

## SEPTEMBER 2020

### Minutes – Wildlife + Food group joint meeting

2 September 2020 via Zoom

Attending: Vanessa and Andreas Ruhlig, Sue Rickard, Stewart Hill, Laura Cooper, Kate Holloway, Anita Roy (minutes), Helen Gillingham (chair), Paddy Finnegan.

#### 1. Group meetings

We discussed the pros and cons of having a single meeting to combine the wildlife and sustainable food groups.

Several useful suggestions came out of the discussion:

a) circulate the agenda beforehand, to encourage people to join

b) good to structure these better so people know what's on the agenda and can contribute to it: copy-paste the agenda into the chat at the start of the meeting, and encourage people to add their notes in the chat bar, so everyone can contribute easily.

c) for the next 3 months we'd do a 'trial' of combining the two groups into one monthly meeting, alternating dates between Weds and Thurs each month. Review this in December, and decide whether to continue or change for the new year.

#### 2. TEN meeting

Helen reported back from the recent Taunton Environmental Network (TEN) meeting. For the coming meeting they have with Rebecca Pow, the group decided to focus on four key areas, led by different people within the group:

- Transport/cycle network/policy on road building etc – Mike Ginger
- Pollinator Action Plan, and reduce council's routine use of pesticides – Helen Lawy (Friends of Longrun Meadow)
- Allotments – Helen G
- Regenerative Agriculture – Jolyon Chesworth (Somerset Wildlife Trust)
- 

#### 3. Community gardening mowing and hibernaculum

Helen reported on recent community gardening activities, esp in Longacre. The new Whatsapp gardening group is working really well. Noted that Himalayan balsam needed dealing with in the small field to the right as you come under Thunder Bridge towards Tonedale Mill. Very successful session with Scouts to build hibernacula for slow worms, grass snakes and amphibians in Longacre. AR suggested sending pics or info to John Dickson, head of Somerset Wildlife Trust's Reptile and Amphibian Group – he's v supportive and has offered his help whenever we need an expert!

#### 4. Wildlife map

Ongoing – with HG, AR working with Simon P to get this done – hopefully by end of the month. 2 ads have been secured, with Eat: Festivals and Blue Pantry at £250 each to cover cost of printing.

PF suggested 'overlay's on the digital version so people can access either foraging info or wildlife info. Gold-star system and/or certificates for Wildlife Gardens to be worked out.

## 5. Signage

Sue, Stewart, Paddy and Laura have taken the lead on creating 'Left wild for wildlife' (or similar) signs to put in long grass/wildflower meadows.

Info board for Post Close still needs doing. AR to contact Lucy Pendrick for her paintings.

## 6. Allotment project

Helen reported back that the list she compiled of contacts and info has now been uploaded on the county council website. There are 1416 allotments listed full occupied, with (at the beginning of lockdown) 198 on the waiting list. As a result of the survey, and no doubt due to Covid/food security fears, an additional 120 people have registered an interest in having an allotment. The FB post about it has been seen by a staggering 9,800 people (!) and 165 people took part in the survey. All in all – very brilliant!!

Andi Rickard noticed the sloping field next to the new footpath near the sewage works is up for sale – 3.6 acres, asking price £40k... might be suitable for a group of people to buy collectively. If anyone wants to lead on this – feel free!

## 7. Seed swap / sharing boxes

AR will contact the council about whether we could get permission for this – replicating the success that they've had, for example, in Frome.

## 8. Grant money

Helen would like to apply for funding from the Town council – but there's no single, large-ish project at the moment. Thinking of putting together a 'wishlist' for all the groups, incl repair café, apple juicing, any other projects? – as can only apply, as a group, once. One idea was to apply to buy wildflower seeds to give away for free, along with a 'how to' leaflet on creating wildflower garden for pollinators.

## 9. Green Noticeboard at Blue Pantry

Sue has taken charge of this, and is looking for ways to spruce up and make this more attractive & 'live'. Everyone encouraged to give her notices or pictures or ideas to put up there – or just do that themselves. It's another important 'public face' for the group, so the more the merrier. Talked about also having the factsheets that will accompany the Wildlife Map available at BP to pick up/ take away (as well as downloadable from the website). That's all on the 'to-do' list!

## 10. Transition Network Webinar Series

Link for information on the whole series: <https://transitionnetwork.org/news-and-blog/what-is/>

All sessions are free and open to everyone.

Helen and Anita will be doing a presentation on behalf of TTW on Thursday 10th September at 7pm entitled: Reinventing and revaluing projects in changing times. In it we and 2 other groups will “explore how our projects are adapting to recent events, to the pandemic, and to the upsurge of concern around climate change.”

Here’s the link for the webinar: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/116230742279>

There will be a short Zoom meeting two days before the webinar so that Helen and Anita can rehearse their presentation and take feedback from the group (!). If you’d like to join – please do!

Topic: Transition Network Webinar rehearsal/dry run!

Time: Sep 8, 2020 07:30 PM London

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4425737666>

Meeting ID: 442 573 7666

NEXT MEETING: will also be a joint food + wildlife group meeting on Thursday 8th October at 7:30pm. On Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81626964052?pwd=THRMM29pemRYSXJWclh2Vk5lWVkyZz09>

Meeting ID: 816 2696 4052

Passcode: 281428