

# WIRRAL EVERGREEN

Issue 32 Autumn 2019

The Magazine of the Wirral Environmental Network



## Wirral Earth Festival 2019

Wirral Earth Festival returns to West Kirby on September 21st for an exciting day of Earth and people friendly activities! The festival takes place annually on St Bridget's Field, next to St Bridget's Church in West Kirby and is organised by Transition Town West Kirby with support from St Bridget's Church and School. The festival features live music, storytelling, exhibitors, stalls from local interest groups, arts and local crafts, activities for children, plus food and drink and who knows what else more! Wirral Earth Festival brings the community together where you're very likely to bump into an old friend or make a new one and is ever more relevant as issues of climate change, plastic reduction and greater environmental awareness are increasingly in the news. It is also an excellent day for all the family and a fixture of the social calendar that you won't want to miss! Entry is by suggested donation to keep the festival going into the future.



**Wirral Earth Festival**

Saturday September 21st 11am to 5pm

St Bridget's Church, West Kirby



### 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.

**Registered address:** Wirral Environmental Centre, Sandon Building,  
Falkland Road, Wallasey CH44 8ER

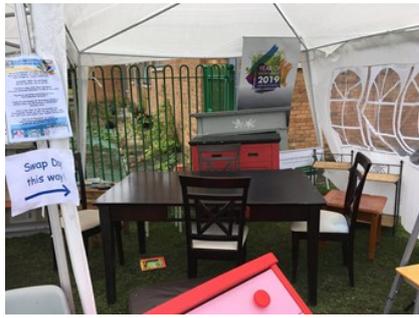
**Tel:** 0151 639 2121 **email:** wen@la21.net **Website:** www.wirralenvironmentalnetwork.org.uk

**Facebook:** Wirral Environmental Network

**Registered Charity No.** 1068306 **Co. Ltd. by Guarantee no.** 3462312

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

## Keeping furniture out of landfill



Nearly a third of bulky items taken to a Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) are re-usable in their current condition. This increases to 51% if items requiring slight repair but in otherwise good condition were considered. Nearly a quarter of bulky items collected at the kerbside are re-usable, with a further 16% as re-usable with slight repair. (Source: WRAP.) **But** items collected by Wirral's Bulky Waste Service and dropped off at the Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) are rarely reused.

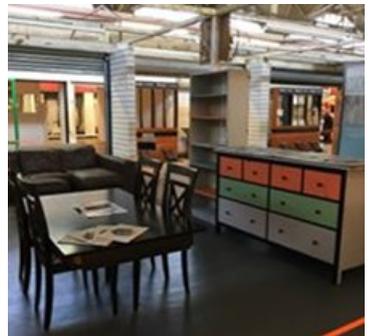
In conjunction with Urban Vintage and thanks to the support of Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority Community Fund and Wirral Borough Council, Wirral Environmental Network has set up a furniture reuse project. We aim to divert household items from landfill before they become 'bulky waste' at the HWRC. Items are delivered to groups who work with individuals and families in need or upcycled and sold.

If you have reusable furniture items that you want to go to a good home, we can arrange collection by our team of volunteers or through one of the organisations we work alongside.

We have also restarted our much-loved furniture swap events – bring, swap, buy items (based on what you can afford). We have a van, volunteers and PAT testers. So far this year we have held events at Wirral Environmental Network and Leasowe Family Fun Day, have had a stand at Birkenhead Market and are helping Urban Vintage with the furniture upcycling shop, supported by Magenta Living. Contact us if you would like an event at your premises.

Volunteers are always welcome. Can you help once a week or once a month to collect and deliver items, or to repair wooden pieces, upholster soft furnishings or support Urban Vintage in the shop in Birkenhead? We plan a regular repair workshop for people to make small repairs on their own items or donated items. Contact us to register your interest.

There are many organisations that collect pre-loved items and sell to raise funds or pass on to individuals and families in need. If you can't find an organisation which wants your item, try offering on one of the many Facebook sites or via Freecycle Wirral. As well as reusable items, listings are often 'for spares or repair'. Members on Freecycle have been known to make use of broken watering cans and even pond liners with holes!



Contact [wen@la21.net](mailto:wen@la21.net) or 0151 639 2121 to offer or ask about items or find about how to get involved.

## Bottle return scheme could be worth £2bn say campaigners

A comprehensive deposit return scheme (DRS) for plastic bottles, cans and glass could boost the economy by £2bn, government assessments show, as ministers weigh up which type of system to adopt.

Government data highlighted by the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) indicates that a more restricted DRS involving only bottles of 750ml and under would benefit the economy by just £250m.

The campaign group is pressing ministers to adopt a comprehensive scheme when they announce their decision this summer.

CPRE says the economic benefits include a reduction in the amount of waste sent to landfill, fewer littered drinks containers and less of their associated cleanup costs, reduced air and water pollution, and less carbon emissions caused by the extraction and production of raw materials needed to produce new drinks containers.

Recycling rates in countries that have such a scheme, including Germany and Norway, are much higher than those without a DRS.

Maddy Haughton-Boakes, a litter campaigner at CPRE, said: "This is yet more evidence of the positive impact that a deposit return system will have on the whole of society. Taking us towards a circular economy, we will recycle almost all of the drinks cans and bottles we consume, slow down the depletion of scarce resources and reduce carbon emissions, all of which will have a lasting positive impact for our countryside and environment.

"The government has an opportunity to ensure England gets the most effective and economically viable deposit system in the world."

Last year the government committed to introducing a scheme and the decision on which type is expected in the next few months.

Environmental groups fear ministers are under pressure from industry to restrict the scheme to bottles of 750ml or less that are sold in single units, excluding supermarket-bought multipack bottles and all bottles of more than 750ml.

This year the Scottish government announced plans to introduce a deposit return system for glass, plastic, steel and aluminium drinks containers of all sizes.

## The Amazon burns to feed our craving for meat

The ongoing destruction of the Amazon Rainforest is not a new issue. Land use change in the region has been a problem for decades with more and more pristine rainforest being converted into fields.

The most common crop that is planted into the deforested landscape is soya for livestock. As the second largest producer of soybeans worldwide, Brazil accounts for 30% of the global production of the crop and is the largest exporter of soya in the world.

Brazilian soya is the lynchpin of globalised meat production which has become increasingly industrialised. Energy-intensive grain is used to feed animals that are housed in intensive units where producers want to fatten their animals in the shortest time to maximise their production and their profit. Additionally, when hundreds of animals are packed indoors without access to fresh air or space to roam, grain-based feed provides the only viable source of nutrition. Without the grain to feed animals, intensive livestock systems could not work.

Underpinned by global soya, industrialised meat has a significant carbon footprint and contributes to global warming. However, in responding to this challenge it should be remembered that the methods of production and the associated emissions of intensive livestock systems differ significantly to those of sustainably managed livestock, particularly, when one considers local landscapes and geography. It is not correct (nor responsible) to equate the GHG emissions of a concentrated feed lot in Texas, where thousands of heads of cattle are fed solely on grain, to a small, extensive herd that are grazed on permanent pasture in England.

Grazing cattle on permanent pasture that has been grown without agrichemicals and has a diverse sward (mixing nitrogen-fixing legumes, grasses and forbs) can help to mitigate climate change by sequestering carbon. Without ploughing or cultivating it and by allowing livestock to graze as they naturally would, levels of organic matter in the soil begin to rise. By building up soil organic matter, carbon can be drawn down into the soil and stored. This not only increases soil fertility, biodiversity and water retention, it can help to reduce emissions and mitigate climate change.

## Out and about with Wirral Environmental Network

### River park visit

Wirral Environmental Network comes to Port Sunlight River Park.....

Over the winter it was good to contact WEN and be able to pass on our beautiful red dogwood prunings to be put to good use in the weaving projects. A offshoot from this was two visits from Carol's group to the River Park in June! The June weather didn't live up to expectations, but the interest of the group was matched by the display of wildflowers. The Vipers Bugloss and Ox-eye Daisy were particularly impressive!

The park has now been open nearly five years and some of the group came just after it first opened so it was good to hear their comments on how much had changed! The vegetation cover is nearly complete, there's a wide diversity of plants, from garden escapees to really interesting wild flowers on this chalk soil. Quite a contrast to the prevailing acid soils in Wirral. One advantage of the poor soil is that the tree growth is slow so the views are still spectacular.

The surroundings have changed also with the demolition of Prices Candle Works factory and the construction of over 400 houses in two sites. Also the Land and Marine site is now vacant.

The park is managed by Autism Together and our service users have been based in the park since November 2015 helping with the maintenance. Now with the Heritage Lottery Funded (HLF) Heritage Centre and Café there are additional opportunities for more people to help in the café. The group met Andy, our Education officer, also funded through HLF 'Discovering Bromborough' grant. The heritage centre has already been used for many school groups and were delighted to host the Eco-school summer day here on 12<sup>th</sup> July with Lynn Struve.



Future plans are to install interpretation in the centre when the archaeology at the Courthouse has been completed. There will be paths installed there soon and eventually both sites will be linked by a riverside walk.



#### Testimonials from the River Park visit:

*'First visit ever! Will definitely come back. Amazing walk and lovely scenery. Loved all the rare flowers. Amazing diversity of flowers, plants and wildlife.'*

*'Magical! It is amazing how nature takes hold given encouragement. Lots of rare flowers, bees in abundance (I learnt a lot about varieties!) and birds too. A lovely walk—just the right length for me.'*

*'What a gem! Fabulous wildlife, abundance of rare plants, always something new to see.'*

*'Wonderful will go again soon, in the sun.'*

*'I was impressed by the range of unusual plants the Ranger, Anne, was able to show us. Most of them were unusual wild flowers (eg Bee Orchids) and others were plants that few of us would recognise (eg Hemlock) I was also please to hear how the Ranger and volunteers manage the diversity of the plants.'*

*'What an amazing visit! Anne was so knowledgeable and gave us so much information about the plants and wildlife it brought everything to life. The Bee Orchids were beautiful, I have never seen them before. Will definitely go back.'*

## WEN and 'In Bloom' at various places in Wallasey and in Birkenhead

**Wirral is blooming with beautiful floral masterpieces once again this summer thanks to the hard work of residents, community groups and organisations.**

This year has seen 30 projects from many areas of Wirral enter the annual North West in Bloom competition.

Staff and volunteers from WEN have played a significant role in this working in the Seacombe and Birkenhead areas.

Royal Horticultural Society judges were back once again over three days from 23-25 July to see the fantastic floral projects across the borough and spent time speaking to those groups that had worked their magic on creating the masterpieces.

The groups behind the entries have dedicated many hours and effort into improving local areas including neighbourhoods and communal spaces for others to enjoy, showing their love for Wirral. Each have used their imaginations and skills.

Results from the competition will be announced in November 2019. Good luck to all Wirral's wonderful entries.



ART IN THE GARDEN AND SAVE THE DATE FOR OUR PRE CHRISTMAS EVENT ON 23<sup>RD</sup> NOVEMBER

A few snaps from our Art in the Garden event in July. Thanks to all who helped and came.



WIRRAL ENVIRONMENTAL NETWORK  
Falkland Road, Wallasey CH44 8ER

# Pre Christmas Fayre

on SATURDAY 23rd NOVEMBER 2019  
Doors Open: 11am to 2pm

**Father Christmas will be here  
with his sleigh and reindeer  
and the Owls too ....**

Refreshments (home made cakes) Plants for sale  
Fun Activities for Children Tombola, Raffle  
Local Jams & Chutneys Crafts  
Christmas table arrangements  
Lots of festive treats and activities for everyone

DONATIONS ARE WELCOMED AND APPRECIATED  
WHEELCHAIR ACCESS FRIENDLY. Reg Charity No: 1068306

**Please consider our neighbours when parking your car**

## New Gardening courses at WEN for 2019-20

### Discover Garden Courses at Wirral Environmental Network, WEN, from September 2019

Wirral Environmental Network popular gardening courses restart at the end of September. Can't make the start date or this term...we run them every term. Contact [carol.seery1@btinternet.com](mailto:carol.seery1@btinternet.com) for more information.

#### **A – Z PRACTICAL GARDENING – including fruit and vegetable growing**

Discover the theory and practice the tasks you can do in your garden in the autumn and winter including pruning, taking cuttings, what to sow, taking care of your soil and what to do in your garden week by week, looking at YOUR garden for the following year and much more!

Start Date- Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> September, 9.30 – 11.30 am

#### **A - Z OF GARDENING - ORNAMENTAL AND PRODUCTIVE**

We will look at a new subject every week such as plants for winter, easy plants for gardens, you can choose and much more

Find out what you should be doing week by week in your garden and gardener's question time

Start Date- Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> September, 2.15 – 4.15 pm

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**Cost of each course above is £55.00 for each 10 week term**

***You can do one term or as many as you like all are different!***

#### **SCIENCE AND HORTICULTURE -**

The science of **Plant classification, structure, and function**, which will then follow on to plant nutrition and the root environment, maintaining plant health and understanding plant propagation **and development**, (**this, in part, can** lead to a level 2 or 3 qualification if you want to go down that route!).

START DATE - Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> September 12.30 – 3.00 – level 2

Friday 27<sup>th</sup> September 12.30 – 3.00 level 3

COST - £75.00 per 10 weeks, 25 hours (each course)

All to be held at WEN, Sandon Building, Falkland Road, Seacombe CH44 8ER

For more information, book on course or find out about other courses  
phone 0151 639 2121, 07932 355742 or Email [carol.seery1@btinternet.com](mailto:carol.seery1@btinternet.com)

#### **Wirral Environmental Network is getting busier than ever.**

Come and join any of our groups to learn new skills, make new friends, share your passion for the environment

Mondays – Craft Group – bring your own ideas or get involved in current projects. From reusable bags made from off-cuts of materials donated by a haberdashery to willow weaving

Wednesdays – Falkland Road Organic Gardeners – help in our community garden at Falkland Road

Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays – Gardening Courses – 10 week courses at a level to suit you

Mondays – Furniture reuse – collection, delivery and small repairs – join a fun team as we collect items and pass on to those who help individuals and families in need

All week – Furniture reuse – support in the upcycling shop in Birkenhead

Events team – help at stands and stalls at events across the Wirral, promoting and encouraging environmental activity and highlighting all the wonderful work local groups do.

Want to help, but stay office based? We need people to answer the phones, do light computer work, help with promoting environmental activities online.

Contact [wen@la21.net](mailto:wen@la21.net) for more information on any of the above.

## Wirral's Local Plan...it's coming....tell the Council your views

Local Plans set out the long-term development strategy of an area. All future planning decisions will be made in line with our Council's Local Plan. This means the best way to influence how our local area changes is by getting involved in the creation of the plan.

The Local Development Scheme sets out the Council's programme for the preparation of local development documents. At the time of writing, the latest Scheme for Wirral was approved by the Council on 19 March 2018.

[www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/local-plans/local-development-scheme](http://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/local-plans/local-development-scheme).

Appendix 2 in the local development scheme indicates that the Local Plan is due for consultation any day now. The latest information from David Ball, Assistants Director, Major Growth and Housing Delivery is that the draft Local Plan will be considered by Cabinet in November 2019 and by Council in December 2020. Following this, public consultation on the draft Plan will commence in January 2020.

***It is important that we all feed in, whilst the plan is being developed and during the formal consultation.***

Wirral Environmental Network will be preparing a series of suggestions so keep an eye on our Facebook page and Twitter or become a member to receive our emails, but it is worth everyone considering what they want Wirral to be in the future and how this can be supported by our Communities, Buildings and Development, Transport, Energy, Trees, Green Spaces and Coastlines.

***Let the Council and your local councilor know your or your group's thoughts.***

For more information: The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally-prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced.

### **Liverpool City Region Listens**

Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority is encouraging all of its community groups and stakeholders to take part in the Liverpool City Region 'LCR Listens' initiative.

It is an opportunity for groups and local residents to let the Liverpool City Region Mayor know about what matters most to you and what can be improved in your local area. In particular the initiative wants to know about your experience of the environment, and what would make the biggest difference locally.



Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority is the public facing name for Merseyside Waste Disposal Authority, which is a statutory Joint Waste Disposal Authority under the Local Government Act 1985.

ADDRESS: Merseyside Recycling and Waste Authority, 7th Floor, No. 1 Mann Island, Liverpool, Merseyside, L3 1BP

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For further information and to give your views please go to <https://www.liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk/LCRListens/survey/>

## Support our charity by becoming a member

WEN is an educational charity with 25 years experience of working with schools and community groups.

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

We achieve this through running courses on growing your own food, public discussions, organised events, working in schools to support teachers and working with community groups and organisations in growing and recycling.

Our work is supported by a large number of volunteers committed to the charity ideals.

Costs per annum: **INDIVIDUALS £6 (unwaged) £8 (waged) FAMILY GROUP £12**

**COMMUNITY GROUPS £10 BUSINESSSES £20**

**Contact Naomi Graham or Pam McCarron (Membership Secretary) on 639 2121**

**Email: [pam.mccarron@la21.net](mailto:pam.mccarron@la21.net) for a membership form**

*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.*