



Welcome to our third Biodiversity and Environment Volunteers' Newsletter! Our "Connecting our Communities with Nature" action plan continues with gusto and the generous funding from Natural Networks, Malvern Hills National Landscape Partnership and Cllr Christine Wild has been spent on some very exciting habitat and community engagement projects in our parishes.

As ever, this is to update you about some of these projects and also provide information about local environmental events and seasonal helpful biodiversity enhancement ideas. Useful info and links always gratefully received that I can share here too please!

Best Wishes , Sue Haywood

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Our environment and biodiversity projects have been made possible with the generous support from:



Public Green Spaces

The beautiful new sculptures in the cemetery have been completed! Local wood sculptor Ant Beetlestone has finished the bench for quiet reflection, surrounded by sculptures inspired by the special fungi to be found naturally in the cemetery, and also a gorgeous sculpture of two owls.

The next tranche of activity in the cemetery will be to do surveys of the flora and fungi. We are getting advice on this but will be needing volunteers with field survey experience to help. If you are interested in helping with this, please contact Sue on srhaywood@gmail.com.

Although all the new native wildflower bulbs planted around the verges in the village centre didn't have time to do very much this year, hopefully next year they will be adding lots of lovely colour. In the meantime, the new wildflower turf in the Rec is doing superbly (see photo above)!

You'll see that the parish council is mowing here and around the village slightly differently this year. This is because we are letting some areas grow longer, and flower for longer, to provide valuable food and habitat for wildlife. You can support biodiversity at home too - please remember No Mow May (and Let It Bloom June if you can!). Even leaving a small area to grow longer and flower can really help.

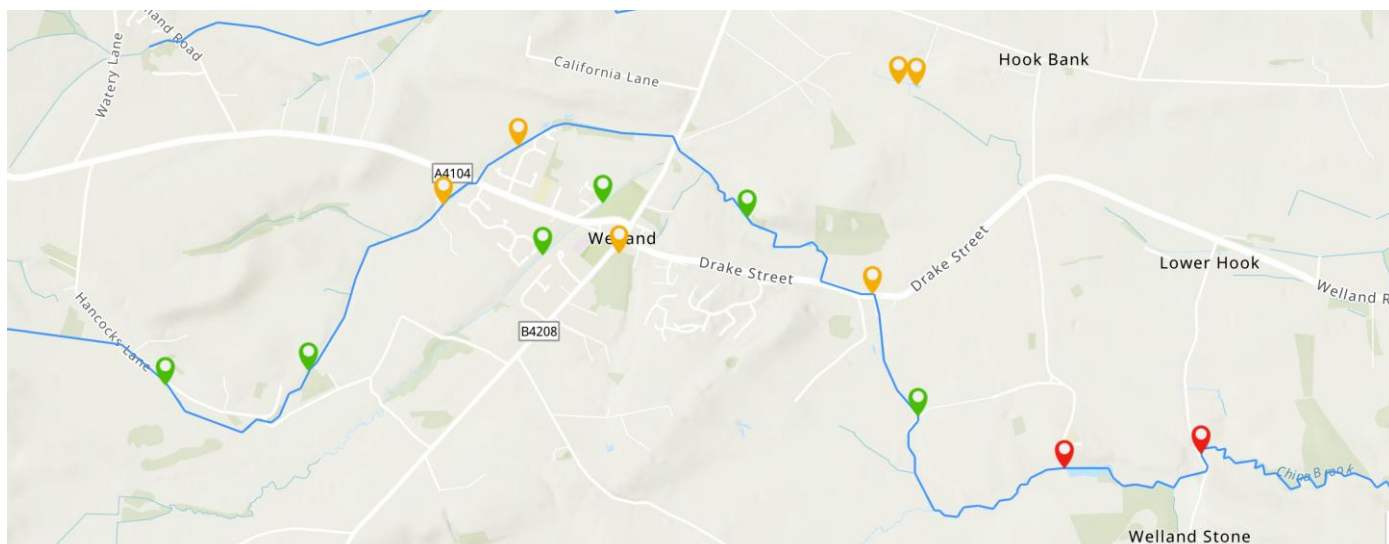
Grateful thanks to the dedicated BEVs who are carefully watering the new native hedgerow plants in the cemetery and the wildflower turf in the Rec during dry spells of weather.



Water Courses and Ponds

Many thanks too to those of you who signed up to the Spring 2025 Earthwatch national water testing survey and to Mark Whaley who coordinated our testing to give us an idea of the health of some of our local streams and ponds.

The results were relatively good, until down near Welland Stone; it will be interesting to understand more about this and also the potential causes of the moderate levels of nitrates at some of the other test points. The online WaterBlitz map allows you to see the results at each of the test points: [Great UK WaterBlitz Results | FreshWater Watch](#)



Footpaths

Lots of work has already been achieved on the footpaths in and around Welland, including a super stretch now finished from Rosebud Meadow to Castlemorton Common. Two circular paths are planned – do check out the latest parish council newsletter (being delivered to every household in the parish this weekend, and also available in the village shop and the library in the parish hall) for a lovely update on the works to date and planned.



Two volunteers with enviable carpentry skills are also currently installing our nature rubbing plaque trail. We hope that the whole trail of 12 posts, with plaques displaying pictures of native animals that can be transferred onto paper by rubbing with a pencil or crayon, will be “launched” with the community just before the summer holidays. But you can have a sneaky peak at the first three that are already installed and hidden around Pursers Orchard. Handy hint – the images come out best when thinner paper is used.

Community Engagement

Tree Planting Advice

As mentioned previously, one of the objectives in the action plan is to support and enable local landowners with their own biodiversity enhancement projects. We would therefore like to bring Severn Treescapes to your attention. The team running this scheme within Worcestershire Wildlife Trust work with landowners and communities to add more trees to the landscape. They provide free advice, help to organise volunteers for planting, and help landowners access grants to fund the work. The parish council has already put some projects forward but further small projects could potentially be added to our “bundle”. If you or someone you know is interested, please contact Sue Haywood via srhaywood@gmail.com and she will put you in touch with them.

Can you give a tree a new home?

If it is just a few trees you are after though, Richard and Beccy (in our BEV group) say they have the following in pots but some are getting quite large and need to be planted out. They have:

- Two birch trees, approx 7' and 3'
- Three “common” oaks 4' 3' and 2'
- Three Monterey pines 3' 2' and 1' (grown from seeds from a pine cone in Queenswood, Hereford)
- Two horse chestnuts
- Two apples (Braeburn or Jazz, not sure)

If you think you could give one or more of them a nice new home, please contact Sue Haywood who can put you in touch with Beccy.

Engaging Families with Nature and our Landscape

During the February half term, and with thanks to the army of volunteers who made it possible, we held a Family Environment Day that proved a great success! There's a lovely write up about the event on the parish council website [Excellent Environment Event Enjoyable to Everybody! – Little Malvern and Welland Parish Council](#). We also engaged with families with the distribution of activity packs to all the children at the school and pre-school just before Easter. The packs contained nature notebooks, wildlife colouring pages, nature spotter sheets and a packet of native wildflower seeds for planting outside at home.

Don't forget Welland's wonderful Litter Picking Team!

The first litter pick is this Saturday 10th May! Apparently the bacon rolls are on order!

Mick reports: *"We'll follow the well established format with most people on foot and depending on numbers possibly we may need some people willing to travel a bit further afield. My long range forecast app is predicting 11 hours of sunshine and 22° but whatever the weather we will not be daunted! 'Cup of tea, safety briefing, pick up equipment and sort out routes from 10.00am onwards. Aim to reconvene at the Parish Hall around 11.30 where there will be bacon rolls, coffee, tea and cake available while we take stock of the morning's activities.'* If you could let me know before Friday if you are planning to come that would help with provisioning and route planning. And again, if you prefer to do your own thing at another time and you need to borrow some kit, let me know that too." If you want to get involved, please contact Mick on mick.davies@littlemalvernandwelland-pc.gov.uk

Finally, some seasonal hints and tips:

- Think about making a "mud store" for swallows and house martins in dry weather. Castlemorton Environment Group shared a lovely article and cutest video recently: *"I thought the group might like to see that our swallows have arrived and they are already starting to use our 'Mud/hay Swallow convenience store'. Making the mud store saves them time and energy meaning they can nest build earlier and the young get a bit of a head start. We had eight pairs of swallows arrive here last year by the time they left we had over 60 as some of them bred Three lots of young."* <https://youtu.be/5clYub0KJXo?feature=shared>
- Although we have had some rain lately, more long dry spells are likely. Putting out some water for wildlife when it's dry is incredibly important for birds and other animals in your garden
- Pollinators like bees, butterflies and bugs are vital to our ecosystems but they're under threat. Many thanks to Mark who spotted this free email course to learn how we can help protect them: <https://act.gp/4j1HTGm>
- The next in Castlemorton's excellent environmental talks will be about natural flood management and how communities can work to reduce flooding. It is on Thursday 29th May at 7:30pm in Castlemorton Parish Hall and details can be found at [Flood Management Talk 29 May 2025 – Castlemorton Environmental Group](#)
- The humble hoverfly is often overlooked. Many species mimic bees, wasps and even hornets in appearance and they are brilliant pollinators. But they are struggling, with hoverfly distribution declining by 44% since the 1980s. Worcestershire Wildlife Trust has produced a free booklet showing how you can support hoverflies on your patch - [Hoverfly Hero booklet.pdf](#)