

DECEMBER 2023 newsletter



BRIDPORT TREE PLANTING Let's help double tree cover

JOIN US TO PLANT A .. IN ASKER MEADOWS



Come along with a spade (although we can lend you one too) at **11 am on Saturday 16th December**. Bring a lump hammer for banging in stakes, if you have one.

The Environment Agency has now given the go-ahead to planting alongside the river. We'll be putting in about 90 goat willows, white willows, elders, guelder rose in four strips. MEET BY THE NEW BRIDGE NEAR NEW ZEALAND NATURE RESERVE and help make Asker Meadows even more of "An area rich in wildlife, enjoyed by local people for informal recreation", as the Management Plan says



CONGRATULATIONS to West Dorset Wilding for successfully bidding for funding for the Government's ELMS Landscape recovery Scheme: The Brit Catchment Recovery Project.

“The project, which involves 53 farmers and landowners from within the wider Brit catchment area, has identified more than 8,000 acres of land which will be improved for nature over 20 or more years. This amounts to 38% of the rural land in the catchment, and there is scope for bringing yet more farmers and landowners, and their expertise and land into the project. Over the lifetime of the scheme, the outcomes for nature will include more wetland, species-rich grassland, wood pasture, native woodland and vitally important but often undervalued scrub. This will create space for nature to return, including an increase in the diversity and abundance of birds, insects, mammals, fish, native wild flowers and trees. The project will also work with local organic and regenerative farmers, will look to improve water quality in the area's four rivers, and will seek to increase the amount of carbon stored above ground and in the soil.”

Go to <https://www.westdorsetwilding.org/> to keep up with this exciting project so close to Bridport.

Today's Climate Forecast

And onto today's climate forecast,
where we can expect to see a prolonged spell of inaction,
interspersed with patches of hazy promises
across many areas.

Over Westminster and other centres of government,
a build-up of hot air will cause inactivity
to soar to record levels over the coming days,
in spite of the high pressure.

Elsewhere, a front of chronic misinformation
will sweep in from the east,
bringing with it a band of climate change deniers
and the chance of scattered falsehoods,

while powerful gusts of idiocy and ignorance
look set to blow across social media.
Outbreaks of 'We just got on with it in 1976'
and 'It's called the British summer, mate' are likely.

In summary: unsettling.

Poem by Brian Bilston 2022. He recently appeared at the Electric Palace.



FIREMEN IN GALICIA, SPAIN, FIGHTING A FOREST BLAZE. Galicia has had one of the worst records for forest fires in Europe.

Here are some upcoming hedge planting and coppicing events which might interest you.



Free 1 Day courses: Introduction to Coppicing

We are working woodland in the Marshwood Vale, West Dorset and are running 3 one day courses on an introduction to coppicing, on this course you will:

- Learn how to use different coppice tools
- Learn how to cut and layer hazel coppice
- Understand different types of hazel coppice products
- Get hands on experience in a beautiful working woodland
- Get 2024 off to a great start learning new skills, meeting new people and contributing to conservation

We are running the course on 3 different dates:

- Sunday 7th Jan 24
- Sunday 21st Jan 24
- Sunday 28th Jan 24

The course will be offered **free of charge** thanks to support from FIPL funding

Numbers are limited so early booking is essential, contact Ruth on 07930279385 or ruthfuller@hotmail.com
Visit www.primecoppice.com



Farming in Protected Landscapes programme



Could you volunteer some time to help the National Trust team in West Dorset plant two new hedgerows? We will be putting our new trees in on **Thursday 14th December** from 10:00 to 16:00 but welcome volunteers to drop in at any point during this time. Please meet in the Eype Beach car park (Google Maps link: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/Q6FGVKXYAtCjYrq49>) where a member of the Ranger team will meet you at 10:00. From there it's a short walk along the South West Coast Path to the field where we'll be planting our hedges.

If you arrive after 10, no problem. There will be signs to walk up the coast path going west and you'll see the work party. No need to bring tools. Gloves will be provided, or bring your own. Ring 07747 007159 if you need more details.

As we write this newsletter we are at the end of National Tree Week. Here is a useful link giving background.

https://www.9trees.org/9trees-blog/national-tree-week-a-vital-celebration-for-our-environment?utm_source=9Trees+CIC&utm_campaign=a85b1e7926-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2023_08_01_04_34_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0-ef4e39134c-%5BLIST_EMAIL_ID%5D&mc_cid=a85b1e7926&mc_eid=2a3cdf207d

IT WAS INTERESTING TO SEE THE NEW GOVERNMENT MINISTER WITH DIRECT RESPONSIBILITY FOR TREE PLANTING - REBECCA POW - RECENTLY TACKLING THE SHORT LIFESPAN OF TOO MANY TREES THAT ARE PLANTED TO MEET GOVERNMENT TARGETS.

Taking aim at housing developers, she said: “We have examples of it ... where hundreds of trees have been planted too close together, in the wrong soil type, and they’ve just died. We’ve seen it from sometimes big housing developers who’ve got to tick the box of planting X amount of trees but if you don’t put the right care in for the tree, there’s no way it’s going to survive.”

Pow said aftercare for trees, including watering and protection from pests, must be included in any scheme: “So that means also making sure the soil is suitable when you put the tree in, potentially having a system where we make sure that it can be watered in its first years but also protection from pests as well. This is absolutely critical. It can’t be just a matter of shoving trees in the ground.”

We agree. Let’s keep an eye on the tree planting plans and aftercare for the 760-home Foundry Lea development in Bridport.



**Dorset
National
Landscape**

School children explore their local trees



Over 100 children from five primary schools in West Dorset have been exploring and learning all about trees as part of a new pilot tree project this autumn. The Dorset National Landscape team, supported by Public Health Dorset and Bridport Tree Planting Group have been working with children from Broadwindsor, Burton Bradstock, Loders, Powerstock and Salway Ash schools to get to know their local trees better.

Education specialist Rowan Beecham and members of the Dorset National Landscape* team have joined each school on their Welly Walks, highlighting the trees and setting up activities to help children identify the tree species they see in their local environments and making provision to get creative with leaves, twigs and bark while sharing stories and fun facts about each. A special Tree book as well as bespoke teaching resources have been drawn up so that each class can further explore trees back in the classroom.

The children have also been invited to get ‘hands-on’ at a special tree planting day planned in February, which will also include curriculum linked and creative activities. Bridport Tree Planting Group have kindly donated a tree to each school to study and nurture and each tree will be planted at the event.

**Dorset National Landscape is the new name for Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty*

There has been a slight delay in Bridport Tree Planting being able to collect the fruit trees we are buying from Adam's Apples in Devon - because of very wet autumn weather which has delayed lifting of the trees.

The apples, pears, damson, figs, plums are going to be disposed of in four ways - a new orchard at Court Orchard, a gift to Bradpole Buzzers group, donation to the Bridport Allotments Association and donations to you the readers of this newsletter. Some time after the second week of January we'll be in touch briefly about this again.



Needles

I
wrote
a poem
in the shape
of a Christmas
tree but then forgot
to water it and only a few
days
later

there
were words
all over
the carpet

Bilston Brian

With best seasonal wishes

Joe Hackett
John Hinsley
Bridport Tree Planting