



Sid Valley Environmental News



Welcome to this edition of Sid Valley Environmental News, a newsletter pulling together everybody who is interested in our biodiversity, environment and green matters. Compiled by Denise Bickley, STC and EDDC councillor and chair of the Plastic Warriors, and member of the Sid Valley Biodiversity Group. If you have anything you wish to share, please email denisebickley@hotmail.com

Sidmouth Carbon Footprint Project

A project has been established, supported by the Sidmouth Town Council Environment Committee, with the aim of helping Sid Valley residents to reduce their own personal carbon footprint. If every resident does something, collectively we can make a material positive difference to the environment.

A small group has been established from across the community to start to work on the various elements of the project. However more contributors are required at this early stage of the project. It has been decided to hold an "open



day" on May 7th 11:00am to 3:30pm in All Saints Church so members of the community can learn more about the project and decide if they would like to get involved. There will be two talks on carbon footprint models and one person's experience on deploying renewable technologies in their home.

The hope is that at this meeting more volunteers can be attracted to the project to help deliver the ultimate goal of reducing Sidmouth's carbon footprint.

For more information contact Chris Lockyear at chris@lockyear.gotadsl.co.uk

Issue #3 - April 22

Diary dates - why not get involved:

1st-8th May
National Tree Week

7th May
Carbon Footprint Open Day @ All Saints Church
11.00-3.30

8th May 10-12
SPW Beach Clean

14th May
Creation Care Seminar - see page 9

20th May
SeaFest @ The Ham - multiple activities

May 29th
SPW Joint Litter Pick with Tipton

15th October
Science Festival/SVBG Environment Day

CHAMPIONS



AWARDS

Sustainable Sidmouth Champions Awards 2022: a proposal: education for sustainability and for hope

Awards 2021

It was in the middle of the pandemic a year ago that the **Sustainable Sidmouth Champions Awards 2021** were launched.

Denise Bickley, chair of the STC's Environment Committee, approached the Vision Group for Sidmouth with the idea of celebrating the magnificent community efforts which had been taking place during the pandemic.

And so the VGS - in partnership with the

Sidmouth Plastic Warriors, Transition Town Network and Sidmouth Town Council - put together the Sustainable Sidmouth Champions Awards 2022, culminating in October with a ceremony celebrating the Award winners and? all those who had been nominated for their contributions.

As VGS Chair Peter Murphy said, "The response to the Champions Awards far exceeded our expectations,

and showed the enthusiasm throughout our community for recognising the major role volunteers, businesses and organisations played during lockdown, to keep the wheels turning on so many new fronts."

Education for Sustainability

For the Champions Awards 2022, the suggestion is to focus on 'education for sustainability'.

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This would follow on from the Champions Awards 2021 which recognised the efforts of Clare Fegan and Sidmouth Primary School, and Denise Bickley and the Sidmouth Plastic Warriors – as well as the several nominations for the Scouts.

The question, then, is: What do we mean by **‘education for sustainability’**?

Last year, many of us sat through lots of zoom seminars and talks, whether from the Sid Vale Association or the Devon Wildlife Trust. Some of us were fortunate to be able to log into U3A groups, yoga classes or book club meetings online.

And in the meantime, the College and schools in the Valley managed to hold lessons – both virtually and face-to-face. The likes of the Scouts also met up as soon as it was safe to do, determined to bring young people together for some active learning.

But what about ‘education for sustainability’?

It’s been difficult through these two years to also look beyond coping with very trying circumstances – but a lot of our education and learning and online talks have looked to the future, to what kind of world we want to look forward to once the pandemic is over – and to building hope: because so much of the last two years has just left us feeling anxious. In particular, it has affected lots of young people. In which case, it is all the more important to build us all up to be more resilient, to be more hopeful and to be able to look to those things which can sustain us.

Education for hope

‘Eco-anxiety’ has become the affliction of our time. To go beyond despair, we need to give people, both young and old, **a sense of hope**.

And in these times of having to **manage with less**, we also need to give people a sense of control over their lives and confidence in themselves – the confidence that **we can survive with less money and still live well**.

The proposal, then, is to make the Champions Awards 2022 about the positive things people have taught and learnt – whether it’s offering or taking up opportunities to learn.

Examples might include the **Town Council’s infrared camera project** – to show people their house’s carbon footprint which should then hopefully lead to households learning how to reduce their impact and save money.

Other ways to learn about sustainable living in today’s world come from the **Solar Punk movement** – whether it’s promoting and learning about using up waste food in new meals or repurposing clothing and fabrics, taking us back to the 1940s/50s and making do and mend.

And there is the **Repair Café** with its ethos of helping people to fix their own things, rather than throwing stuff into landfill and spending on yet more stuff.

Finally, there are the schools and other education bodies which have been involved in all sorts of projects focussing on nature and the planet in exciting and engaging ways – from **Eco-warriors** getting ‘green flag’ status to **Eco and Sustainable Fashion projects**, from Bear Grylls endorsing **‘plastic clever’** to working with the **Global Action organisation**.

Teaching and learning about positive ways to cope and to build a better world need to be recognised and celebrated – and this is the proposal for the Champions Awards 2022.

Get involved

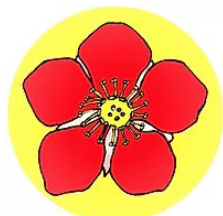
If you’re interested in helping with such a project, get in touch with the VGS at <https://visionforsidmouth.org/contact/>

And let’s see if we can look to building a better future – through recognising the champions for sustainability and hope in our midst.

Jeremy Woodward
Secretary, Vision Group for Sidmouth



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Sidmouth in Bloom: plans for 2022

Our Theme for this year is 'Right plant in Right place' employing planet friendly practices – biodiversable, sustainable and environmental- all in accordance with the new RHS criteria 'Putting sustainability at the heart of Britain in Bloom. '

Our planting for this year is again widespread – from our continuing development of the Sensory Garden for all to enjoy, in our displays of Sidmouth's historic themes and features to our children's display in Blackmore Gardens featuring a much-loved literary character.

All these incorporate the

current thinking of how to minimise issues of climate change, energy use, use of sustainable products sensibly and the need for all of us in the community to work together and take Pride of Place onwards.

Work planned for this year is to continue to collaborate with others on the Ham redevelopment , new urns on the river mouth 'prom ' by courtesy of the 'Welcome Back Funding', to finalise the planting in the Radway seating area and widen the scope of collaboration with the town's schools and colleges. We will plant a new 'climate theme' situated in Blackmore Gardens, try out techniques for self-watering hanging baskets and produce a



themed bed for the Queen's Jubilee. Community planting opportunities for all is on our agenda together with community 'social' coach trips and continued liaison with the Royal Parks.

The Sid bashers' aim to defeat Noxious Himalayan Balsam. Our past work over the years have made serious inroads into ridding our valley of this destructive

weed. We have managed to clear vast tracts in areas around the middle of the river Sid below Sidford. We are recommencing in May with working parties every **Tuesday mornings from 9.30am to 12.30 pm.** We aim to start work then to catch the early growth and continue clearance work up to the time seeds are set to "explode" in late summer. Unfortunately, we are finding that areas cleared are being subject to invasion by Japanese knotweed. Investigations are being carried out into ways and means of tackling this and advice sought on how outbreaks can be treated. We are seeking more volunteers to join with our teams to help clear these noxious weeds from our Sid Valley. Please visit our SIB web site sidmouthinbloom.org or contact us info@sidmouthinbloom.org





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Sidmouth plastic Warriors

Regular beach cleans will resume post Denise's covid tussle - so the next planned one will be 8th May. There will also be two on Seafest day, plus we will be joining up with Tipton's group, the Eager Beavers, on the 29th. Plans are starting to restructure the group with more involvement from members.

We will also be encouraging Sidmouth residents to join in with the Big Plastic Count between 16-22 May. Join in on **Facebook** or visit the website at **sidmouthplasticwarriors.org**



Sid Valley Biodiversity Group (SVBG) - a very brief summary of projects

- South Combe Farm becoming a very important area for the group - medium term overall plan to be created as an exemplar. Herbaceous surveys, bird watching taking place already
- Water monitoring project: funding and

advice requested and group heavily involved in enquiries regarding SWW and sewage levels

- Bird group - surveying at South Combe; Joined with local bird watching group: <https://www.devonbirds.org>; received a donation of books
- Ponds: 'ghost pond' identified at South Combe - plans to restore it and working to identify others, focus project to encourage public to create their own ponds
- Hedges: possible start to hedges sub group including recruiting hedge-laying trainees
- Strengthening ties with local land owners (organic

farms, stables, Woodland Trust etc)

- SeaFest: Saturday 21st May: SVBG focus on ponds, water survey, fish pass and hedges/herbaceous
 - Environment Week 20th - 24th June: planning stage - various speakers booked
 - Sci Fest: Environment Day (15th October) planning stage - SVBG to take charge of organising the day
 - Winstones organising environmental talks
- sidvalleybiodiversity.org.uk** or the **Facebook group** for more information.



Nature Recovery

I would very much urge you to read this page - it is very encouraging...here is just a taster...

At East Devon we are striving to improve biodiversity and support nature recovery across all of our greenspaces. This means we are using information on historical, ecological, environmental and human use to inform our green space strategies across the area.

With nature recovery, we

aim to:

- Reduce human intervention in ecological processes
- Allow and enable wildlife to thrive (with an emphasis on insects)
- Plant trees to capture and store carbon
- Provide beautiful recreational spaces

We will do this using the following strategies:

- Reduce the frequency, area and deck height when cutting grass
- Establish ecologically appropriate plants across our green spaces to help wildlife
- Transition away from carpet bedding towards

more herbaceous and woody perennial plantings

- Plant trees and hedgerows
- Establish wildflower meadows
- Create wetland areas
- Install bird and bat boxes & bee and bug homes across our area

Biodiversity

We hear the term 'biodiversity' a lot these days but how many of us truly understand its definition and the consequences of not doing everything we can to help it?

Biodiversity is the variety of species, habitats and ecosystems that support life – ours! It underpins the

air we breathe and the food we eat. We depend on biodiversity for protection against pollution, flooding, climate breakdown and a lot more. The areas we are rewilding provide much-needed habitats for insects, especially those facing extinction, and have the many advantages that biodiversity brings. Let's face it, without biodiversity, human life is threatened.

So, now we are fully aware of its importance to us all, what are we doing about biodiversity losses that scientists estimate will lead to the extinction of 1 million species within our lifetime if we do not act now? **[\[Continue reading online\]](#)**



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Sidmouth Town Council Thermal Imaging Surveys

Sidmouth Town Council's 9 Volunteers completed 88 thermal imaging Infra-red surveys since the scheme was launched in mid-January. Photographs were taken of the outside, and in many cases the inside, of houses to identify warmer areas, when viewed from the outside and colder areas, when viewed from the inside, that might indicate heat loss. All houses lose some heat, and the amount is determined by the temperature inside and out, and the thermal insulating properties of the walls, windows, doors, roofs, and floors. This report summarises the main generic findings. It is important to note that these are the

generic observations of the volunteers and not trained heating engineers. Householders must seek professional advice on their specific building to order to ensure suitability of any modification.

Walls

A wide range of different wall types were photographed, and their performance depended on thickness, cavity wall effectiveness, cavity wall insulation, tiling, rendering, and lagging.

Rendering provides some level of insulation, when reasonably thick, as it was seen that unrendered brickwork, typically at the base of the wall is often warmer than the render when viewed from the outside. Tiled walls were typically cooler, when viewed from outside,

and so this construction method appeared to provide additional thermal insulation.

Cavity wall insulation, when poorly installed, appears to settle leaving areas towards the top unfilled. This is visible as a line separating warmer and cooler areas with the warmer area towards the top of the wall when viewed from outside. These areas appeared to be cooler inside and were prone to dampness.

In some buildings there were cooler areas above doors, when viewed from inside. It is likely that a different method of construction might have been used to else elsewhere in the building and so providing poorer insulation.

In buildings with an overhang on the first or second floors we typically saw warm air trapped under these overhangs. This illustrates heat loss from the building which will actually be occurring in all buildings. Buildings without the overhang will probably be experiencing similar heat loss, but the warm air was dispersed and so not visible.

Windows

The temperature of windows was generally warmer than the neighbouring walls when viewed from outside, suggesting greater heat loss. Double glazed windows were clearly more insulating than single glazed.

Secondary glazing has been installed in some houses and this provided an additional insulating layer but generally did not perform as well as designed double glazed windows.

A few the double-glazed windows photographed had internal condensation as a result of loss of integrity of the internal seals, but the temperature of these windows did not appear to be significantly different to those that were not. It was not clear why this might be.

The external seals around the outside of some windows appeared to be leaking and this produced visible draughts when viewed from the inside, and warmer windows when viewed from the outside.

Many modern windows had a vent at the top which resulted in some limited heat loss, but this is important to ensure sufficient ventilation.

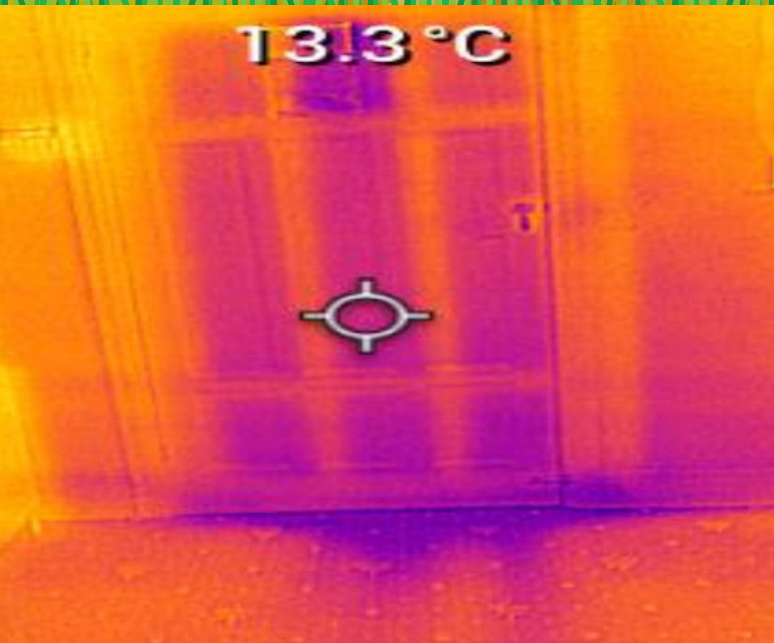
Window positioning in the wall sometimes compromised the cavity, allowing the cooler external bricks to be inside the room.

Window frames were often seen a warmer than the glass when viewed from the outside suggesting some heat loss through the frames. However, the surface area is small so the net loss will also have been small. More modern frames generally performed better with lower heat loss.





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Curtains provided some degree of insulation by restricting circulation of the cooler air.

Doors

Doors were the most common cause of draughts, and these were generally most visible when viewed from the inside. This was indicated on the photograph by an area of blue sweeping from the base of the door into the room. Sometimes this was lack of, or worn, seals, and in other cases faulty door catches. It was noticed in some cases that locking the door enhanced the seal effectiveness.

Door construction varied widely and in some the frame was clearly visible as a cooler area when viewed from inside. Door glazing was also the cause for heat loss in some cases; especially when single glazed.

Tiled floors next to

front doors were often significantly cooler than elsewhere in the porch.

Roofs

Measuring roof temperatures was difficult as not all were visible freely from the ground. And

where the sun was shining on the roof, the thermal gain from the sunshine hid any heat loss from the house. Almost all houses appeared to have good loft insulation and in some cases this was visible from the end wall where the wall above the first floor ceiling was cooler than the rest of the wall. However when viewed from the inside some insulation did not extend the full width of the top floor ceilings and so cooler areas were seen at the edges, sometimes resulting in dampness and loss of heat.

Floors

Floors were generally not a cause of heat loss but there were exceptions.

Suspended wooden floors were a source of draughts when the boards were not tight fitting. Undercroft areas were also prone to heat loss, in some cases because of poorly lagged central heating pipes.

Next Steps

The Energy Saving Trust provides useful advice on how to reduce heat loss from your home. Their web address is: <https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/energy-at-home/reducing-home-heat-loss/>

Most energy companies can also give advice on energy saving so it would be worth while looking at your suppliers website.





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Sidmouth Library Backpack Project

Some exciting news from Sidmouth Library, as we launch our Nature Explorers Backpack Project on Saturday April 2nd.

The idea for the Backpacks came from the great interest that has been shown in our Library Nature Table, both in the library and online as Facebook group, and we wanted to encourage more people to explore nature on their doorstep.

The Backpack contains magnifying, measuring and collecting equipment to which we will add spotter and identification sheets according to the various local habitats.

Borrowing a Backpack is free (although a £5 deposit is required to cover lost or damaged items) and can be borrowed for 2 weeks. Longer loans can be arranged.

We will use our connections with local schools to promote our Nature Explorer Backpacks which will add value to the curriculum and hopefully foster an interest at an early age.





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SIDMOUTH SEA FEST



Sidmouth Sea Fest 2022

Sea Fest is back - helping to have some fun, with a host of art, environmental and community activities. Music, food, author talks and much more.
Saturday 21st May 10am to 11.30pm at The Ham, Sidmouth.

This year we invite you to JOIN US for a special Friday Night Fundraiser on the 20 May

TICKETS available on Eventbrite (link below).

With your support to celebrate being back after two tough years we can continue to run our annual free community event this year and next.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/sidmouth-sea-fest-2022-friday-fundraising-party-night-tickets-294837546037>



SIDMOUTH SEA FEST
"KEEP OUR OCEANS"
The Ham, Sidmouth, EX10 8BG

An SCCH production

FRIDAY NIGHT FUNDRAISER 20TH MAY 6PM-11PM
SUNTOU SUSSO | SAMANTICS | RAZZOMO | OLD MAN CORNER | PLUS GUEST DJ'S TICKETS AVAILABLE ON EVENTBRITE

SIDMOUTH SEA FEST SATURDAY 21ST MAY 10AM-11PM
MAIN STAGE MARQUEE | FULL LINE UP DETAILS TO BE ANNOUNCED!

FEATURING:  

COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT AREA | CONNECT, SHARE AND LEARN
CREATIVITY ON THE COAST | MAKE AND CREATE ALONGSIDE THE ARTISTS
LITERARY ZONE WITH WINSTONE BOOKS | STORIES AND TALES OF THE SEA
FOOD & DRINK | COFFEE, CAKE, ICE-CREAM, AND LOCAL HOT FOOD

WITH "THE PRAWN COCKTAIL BAR" OPEN FROM MIDDAY
PLUS SIDMOUTH SEA FEST CHOIR, RAFFLE, CAKE OFF, BEACH CLEANS WITH SIDMOUTH PLASTIC WARRIORS AND MUCH MORE...

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A SINGLE USE PLASTICS FREE FESTIVAL

SIDMOUTH COASTAL COMMUNITY HUB

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Can We Actually Make A Difference In A Broken World?

Creation Care Seminar

How Can Our Local Communities Care For Creation?

All Saints' Church
Saturday 14th May 2022
All Saints' Road, Sidmouth
EX10 8ES
2pm - 5pm

Visiting Speaker:
Billie Anderson, Tearfund

Creation Care Theology
What Can We Do And How?
Living Differently
Influencing Others
Carbon Footprint Calculators
Networking Opportunity

All are welcome. There is no charge for the seminar and tea and coffee will be provided free of charge. Please sign up on the All Saints' website - <https://allsaintssidmouth.org.uk/> or by phoning the All Saints' Church Office on 01395 577773.