

Helping nature help us: a new project for Buriton

Buriton has been selected as one of only six parishes in Hampshire to take part in a pilot programme to help improve conditions for important pollinators – and it is hoped that lots of people will want to take part.

Small creatures such as bees, butterflies, moths and beetles are vital for flowers, crops and food production. Some experts say that one in every three mouthfuls of food that we eat depends on them.

But Government reports show a loss of over half of bees, butterflies and moths over the last 50 years. Human activity is changing nature at a rate never seen before and Britain is becoming one of the most nature-depleted countries in the whole world. The County Council project is intended to increase awareness and participation in villages like Buriton – and to begin to improve and connect local green spaces across Hampshire to help pollinators and other creatures.

Turning the tide could begin here!

The project offers the potential to involve the village school, St Mary's church, local farmers, roadside verges and residential gardens as well as Parish Council land and the existing Nature Reserves. Each part of the village might wish to think about how their area could help.

It may be possible to plant some more native trees or shrubs, to build bug hotels, to reduce grass mowing and to increase areas of wildflowers.

Simply mowing some parts of grassed areas less frequently and thinking carefully about when not to cut vegetation back can probably help to create corridors for wildlife through the village to connect to the wider countryside. And everyone can get a buzz out of wildlife-friendly gardening – excuse the pun!

The Parish Council has already made a start by planting a new copse of trees on the recreation ground during the first coronavirus lockdown and it will also be considering how to manage its land to enhance nature. It also welcomes ideas from residents and hopes that lots of parishioners will be keen to join in the project. If you would like to take part in any way, please contact Doug Jones (01730 231326 / doug.pam@btinternet.com) or anyone else on the Parish Council.

There could be opportunities to extend the initiative beyond pollinators into something to promote greater awareness and understanding of nature more widely and to connect with other important issues such as climate change, healthy living and changing anti-social behaviours such as littering and dog fouling. All suggestions and ideas are welcomed.

