

WFGA February 2024 Newsletter

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February 3rd. Kidderminster Repair Café 10.0am till 1.0pm, at the Youth House Bromsgrove Street Kidderminster

5th February. Green Drinks. 8.0 pm at Bewdley Rowing Club bar wood-burning stoves. We will learn about a low-cost monitoring system which can guide you to minimise particulate pollution in your own homes. Discussions will no doubt include the impact of wood-burners on neighbourhoods, whether burning wood and other bio-fuels can be truly sustainable and carbon neutral and what contribution planting trees and managing woodlands can make to mitigating climate change. Whether you have a wood-burner or simply interested in human health and the future of our environment, come along for a lively and sociable conversation.

12th February. Greener Living Fair 7.0 – 8.30 pm.

“Event supported through grant funding provided by Kidderminster Town Council and Wyre Forest District Council “.



Greener Living Fair
Monday 12 February 2024
7pm – 8.30pm
Trinity Methodist Church
Churchfields, Kidderminster, DY10 2JL
Locally produced food and arts & crafts,
plus stalls and info to help you
be more eco-friendly

FREE ENTRY

Organised by
Wyre Forest
Green Alliance

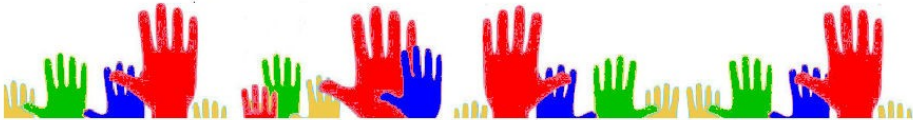
Free Tea
& Coffee

Saturday 17th February. Bewdley Repair Café. 10.0 – 1.0 at St Georges Hall, Bewdley. As well as carrying out our usual range of repairs and tool sharpening, we will be joined by the newly formed Bewdley “Upcyclers”, the latest project from Transition Bewdley. Come along, see them at work making shopping bags from old fabrics and share ideas about future upcycling projects. Upcycling, also known as creative reuse, is the process of transforming by-products, waste materials, useless, or unwanted products into new materials or products perceived to be of greater quality, such as artistic value or environmental value.

Tuesday 20th February and Tuesday 19th March . Butterfly Conservation Work-Parties We meet 10am at Earnwood Copse car park on the Bewdley-Kinlet road just beyond Buttonoak village. contact wmbutterflies@gmail.com

8th March 7.15 for 7.30 Trinity Methodist Church, Kidderminster. Environmental Question Time with Wyre Forest FOE supported by WFGA

This year's General Election is an opportunity to get some impetus behind a green agenda. With the mounting climate and ecological problems this has never been more important. The Friends of the Earth Question Time event is your opportunity to find out more about what's on offer from the main parties and make your vote matter.





Vote for your future! - Make your vote count!

Environmental Question Time
Chaired by **Adrian Goldberg, Broadcaster and Journalist**

*Which Party Offers The Best Hope of Dealing
With The Climate and Environmental Crisis ?*

**Join us on Friday 8th March 2024 to quiz
the four main parties' representatives**

Trinity Methodist Church, Kidderminster, DY10 2JL
7:15pm for a prompt 7:30pm start
Refreshments and chat from 9pm
Your questions in advance please
to wyreFOE@protonmail.com
free entry, parking



Promoted for Wyre Forest Friends of the Earth
by C. Crean of WMFoE, The Warehouse, Allison Street, B5 5TH

www.facebook.com/wffoe

The Wyre Community Land Trust will start its programme of monthly Ruskin Club courses for 2024 with a lovely workshop led by artist Olivia Mabey

Saturday 23rd March Pigment to Paint - EITHER 10am to 1pm OR 2pm to 5pm to be held at Uncllys Farm £45 per person Make your own watercolour paint using a selection of natural pigments from Okhra, Ecomuseum of Ocher (Roussillon, Provence). Explore the medium, make studies of the surroundings or create watercolour artwork of your choosing.

You do not need painting experience to join, just creative curiosity. All materials will be provided, but feel free to bring your own brushes or sketchbooks etc. if you wish.

Please book online through the website www.wyreclt.org.uk or contact events@wyreclt.co.uk

Going Wild in the Wyre – further dates for wildlife identification courses will be arranged very soon, if you are interested in becoming one of our wildlife champions please email kate@wyreclt.org.uk or keep an eye out for details in the next newsletter.

SustFest 2024

It is not too late to register events for SustFest Wyre Forest (27th April – 12th May). Go to our new SustFest website to find out more and to register any events that your organisation or group might like to put on as part of SustFest. [SustFest Wyre Forest](#)

Launch event/Family Fun Day at Riverside Meadows, Stourport, Saturday 27th April 11am-4pm.

If your organisation has not already booked a stall for this event, email Hannah at sustfestwyreforest@gmail.com It is a great opportunity to let people know about your group/business.

Help needed

We are calling for volunteers from WFGA membership to help at the SustFest launch family fun day. We will need volunteers from 8am through till 5pm so if anyone is able to spare a couple of hours, we would really appreciate it.

- General tasks would be laying out the field in the morning before event start, directing traders, erecting gazebos and setting up the WFGA/SustFest stands.
- We hope this year to have a SustFest information stand but also host a free activity so we can engage with visitors and hand out programmes. The activity will be something simple like sowing seeds in recycled containers so we would also need help with this.
- We'll also need help with directing visitors, collecting donations, handing out feedback forms and collecting evaluations from traders.

Could anyone who is able to help please email sustfestwyreforest@gmail.com and Hannah will respond.

Beavers are being re-introduced to the Wyre Forest!

Exciting news! If successful this will help alleviate flooding in Bewdley when there is heavy rain locally and benefit biodiversity in the forest by creating pools and pockets of damp areas and spawning sites for fish and amphibians. [Link](#)

Composting and food waste reduction tips from Garden Organic.

Making compost at home is good for the planet good for your pocket and good for your garden.

For more on composting...

<https://linktr.ee/gardenorganiccomposting>

For more on food waste...

<https://linktr.ee/gardenorganicfoodwaste>

Update on – Plastic Free Bewdley

Plastic Free Bewdley. Transition Bewdley is looking at re-establishing Plastic Free Bewdley (PFB), started in 2019 with support from Bewdley Town Council, but development of PFB was curtailed by Covid.

Plastic Free Bewdley has a vision of a plastic free community - a town where plastics don't end up in our river, our seas and on our beaches.

We use single-use plastic for just about everything, from brushing our teeth and showering, to buying and storing our food. It's durable and lightweight, but it's these properties that allow it to persist in the environment for hundreds of thousands of years, impacting on our health, environment and marine life.

PFB was affiliated to "Surfers against Sewage" and its accreditation scheme, established a refill scheme for refillable water bottles (still in operation. Look out for the logo), engaged with local businesses and organisations as Plastic Free Champions and set up a website <https://www.plasticfreebewdley.co.uk/>.

If you would like to be involved with re-launching this initiative in Bewdley, we will be convening a meeting in the next few weeks to look at the best way of putting this issue back on the agenda in Bewdley. Please contact Peter Miller peterimiller10@gmail.com

Spotlight on WFGA member "The Pickup Artists"

The Pickup Artists was created in 2018 after a new year's resolution. Michelle Medler was fed up when she walked her dogs and had to keep stepping over all of the litter on route. She got herself a litter picker and collected a bag of rubbish on every dog walk. After a few days she posted a picture on Facebook to show the difference and the post blew up. Michelle received messages from people all over saying they felt inspired and were going to do the same. By April 2018 a face book page called Keeping Kidderminster and Surrounding Places Clean was started and the war again litter in Wyre Forest began.



Wyre Forest District Council were very supportive and assisted the group by giving them equipment, funding for clothing, safety equipment, somewhere to store everything and even an app to log where collected litter had been left.

Foley Fish Bar and Merchants in Kidderminster gave a donation to start the Junior Pickup Artists. This was a free educational package where volunteers would go into schools, talk to children about the damage litter has on the environment and wildlife and then the children would go out for a litter pick of their own. This was so successful; Wychavon Council funded the project privately and Little Litter Warriors was created. These are workshops for schools and community groups and can be booked online.

The Pickup Artists have worked alongside the Canal and River Trust and adopted a stretch of canal path from Stourport to Kidderminster. This involves walking the path and litter picking. In the summer weekly events are made and people get together for a walk, chat and maybe even a pint at the local pub while clearing up after those who leave more than footprints. We have taken on more than just the litter, we have had events where invasive plants have been removed and the most popular event is trolley dipping. Grown men seems to really enjoy the challenge of using grappling hooks and fishing for trolleys, bikes and anything else which has ended up in the canal over the



years. A local group pop along once or twice a year on paddle boards and kayaks to help clear the litter we can't reach in the canal.

Another project The Pickup Artists have taken on is Hartlebury Common. Monthly litter picks have been going on for over a year now, awards have been won, many lorry-loads of historical fly tipping has been removed from this beautiful nature reserve and the biggest battle with fly tippers has been going on while others carried on with their lives. This is such a beautiful place to walk the dog, enjoy and finally we can see a difference.

The Pickup Artists support young people in working towards their Duke of Edinburgh Awards. A number young people have achieved their volunteering awards by litter picking, registering their hours and posting on the Facebook page.

We have been supported by many local superstores and had group litter picks with staff and volunteers around Kidderminster and Stourport. The superstores have always allowed staff time to come and help and finished the events with hot drinks and cakes.



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Our most recent donation from Intergas Heating has been used to buy winter jackets so our volunteers can be seen during the darker nights. After a discussion how they could give back to the community we discussed litter picks and have teamed up with the Canal and River Trust to plant some trees to have a longer lasting result on the environment. Bringing people together to get positive results is another one of The Pickup Artists talents.

In the 6 years the Pickup Artists have been busy, Michelle has been nominated and won awards, been to the Houses of Parliament as a Litter Heroes ambassador for Keep Britain Tidy and been given an award by the Prime Minister. Individuals from the group have also won awards from their local neighbourhood teams and a group of children from the Horsefair were given a trip around the Safari Park for their litter picking efforts.

The daily running of The Pickup Artists has been very challenging, tiring and at some times, overwhelming. Luckily, the group now runs itself with the help from a handful of volunteers who litter pick daily, keep the pages active by posting and supporting others and generally being amazing. Over the years new friendships have been made and a community of litter pickers has been born, some volunteers have been lucky enough to swap their hobby to paid employment.

Giving your time to help others, the environment or any activity, which changes things for the better, is always worth it. Michelle knows without the support of the volunteers and the community nothing would have changed and she is so lucky to have met the right people at the right time. We always try to meet up for non-litter picking events throughout the year. We have had afternoon tea in the park, we have been out for food and of course, a pint after a pick has happened on more than one occasion.

If you want to become a litter picker to make a difference to where you live, get in touch with Wyre Forest District Council and adopt your street. You will be given free equipment and you can use it to come along to our free events. http://www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk/adopt_a_street

To get in touch with The Pickup Artists search for us on Facebook or WhatsApp 07507228672.