



## **WILD DIDCOT CAFÉ 14 May 2022**

Following the decision of Didcot Town Council to award Sustainable Didcot £719.36, we are pleased to report we ran a successful event launching the Wild Didcot project at the Didcot Civic Hall on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2022.

Sustainable Didcot is a community group for Didcot residents with a shared interest in the environment, sustainable living and acting against climate change.

The Wild Didcot project aims to connect people with nature and to encourage residents to actively support and take actions for nature recovery in our town. This includes establishing a network of wildlife friendly areas across town connecting to the wider countryside.

Thanks to the Didcot Town Council grant, we were able to provide free entry and free activities to ensure inclusion for all. We were also able to offer workshops to build bug hotels and hedgehog houses at significantly discounted rates.

The grant was supplemented by kind donations from our volunteers and from others including the Tesco Community Champions, Planet Patrol, Usborne Book partner Starlight Safari, Pikku Publishing, Pam Ayres, Whizz Pop Bang Magazine, Chilton Garden Centre, the Field Studies Council, Together TV, Wild Gardens and the RHS.

Overall, this allowed us to:

- Offer stalls on a range of topics including on pond and water for wildlife, mini beasts, bees, hedgehogs, compost and worms. Each stall provided a mix of information and advice on actions people could take in their own garden and local spaces (e.g. how to build a pond, make a hedgehog-sized gap in fences, plant lots of pollinator-friendly flowers) and lots of free fun activities, including making sustainable balloon or pompom bees, wooden garden signs, air-dried clay hedgehogs, bottlecap bugs, nature art and more. Many of the activities used recycled material to support our sustainability agenda.
- Run three workshop sessions where attendees built 12 bug hotels and 6 hedgehog houses.
- Launch the Didcot Wildlife Garden charter, offering advice to visitors on how to help wildlife thrive in their garden. Those who pledged on the day (around 40 people) also received a free pledge card and a plant to support their endeavour!
- Donate wonderful book prizes to our art competition winners, presented by Didcot Mayor Pam Siggers on the day, and sunflower seeds to those completing the scavenger

hunt (the leftover seeds were offered to the Didcot Library Jubilee party visitors along with one of the minibeast craft activities).

We were also keen to showcase and promote other groups and organisations.

Didcot library brought many wonderful nature-themed books for visitors to borrow on the day. They also held a story time session in the garden in the afternoon.

The Tesco Champions offered a free seed bomb making activity and fresh fruit.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Hagbourne Scouts provided food and drinks, which raised funds for their group.

To offer visitors a wider perspective on what is being done for nature both locally and nationally:

- Planet Patrol showcased information on recycling and litter picking and offered a free seed sowing activity.
- The Earth Trust showcased information about their activities and offered a free willow weaving activity making bird feeders.
- The RSPB and Wildlife Trust provided information on their activities and membership.

We made use of the garden with some of the stalls located outside as well as additional activities and the story time session. This helped the connection with nature!

The feedback on the day and afterward was incredibly positive and many (visitors and groups/organisations alike) asked when the next event was going to be. Walking around the room showed many children and families happily engaged throughout the day. We counted 207 individual visitors, though we may have missed a few.

It was a great start to the project and we hope to offer more events in the future.



**DIDCOT WILDLIFE GARDEN CHARTER**

**Will you pledge?**

- 1. Provide wildlife with access to your garden, e.g. by creating a hedgehog holes in your fences** 
- 2. Leave an area of your garden to grow wild** 
- 3. Stop using pesticides, weed killers and peat** 
- 4. Provide a water source (a pond or water bowl)** 
- 5. Nurture existing trees and plants, and add nectar and pollen rich flowers**

The poster features a green border and includes two cartoon characters: a yellow 'minibeast' on the left and a yellow character with arms raised on the right. A circular logo in the top right corner reads 'SUSTAINABLE DIDCOT' around a tree icon.

Our nature art competition winning entries



Didcot Mayor Pam Siggers presenting prizes to one of the winners of our nature art competition



We had a selection of around 10 peat-free compost for people to compare. We are planning trials next



Residents who signed up to the charter also got a free plant on the day!



Lots of advice, a magnetic pond fishing game and make your own dragonfly craft, something for all ages!



The Earth Trust stall also offered a willow weaving activity making bird feeders

