

September 2021

Tips for climate action – learning from COVID

Ros Wade and Barry Goodwin share some ideas.

We have come together as a community to support each other during the pandemic. How can we do the same to address our next big challenge – climate change? Climate change is already affecting our seasons and the plants we can grow. In poorer parts of the world, it is causing extreme poverty through loss of livelihoods and conflicts over land, water and resources.

What can we do to adapt and conserve our natural environment and reduce greenhouse gas emissions?

These are some tips from two members of SPRA. Can you send in some of your own (span2011@hotmail.co.uk) for inclusion in the next SPAN?

- Encourage friends and family to **Reduce, Reuse, Recycle.**
- Buy local where possible to reduce food miles and support the local economy.
- Support local environmental groups like Friends of the Earth.
- Plant more trees and shrubs which absorb carbon dioxide.
- Reduce water use in our homes and gardens.
- Grow some of our own food.
- Use eco products, such as Ecover, for cleaning.
- Eat less meat and waste less food.
- Use a green energy supplier like Ecotricity but remember hitting the 'off switch' reduces your carbon footprint and saves on energy bills. Switch to LED light bulbs.
- Try to cut out plastic – use a canvas bag when you go shopping and avoid buying bottled water.
- Walk, cycle or use public transport where possible.

Red alert on global warming – what can you do?

SPRA members, Barry Goodwin and Ros Wade share their thoughts.

In the face of the recent report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change ('Code Red for humanity') our natural reaction is either to bury our heads in the sand or to panic. Global warming is now unstoppable and many parts of our planet will be affected. But there is still time to alleviate the most extreme changes and it is important that we find other ways forward.

Politicians need to make the big decisions to end our dependence on fossil fuels and they need our support to do this. A key global conference in Glasgow – COP 26 – begins at the end of October, so this is our opportunity to let our representatives know that we want them to take action **now**.

Last month we suggested some activities that would help in alleviating climate change. This is now even more urgent, so here are some more suggestions:

- Write to our local councillors and Sarah Jones, our local MP, stating your concerns for urgent action
- (politicians listen to their public as they need our votes).
- Join a campaign with a local or national group like Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace, Oxfam, Extinction Rebellion.
- Join in one of the actions to support October's COP 26, the global climate conference in Glasgow. You can find more information on the 'Climate Coalition' website at www.theclimatecoalition.org/
- Join a local climate action group such as 'Croydon Climate Action' (www.croydonclimateaction.com) to raise awareness and encourage action.
- Invite a speaker to any group you are part of, who can inspire and encourage local action.
- Organise a local activity to encourage climate change awareness, e.g. an arts competition, story writing.
- Ask all your friends and family to make one climate change commitment for the next year, and then keep to it.



November 2021

Working together for our planet – there is no planet B

By SPRA members Barry Goodwin and Ros Wade.

From 1-12 November 2021, the UK, together with our partners Italy, will host COP26 in Glasgow – an event many believe to be the world's best last chance to get runaway climate change under control. For nearly three decades the UN has been bringing together almost every country on earth for global climate summits called COPs – which stands for 'Conference of the Parties'. In that time climate change has become a global priority. This year will be the 26th annual summit – giving it the name COP26. COP26 is a major check-in point to review countries' ambitions on climate action and is absolutely critical in getting the world on track to limit the heating of our planet to below 1.5°C.

We are now seeing the effects of climate change in every country and region, with severe weather events becoming more frequent, resulting in food shortages and major displacements of people. Our planet is warming-up and during the last decades this has actually been speeding up rather than slowing down. Our most urgent and challenging global goal is to **secure global net zero by mid-century and keep 1.5°C within reach.**

How will this happen?

Countries are being asked to come forward with ambitious 2030 emissions reductions targets that align with reaching net zero by the middle of the century.

To deliver on these stretching targets, countries will need to:

- accelerate the phase-out of coal,
- curtail deforestation,
- speed up the switch to electric vehicles,
- encourage investment in renewables, and
- reduce carbon emissions from homes.

We can all help to do this by:

- Checking out the list of goals on the COP26 website (<https://ukcop26.org/cop26-goals/>).
- Joining the movement **together for our planet** (<https://together-for-our-planet.ukcop26.org/onestepgreener/>).
- Getting involved in local action for a sustainable planet and sharing our experiences (<https://together-for-our-planet.ukcop26.org/get-involved/>).

If you need some inspiration, these websites provide ideas and resources for individuals, schools, faith groups, community groups and businesses. And do share your actions with readers of SPAN.

December 2021

How will we heat our homes in the future?

By SPRA members Barry Goodwin and Ros Wade.

In recent weeks there has been much discussion about how we will heat our homes in the future. Home and workspace heating makes up almost a third of all UK carbon emissions. The 'UK Net Carbon Strategy' says no new gas boilers will be sold after 2035, so much attention has been drawn to air and water source heat pumps. As an incentive, a three-year 'Boiler Upgrade Scheme' will see households offered grants of up to £5,000 for low-carbon heating systems, so they cost the same as a gas boiler now.

The technology behind a heat pump is not new and is really quite simple. Residual heat from the air, ground or water is absorbed at low temperature into a fluid. The fluid is then passed through a compressor which raises the temperature to between 20-30°C. This high temperature is transferred to the heating and hot water circuits of a building. Heat pumps need electricity to operate but they make sense as long as there's more energy coming out than going in and may qualify for the 'Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme' (<https://www.gov.uk/domestic-renewable-heat-incentive>)

The collection pipework for a ground pump is a continuous, unjointed length of pipe buried in the ground either horizontally, or vertically. Horizontal systems are probably more suited to new builds as they need the pipe to be buried under an area about the size of a tennis court. A vertical system needs one or more boreholes equivalent to around 150 metres deep.

An air source heat pump takes the outside air as its heat source and is consequently easier and cheaper to install as there is no collection pipework to install into the ground. Installation costs vary because radiators may need changing or underfloor heating considered but, in all cases, it needs to be carried out by a qualified specialist who can explain how and where one can be installed and used most effectively. For more details the Energy Saving Trust website is worth exploring: <https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/energy-at-home/>

To fit one is a big decision to make!

If you have had a heat pump installed, please let us know your experience through the 'SPAN letters' pages.

January 2022

After COP 26 – Keep up the momentum with New Year resolutions for the planet

SPRA Members Ros Wade and Barry Goodwin share some New Year ideas.

Don't get too depressed – there were some positive outcomes from COP 26:

- The world has now made a positive turn away from fossil fuel as a source of energy.
- There is acceptance of the 1.5°C global warming target to avoid catastrophic climate change.
- Rich countries have been urged to implement their promise to deliver US\$100 billion per year for five years to developing countries vulnerable to climate damage.
- Recognition of the importance of nature and ecosystems, including protecting forests and biodiversity.
- High-level roundtable meetings will continue each year, focused on revisiting and strengthening the 2030 targets as needed, to ensure a top rise in temperature of 1.5°C.
- A joint working group set up by the US and China, the world's biggest polluters, offers more hope. A previous agreement during Barack Obama's presidency kicked off a substantive programme of joint technical work on clean energy cooperation and more.

Why not make some New Year resolutions for our planet?

These could include:

- Plan weekly meat-free days – you don't have to be vegetarian to enjoy some of the delicious vegetarian and vegan recipes or ready meals.
- Try walking or cycling for short local journeys – it's much easier to stop to chat to any friends you meet; you can enjoy some of the beautiful Shirley front gardens and street trees, and combine exercise with travel.
- Avoid single-use plastic.
- 'Shop local' where possible.
- Plant a tree or shrub, or support Croydon's tree sponsorship scheme.
- Join a local climate action group, e.g. Croydon Climate Action, Friends of the Earth or Greenpeace.
- Draw your curtains and blinds at dusk – their insulation will keep your home warm and the fuel bills down, as well as reducing light pollution which harms night-flying insects.
- **Most importantly:** Spread the word – talk to others in your networks or organisations about the climate emergency and suggest ways to make a difference. And if you are a member of a faith organisation, encourage them to join the Eco church movement.

Can you imagine Shirley with out plants, wildlife or woods?

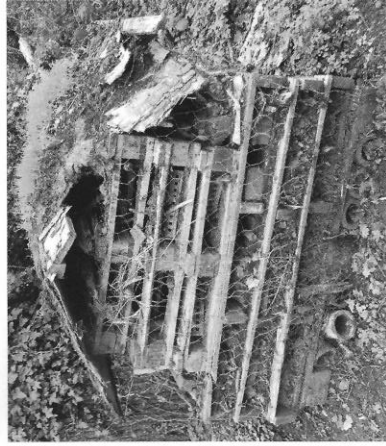
SPRA Members Barry Goodwin and Ros Wade suggest how we can help prevent this.

Scientists tell us that we are now in the epoch of the 6th mass extinction of living species on planet Earth. It is estimated that this threatens up to a million species of plants and animals, in large part because of human activities such as deforestation, hunting, and overfishing. Here in the UK, there are declining numbers of our favourite garden birds and the red list of critically endangered species now includes starlings, sparrows, greenfinches, skylarks and house martins (<https://www.rspb.org.uk/globalassets/downloads/bocc5/bocc5-report.pdf>).



Biodiversity is essential for continued life on earth and to help address climate change. We are lucky in Shirley to have a large number of open spaces – woods, heathland, open fields and parks. We also have a rich array of birdlife and wildlife in and around Shirley. Birds include:

greater spotted woodpeckers, jays, goldfinches, collared doves, robins, blackcaps and, in winter, redwings. There are also squirrels, foxes and badgers, hedgehogs and on rare occasions even roe deer. At Millers Pond we also see an array of aquatic birds – from Canada geese and coots to the beautiful Egyptian geese. Imagine what Shirley would be like without all these natural riches?



How can we protect and enhance nature in Shirley?

- Appreciate and enjoy the wildlife in our area and remember that we are all part of our wonderful natural world.
- Learn more about the different species and their habitats.
- Put out food and water for birds, especially in winter, and set up a nesting box.
- Leave an area of your gardens for wildlife to hide and thrive.

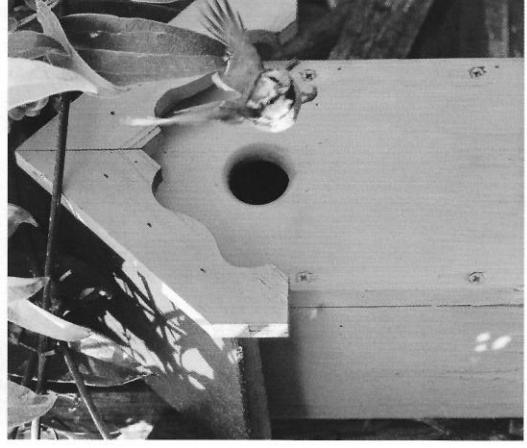


- Don't keep gardens too tidy – avoid cutting back all the dead wood and plants. Insects need these to shelter and feed.
- Avoid using pesticides and try not to mow your lawn too frequently.
- Make an insect hotel for solitary bees and other insects.
- Grow plants that are good for pollinators and allow areas for 'weeds' like dandelions to be available in spring. The RHS gives a comprehensive list of pollinator plants: (<https://www.rhs.org.uk/science/pdf/conservation-and-biodiversity/wildlife/plants-for-pollinators-garden-plants.pdf>).
- Try to ensure that you leave gaps in your garden fences. Hedgehogs (a critically endangered species) need a wide area to roam.
- Pile up leaves, twigs and grasses for hedgehogs and other small creatures to hibernate.
- Pick up litter which can be dangerous to wildlife.

- Keep dogs on a lead when walking in areas with ground-nesting birds.

Some more ways to enjoy our natural world:

- Get a pair of binoculars for distance viewing and a magnifying glass to enable you to see more detail.
- Join a local wildlife group such as the Friends of Millers Pond or Spring Park Wood, Kent Wildlife Trust, or Croydon RSPB.
- Take photos to share on social media – or send in to SPAN.
- Be creative – painting, drawing, music, storytelling and poetry can enhance your love of the natural world.
- You could put up a camera in your garden to watch from afar.



March 2022

The return of London smog

Words by Barry Goodwin and Ros Wade. Photo by Barry Goodwin.

For a few days in January, we enjoyed a beautiful blue winter sky and warm sun to slowly melt the night-time frost. However, that betrayed the dirty grey smear of air pollution that hung over Croydon and the whole of London. So severe, that it was advised that adults and children with lung problems, adults with heart problems, and older people, should avoid strenuous physical activity – a ‘Code Red’ situation.

As high pressure sat over the capital with little wind, the kind of urban smog that is prevalent in cities with high levels of car use, and high particle air pollution, was evident to all. It is there all the time even if we cannot see it.

Air pollution can travel long distances affecting areas far from where it is formed. In towns and cities, the main source of air pollution is road transport. Diesel and petrol vehicles emit pollutants, such as nitrogen dioxide, and particulate matter making it difficult to breathe. Diesel vehicles create higher levels than petrol vehicles and the friction from brakes and tyres on the road also contributes to particulate matter. These particulates can pass deep into the lungs and into the bloodstream increasing the risk of heart attacks and strokes.

Now this sounds very scary, and it is, but the UK Net Zero Carbon strategy will see an end to the sale of new petrol and diesel cars and vans from 2030 and a reduction in other forms of air pollution. In the meantime, we can all think about how we contribute to the pollution

around us. Perhaps as we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, and life returns to normal, ask ourselves if every car journey we make is necessary when public transport, walking and cycling are there as alternatives.

How can you help to improve our air quality?

- Walking or cycling to shops – it only takes approx. 20 minutes on foot from Shirley to West Wickham and it will help to keep you fit.
- Support local schools in monitoring air quality.
- Set up walk-to-school ‘buses’ of groups of parents.
- Share car journeys to local events when public transport is not possible.
- Support local campaigns to improve cycle lanes.
- Support local campaigns to improve polluting industries such as the Viridor incinerator at Beddington.
- Protect our local green spaces by helping with Clean-ups.
- Grow more shrubs and plant trees to absorb some of the worst greenhouse gases and provide us with oxygen.



April 2022 (Linked to our seed swap)

Nature on our doorstep

By SPRA Members Barry Goodwin and Ros Wade.

It is said that there are twenty-four million gardens in the United Kingdom – a staggering number. Not everyone will like gardening, of course, but whether we have a large garden or small, or a few tubs outside the door or on a balcony, the way they are cared for can make a big difference to the natural world around us. Growing vegetables and flowers from seeds is one of the most rewarding ways of doing this. You will also be helping to address some of the challenges of climate change. Growing plants in your own garden may seem to be a very small contribution but lots of individual actions in gardens across the UK can make a real difference. Every plant captures carbon as it grows and releases oxygen through photosynthesis.

Many herbs make excellent container plants and are not difficult to grow. Some vegetables, too, like tomatoes or courgettes will grow in containers if we don't have a vegetable plot – enough for a meal or two. Flowers, whether annuals or perennials, provide colour and scent on a summer day but most importantly are also good for attracting pollinating insects.

Some scientists estimate that one out of every three bites of food we eat exists because of pollinators like bees, butterflies, moths and other

insects, as well as birds. Pollinators visit flowers in their search for food (nectar and pollen) but sadly, the number of some pollinating insects is in decline for a number of reasons including loss of habitat, climate change and use of pesticides. Growing flowers that attract pollinators can help halt the decline.

The price of a packet of seeds can seem expensive but most of us never use all the seeds we buy. This year we have tried organising a 'seed swap' in St John's Shirley and managed to collect a number of herb, vegetable and flower seeds some of which may be available by the time you read this. Please have look on the St John's website at <https://www.stjohnsshirley.org.uk/> and let us know if you think this is a good idea.

The Wildlife Trusts and Royal Horticultural Society also have lots of other ideas about how to make your garden nature friendly:

<https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/sites/default/files/2018-10/The%20Wildlife%20Trusts%27%20Guide%20to%20Wildlife%20Gardening.pdf>

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/science/pdf/conservation-and-biodiversity/wildlife/plants-for-pollinators-garden-plants.pdf>

Responding to global challenges

SPRA members Barry Goodwin and Ros Wade share their ideas.

The key global challenges of today can often feel overwhelming. As we write, the most urgent challenges are the war in Ukraine and the growing impact of climate change. Climate change may not seem as immediate to us here in Shirley but nonetheless it is already having a huge impact worldwide with unpredictable and increasingly violent weather, forest fires, landslides and famine in areas which are no longer habitable. We are all having to adapt our lives to this new situation and, in reality, the war and the impacts of climate change are closely linked.

Ukrainian scientist and member of the IPCC, Dr Svitlana Krakovska, reminded us in a recent interview (BBC Online 3 March), that fossil fuels and Europe's reliance on exported oil and gas from Russia, were funding the war in Ukraine. It has caused untold suffering to the people there and led to huge numbers of refugees having to flee to neighbouring countries. The welcome they have been given is a wonderful testament to human kindness and compassion. When humanity rallies round to help those in trouble then there is always great hope for optimism. It shows what can be achieved, as we in the UK did in a smaller way when we rallied round to help each other during the pandemic.

The effects of war are always widespread and devastating, not just on people but also on wildlife and the natural world itself – any conflict has a devastating effect on climate change.

The munitions used are releasing untold extra greenhouse gases and adding further to global warming. The sanctions on Russia will also have destabilising effects on energy prices across Europe which were already extremely high and this underlines the urgent need to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels. In the face of all these threats and challenges, how can we avoid being overwhelmed and what can we do to help?

Feeling powerless will negatively impact on our mental health, so talking about these issues and taking action is very important. One thing we can all do which will not only support the sanctions but also help ourselves is to try to cut down on energy and fuel use.

Some suggestions:

- Turn down our thermostats by one or two degrees.
- Use microwaves, slow cookers or pressure cookers for cooking where possible.
- Boil kettles with only the amount of water you will need.
- Use draft stoppers by doors/windows.
- Wear extra warm clothes in the house.
- Wash clothes less frequently and on lower temperatures.
- Take showers rather than baths.
- Support local charities, such as the Shrublands Trust, which help those in energy or food poverty.
- Improve your insulation in the loft and throughout the house.

Waste not, want not

SPRA Members Ros Wade and Barry Goodwin reflect on some memories.

The 1950s saw an end to rationing but the memory of the hardships of the war years were still recent in people's minds. Food grown in back gardens and allotments was important, fridges and freezers a rarity and supermarkets a novelty so, for many, a daily trip to the grocer's was essential. Food was mostly seasonal and there was little choice. I recall my mother telling me that after the war years, the appearance of bananas in the local shop caused great excitement. The main meal was usually a roast on Sunday and then leftovers were used up in different meals during the week. Tea leaves or tea bags could frequently be reused a couple of times.

Today, things have changed radically and access to all kinds of food at all times of year is common. We live in a different world and many of the changes have been for the better but surely there is something we can learn from the habits of the 1950s when 'waste not, want not' was a common saying?

What do we need to change?

Did you know that in today's world about one third of the total food we produce is thrown away? An area larger than China is used to produce the food we waste! At the same time, around one billion people in the world are malnourished and food waste costs an average UK family a loss of £700-£800 per year.

The United Nations Environment Food Waste Index 2021 states that 'If food loss and waste were a country, it would be the third biggest source of greenhouse gas emissions. Food waste also burdens waste management systems, exacerbates food insecurity, making it a major contributor to the three planetary crises of climate change, nature and biodiversity loss, and pollution and waste'. This same report estimated that global food waste was 931 million tonnes of food waste (about 121kg per capita) across three sectors: 61 per cent from households 26 per cent from food service and 13 per cent from retail. Moreover, food waste that is not handled or reclaimed properly (e.g. through composting) can have many negative environmental consequences and contribute to dangerous greenhouse gas emissions of methane. Food production also uses up around one quarter of fresh water in the world.

What can we do about this?

- Avoid buying food you don't need by planning your menus and making a list before shopping.
- Increase your plant-based diet and reduce meat consumption.
- Try to buy food in season and locally where possible – apart from anything else it will taste fresher and better.

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- Use the food you buy in good time to get the best out of it.
- Use the 'smell' test rather than the 'best before date' to check if food is no longer fit to eat.
- Start a conversation about food waste with friends and family.
- Try not to peel vegetables but wash them thoroughly instead (NB the skins contain a lot of nutrients).
- Make a compost heap in your garden if you have one, if not, put scraps in your food waste collection bin.
- Make sure that you do not contaminate your food compost (or other recycling) with inappropriate items.
- Start a vegetable patch in your garden or even a window box.



- Use up leftovers in soups, stir-fries or casseroles, or freeze them for future use.

Why not also try to change food policy:

- Lobby your local supermarket to offer more locally-produced and seasonal food.
- Join a campaign group like Friends of the Earth.

The many ways to be positive – signs that we are tackling climate change

SPRA members Ros Wade and Barry Goodwin reflect.

It is sometimes easy to give way to gloom and doom over climate change and feel that nothing we do can ever be enough. However, this merely leads to depression and inaction when we could be celebrating and supporting the many positive steps that are already being made. It's time to cast off doom and welcome some good news. As climate scientist, Michael Mann puts it 'Climate doomerism can be harmful, because it robs us of agency, the agency we still have in determining our future' (*Guardian*, 19 May 2022).

So, what can we celebrate?

Globally, the tide is turning in many countries with a growing awareness and understanding about climate change and an increasing willingness to act, following the COP26 conference in November last year. Many countries are legislating for this by including the protection of the natural environment into law.

Nationally, we can be proud of being the first country in the world to introduce a Climate Change Act in 2008. This has been followed by detailed proposals of how we can seek to reduce our carbon footprint from transport, our homes and where we obtain our energy – there is still much to do.

Locally, there are many voluntary groups who are doing their bit for the climate, including the following (See SPAN 'Local Activities' for more details):

- **The Friends Of Millers Pond, Friends of High Broom Woods and Friends of Spring Park Wood** all help to ensure that the natural environment is cared for and safe for wildlife and families.
- **The Wilderness Project at Hall Grange** provides a wonderful example of how we can all increase the wild areas in our gardens to support pollinators, birds, and wildlife generally.
- **The Walking for Health** group encourages people to get out of their cars, get fit and enjoy what our neighbourhood has to offer.
- **The Croydon RSPB** inspires interest in, and raises awareness of, birdlife, as well as collecting data on sightings in our area.
- **The Spring Park Clean-up** group does a sterling job in collecting litter which presents hazards to both wildlife and people in the area.

'The Time is Now' (<https://thetimeisnow.uk/>) campaign, run by The Climate Coalition is the UK's largest group of people dedicated to action against climate change. It is a collective of over 140 organisations (including faith groups), 22 million voices strong. The aim is to protect from climate change, and to ask politicians to put aside their differences and commit to doing whatever is necessary to protect them.

'And I like those stylish clothes you wear'

SPRA Members Barry Goodwin and Ros Wade reflect on another aspect of our lives which can affect the environment.

That was a line from the 1982 DeBarge family hit called 'I like it'. We all need to wear clothes but thinking about where those clothes are made, what they are made of and what happens to them after styles change or they wear out is no bad thing.

Cotton, wool, and cellulose/plant-based materials such as viscose and rayon are still used in manufacture, but it is estimated that around 60% of every fibre used in the fabric industry is made from an artificial material, mainly polyester. This and other synthetic materials such as nylon, polypropylene, acrylic, as well as elastane, all use oil as their raw material.

Many organisations such as Greenpeace have pointed out how bad 'fast fashion' is for the environment. From the overuse of synthetic fabrics which don't biodegrade, to manufacturing and transport, fashion is highly polluting. Even growing and processing cotton uses a lot of water, though its production is specifically vital for farmers in lower-income nations.

Huge amounts of clothes are still dumped in landfill at the end of their useful lives, or even burned, and synthetic fabrics, when washed, release billions of microplastics into the oceans. There is also the human cost of workers in many countries,

including our own, being exploited and working in unsafe conditions (<https://www.greenpeace.org.uk/news/fast-fashion-this-industry-needs-an-urgent-makeover/>).

It's not all bad news. The environmental organisation, WRAP, have made considerable progress since 2012 in persuading '90 pioneering brands, retailers, re-use, and recycling organisations, academics and innovators to come together to influence the way products are designed, manufactured, and re-used or recycled.' There is, however, still a long way to go (<https://wrap.org.uk/taking-action/textiles/initiatives/scap-2020>).

It is down to all of us to think about the clothes we wear – what we buy, can it be repaired or upcycled, or donated through charities – although be careful because some of what we donate can end up in landfill or an incinerator if we choose badly.

Ethical and environmentally sustainable fashion is now becoming mainstream as more people turn towards its benefits. Buying better quality clothing and keeping it longer is one solution but it's not always possible for everyone and we have to bear that in mind as we look for more affordable and sustainable answers.

The wonder of wildflowers on our doorstep

Barry Goodwin and Bernard Maguire enjoyed a wildflower and grasses survey of St John's churchyard.

There is, quite rightly, a real concern about the loss of biodiversity across the world today but sometimes we can be surprised by just how much there is on our own doorstep.

Back in June, St John's hosted a workshop organised by Caring for God's Acre (CfGA), an organisation which works nationally to support groups and individuals to investigate, care for, and enjoy churchyards and burial grounds (<https://www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk/>). There are over 20,000 burial grounds in England and Wales, ranging from small rural medieval churchyards to large Victorian city cemeteries,

spanning different cultures, religions and centuries.

As Bernard has noted in his blog on the St John's website: 'Burial grounds, including St John's, can be remnants of the landscape that once surrounded them, unspoilt by agriculture and development, home to plants, animals and insects now rare in our wider countryside. Our churchyard encapsulates the history of a community, it tells us about fashion, status and immigration of lives long-lived and those tragically short. It is a place full of stories.' (<https://www.stjohnsshirley.org.uk/2022/06/30/bernards-blog-no-24/>)





Led by experts from CfGA, Surrey Wildlife and a local wildflower specialist, those of us who gathered spent an enthralling morning doing wildflower and grass identification. With the help of a hand lens, we learnt to identify the differences between groups of flowers that we thought were the same. The experts enthused over the ranges of grasses, and we were subsequently overjoyed to find that in just two hours we had observed 55 different flowers, ferns and grasses plus five different insects on the day. Remembering them all might take a bit more time! We have now heard that St John's will soon appear on the CfGA website as one of the national 'Burial Grounds to Inspire'.

There is always a tension in maintaining burial grounds. It is between allowing safe access for families to maintain family graves,



so important as we remember loved ones, and at the same time allowing wildlife to flourish. With careful maintenance, water butts to reduce our tap water use and bug hotels, the team at St John's can be proud at what it has achieved.

If you would be interested in a monthly Sunday afternoon 'mini eco walk' when the St John's tearoom is open then please let us know – we can learn from each other and as the Autumn approaches, and the flowers fade, it will be the turn of the fungi. Also, if you would like to see a copy of St John's guide to its historic monuments and trees, or a list of the plants we identified then please contact us via Bernard at verger@stjohnsshirley.org.uk

CROYDON CLIMATE ACTION
presents
CROYDON GOES WILD!

Exhibition

Are you growing wild flowers or pollinators, have you created a bug box or pond, installed a bird box or hedgehog home? Whatever you are doing however big or small to support wildlife and sustainability in Croydon we would love to hear from you for our **Croydon Goes Wild Exhibition** to be held online and in a public space near you! There are prizes to be won!

To enter - Send us your photo and up to 150 words on how you're helping Croydon Go Wild.

Entries will be accepted 23rd August to 23rd September 2022

For how to enter and the competition T&Cs, go to:
www.croydonclimateaction.com/croydongoeswild

The categories are:

1. Residents of Croydon
2. Croydon schools
3. Croydon faith Groups
4. Croydon businesses

GOOD LUCK!

St John's entered the 'Croydon Goes Wild' competition highlighted at the bottom of the page.