



Environment Matters

The environment bulletin of District 105N



Issue 1
Summer 2022



Fellow Lions,

This has been one of the most challenging summers for wildlife ever seen! Climate change, which has seen an increase of 1°C has not only caused the wild weather, of the early part of the year, but has also seen heatwaves and droughts in some parts and flooding in others. This has impinged on our food production with farmers harvesting grain crops in July because the plants are not managing to make larger seeds which will in turn make some staple foods more expensive to buy.

The same changes impact on the natural world, which affects the distribution and abundance of plants and therefore the animals which use them as a food source. Small wonder we are seeing unusual plants and animals turning up and what we would normally expect decreasing in numbers.

With the predicted 2.5 °C increase, by 2050, the severity and frequency of these changes will increase. How many of us will have children or grandchildren living in 2050? What we do NOW will determine what sort of world we will leave them as our legacy. The choices we make NOW can minimise the increases or make them happen even faster. If we don't do something about our lifestyles NOW then we will see the most common cause of infant mortality be starvation, dehydration or other events arising from climate change.

Much of this arises from the industrialised world's demands for fossil fuel energy and our desire for more and more comfort and convenience in our lives. At what cost is our insatiable demands for holidays in foreign parts, our need for a Chelsea tractor, when we live in a city close to a bus route, lights on throughout the house and heating rooms we don't use. If those around us don't change, then "Be the Change".

As Lions, our mantra is "Where there is a need, there's a Lion". Let's add another -

"Leave only footprints".

Bird Flu!

The risk of contracting avian flu is low but not absent. Common sense should be used to minimise the risks even further. If you come across a bird which looks ill or dead, do not pick it up and keep your pets away from it.

If you find three dead wild waterfowl (swans, geese or ducks), a single dead bird of prey, or five or more dead wild birds of any other species (including gulls) at the same place at the same time, you should report them to Defra's national GB telephone helpline: 03459 33 55 77

Sea bird colonies are especially vulnerable, because at this time of year, the cliff nesting ones are in close proximity on cliff ledges which makes transmission of the virus relatively easy.



Tree Planting

2022 has seen the UK lose more trees to high winds than ever before. The scale of loss has been so great in the UK over the past 12 months, it is beyond the scope of any voluntary service group to try to keep pace. Fortunately, local and central governments are taking the issue seriously and we are seeing large scale planting by commercial firms with the right heavy-duty gear, planting thousands of trees in sites around the country.

Are our tree planting efforts therefore a waste of time? Absolutely not! Every tree planted helps and also planting in areas of public land increases awareness of what is required. This is especially true in areas of school grounds which helps develop understanding of the natural world, in young people so that they do not make the same mistakes that previous generations have done.

The planting of trees also provides oases for wildlife in urban or agricultural lands. If you are undertaking tree planting, please make sure that the trees you plant are local to your area so that they can play a part in increasing biodiversity as well as doing their bit for combatting climate change.

For those wishing to plant this autumn and intending doing this in conjunction with the Woodland Trust, please remember that applications for November delivery are likely to close in mid-August. However, packs can be bought from the on-line shop at any time of the year. If you are looking to plant next spring, deliveries will be made in March to successful applicants.

[Free Trees for Schools and Communities - Woodland Trust](#)

[Grid Reference Finder](#)

[Free Tree Packs: Frequently Asked Questions - Woodland Trust](#)

The application form is in the FAQs one

Please also make sure that you keep yourselves and other planters safe. Many of our woodlands are still in dangerous condition with uprooted trees and loose branches being propped up by others some height off the ground. Moving one small branch can be enough to trigger much larger ones to fall. Please ensure that this reflected in your Risk Assessments.



Educating people about the environment

One consequence of “staycations” has been that our wild places are under huge pressure from visitors, many who are keen on their rights to visit these places but not so keen on their responsibilities. This is true in all parts of the country. Mount Snowdon was turned into a public lavatory on one bank holiday, a problem shared with Scotland’s North Coast 500, where poor amenities and infrastructure cater for too many tourists, and also the Lake District which was forced to close off some parts to tourists because of visitor numbers. Wildfires have been started by people using disposable barbeques and throwing them away. Litter is a vast problem in all of these. Is there a role for Lions in educating people about their responsibilities?

[The Countryside Code: advice for countryside visitors - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/campaigns/the-countryside-code)

Many Clubs have established links with primary schools through donations of Wild Tribe Heroes books after Ellie Jackson’s inspirational talk at District Convention. This has given an “in” with many primary schools and perhaps these can provide an area for tree planting and follow up exercises to stimulate interest in youngsters and could possibly be extended to involve parents. One possibility could be to create an outdoor teaching area such as that shown below.



This layout above uses willow stems which root very easily and need little maintenance. If you do use willow, make sure that you plant them well away from buildings or walls as their roots can play havoc with the foundations! (see also Ryedale LC’s activities in the around the clubs section)

Gardening for nature

There are many gardeners now becoming aware of the part they can play in maintaining biodiversity. For some, this simply means that they stop mowing the lawn and let the weeds (sorry, wild flowers) take over. Other gardeners look at this with horror as they want their gardens to be pristine, full of colour and not a weed to be seen. Is it possible to be an immaculate gardener and assist maintaining biodiversity?

Adding a small pond will instantly increase the wildlife value of your garden. Even small ponds will soon have a population of insects, probably including, frogs, newts and water beetles living in them. There are many beautiful plants live in shallow water or in the surrounding soil. Apart from the permanent residences for whom your garden is now their world, you will also find animals like wasps coming in for drinks. A huge number of insects spend part of their life cycles in water and so don't be too surprised to see demoiselle flies flying in tandem to your pond and laying eggs.



When wetlands are under huge pressure and species found in them are becoming at risk as a result, your garden pond can help their survival. You may not get swans or flocks of ducks but the mini beasts which will visit can be equally as rewarding.

Honestly, there is water in there!

What about the flowers? Planting a range of flower sizes and shapes means that you are providing pollen to a range of different pollinating insects. Pollination is not just about bees. A myriad of flies, hover flies and butterflies are all designed to get their pollen from different sizes and shapes of flower. Providing that, over a long period of flowering, provides a food source for a range of insects.

Of course, this applies to the less than immaculate gardener as well. To both groups my heartfelt plea is not to cut back the old flowering stems as summer draws to a close but to leave them be until next summer. Some of your garden roomies (groomies?) are completing their lifecycles inside the stems or are going to overwinter in them.



The old stems lying on the ground, which the immaculate gardener will not want, are important because they also will have insects inside them but also help provide a habitat for many ground crawling insects. These in turn feed foraging birds. If you must clear them up, why not pop them in a large flowerpot or two and cover them with a slate or tile, instead of throwing them out?

Remember the bug hotel from last year's bulletins? It then went on tour to the District and MD Conventions, why not pop a few of them in secluded corners of the garden? It is better to do a small bit than not do anything.

Lastly, as a reward for being a less than immaculate gardener, I am delighted to say that my regular visits of the endangered Song Thrushes were surpassed this year and no fewer than six broods of young were produced! Not many gardens have Song Thrush as their most common bird! Additionally, house sparrows, wrens, blackbirds and wood pigeons also bred. Not bad for a wee garden! There is something special about getting up very early and having your coffee outside watching the birds frantically hunting for food for their offspring. Regrettably, the jackdaws also bred

Re-use, repurpose, repair and, if you must, recycle

Just a short section in this edition. I would strongly encourage you to view the MD video on the Environment and in particular the presentation of PDG Teresa Carberry, past mayor of Mold, Flintshire.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCSdXWU5hh2mmNmiaonaHAhQ/playlists>

Teresa has been recycling school uniforms (many schools still do not). Crucial in her efforts has been two key factors. The clothes must be in perfect condition and purchase must not involve any loss of dignity. Teresa envisaged trousers, skirts and ties as being most common but demand has also included shoes, sports kit, winter jackets etc. Please visit and hear for yourselves what has already shown itself to be a huge boon to the community and will, no doubt, see much more use in the current and foreseeable future.

This is something in which many Clubs could get involved and perhaps could also be extended to baby and toddler clothes as this is the age range where kids outgrow clothes most quickly.

Are you suffering from hose pipe bans?

Even here in Aberdeenshire, water shortage is evident. Below average rainfall coupled with a warmer summer than average has left us a bit short. It is, of course, much more acute in the Deep South (i.e. Yorkshire).

Much is made of the waste of water through leakage. Although it is a disgrace, this is beyond us to do anything to stop it. It is being reported in the press that one water authority alone is losing 88 million litres of water through leakage. Periodically, how much water is being taken from rivers hits the headlines, but not too often, because the

alternative may be having to cut domestic use and collect from street standpipes, as in the seventies.

However, the way in which we as individuals waste water has a bearing as well. We use a considerable amount of energy ensuring that our water is fit for consumption. It is then pumped under pressure to our homes. Some of it is used to water the garden, the car, the dogs paddling pool etc. Worst of all is using drinking water to flush away our personal wastes!

Leaving taps running un-necessarily is just wrong! It wastes energy and a precious resource. Here's one simple tip on saving water. If your shower is heated at a boiler, the first water to come through will be cold. Collecting it in a bucket will provide you with a fair bit of water. In our house, the two of us both do this and have almost two gallons of water per day which is then used for other purposes.

Using an egg timer to limit the time spent under the shower is another. It has been estimated that only four minutes is needed for a person to shower thoroughly. How else can you save water? Please share your ideas.

Around the Clubs

Darlington L.C.

Darlington Lions paid for planting twenty native, deciduous trees at Blackwell Grange Golf Club.



Lions Richard Western, Dave Simmons, Sandy Duncan, Lion President Neil Anderson, Dicky Parker (club captain) Sylvia Western, Pat De Martino, John De Martino & Jean Pinnegar



Lion President Neil Anderson & Dicky Parker (club captain).



Commemorative plaque

Keighley LC

We at Keighley Lions are in the process of presenting WildTribe Heroes books...aimed at primary school children...promoting care of the environment. The books, written by Ellie Jackson are in sets of seven...each concerning a different look at the world of nature. A presentation was also held for the schools at Keighley library, with the support of the town council who have helped with a grant.

Ryedale LC

FOREST SCHOOL AT PICKERING COMMUNITY AND INFANTS SCHOOL

The Forest School, located in the grounds of Pickering Community and Infants School, was established about 15 years ago and is a much used, much loved, safe and secure environmental asset to the school. It was starting to get overgrown and unkempt and required substantial freshening up.

The Ryedale Lions Club was approached by the school to see if it could help, and using members with the necessary knowledge and expertise, they committed to the following scheme which is now substantially complete and will be completed during the Summer Holidays:



This involved treating with approved chemical all areas of ivy and removing all growth to the neighbour's boundary. Removing poor quality trees and shrubs and tidy up remaining trees.



Shredding all removed timber and spreading around pond area.



Supply and plant new suitable trees on completion.

Boroughbridge 98 LC

Three from Boroughbridge LC!

Ellie Jackson's WildTribe Heroes series was distributed to ten local primary schools with plans to extend this to Ripon very soon.



The schools have been over-joyed to receive the books and this has also kick-started other environmental projects in the schools including a local farm called Sally Farm planting over 1000 native trees, one tree for every pupil in the area. Each child is decorating a name tag which will mark their very own tree at Sally Farm!

And there's more.....

In addition Boroughbridge Lions have donated £350 to Roecliffe Parish Council to help in the development of Roecliffe Common for the village community. The money is helping improve pathways in the common, improve access, buy nest boxes, and plant wild flowers.



Boroughbridge Community Larder

In the UK, we throw away more than 4.5 million tonnes of edible food a year, which is enough to fill up the Royal Albert Hall 90 times over, according to "Love Food Hate Waste". Food waste is a huge climate change contributor as rotting food releases methane, a damaging greenhouse gas. In fact, food waste is responsible for a staggering 8-10% of total man-made greenhouse gas emissions, four times more than aviation! Some 70 per cent of food waste comes from households and in Britain each day the waste includes 24 million slices of bread, 1.4 million bananas and 5.8 million glasses of milk.

For this reason, Boroughbridge 98 Lions decided to work on a joint venture with Boroughbridge Community Care to set up Boroughbridge Community Larder.

What is a Community Larder?

It is a place where ANYONE (shops, households, farmers, allotment holders etc) can donate any surplus produce they have; this food is then available to ANYONE, free of charge, regardless of means. A Community Larder is not a food bank.

Why have a Community Larder?

The aim is to reduce the amount of food waste going to landfill (this will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions which in turn will help climate change) and also to help bring our local community together. So on Wednesday 6th April the Mayor of Boroughbridge carried out the Larder's official opening.

At the moment the Larder is open for one afternoon a week on a Wednesday. It is manned by several of our club members and we have a pool of 18 volunteers from the local community plus 6 from BCC who also help out.

In the 10 weeks since opening we have had 451 visitors to the larder representing 974 household members and we have prevented a total of 1618.56kgs of food from going to landfill, that is a massive 1.6 tons*!!!!!!

The atmosphere at the Larder is buzzing and everyone - visitors and volunteers alike, get so much out of it! We're all doing our bit to help save the planet.

Update: Now 3 Tons!

To all the Clubs who have shared what they are doing in Environmental Projects, my grateful thanks. For the Yorkshire lads and lasses, "That'll do".

Lastly, an idea for Clubs to try as a Club project, if you can access a suitable public area. It is a large-scale version of a bug hotel but uses old pallets which would mostly have been burned or thrown out with the rubbish. Different materials are used to cater for different species and different sized tubes are used to accommodate different sizes of animals



Another possible use for unloved and unwanted pallets is to make pallet chic furniture out of them – if your members have the skills to do so.

Here are photos of the outdoor part of a café which has done exactly that. Could your Club adapt these ideas for areas around you?



Any alternative ideas? Pallet reuse is cheap and lends itself to outdoor construction projects. Please share any ideas with others.

Kindest regards

Malcolm Hogg
District Officer: Environment