



# WEG Newsletter

Edition Two

September 2020

Our Aims - Covering the area Winterbourne, Hambrook and the wider Frome Valley area. We are passionate about the environment and building a strong inclusive community.

Please consider donating money to WEG to assist in progressing our many objectives and projects.  
[WEG PayPal Donations](#)



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- Update on Rewilding on the Hambrook Common
- Updates about local roads
- Community Plastic Recycling Project
- Nature Reserves
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- Winterbourne Medieval Barn update

Thank you to UWE for the grant funding for our rewilding projects and for assisting us in the research on



We hope you enjoy this newsletter, if you have any feedback or suggestions for local actions we could be taking please get in touch.

Email : [winterbourneenvironmental@gmail.com](mailto:winterbourneenvironmental@gmail.com)

In addition, if you would like to subscribe to receive future e-mails and notices via e-mail and share your views on local environmental issues please complete this questionnaire.

Subscribe : [WEG Questionnaire – Click Here](#)

Please follow us on Facebook to keep up with current news and any events being planned.

Facebook : [@Winterbourneenvironmentalgroup](#)



### Wildflower Meadow on Whiteshill Common

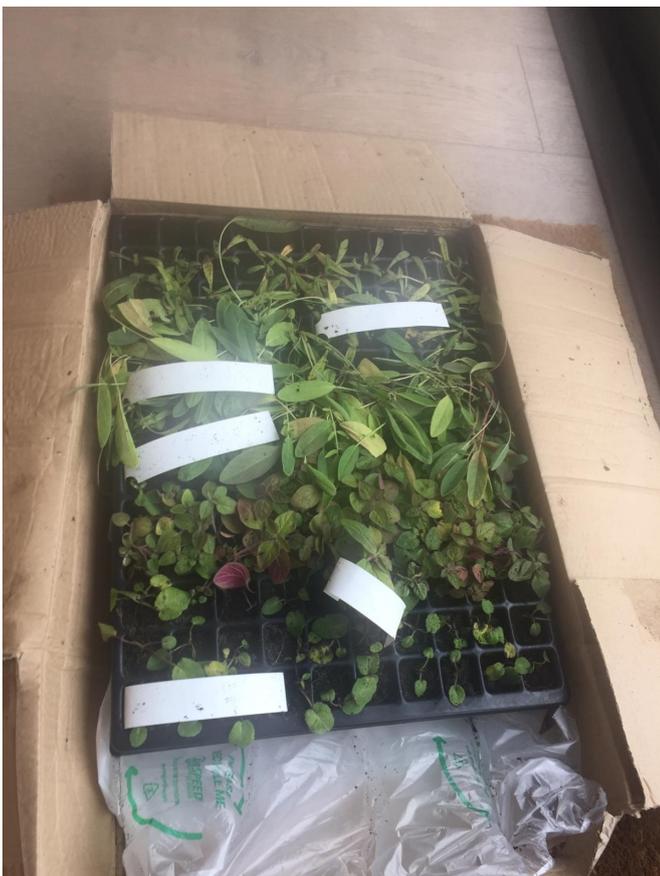
During 2019 and 2020, Winterbourne Environmental Group (WEG) worked with Winterbourne Parish Council to agree a plan to turn part of the Small Common at Whiteshill, Hambrook into a wildflower meadow with the aim of improving local biodiversity as well as improving local amenity and providing opportunities to increase ecological awareness. During Spring and Summer 2020, two sections of the Small Common were left unmown. A wide perimeter has continued to be mown frequently to ensure access for horse riders.

We have been really encouraged at how quickly the unmown sections have grown into a wildflower meadow. Local botanists who have visited the site

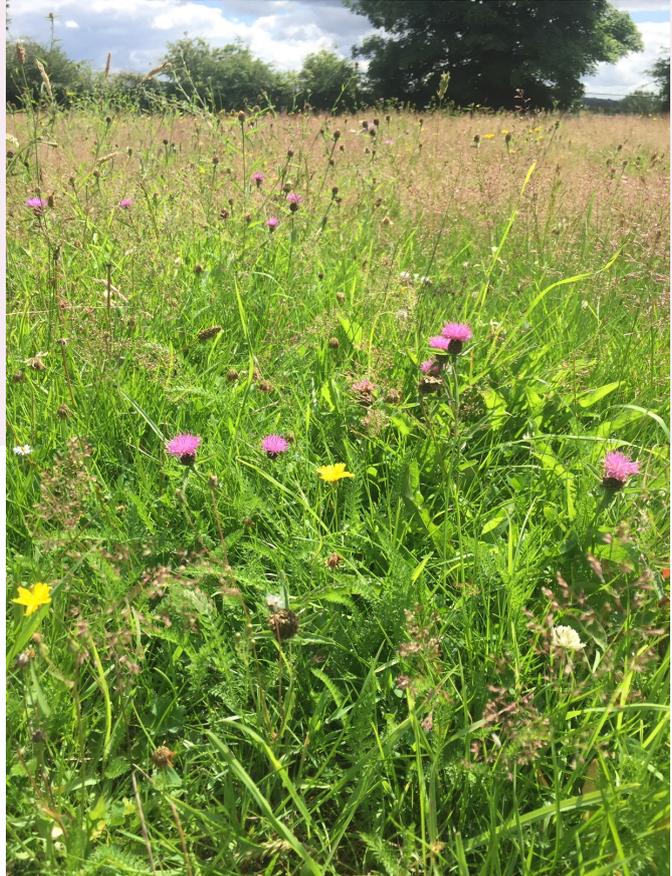


Thank you to Robin Laird for the kind donation of the dibbers to assist with the planting of the plug plants on Whiteshill Common

Thank you to Winterbourne Parish Council for the kind donation of tools and equipment to support our work on the common and other work in the local area.



have been impressed at the speed of change from the close cut sward to a nectar rich wildflower area. The meadow areas have now had their late Summer cut, with the mowings removed to decrease the fertility of the soil (which helps the wildflowers to thrive).



We are planning to continue to develop the wildflower meadow and increase species diversity. We are arranging a work party on the morning of Saturday 10th October (starting at 10am) to plant some wildflower plugs, potted plants and seeds. Please email [janeantrobust@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:janeantrobust@yahoo.co.uk) if you would like to attend so we can make arrangements to manage numbers and timings to ensure social distancing.

## Whiteshill Common Working Party



10th October 2020  
Starting at 10am

**Wildlife we've seen in Winterbourne** - By Emily Porter age 8 from Winterbourne St Michael's School.

### Jay



**What do they eat?** They eat insects, seeds, nuts and smaller animals.

**Where do they live?** Woods, parks and large gardens.

**Fun fact:** They hide their food and eat it later on. Sometimes they forget where they hid the food and trees and plants grow from the nuts and seeds, so they help our environment.

We found three jay feathers in the woods by The Dingle and they are beautiful. Look out for tiny feathers with blue stripes!



### Yellow Centipede



**What do they eat?** They eat other insects, spiders and worms.

**Where do they live?** In fallen leaves, under rocks, rotten trees and bark.

I found this one on a rock, about to slip off into the River Frome.

Centipede's bodies are made from many segments. Centipedes have two legs per segment and millipedes have four legs per segment.



## Ways to help garden wildlife in autumn

### Ponds

Remove debris from ponds and float a tennis ball or golf ball on the surface to prevent freezing.

### Twigs and sticks

Put bundles of twigs at the back of borders or a plant pot where invertebrates and small mammals can shelter.

### Borders

Leave them intact, decaying plants and seed heads offer protection and food for all sorts of wildlife.

### Plant pots

Leave pots stacks in a cool dry place to offer protection for bees and other insects.

### Leaves

Pile raked leaves to a corner or beneath a hedge for hedgehogs and other animals to shelter and

## Sustainable food - how do I start?

Vegan and plant-based diets have become increasingly popular over the last few years. While there are some incredible benefits to following this lifestyle, it often isn't an easy thing to start. Do-gooders can often come across as preachy and therefore any messages they share become unhelpful. If you are vegan or want to be, that's fantastic! But there are many steps along the way to make more sustainable food choices. I'm going to try and break down simple steps to take to find sustainable options within your budget and lifestyle.

First and foremost, whatever change you decide to make is a great thing! Even just changing one thing a week, month or year can really make a difference; if you're consistent in your efforts you'll reduce your impact on the environment. The best changes you make are ones you can stick to.

### How can I eat more fruit and vegetables?

Fruit is very low in carbon emissions compared to meat, so including more veggies is a great way to reduce your carbon footprint. Over lockdown there was a huge increase in people growing their own produce; if you think of yourself as having green fingers this is an excellent hobby to get into – why not share any extras you grow with your neighbours and friends? If you're not into gardening, there are local areas that are open to pick your own fresh produce such as St Aldam's farm in Pucklechurch or Farrington's Farm (which are currently open for pumpkin picking, ready for Halloween!) This is a fun and rewarding activity as you're foraging your own food. Turn them into a range of dishes from salads, soups, stews, or sweet desserts! You can also choose to shop local at farm shops, the produce tends to be more organic, better for you and better value, and it has travelled a lesser distance so is keeping food miles down. Or, if you find yourself in your local supermarket, look out for 'wonky veg' – they taste just as good, and if they don't get bought they go to waste.

### What about meat?

Yes, you can still eat meat! But think about swapping the types of meat for something more environmentally friendly. It takes approx 7kg of grains and 15,000 litres of water to make 1kg of beef. Where possible, opt for pork and chicken over red meat, as they have less of a toll on the environment. Or simply cut meat out of one of your meals a day (or a whole day if you can). If you have meat for breakfast, lunch and dinner, maybe just have it for dinner and fill the rest of your meals with more fruit and veg.

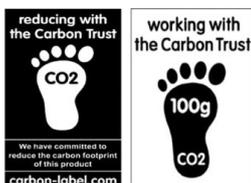
Unfortunately, shopping local for meat makes little difference in its total emissions, the damage is mostly done in the farming and production stages rather than how many miles it travels to get to you. It's the same story with dairy, cut this down when you can.

### Is this going to be hard?

Any change is going to take some adjusting to, that's why you should start small and see how it goes. Luckily, organisations have made it really easy to spot better options in supermarkets. Look out for specific symbols (I've included some images of some to look out for!) when shopping to make sure you're making the best choices for you. You can even make it into a game! Get kids (or yourself) hunting for symbols, just a few swaps in your weekly shop will reduce your effect on the environment and you'll barely even notice.

This way you can still eat the foods you love but with an added serving of sustainability. Whatever you choose to do please tell us! We'd love to hear how you're getting on and any tips you can share with other readers.

*Article by Jessica Cartwright - Social Media Volunteer member of WEG Committee*



Additional Label



EU Eco-Label



## Impact of Pesticides on the Environment

When chemicals that are designed to kill are introduced into delicately balanced ecosystems, they can set damage in motion that reverberates through the food web for years.

- Honeybee populations are plummeting nationwide.
- Male frogs exposed to atrazine become females.
- Pesticides are implicated in dramatic bat die-offs.

Pesticides wreak havoc on the environment, threatening biodiversity and weakening the natural systems upon which human survival depends. our natural ecosystems.

### What can we do?

- ⇒ Buy organic produce
- ⇒ Avoid using weedkillers and slug pellets in your own gardens
- ⇒ Use eco friendly household products



## Winterbourne Library Mini Wildflower Meadow

Back at the start of the year Winterbourne Library kindly agreed to give one of the green spaces out of the front of the library over to a wildflower



meadow. The maintenance of this has been spot on, with the edges being maintained giving tidy areas around pathways while the grass and flowers grew freely, giving amazing support to bugs, bees and

butterflies. The next step with this is to give the grass an 'end of summer' mow and take the grass off site for composting elsewhere.

It is great news that the library has agreed for this project to go forward for another year, so we are intending to plant some plug plants and lay some seeds to increase the range of native flowers on this patch. We are also going to improve on the signage and have signs that will hopefully stand the test of time and inform people of the benefits of letting the grass grow long!

Looking forward to another year of watching the grass grow!



## Community Plastic Recycling Project

The aim of this project is to firstly establish a plastic recycling workshop. Then we can begin the exciting process of creating useful products from our everyday plastic waste.



Right now, I am at the stage where I'm turning this

Into this, The Plastic Shredder



This will allow us to turn typical household plastic waste into something amazing.

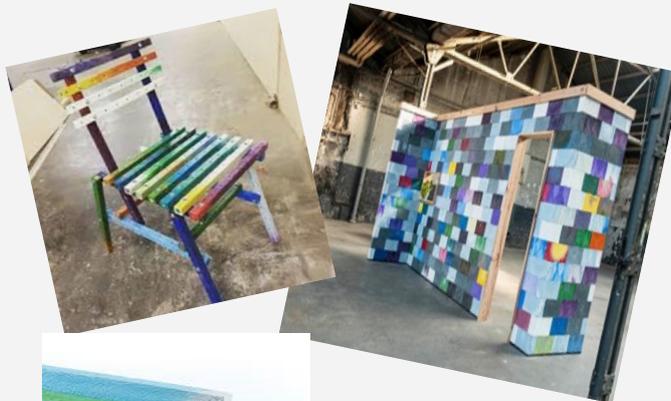


becomes



## But what do we do with it you say?

That's fun bit, we can create so many things with it your imagination is the only limit...



## So, what's the next step?

We need to either fund or build additional machines to produce the lumbar, sheets or moulds.

Once we have the machines we can start generating money by selling on items made from recycled plastic.

Precious Plastics – <http://preciousplastic.com> has all the plans (free) for the different machinery. The extruder is beyond my ability (specialist tools I do not have) but it would be the next obvious step after the shredder.

- **Maybe you could help with building the Extruder or know someone who could?**
- **Could you help with funding projects?**

I'm thinking of asking Tesco, Waitrose and Coop for money through the Bags of help schemes – oh the irony.

If you would like to help out please get in touch.

Email is [stuartkellock@gmail.com](mailto:stuartkellock@gmail.com)



## WE'RE ON A MISSION

The plastic problem is crystal clear by now.  
If you're on this webpage, chances are you know this already.  
And understand its gravity.

Precious Plastic exists to reduce plastic waste.  
Sometimes we do it through boosting recycling. Sometimes through new biodegradable materials. Some other time by adopting zero waste lifestyles.  
Whatever works.

Our solutions see people as the key element to fix the plastic mess.  
Precious Plastic approaches count on people to bring about the necessary change.  
Small steps, multiplied by millions. That's where we can win our battle.  
We don't believe in techno-utopian, fix-it-all, dream technology.

Precious Plastic is a combination of people, machines, platforms and knowledge to create an alternative global recycling system.

**Frome Valley Growing Project** is a local project to grow and produce food for members and the local community from a site rented just off Swan Lane in Winterbourne.

The group are growing food as a community in a more sustainable way that depends less on fossil fuel and uses permaculture growing methods, working with and supporting nature.



**Frome Valley**  
GROWING PROJECT



*Thank you to Andrea from the Frome Valley Growing Project for answering some questions about the project so far*

#### Can you tell me something about yourself?

I've been teaching for the past 10 years in various schools: mainstream, Steiner-Waldorf and SEND. I am passionate about working in a holistic way with children, educating their hands, heart and head and developing a connection to themselves and the earth.

#### What made you want to get involved with the FVGP?

Onions! I was sitting in the sidelines of the project for a few months. Back at the beginning, I helped to shovel some manure to make the very first beds but then I watched from afar. It was when I saw how many onions Ben planted that convinced me to become a fully fledged member! I want to grow my knowledge and experience in growing foods in a way that respects the natural systems already in place on the land. I want my children to feel confident and experienced growers.

#### What have been the best parts of being involved?

Definitely the potatoes! Apart from them, the inspiration from other members who are growing and have such wonderful ideas of how to use the land and space. Though it's been a little tricky because of COVID, there have been some incredible times spent, in community, on the land, working together. It really has been a haven for us as a family, to escape the city and run loose in a field for the day.

#### What future plans are you most interested in?

I am excited about the food forest. There is something so appealing to me about planting trees that won't make much of an impact for a decade or two. Also, looking forward to the compost loo and roundhouse!

#### How would you imagine the project in 8-10 years?

My hope would be for it to have some super productive polytunnels, for the food forest to be established and for the place to have been re-wilded a little. I would like for it to be a place where creatures and humans can co-exist and be nourished.

#### Give me three words that some up your experience with FVGP to date.

Onions - wheelbarrows - children!



## Local Nature Reserves

WEG has been in discussions with Winterbourne Parish Council about helping look after the nature reserves in the area. We intend to help with working parties, where volunteers are available and we're taking a more proactive role helping to maintain the woodland area in the Frome Valley adjacent to the The Dingle.

We are lucky to have five reserves on our doorstep:

### Newleaze Wood

Newleaze wood is a small woodland area with a large



pond next to the Bristol Road. The area is often used for forest school and is a peaceful place to sit and watch many wild birds. A bridge was added across the pond to recognise the work of Frank Smith who managed and maintained Newleaze Wood, Monks' Pool and Bradley Brook.

### Huckford Quarry



Sited in a defunct quarry beneath the Huckford railway viaduct, this reserve is a very different habitat that is cool and damp all year round. There are many paths and steps to explore. The easiest way to get here is via the footpath to the north of Harcombe Hill railway bridge. Descend the steps and follow the

path to the right to find the entrance.

### The Dingle

The Parish Council owns a small section of land adjacent to the north bank of the River Frome beneath The Dingle. The area comprises many steps and plateaus with a network of fun to explore paths. We are currently actively working to re-establish the



grassed picnic area as shown in the photo.

Work is also needed to improve steps, the riverbank and fallen trees to maintain and foster a diverse ecosystem we can all experience.

The Parish Council have generously purchased a selection of sturdy tools and gloves for volunteers to help maintain the Dingle and other reserves. Please contact us if you are able to join a working party to help. We are always looking for other volunteer, like us, to cut back paths, build walls, clear litter and many other jobs. You do not have to be strong or very fit! If you can spare a few hours a month on weekends or summer evenings, please let us know!





## November Tree Planting

We applied for trees back in Spring for the autumn free tree packs from the Woodland Trust. We were successful!

Our tree packs are arriving in November and we will look to plant them as soon as possible. We don't have a specific date yet but will share an event on the Winterbourne Environmental Group facebook page as soon as we have an idea of the arrival day.

If you would like to get out in the fresh autumn air and help us plant some trees then please look out for further announcements.



## Winterbourne Roads Update

### Hambrook Road

Following correspondence from WEG and other residents, South Glos Council opened a consultation into reducing the B4058 speed limit through the conservation area of Hambrook from 40 MPH to 30 MPH. The consultation ended on 30 September and we are awaiting a decision. We hope this will reduce the speed of traffic near to Hambrook School and Whiteshill common and church where pavements are often narrow in order to improve road safety, reduce noise and encourage more walking and cycling in Hambrook.

### 20MPH For Winterbourne

WEG has been given full support by the Parish Council for a campaign to reduce road speeds to 20MPH across Winterbourne's residential roads. These changes are taking place across the UK and Europe in line with Stockholm Declaration to reduce air pollution and encourage active travel. 20MPH zones have demonstrated a positive impact on road safety in areas where people live, walk and cycle as well as reducing air pollution. While some people have questions about the efficacy of these schemes, a recent survey of nearly 300 residents showed 2/3 support and only 1/6 opposed to such a scheme. In collaboration with groups such as Brake and 20s Plenty, we intend to help local residents understand the data and evidence behind the benefits such a scheme can bring for us all and encourage South Glos council to start a consultation.

### Damsons Bridge

Discussions about safer space for pedestrians on Damsons bridge has been ongoing for some time. In 2019 a local resident collected a large petition to the council to solve this dangerous section of road. South Glos have visited the site since and while they accept the pedestrian space is dangerous, they are not yet willing to spend their estimate of at least £300k to either add shuttle lights and a raised safe pavement or build an adjacent footbridge. The scheme is now listed for consideration, however the injury rate there is too low compared to other local schemes that also need funding, despite a high rate of collisions on or near the bridge. Following a private consultation, we understand that the scheme could be completed for £100k. We are continuing to pursue the council on the safety of this bridge to avoid a serious incident as well encourage walking and cycling, particularly in the period of social distancing.

There are many other improvements residents and WEG want to see in the Winterbourne area. If you think you can help us, please contact Duncan Porter at WEG.



## And also Litter ...

Due to COVID restrictions, we've not been able to run our monthly group litter picking. Earlier this year we asked South Gloucestershire Council for litter picking equipment. They delivered twenty litter grabbers for adults and children, some bag hoops, gloves and lots of bags. We've handed them out to families in the area who wanted to help and we've spent the summer clearing litter many times a week. South Glos Street Care collect and recycle the litter we collect.

This is a month of litter collection from one person in June!

If you want to help us, please get in touch. If you are able to help out once a month or many times a week, not only does it make our village nicer, but every piece of plastic we pick up is one less piece of plastic that will



end up in our streams, river and soil. WEG monthly litter sweeps will hopefully be back soon!

## Local Gardens as Mini Nature Reserves

Earlier this year, we asked people on our Facebook group and page to share images of how they are supporting nature in their own gardens. People submitted some lovely photos which show how much of a difference it can make to try and support wildlife in any green space you have available to you.



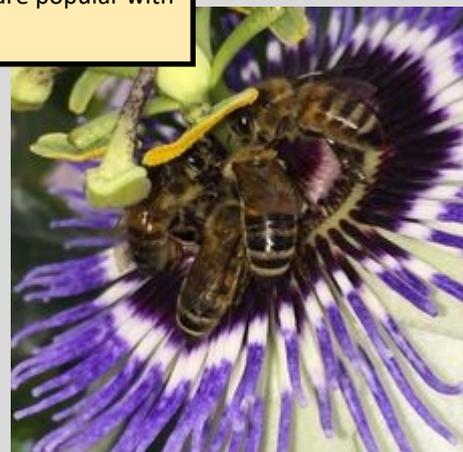
"my herb garden has been great this year for bees and butterflies"



"An abundance of frogs and some newts in my garden since digging a small pond 18 months ago"



"Passion flowers are popular with the bees today"





At Winterbourne Medieval Barn we're delighted to be opening our doors to visitors more regularly. We've got a varied programme of autumn events coming up, all socially distanced in the Main Barn including tea and tours on the first Thursday afternoon of each month. Check the [website](#) or [facebook](#) page for full listings.

Autumn Event Highlights:

[Felt Hat Making Workshop, Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> October](#)

[Talk: 180 Years of the Gloucestershire Constabulary, Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> November](#)

[Fabric Wreath Making Workshop, Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> December](#)

Our garden team have been hard at work replanting the kitchen garden over the summer months. It's a lovely tranquil space to pause for thought and will be a brilliant learning resource for when we welcome school groups back onsite. Particularly with our Apothecary workshop where young people discover a world of medieval herbal medicine and have a go at producing remedies of their own. Work on the rest of the Barn site is well underway with plans for a wild flower area, and more planting in the spring next year.



Photo credits : Simon Goodwin

