

Some Notes of the Macctastic Meeting 28/1/19

Greening Your Garden

Chris Wellavize of [Prestbury Plant and Garden](#) spoke about the shift in gardening away from an adversarial relationship with Nature; from seeing wild plants and insects as weeds and pests, to recognising that we can make our gardens actively support nature, and that areas of bare soil between specimen plants in our borders are not essential.

He advocated using ground cover plants whose blooms would attract pollinators, and avoidance of pesticides which disturbed the balance of the food chain (without ladybirds, greenfly flourish!).

Chris welcomed a fall in the sales of weed-killers and pesticides at his garden centre, and encouraged gardeners to use organic control methods, including moving raked leaves into beds to act as mulch.

He also encouraged the building of simple chicken wire compost heaps to make fertiliser.

Chris was influenced by Rachel Carson's 'Silent Spring' published in 1962

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Silent_Spring

As influential as the Blue Planet series, Chris recommended the BBC programmes - Cities: The New Wild

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b0bx719h>

The book 'Wilding' by Isabella Tree

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2018/jun/28/wilding-isabella-tree-review-farm-return-nature>

And 'Wonderful Weeds' by Madeline Harvey

<https://www.waterstones.com/book/wonderful-weeds/madeline-harley/9781906506605>

The 'Blooms for Bees' website showed which flowers are most popular with bees.

<http://www.bloomsforbees.co.uk/gardening/flowers/>

Litter

Gordon Richardson spoke about the several informal groups of litter pickers operating around Macclesfield.

Sue and Gill had picked up 60kg of litter since the start of the New Year. There are other groups working in Hurdsfield, Victoria Park, roads radiating from Cumberland Street, and in Higher Sutton.

It was now recognised that litter is not just an eye-sore, but more accurately pollution; rubbish that isn't binned can find its way into drains, rivers and the seas.

Keep Britain Tidy, in conjunction with the Daily Mail, are promoting The Great British Spring Clean for 23rd March to 22nd April

<https://www.keepbritaintidy.org/get-involved/support-our-campaigns/great-british-spring-clean>



The Town council intend to appoint a Town Ranger to support litter clear ups in April (?)

Ansa have in the past supported a clean-up in South Park providing volunteers with equipment and disposing of what was collected.

Sustainability Policy

Tracy had been able to help Macclesfield Town Council in drafting a sustainability policy, and this is currently being considered by the council for acceptance.

Young People

Esther reported on progress with her work with ‘Tythy goes Green’ at school; working with the caterers to reduce single use plastic, and setting up a liaison group with other schools. Next Meeting on Wednesday.

Ester secured a grant for £500 from Grow Wild UK, the outreach arm of Kew Gardens, to help with creating some Eco Brick Wildflower beds and she found out today that she's been awarded the funding! She's grateful for everyone's support and encouragement and hoping that everyone will help by creating Eco Bricks and dropping them off at the [Rustic Coffee Cafe](https://www.ecobricks.org/) on Churchill way. <https://www.ecobricks.org/>

Mug Library

Jess Robins reported that they had acquired about 30 mugs on Sunday, which would be offered free at outdoor events for use in place of disposable cups. Jess would wash them up after. More mugs welcome (unchipped please). They can be left at the Print Mill section of the Heritage Centre.

Transport

David Mayers reported that the group had decided to focus on

- The school run/encouraging walking and cycling to school
- Traffic congestion and associated air pollution
- Cycling within Macclesfield – commuting and other local trips rather than leisure

They plan to speak to schools (starting with primary) to find out what they already know about their pattern of journeys to school, are they part of the Green Flag programme, what incentives are used to encourage walking/cycling to school; and how we might be able to help.

Next transport group meeting: Tuesday 26th February 7.30pm in the Park Tavern (probably upstairs)

Plastic Reduction

Persuading our chip shops and the like to change away from polystyrene trays and plastic forks is something everyone can try to influence. There are a lot of practical steps an individual can take at the Macclesfield website www.notjustonce.org

Drinking Water Refill Stations

We now have over 18 cafes and businesses displaying the blue disc indicating that you can ask to have your water bottle filled without feeling obliged to buy anything. And if you use the App to record the transaction, Water UK donates 13p to support the charity. See the map of places [here](#)



Repair Café

Many attempts at starting repair cafes have failed due to a shortage of clients rather than fixers, though a successful and ongoing scheme had been visited [in Levenshulme](#). A 3 month trial is planned.

Grow Project

Supported by Cre8 this project aims to offer (amongst other things) surplus food donated by supermarket to low income households for a nominal fee. Looking for suitable premises.....