, if you have any burning views to express and it would help if you could let us have any questions in advance, so we can make sure we are prepared with the answers.

Like many organisations we did not hold an AGM last year and many of our activities were put into cold storage due to the pandemic. However, our committee has continued to meet virtually and we have been able to make progress on some activities. Some roadside verges have been planted up with bulbs and wild flower seeds and we have continue limited work at Kett's Park Wood and tree planting in small groups during non-lockdown periods. Sadly, we haven't been able to ask people to join us in the woodland work days or hold our Wymondham Litter Picks. In March we held a successful virtual seminar with three speakers on how to manage our open spaces (see separate article in this newsletter)

We would welcome some new faces to our committee, so do please contact us if you feel you can contribute. Our meetings are quite informal and we have lots of laughs! We are happy to welcome guests to the Committee meeting which follows the AGM - just let us know on the above email address.

Wymondham Annual Parish Council Meeting - 27th April 2021 7pm (Zoom)

Every Parish Council has to hold a Parish Meeting every year. Sadly this has not been well attended over recent years and this is a pity because at the meeting residents have the floor to tell the Town Council about their ideas for what Wymondham should be doing. This year Greening Wymondham will be presenting two short talks on the importance of green spaces and biodiversity and climate change policies that the Town Council should be encouraging.

This year's meeting will be held on Zoom and anyone wishing to come must apply to the Town Clerk by Friday 21st April on office@wymondhamtc.co.uk Please make the effort to come and let the Council know what you think is important for our town.

Last year, Greening Wymondham turned its attention to roadside verges. These areas provide an excellent habitat for invertebrates particularly if they are rich in wildflowers with the aim to help the native insects, especially the pollinators, increasing biodiversity.

The key to creating more wildflower areas is to reduce mowing to once or twice a year. Native wildflowers will grow if they have less competition from grass and they prefer a poor soil.

One technique GW are trying is the 'grow, flower, seed, mow' process:

- Scour (rake) out grass to reduce fertility of the soil.
- Plant wildflower seeds. Local seed containing native species are best. Top 10 flowers to feed native invertebrates are: birds-foot trefoil, yarrow, red clover, dandelion, ragwort, lady's bedstraw, hedge bedstraw, white clover, meadowsweet and oxeye daisy.
- Yellow Rattle, known as 'nature's own lawnmower' (or affectionately known as "The Vampire Plant") - is an essential addition. Yellow Rattle reduces the growth of grass thereby creating room for other wildflowers to grow.
- Rake or roll in the seed to give a good contact with the soil.
- Cut the wildflower area once a year between mid-July and the end of September. This allows the plants to flower and gives time for seed to set. Don't remove the cuttings.
- Leave for up to a week to allow the cut flowers to shed their seed. Collect the cuttings. It's really important to remove these to keep the nutrient levels low.



Planting wildflower seeds will increase early season flowers but for larger areas, it is not necessary to plant seeds as these will naturally find their own way to the right habitat. The key is to **reduce mowing** to once a year at the end of the summer.

For further information on roadside verge management, see The Good Verge Guide on the Plantlife website: www.plantlife.org.uk

Greening Wymondham have already prepared several sites around Wymondham and are working with Norfolk County Council, who are responsible for mowing roadside verges in our town, and South Norfolk Council, taking advice on keeping sightlines clear for road users, as well as liaising with Wymondham Town Council. In future, we shall be looking for volunteers to help us. Do contact us on greeningwymondham@gmail.com if you are interested in joining our team.

Past verge in bloom

A snapshot taken of previous verge activities from 2017 in its glory by the library. These Hyacinths bulbs continue to flourish and spread. They looked particularly fine when blooming a few weeks ago.



Our fourth season now and with several acres of woodland there is much more to get to grips with. Problems are a plenty, lack of prior management, Ash Dieback, rampant Willow, winter flooding, dare I say the 'C' word, but nothing that our volunteers can't cope with, even COVID (sorry) restrictions.

The bulk of our tasks have been selectively thinning, coppicing and pollarding. Ash Dieback has been a problem and we have been felling those affected. Willow has also been quite a problem due to its rapid growth, crowding out many of the other species all competing for light and if left the Willow gradually starts to take over. Thus, coppicing it lets in more light, hopefully allowing the surrounding trees to flourish and other flora to grow on the woodland floor. The coppicing may look quite drastic but the Willow very quickly regenerates and will need to be coppiced every few years to keep it in check.



As well as thinning out, planting new trees is important to keep a succession and create an age structure to the wood and enhance biodiversity. To this end, during the planting season, we have planted some more Oak, Rowan and Hazel saplings and will be planting more native species later in the season.

Due to the enormous task of getting the wooded areas back into management the glade area has on the whole been left to its own devices. However during the late summer, we cut and opened it up further and are very pleased with the result and hope to keep this going over the summer months, volunteers willing.

The whole area is very wet in winter and prone to flooding, which impacted on the path. During the summer our volunteers conducted remedial work on a section of the path. This winter was again one of the worst on record, in general the improvements made held up well. Less complaints on social media !

Even so, some sections were affected by flooding and further improvements are planned for Summer 2021.

Due to COVID lockdowns the number of workdays for volunteers has had to be restricted. Fortunately, when restrictions have allowed work has progressed apace and overall the impact on our work has been minimal. Being outdoors, the spacing has not been a problem. Our activities have been very safe. As soon as it can be allowed, we will be opening working days to the wider community. We welcome more involvement from Wymondham residents.

Overall, we are making great inroads into rejuvenating Kett's Park Wood thanks to Matt Davies of the Norwich Fringe Project and our wonderful bunch of volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering visit our website, details below.

For many people the Hedgehog is their favourite mammal, many of us can recall seeing them - if fleetingly - when we were children. They are also a gardener's best friend.

Hedgehogs are in serious decline. Now, there are not so many of them.

They are officially classed as vulnerable to extinction.

Ever increasing road traffic increases probability of roadkill. In rural areas, intensive agriculture plus larger fields and fewer hedgerows has drastically reduced their numbers. Suburban Hedgehogs are also threatened by loss of habitat. As our garden fences and walls have become more secure, the barriers we have created prevent Hedgehogs from accessing our gardens.



Hedgehogs are opportunistic, every night they will travel up to a mile, visiting many gardens, searching for food and in breeding season, a mate. This is where Wymondham residents can help by creating Hedgehog Highways.

What is a Hedgehog Highway?



These are holes in or under garden fences and walls, just large enough for Hedgehogs to pass through. They are 13cm diameter holes (the size of a CD), most commonly in gravel boards. To make your own in a wooden gravel board, you only need a CD to draw around, a drill and a jigsaw.

The holes are inconspicuous, don't wreck the fence and really do work. We have 4 holes in our fence, regularly used by hedgehogs. We also have a hole in our gate, a bit more obvious but we don't mind, the Hedgehog(s) -

there are several individual visitors most nights - prefer to enter via this route - to see examples being used look at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xtG61JUjYTc>



Hedgehog Street (10 years old in March) was formed by the British Hedgehog Preservation Society and the Peoples Trust for Endangered Species. They actively campaign for Hedgehog Highways and their website: www.hedgehogstreet.org is a mine of useful information on how to make your own highway hole (as well as other ways to construct/make holes) and companies which supply gravel boards (wood or concrete) with ready-made holes. They have information on all things to do with Hedgehogs.

Wymondham is lucky, we still have Hedgehogs, but, for how much longer? So we hope Greening Wymondham readers - **YOU!** - will be encouraged to create your own Hedgehog Highway hole (if you haven't already) to help our Hedgehogs. Holes = Hedgehogs.

John Pennell (Norfolk ALC Wellbeing) brought our attention to the campaign below. This ethos is also supported by a local retailer Reno's Refills (Market Street in the Town Centre) who specialises in products that can be re-filled into your own containers. Greening Wymondham has also negotiated the facility to provide free drinking water at various outlets showing the Refill Scheme sign. The Refill app is available on refill.org.uk



REDUCE SINGLE-USE CAMPAIGN

SWAP2SAVE

GUEST ARTICLE BY TRACEY FROM
THE NORFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL WASTE TEAM

Reduce Single-Use: swap2save

Single-use products are items that are used just once, sometimes only for a few moments, before being thrown away. Vast amounts of energy and resources are used in their production, plus these products are responsible for huge volumes of litter and pollution.



Our [swap2save campaign](#) launched on 22nd March and calls for people to swap single-use products for **reusable** alternatives. We're asking individuals, schools and businesses to pledge to swap in a bid to save the planet and save money.

By making some small everyday changes, like swapping a **disposable** plastic water bottle for a **refillable** one, or ditching throw away wet wipes in favour of a washable cotton flannel, everyone can help to drive down single-use product and plastic waste in Norfolk.

The single-use items targeted by the campaign lead to 30,000 tonnes of waste annually in Norfolk, costing £3.47 million to dispose of every year.

What the campaign involves

Social media posts will be going out via Norfolk recycles and Norfolk County Council social media platforms every Monday from 22nd March until 7th June 2021. Each post will promote one of 12 simple swaps that individuals can make to reduce the use of common single-use products.



12 Simple Swaps:

- Swap bottled water
- Swap ready-made sandwiches
- Swap disposable wipes
- Swap disposable coffee cups
- Swap plastic plant pots
- Swap disposable face masks
- Swap crisp packets
- Swap disposable sanitary products
- Swap disposable nappies
- Swap disposable razors
- Swap balloons and sky lanterns
- Swap clingfilm

Short Videos

In each post there will be a short video showing one of the swaps, an environmental fact and information about potential cost savings of making the swap.

Further information about each of the swaps, and all the accompanying videos, are available on the [Norfolk recycles website](#).

The Pledge

As well as promoting these swaps, we are asking people to take action and [sign up to our reduce single-use charter](#) where they can pledge to swap2save single-use products for reusable alternatives. Once signed up, we'd like people to share their swaps with us on social media, tagging us on #swap2save.

Swap examples:



Disposable water bottle swapped for a reusable one.
Takeaway sandwich swapped for homemade.
Clingfilm swapped for reusable tubs.



Buying bottled water swapped for a reusable filter jug that can be filled from the tap.

Schools and Businesses

It's not just individuals who can get involved: in the campaign, we're calling on schools and businesses to make the pledge too.



Our new [Reduce single-use school award scheme](#) and accompanying [education pack](#) have been specially designed to help schools to reduce single-use one step at a time. The first step is to involve pupils in a waste audit to work out which single-use products to targets on the [school charter](#), then an action plan is drawn up. As they work their way through the 12 targets, schools will earn bronze, silver and gold awards.

Before the start of the pandemic, Norfolk County Council put in place some new measures to minimise single-use product and plastic use in its buildings. The [County Hall case study](#) was put together to share ideas and encourage other [businesses to sign up](#) and follow suit, saving money and the planet.



“The single most effective thing we can do to encourage insects and wildlife, is to let our grass grow long.”
- Monty Don

Habitat connectivity:

“It is the total garden network and not any particular garden that is so important for wildlife.

No garden is too small to provide some benefit for wildlife even if many animals that visit it are actually resident in neighbouring gardens.”

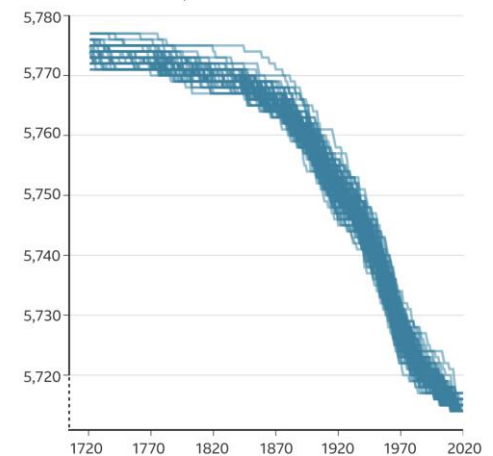
Ken Thompson

January 2008, RHS Garden Magazine

**NO
MOW
MAY**

Mammal species lost in the past 300 years

Number of mammal species

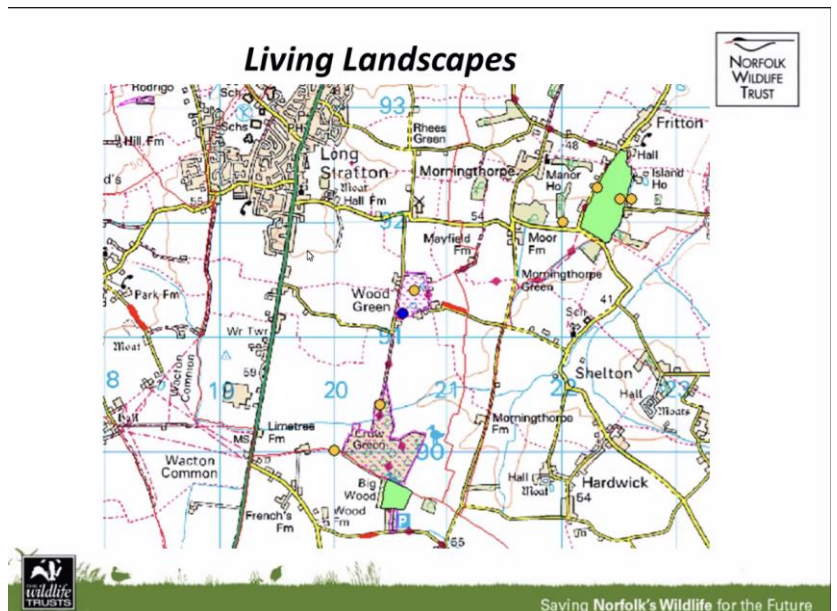


Source: Gothenburg Global Biodiversity Centre

BBC



Hedgehogs travel on average 2 km per night



Hedgehog roads, restoring nature's old pathways, using public spaces to involve and rebuild communities - all these topics and more were part of a fascinating Zoom seminar held by Greening Wymondham in March.

"We wanted to highlight why and how we can care for the green spaces in Wymondham," says Greening Wymondham's Ann Rostron. "And help councillors, volunteers and supporters to understand what we can all help do and why it's so necessary."

Encouraging wild flower meadows and go low on mowing was one of the messages from Helen Sibley from South Norfolk Council. She said there was a drive to encourage flowers, bees and insects in the parks and countryside sites the council runs. And to plant trees which are key to many species and help with flooding. None of it would be done without local people buying in to the idea.

Up next on the webinar was someone already working with Greening Wymondham - Matt Davies of the Norfolk Fringe Project. He is helping drive our Kett's Wood project but had a fascinating account of how a neglected and antisocial small park in Norwich had been transformed by volunteers replanting and rebuilding fences and access. Like all the speakers on the webinar he offers training, tools and advice.

Arguing for roads was our final contributor - Helen Baczkowska from the Norfolk Wildlife Trust. Not human roads but the tiny highways small animals used to be able to use before we cut across them. With the help of farmers, landowners and gardeners her team is working to reintroduce them. There's much more to tell about the huge amount of work her team are doing around Wymondham, but NWT are also collecting seeds native to Norfolk that major seed producers can't afford to produce.

Should you wish to watch the seminar it can be found on You Tube <https://youtu.be/OGSmobQotUA>

These actions to re-vitalise our verges, public spaces and footpaths can all help towards a greener Norfolk. Next month in Wymondham on-line Magazine - Hedgehog Highways!

A Greenish if somewhat commercial link

We've been approached through our web-site to add to our web-site the following link, which given it is effectively asking us to advertise them we wouldn't normally entertain, but the specific site itself we thought might be useful to those with electric or hybrid cars or those thinking of switching.

It is an interactive Electric Car charging point finder tool -

<https://www.carwow.co.uk/electric-cars/charging-points>

We're not specifically endorsing this company but the tool may be useful.

Litter Picking & Litter-Picks for Duke of Edinburgh awards

We have calls for another Litter Pick from many of you, but we have been advised by South Norfolk Council that this cannot be safely organised until September, due to the COVID situation.

In common with most of the country, we seem to be suffering from more litter than usual due to people escaping lockdown and being out and about in the finer weather. So could we ask everyone to play their part and clear litter up when they see it and help keep our town clean and tidy. We will be organising another Great Wymondham Litter Pick just as soon as we are able to in September. We know that this is a great community event, enjoyed by all - especially the cakes! We look forward to seeing you then.

Meanwhile Greening Wymondham were recently approached by two students wishing to litter pick in Wymondham as their volunteering contribution to their Duke of Edinburgh award. The students are tasked with completing a number of volunteer hours and asked whether we would monitor and sign off their activities. I'm not sure if they quite realised that on one of their litter pickings our monitoring would involve spotting them from a bedroom window and quick encouraging text of well done to their parents !



No Mow May

Nicola Maunders

Lots of gardeners are saying 'no' to the mow this May to help our bees, butterflies, wildlife and ourselves! Lock up your lawnmower on May 1st and let the wildflowers in your garden bloom. This will provide nectar for our hungry pollinators. You can count up your 'nectar score' at the end of the month by joining the 'Every Flower Counts' survey. This will tell you how many bees your lawn can feed and help Plantlife, the wild plant conservation charity learn more about the health of the nation's wildflowers. To find out more, go to www.plantlife.org.uk

Greening Wymondham encourages Stationary Drivers to STOP idling their engines

They say a picture paints a thousand words - and alas we're not proposing to build hills in Wymondham but wouldn't it be better for everyone's health if we all could cut down idling our engines. We know we are probably preaching to the converted but.....



OR



CONSIDER



Would anyone like to take on lobbying our council(s) to adopt such signage ?