

# The Leigh & Coombe Hill Newsletter

Issue 190 August 2021

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Parish Website [www.theleighpc.org.uk](http://www.theleighpc.org.uk)



As you are aware the Newsletter baton is now being passed to Karen M and her team of volunteers. On her behalf, please, please keep sending articles, photographs etc – it takes a long time to fill 2 pages on your own!

My thanks go to all those who have contributed, the deliverers (Nicky W, Anne H, Catherine G, Gordon W, Lynn D, Lucy C, Janine B, Sophie W, Josie W and Janet G) and especially Anita S for proofreading each month.

Karen is planning to produce Newsletters for end of September and one in November (including all Christmas items) so please let her have any items in good time. All contributions are welcome via [karen.d.morton@outlook.com](mailto:karen.d.morton@outlook.com), 07711 632256, WhatsApp or letterbox!!! Jo R

Coming Soon.....

**LUNCH** – a two course set lunch for residents of The Leigh and Coombe Hill. Home-cooked in the village and using local produce, it is hoped that the cost will be no more than £10 per head to include refreshments.



Anyone interested in this exciting new venture for our village, starting on Thursday 23 September, please ring 680249 or 680244 by 16 September.

As numbers are limited, it will be on a first come, first served basis.



## Village Sweep

Monday 13 September is the date this year when Mr Bird, or his sons, will be coming to the village. As before, everyone on my list will be contacted but any new-comers who have a chimney to be swept, please give me a ring on 680244. The cost this year has been held at £40 per flue. Anne H

## CHURCH NEWS



Open each Thursday from 10am – 3pm for private prayer

### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

Saturday 16 October

**Harvest Supper 7.00 pm**



Saturday 13 November

**Coffee Morning 10.30am**

January 2022

**'Get over Christmas' Curry Evening 7.00pm**

February 2022

**Coffee and Pancakes 10.30am**



March 2022

**Italian Evening 7.00pm**

As well as these events, we would like to ask for suggestions for the other months - ideas to Hazel or Sue (01242 680835)



## “Save the Date”

We will be hosting another Macmillan Coffee Morning on:

**Saturday 25 September**

If anyone would like to have a table to sell crafts, for a small donation, then please get in touch.

More details to follow.

Hannah G



## GENTLE PAWS

Dog Walking and holiday pet sitting for your Pooches.

Please call Sally  
01242680249 or  
07974303426

## PARISH COUNCIL MEETING:

**Wednesday 11 August  
@ 7.30pm  
St Catherine's Church,  
The Leigh**

Keep informed via  
The Leigh Parish Council Website  
[theleighpc.org.uk](http://theleighpc.org.uk)



**For the Love of Nature!** New housing is a necessity, but it's upsetting to see our local hedges cut down, ditches filled in and acres of green space covered in tarmac and cement. As nature lovers, we can't replace ancient pastures or re-home distressed curlews, but we can do something else and many, many people in The Leigh are doing so.

Wandering around the village we can see areas of rewilding, wild flower meadows, organic veggie plots and many, many new trees and hedges. This year alone I've counted circa 700 young native trees, some in plantations to create a mini woodland and others in hedges, gardens or along the roadside. We all know trees play a huge part in the planet's survival and as an added bonus, provide homes for bugs, bees, beetles, moths, butterflies, invertebrates, small mammals and many species of flies - all have a job to do, even if it's to ultimately feed the birds.

Getting the balance between an attractive garden and a haven for nature can simply mean doing less - cut grass only in Spring and Autumn, or at least cut less often and cut less off! Trim hedges less frequently and use less chemicals. Another route is to go for a purpose grown wild flower area, Mike and Alison H have been working on this as well as being chemical free for a few years and are an absolute mine of information (see their separate report).

We can all do something, even if it's just mowing lawns a bit later in the spring (end of May would be ideal). Leaving hedges less trimmed and allowing the areas beneath to grow naturally will give nesting birds and small mammals plenty of cover and a habitat where their food source can flourish. Colin and Cindy W have done this and earlier this year, took part in the annual RSPB birdwatch and counted twenty-three different species of birds in two hours!

With thanks to everyone doing their bit, the love of nature in The Leigh is there for all to see! **Stella B**



I have started to grow vegetables, all organic no pesticides. Have started a wormery so I can produce fertilisers. Also soak banana skins for the roses. Have a huge compost heap I am hoping will give me some mulch. All seems to be working well. I have lost a few things to bugs but only small percentage. It's been so exciting watching it all grow and harvesting. It really does taste better! Special thanks to Chris H for raspberry canes they are doing great. I have had to learn patience and accept some failure as well! **Karen M**

We have a dozen fairly mature trees going in over the next 4 months, and a small meadow, so we're looking forward to lots of birds and insects next year, as well as some wonderful colours! **James A**

Our meadow is in the process of being done. Mike H is helping us but it won't be until September now that we will do some serious planning and planting. So I guess the best you could say is that there will be another wild meadow in the making! **Jane D**



I use weeds like nettles and dandelions to make naturally-dyed fabrics for my wedding business. I also use smaller, flowering weeds like herb robert to make flower-printed ribbon. My aim is to plant a section of the garden just for dyeing. **Jodie U**



Thanks to Mike K, the patch of grass at the back of our house has been transformed into a wonderful bee-friendly garden. It will obviously take a few years to mature but it's already attracting a variety of pollinating insects so definitely a step in the right direction. **Julie B**

## PLANTING A WILD FLOWER MEADOW

Mike started to get interested in this 2-3 years ago when he became aware of the lack of species diversity and decline in invertebrate populations and the birds and mammals that depend on them. Karen M was kind enough to allow us to experiment with 350 sq meters of land adjacent to her house. We realised we needed to start with bare earth - you need at least 50% bare earth but preferably 100% - and with the help of John A, Richard T and Barry T, we rotavated and cleared the area, sowed the seed by hand and rolled it in. This project is 5 years minimum as it is intended to regenerate a natural wildflower meadow and requires management. Establishing a natural soil mycelial structure is essential for success and can take many years to develop. It is a learning process for us...

The seed mix we sowed was a traditional meadow mix for clay soils, but seed mixes for other soil types are available, potentially including mixes for soil that gets inundated with water!

The patch at the front of our house was sown with an instant sunshine meadow mix which is not traditional but gives excellent first year results for insects as well as looking lovely. Last year it was lawn, the seed was sown in spring, although if sown in autumn we probably would have better results as autumn sowings tend to do better. You have to work with mother nature and pick your time with this.

We now have a tractor, a rotavator, a harrow and a roller and we are happy to offer these implements and services to the village to create small areas for a traditional wildflower meadow (5 years to produce results) or an instant sunshine mix or anything in-between? The tractor is 1 meter wide so can get into tight spaces or discrete strips. If anyone would like to nominate a suitable area we would be happy to evaluate this. The only issue is the cost of the seed which can vary on the desired outcome, an example would be 500g seed is £79 for 33 sq. meters but could be less if bought collectively. Please see [www.meadowmania.co.uk](http://www.meadowmania.co.uk) or [www.greenfarmseeds.com](http://www.greenfarmseeds.com).



We can recommend two books 'Making a Wildflower Meadow' by Pam Lewis and 'How to Make a Wildflower Meadow' by James Hewetson-Brown. It is not quick or easy but so worthwhile. The only problem is mowing larger areas as it requires a disc mower - these are not suitable to use around buildings or people, so Mike has purchased and learned how to use a scythe to do it in a traditional way which is also kinder to the land.

Are the Parish Council aware of any source of funding for this? Producing a traditional wildflower meadow is at least a 5 year commitment but so fun and so worthwhile for people, the long term custodianship of our environment, small mammals, moths, butterflies and insects alike. **Mike and Alison H**