

WIRRAL EVERGREEN

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The Magazine of the Wirral Environmental Network



In 2018, the Government launched its 25 year plan for the environment, pledging that we would be the first generation to leave our environment in a better state than we found it. As part of the plan, 2019 was declared as a national Year of Green Action across the UK.

WEN is working alongside local, regional and national organisations to ensure

- 2019 will be a year of green action across Liverpool City Region
- People from all backgrounds can get involved in projects that improve the natural world.

Our aim is to make our area one of the best places in the country to live, work and flourish and leave a better environment for the next generation to inherit.

Wirral Environmental Network

Working to advance the education of the public about the environment and its protection

Patrons: Pat Sykes (MBE), John Guilleband, Tina Fox, Jonathon Porritt,
Charles Secrett, Dr Joanna Sharples.

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We do not inherit the world from our parents. We borrow it from our grandchildren.

Being a Trustee of WEN

- Trustees have independent control over, and legal responsibility for, a charity's management and administration. They play a very important role, unpaid, in a sector that contributes significantly to the character and wellbeing of the country.
- Trusteeship can be rewarding for many reasons - from a sense of making a difference to the charitable cause, to new experiences and relationships. It can sometimes be demanding of your time, skills, knowledge and abilities.
- Being a Trustee of WEN means being prepared to attend most of our 6 meetings a year (on the 3rd Wednesday evening of alternate months) although we accept this is not always possible. Occasionally you may need to reply to emails for decisions between meetings.
- If you have a keen interest in Wirral Environmental Network and feel that you could contribute to our meetings, please join us for a couple of our meetings to see if you would consider becoming a trustee.
- There are also a couple of vacancies on the board for people with a bit more time and experience in charity management. Please email pete@la21.net for further details on this.



WEN is actively involved with:

- Clean-up days, Healthy Eating, Seacombe Community Hub
- Planters, In-Bloom, Gardening Courses—on-site or at your organisation
- Furniture Reuse and Community Craft Sessions, Collection Point for Terracycle, Tap on the Map with the Refill Project
- Cool Wirral Partnership—Wirral Climate Change Strategy

...and lots more

Year of the Environment 2019

Wirral Environmental Network
Environmental education charity



Welcoming Year of the Environment 2019
And a year of green action

Air quality * Climate change and resilience

Green spaces, habitat and biodiversity

Connecting and engaging communities with nature

Health and well-being * Sustainable energy

Reduce waste * Water

Find out what is going on * Contact us to get involved

Share what you and your groups are doing

www.wirralenvironmentalnetwork.org.uk

wen@la21.net

Cleaner, Greener, Well, Together



THE ENVIRONMENT TIMECAPSULE PROJECT AT NESS GARDENS

25th Anniversary *Saturday June 8th 2019, 2 pm*

"We have not inherited the earth from our grandparents, we have borrowed it from our grandchildren". I and a few others have been commemorating, every year since 5th June 1994, a project at Ness based on that saying in the form of a time-capsule containing relevant artefacts and Letters of Apology to our grandchildren in 2044. We meet at Ness on the nearest week-end around the UN World Environment Day June 5 and something more is planned this year. As well as some exhibits, speechifying, music and our tradition of *cutting up an apple that represents the world*, we shall be fitting to the pillar marking the site a new above-ground plaque which gives passing visitors our website www.ecotimecapsule.com - not possible back in 1994! Full details will follow in due course through the Wirral Environment Network and at the website. For now, please view/hear my son Chris's three minute video there; and *save the date*.

One other thing: PLEASE help me in any way any of you can, to TRACK DOWN PEOPLE WHO WERE THERE ON FRIDAY JUNE 5TH 1994!! Use all means especially social media. Kids who were there in the crowd of more than 250 are of greatest interest, being now grown-ups! Many like George and Garnette Bowler who were such strong supporters are no longer with us or else not well enough to come. But there must be many around who have lost touch but would like to come on June 8.

About the project:

How can we environmentalists, when all we do is simply 'say things as they are' (and likely will be, i.e. decidedly not good news) avoid being routinely dismissed as '*purveyors of doom and gloom and the imminent end of the world, which has always proved wrong in the past*'?

As I pondered that back in 1994, a possible way of conveying the urgency of our situation - without, hopefully, triggering all that 'switch-off' - came to me, when I first heard the above saying.

With colleagues, as a UN World Environment Day project for the year, I arranged the burial of these 'Apology to the Future' [time-capsules](#) in the UK and at significant sites abroad: Kew Gardens in London and Ness Gardens near Liverpool, in Mexico, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa, the Seychelles and at Mount Annan Botanic Gardens near Sydney. Twenty-five years is the accepted duration for one generation, so "our grandchildren" meant people living in 2044. The capsules addressed 'all our grandchildren' in that year, and also contained environmentally relevant items (both bad and good) and 100s of letters from schoolchildren. We believed an apology was called for because of the likelihood that by then we would have comprehensively trashed their 'loan' to us, of this bountiful, beautiful, blue & green, bio-diverse planet: our only home.... And yet! More important than the Apology in this whole project is the [Pledge](#), to do everything required to save the planet by individual and united action, influencing those in power and changing as necessary our own lifestyles.

If all humans everywhere were to do the right things, environmentally, including:

- fully resourcing international *voluntary* family planning to stop unrelenting growth in human numbers, as a human right for all and as
- a win-win intervention that reduces maternal and infant mortality, plus
- reducing our carbon footprints and dealing with global poverty and all forms of injustice

might we even now, although clearly we are in 'last chance saloon', achieve the goal that the finders of the time capsules in the year 2044 will *wonder why we ever apologised?!*

John Guillebaud

Emeritus Professor of Family Planning and Reproductive Health, UCL

24th January 2019

Fairtrade Fortnight

25th February - 10th March



Fairtrade can help protect farmers from market volatility & extreme poverty prices through a minimum price and a premium that goes directly to the farmer' co-operatives and their communities.

This year, Fairtrade Fortnight focuses on cocoa. Farmers have seen prices crash to crisis levels in the last few years, particularly in West Africa where most cocoa is grown.



Take action

Look out for Fairtrade chocolate in many of our local shops as well as Aldi, Coop, Greggs, Lidl, M&S, Morrisons, Sainsburys, Starbucks and Waitrose. It is also in some Ben & Jerry's ice-cream, KitKats, Maltesers and many Cadburys and Mars products.

There are over 4,500 other Fairtrade products from coffee and tea to flowers and footballs.

Why not switch to a Fairtrade product during Fairtrade Fortnight— at home, in your school, work or community organisation?

Save the Bees



Bee decline since the late 1990s has become a serious problem. Beekeepers around the world have noticed unusually high rates of decline in honeybee colonies, and unfortunately, this is not all about a decline in the availability of honey.

Bees are key to food production, as they are vital in the pollination of crops. One-third of the food we eat depends on pollinating insects, and in Europe alone, 4,000 vegetables depend on insect pollination. If this trend of decline continues, crop yield, which already faces a multitude of challenges, will diminish further.

The UK is falling behind in the fight to protect these indispensable species. Since 2010 there has been a 45% loss of commercial honeybees in the UK.

The UK National Action Plan for the Sustainable Use of Pesticides, although conscious of risks to water quality and plant protection, ironically fails to acknowledge the need to protect insects, who are vital in the protection of plant species. This plan fails to prevent pesticides from being used in public spaces. When an area is sprayed with more pesticides, agricultural structural elements are lost, and insects vanish.

As such, more needs to be done to prevent this and protect the invaluable species of bees before it's too late.

Cities like Amsterdam might have found the solution. Like the rest of the world, its bee population has been in steep decline. However, since 2000, whilst this trend has continued for the rest of the world, Amsterdam's bee population has risen by 40%. Planting native flowers in public spaces (such as in parks and on street corners), installing insect homes across the city, and introducing a ban on the use of chemical pesticides in public spaces has enabled Amsterdam's bee population to bloom.

If we are truly committed to saving bees, the species which uphold so much of our wildlife and food production, we need to take this further and ban the use of chemical pesticides in public spaces and provide bees with an environment in which they can thrive.

Memorial garden - St Josephs Primary School

In Autumn last year WEN worked with parents from St Joseph's Primary School in Seacombe to create a memorial garden dedicated to local men who died in WW1 as 2018 was the 100th anniversary.

The garden was created in one of the quadrangles which had become totally overgrown and disused and further work will commence in 2019 on the other overgrown areas to create growing areas for the children to learn about food and vegetable production.



Oakenholt Day Centre - Moreton

I think it's a 1960's pop song that goes something like 'Summer time when the living is easy' however it fails to mention grass grows as quick as you can cut it and weeds 'grow as high as an elephants eye' my apologies to the musical Oklahoma. Mother Nature is wonderful but as any gardener will tell you maintenance is a full time job, due to other commitments, as pleasurable as it may be, the garden is often neglected.

And, so it is at Oakenholt Day centre, Moreton of which I am the chair of the Registered Charity and gardening volunteer. The centre grounds cover quite an area, too much for a handful of special needs adults and a harassed member of staff to maintain. You can imagine my shock when I heard the centre had entered Britain in Bloom.

Fortunately, Carol Seery and WEN came to the rescue, commencing with a substantial donation of compost, followed by the arrival of a small happy go lucky group of WEN volunteers who continue to do a fantastic job – nothing is too much trouble. We meet twice a month and thanks to their efforts the grounds are looking really nice. Despite near drought conditions we collectively made a creditable show for the toughest RHS 'Bloom' judge in the North West, and await his verdict. Post, Bloom judging we commenced making from scratch a memorial garden comprising a lawn, rose bushes and seasonal plants, this is almost completed. The next project is a substantial sensory garden that will take two or three years to complete alongside routine garden replanting etc.

Throughout the long hot summer, thanks to WEN volunteers many hands have made light work and all credit is due to them for transforming the grounds and giving their much needed horticultural advice. Educationally some of the centre attendees have also benefitted from two horticultural courses delivered by Carol in a warm, easy going, patient manner thoroughly enjoyed by the participants.

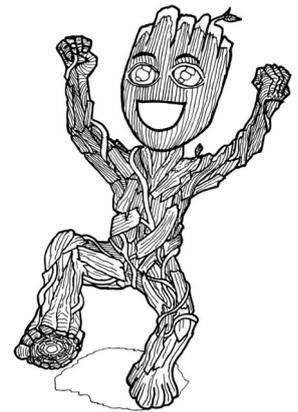
On behalf of all those at Oakenholt we offer our sincere thanks to all at WEN who through selflessly helping out have made a great difference to the lives of some of the most disadvantaged members of our community.

Stephen McGreal. 20 October 2018

Oakenholt - new beds



The garden (011) to the left is a Memorial garden and is almost complete (80%) at the time of the photograph.



TAM O'SHANTER URBAN FARM THE CHALLENGE



Pawprints is extremely proud to announce

From 1st November 2018,

Tam O'Shanter Urban Farm is under our management.



When we turned up at Tam O'Shanter Urban farm in August 2018 with a stray duck, we had no idea that events were about to overtake us. We quickly discovered that things were becoming extremely challenging as funds were running out and the only contract in place was about to end.

As passionate animal lovers and realising the huge potential of the site for environmental development, conservation, wildlife and of course the amazing urban farm we have all loved since childhood, we set about making things happen so that we could get started. We brought with us a qualified farm manager and a team of animal welfare and wildlife specialists and began to assess the site.

Chatting with visitors, we discovered that one of the few things they found distressing was the disappearance of livestock into the food chain. We vowed that the farm, under our remit, would be a sanctuary farm and that no animals brought to or purchased by, the farm would never be sent for slaughter. This is in line with our own policy of all animal life being precious and at the express wish

One of the first tasks we completed on the farm therefore was the securing of the animals. We quickly acquired the three KuneKune pigs before they were returned for slaughter. We made a further purchase of three piglets and have ensured that all animals on the farm, including the pigs were tagged and registered with DEFRA.

We made an outright purchase of 15 Red Hens to live in the Oxton Garden Hen House in Paddock 3.

This is proving a huge attraction as visitors can come and feed the hens and learn about their welfare and how eggs are made. We have also created a huge fox proof enclosure to allow the hens to be outdoors for extended periods of time in safety. Hens are producing around one dozen eggs a day and sales are fast.



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Tam O'Shanter Urban Farm

The neighbouring site Paddock 4 has been worked daily from 9-2 which is adequate for the time of year. This Paddock has been completely overhauled and extensive weeding has been undertaken. All beds have been prepared for spring planting and seed pots have been started. The idea is to grow fruits and vegetables to feed the farm, sell in the farm shop and provide excess to those in need locally.

We hope to be able to introduce school parties to the mechanisms of food production and will ultimately be seeking funding to produce literature and learning packs for use in visitor sessions.

The beautiful alpacas have been visited by Leahurst Vets and have been deemed fit and well. Two are pregnant and babies are expected in June. Babies will become the property of the farm.

All six goats have been checked over by the vet and hooves cleaned and trimmed.

There has been an increase in the arrival of rabbits and guinea pigs due to "dumping" and we have now reached saturation with small mammals and will need to signpost any further unwanted pets to other rescues. Perhaps in time this is an area we could expand, but for now we have to focus on recovery.

We have introduced hutches and pens to the small animal enclosures to ensure full protection from the cold. Several volunteers have expressed an interest in giving specialist care to these animals and this will be encouraged.

We have made a lot of cosmetic changes, but it is the

The large heap of nothingness that remained in place following the demise of the oak tree was tackled in early December. The area had become a positive dumping ground for rubbish and empty post. Our Pawprints Wednesday team blitzed the area and we intend to create signs and information sheets about the many and varied bugs and beetles that will soon be found living amongst the rocks, wood and plants we have yet to plant.



The Farm continued

We consulted with conservation experts about the possibility of reopening the stream that fed the reed beds. We were keen to have them survey the site to ensure there were no hidden gems such as toads and lizards.

As no unusual creatures were discovered tracked the source of the water and reopened the stream to allow it to flow once again under the bridge. Within days the reedbeds came back to life and the former lake refilled. This is very much a work in progress as a huge amount of work needs to be done to restore and maintain this area of the farm. It is a very exciting prospect and one that has attracted the interest of many environmental and wildlife specialists.

This is a huge area of possibility and could become an entire environmental and conservation project for an interested group.



And now – we need YOU. We need to develop and refurbish the three wildlife zones – the wetlands zone, the Mount Roqu- e- fort and the mini soft release garden next to the cottage.

We host Duke of Edinburgh awards, Reaseheath and Leahurst College placement and local school work experience programmes. We want to welcome schools, colleges, Scouts, Girl Guides, Brownies, animal lovers, conservationists, environmental experts, horticulturalists, eco-experts – come and make our Eco-Building – Eco again!

We will refurbish and landscape the herb garden area – using plants potted and grown in the herb growing workshops. We will expand our educational opportunities and prepare school visitor experiences to include nature hunts, treasure hunts etc.

We need visitor information sheets.



There are never enough hours in the day or people to do the work, so if you or a group of people you work with or volunteer with, have a great idea to develop our wetlands and wildlife zone – get in touch. Volunteers welcome. Sponsors and donors VERY welcome. Come and join us.



Sustainable Seacombe Launched by the Chair of OFGEM

Energy Projects Plus has secured funding to develop the Sustainable Seacombe project, which will help over 10,000 residents of Seacombe and Birkenhead to keep warm in their homes more affordably.



It was officially launched on 17th January, at Seacombe Library by Martin Cave, Chairman of OFGEM (the gas and electricity regulator), and Philip Sellwood, CEO of the Energy Saving Trust.

Over the next 14 months, Sustainable Seacombe will hold weekly community events and visit residents at their home to introduce the wide range of support available to reduce fuel bills, keep warmer at home, and improve heating or meet the cost of unaffordable bills.

The programme is funded through Burbo Bank Extension Community Fund, OFGEM's Voluntary Redress Fund together with funding through Wirral Council and other programmes.



The launch was supported by a wide range of partners including WEN, Wirral Council, Involve North West and Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority



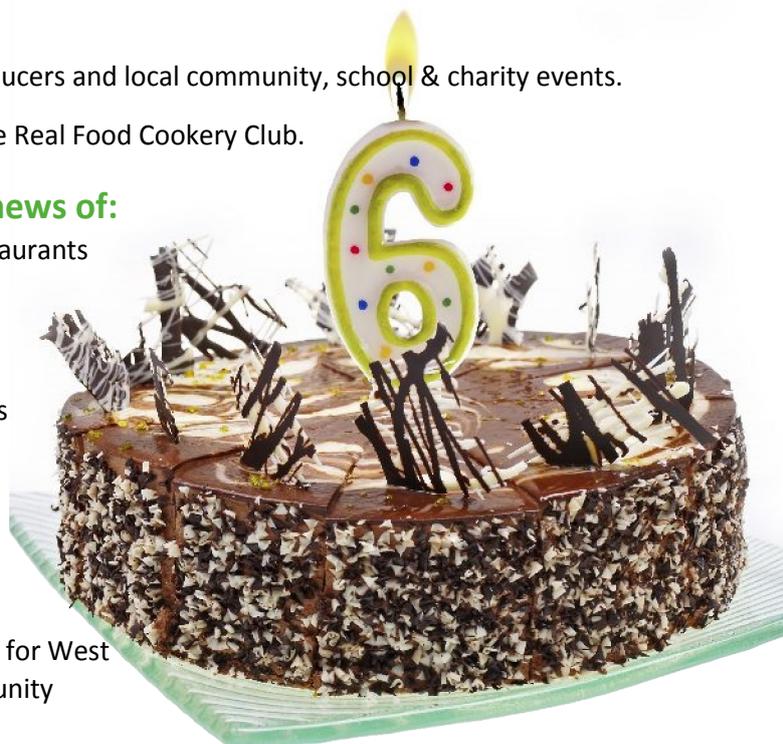
We are keen to work with any local organisations to spread the message so to find out more or to get involved call Dominic Griffiths on 637 3680 or dominic.griffiths@epplus.org

In November 2018 West Kirby Farmers' Market celebrated its 6th Birthday!

The market was started in 2012 with the aim of encouraging and supporting local food production, but it has become much more than this. It has grown into a great, accessible monthly community event, where people meet up and chat to (& buy food produced by!) friends and neighbours. Organised and run by a team of local volunteers, the market has a community café, run by a rota of different community groups to network and raise funds, and a table where other community groups can advertise their own events.

To celebrate our first six years we thought we'd take a look at what we've achieved over this time. We've

- **Supported local primary producers** - local farmers have sold a range of home reared meats, fruit & veg eggs, organic produce, apple juice, microgreens, honey, and farm-made cheeses.
- **Supported local, seasonal sustainable fish** - A local fisherman brings catch to the market monthly.
- **Provided a platform for small local food businesses to start up and/or expand** - Several producers have used the market to explore the demand for their food and expand their businesses. One then opened a deli in Port Sunlight, one a restaurant in Liverpool, and one a restaurant in Heswall
- **Supported other small local food businesses** - including producers from West Kirby, Chester, Hooton, Neston, Meols, Hoylake, Bebington, Port Sunlight, Oxton, Birkenhead, Saughall Massie, Parkgate, Burton & Prenton.
- **Helped a local educational cooperative** - a group of young people learned to run a food business.
- **Provided community stalls for** - Pomona Cider & Juice-making Cooperative, and West Kirby Cycle Hub.
- **Helped raise £15,000** - for local community groups and charities, including - Scouts, Girl Guides, Sea Scouts, School Parents' Associations, Hoylake Cottage, community allotments, The Dove Centre, Transition West Kirby, Clare House Therapy, St Andrew's Church, Marie Curie, RASA, NCS, Food Bank, St John's Hospice, Friends Groups & Rotary.
- **Loaned out market gazebos** - to support producers and local community, school & charity events.
- **Supported a community cookery club** - The Real Food Cookery Club.
- **Published 72 monthly newsletters, with news of:**
 - Local food sold at independent food shops and restaurants
 - Local farm shops, markets and farm direct sales
 - Recipes with local seasonal ingredients
 - New food related books by local writers
 - Cookery, craft & beekeeping courses at local venues
 - Food & health related community events
 - Local sustainable food initiatives
 - Local wild food foraging walks, etc
- **Donated money & vouchers** - for the refurbishment of St Andrew's Church Hall and grounds, for West Kirby and Hoylake Christmas Lights, and to local community groups, schools and charities to help with fundraising.



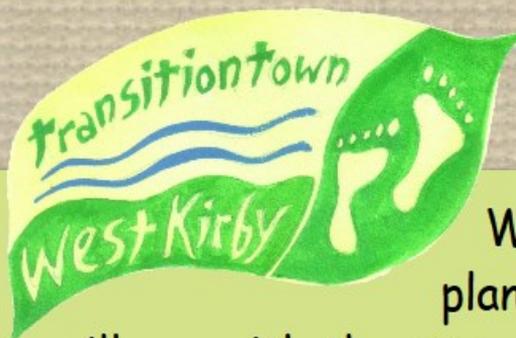
We'd especially like to thank all our supporters:

Our sincere thanks go to our loyal local producers; our enthusiastic volunteers who put out posters, help setting out and packing away the hall and defend the car park; the support from St Andrew's Church; Graham Road neighbours who put up with us, various voluntary groups who do the café; local retailers who work with us and of course, all you local people who come to shop at the market. THANK YOU!

Incredible Edible West Kirby

Incredible Edible is a nationwide voluntary scheme for growing vegetables, herbs, fruit and edible flowers that anyone can pick and enjoy.

Our West Kirby team is one of the several focus groups of Transition Town West Kirby.



We cultivate a number of planters and plots around the village, with the support of local businesses and West Kirby Residential School, who help look after the large planter in the Concourse.

We also care for the Gilroy Apple Avenue, the orchard in Grange Community Park and other fruit trees in public areas.

Anyone is welcome to join us. To find out more ask any of our volunteers, often to be seen working around the village, telephone 0151 6259974, or email info@transitiontownwestkirby.org.uk.

Wirral Environmental Network 2019

- Jan** Consult, plan, launch Wirral Year of Environment ~ Gardening classes run through the year
- Feb** Reduce single use plastics ~ Plastic free markets ~ Producer responsibility ~ Wirral Together
- Mar** Refill stations & water butts ~ World Water Day
- Apr** Focus on furniture & reducing waste
- May** Sustainable transport & air quality ~ Bike fix-it days ~ Led walks & cycle rides
- June** World Environment Day & Time Capsule at Ness Gardens ~ Clear the air for Clean Air Day
- July** Go wild in green spaces ~ In Bloom judging ~ Bike fix-it days part 2
- Aug** Healthy and meatless ~ New Cool Wirral Plan
- Sept** Changing *seasons* ~ Homes & habitats ~ Car Free Day
- Oct** Get set for Winter ~ Energy efficiency in the home ~ UN Climate Summit
- Nov** Veg out ~ World Vegan Day
- Dec** Celebrate, reflect and agree the plan for lasting change



Activities are added all the time. Follow, like & share us. Meet us at your local Wirral

Support our charity by becoming a member

WEN is an educational charity with 25 years experience of working with schools, community groups, businesses and the local authority.

Our aims are to educate the public about living sustainable and healthy lifestyles.

We achieve this through running courses on gardening, growing your own food, craft and resource reuse, public discussions, organised events, working in schools to support teachers and working with community groups and organisations to deliver a wide range of environmental projects.

We rely on membership and the occasional grant to keep spreading the word, undertaking projects and being the voice of the network.

In this Year of Environment, could you show your support by becoming a member?

INDIVIDUALS £8 COMMUNITY GROUPS £10 BUSINESSES £20

Contact: Naomi Graham, Kenny Peers or Pam McCarron on 639 2121

Wirral Environmental Network publish this newsletter as a community information tool. Please note that the views expressed may not be those of Wirral Environmental Network, its trustees, staff or volunteers.