

Wyre Forest Green Alliance January 2024 Newsletter

Contents.

[Wyre Forest Vegans](#) door drop of leaflets

Saturday 6th January. [Kidderminster Repair Café](#)

Saturday 20th January [Bewdley Repair Café](#)

Saturday 27th January, from 10am to 2pm, [Wyre Forest XR and our rivers](#)

Have you seen [Gilbert](#)?

New Year Resolution – [use your vote](#)

[Spotlight](#) on The Wyre Community Land Trust

January 2024 Newsletter

We hope that you have had a wonderful Christmas and are looking forward to a more sustainable New Year when more people start caring for our planet, its climate and wildlife.

During the first two weeks of January, **Wyre Forest Vegans** will be door dropping leaflets throughout the local area to promote Veganuary (veganuary.com). Anyone who would like to help, please call or text Ronnie on 07703 558724. Veganuary encourages and supports people and businesses alike to move to a plant-based diet as a way of protecting the environment, preventing animal suffering, and improving the health of millions of people.

Saturday 6th January. Kidderminster Repair Café 10.0 – 12.0 10am till 1pm at the Youth House, Bromsgrove Street, Kidderminster.

Saturday 20th January Bewdley Repair Café St Georges Hall, 10.0 am – 2.0 pm (last entry 1.0) volunteers look forward to welcoming our customers at our first session of 2024. Christmas gifts broken already? Bring them along! Only bike repairs need to be booked in advance (ring 01299 403424. Or john.rhymer50@gmail.com)

Saturday 27th January, from 10am to 2pm, Wyre Forest Extinction Rebellion will be in Bewdley drawing attention to the state of our rivers. Complete our "Citizen's poll board". Find out about the extent of raw sewage and other pollutants that are making our rivers unsafe to bathe in and are destroying biodiversity. You might also see Gilbert the skeleton on his portable loo.

Have you seen Gilbert?

Our friend Gilbert keeps popping up. He first made an appearance floating on a raft in the River Severn on "International Rivers Day" in Bewdley. Since then, he has made guest appearances in Worcester and



frequently pops up on Bewdley by-pass and various locations in town including in front of the Farm Shop. There is no truth in the rumour that he got this thin by taking part in Veganuary! He has always been like this. We wish Gilbert all the best for 2024 and success in raising awareness of the parlous state of our rivers.

<https://www.kidderminstershuttle.co.uk/news/23966402.skeleton-figure-protests-river-severn-pollution/>

A New Year's Resolution. Use your vote.

2024 will be a pivotal year for the climate and there's the potential for a significant political shift. Whilst we all campaign under the auspices of our respective organisations, as individuals we can also choose to support a political party during elections, or even stand as a candidate.

Next year will see a General Election, and locally, an election in May for Kidderminster Town Council. For the Council, all political parties would appreciate your support to help make a difference, or even to stand as a councillor candidate where you could be elected, or be on the ballot where election is unlikely.

Reach out to them here:

- Contact@wyreforest.greenparty.org.uk
- hello@wyreforestlibdems.org.uk
- labourwyreforest@gmail.com
- office@wyreforestconservatives.com

We hear that Wyre Forest Friends of the Earth are inviting potential candidates for the General Election from all parties to contribute to an "Any Questions" style event in 2024. Watch this space for further information.

Spotlight on The Wyre Community Land Trust

Deep in the Wyre Forest the Wyre Community Land Trust (WCLT) helps conserve the beautiful Wyre Forest. Working with valued partners like the Guild of St George, Natural England and Worcestershire Wildlife Trust, it focuses on attempting to reverse the nationwide loss of biodiversity.

Our base is in Ruskin Land, an area of the Wyre Forest that is owned by the Guild of St George, a charity set up by Victorian polymath John Ruskin, and is made up of 100 acres of oak woodland, an orchard and a wildflower meadow. Ruskin's aim was to take a small piece of English ground, beautiful, peaceful and fruitful and conserve it as well as encourage the continuation of traditional skills promoting his vision of a sustainable relationship between people, craft and nature.

We at WCLT work closely with the Guild to manage Ruskin Land and also provide opportunities for groups and individuals to visit and learn about the natural environment and heritage crafts. This includes our education and care farming programme in partnership with local community organisations and schools as well as our 'Ruskin Club' courses and events programme.

The team consists of 6 part time staff - Richard Channing (Woodyard Manager), Sally Pendergast (Farm Manager), Kate Quinton (Volunteer and Community Development Manager), Debbie Blades (Office Manager), Liz Bunney (Development and Education Manager) and Ryan Collins (Conservation and Woodland management). However, we are strongly supported by a highly valued team of volunteers who are at the core of our organisation and the key to our success. They give their time to help us complete important practical conservation work, survey the wildlife present on Ruskin

Land, educate the community and next generation on the importance of looking after the natural environment as well as utilising oak we harvest through the sustainable management of the forest to create beautiful benches and seats, bird boxes, bird feeders, bread boards and so on. Volunteering with us is a great way to connect with nature, meet new people and also keep fit and healthy and has also helped a number of young people into careers in the conservation sector.

Many people think “cows” when there’s mention of the Wyre Community Land Trust! Our herd of traditional breed pedigree Dexter cattle are quite famous locally! They carry out a “conservation grazing” programme, grazing our woodland, orchard and meadow here at St George’s Farm and nearby for our partner organisations Natural England, Forestry England and Worcestershire Wildlife Trust. Our cows create a mosaic of habitats as they graze a site through their selective feeding and behaviour which benefits a wide range of animals including reptiles, insects, birds, mammals, plants and fungi. Over the last few years Sally has been training selected cattle from our herd using the unique NoFence grazing system which uses GPS tracking to create a virtual fence for livestock, enabling them to graze land in unfenced areas of the forest. To find out more about this grazing system you can visit www.nofence.no/en-gb

We try and attend as many local events as possible throughout the year where we sell our produce (apple juice and wooden items made by our talented woodyard volunteers) and enjoy engaging with the local community.

For more information, visit our website www.wyreclt.org.uk; email info@wyreclt.org.uk; phone 01299 488083. If you would like to sign up to our e-newsletter or better still, want to consider joining us as a volunteer, please get in touch.

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

Pigment to Paint Saturday 23rd March - EITHER 10am to 1pm OR 2pm to 5pm to be held at Uncillys 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.

The photos that follow give a flavour of the range of activities we are involved with.

		
<p>2023 apple harvest for pressing into juice</p>	<p>Training courses in animal and plant identification</p>	<p>Art in the Forest Day community event</p>
		
<p>Rustic frame basket course</p>	<p>Coppice craft course</p>	
		
<p>A Dexter cow</p>	<p>Our stand at the Far Forest Show displaying our wooden items</p>	