



DISTRICT 105N

2021-22 Environment Bulletin 1

What we are doing to help reduce and reverse the impact we have on our environment.

Malcolm Hogg
District Environment Officer



Fellow Lions,

It is with great reluctance that I must start our first bulletin with sad news. Following complaints from a number of Lions (including members of my own Club) Charlotte, our cover-girl, has been let go. The news was broken to her immediately after her wedding breakfast so to intrude on the newly widowed lady was bad timing. She took it very badly, almost regurgitating the groom. I am delighted to say that she has now moved on and is looking for a similar position with other organisations, perhaps Rotary or Round Table in the Mordor area (for Lord of the Rings fans only). Charlotte's fans can follow her antics on the web.



This leaves a slot on the front cover available for Lions who have taken pictures of more photogenic plants or animals. Please send in your photos to lionmalcolmnenv@gmail.com by 1st September 2021, remembering to give your name and Club. The three judged to be best will be on the covers of the next three bulletins. Photos can be of any UK plant or animal but no domesticated animals and no garden plants. This includes sheep, cute puppies or petunias. Also barred are any photos of spiders. All entries will be featured in the autumn bulletin.

This is **not** to be confused with the Environment Photo Competition and is simply a bit of fun and an opportunity to show others our efforts. You can enter as many photos as you like and all will be shown in the next bulletin. Every expense has been spared for the prizes which are:

First Prize: Basking in the sunshine of the admiration of others

Second Prize: An internal warm glow of satisfaction

Third Prize: A lukewarm glimmer of pleasure

Sam Finlayson, an amateur wildlife photographer, who is a non-Lion (but should be) has agreed to judge the photos which permits me to take full responsibility for blaming Sam when disgruntled photographers consider they have been robbed.



Sam



One of Sam's

(Please remember to include your name and Club with your entry.)

Around the Clubs

I have had no news of what has been happening over summer. Please let me know what you are doing or planning to do so that we share ideas! Both large projects and small make a difference and your idea may help another Club so please don't think your project is too small to share.

Tree Planting

There are a good number of Clubs now carrying out tree planting as part of their programme. The number of trees planted per club varies a lot and depends on the size and fitness of the membership to carry out a physically demanding task. Some smaller Clubs have combined together to take this on and others are doing it on their own.

The changes in our weather should tell us how urgent the need has become. It is a bigger threat to mankind and humanity than anything else. The lives of our children and grandchildren will be dictated by the changing global weather patterns which are impacting on us now.

Trees help to stabilise environments. They take more carbon dioxide out the atmosphere and more cheaply than the most sophisticated machines. As a bonus, they provide oxygen, a habitat for animals and plants, reduce pollution, cool down cities, reduce soil erosion, minimise flooding, reduce landslides and provide a calm place to improve mental health. What's not to love?

At this time of year, tree seeds start to turn up on ebay. Why not buy a couple of packets of crab apple seeds (currently around £15 for 300). Pop them in a freezer bag, with a little moist compost and put them the fridge (not freezer) for a month. Sow in compost and water when needed, potting them on until they are between three to five years old. You will have over 100 trees to give away for small gardens. They will not get super huge and are easily trimmed to size. The apple-blossom looks pretty and provides pollen for a myriad of insects. Leaving the fallen apples and leaves provides a great boost to the biodiversity of animals in the gardens. If you can access a small piece of waste-ground, the trees will make a beauty spot and become a wildlife haven. The importance of these islands of trees is becoming more appreciated.



Food for our pollinators



Food for our ground feeders

Litter picking

Many Clubs carry out litter picking exercises, sometimes with other organisations and sometimes as the organisers. Please remember to risk assess and give appropriate health and safety advice, if you are doing so. Depending on your chosen area, needle stick injuries may be an issue or infections arising from bags of dog poo hanging from trees. What protection is needed, what precautions need to be taken and what advice needs to be given must also be included in your preparations. Know your turf! Remember too, Covid is still out there.

One novel idea shown on Facebook was a wooden sign at the start of a popular beach walk with a stack of plastic supermarket baskets. Presumably litter bins were also close by. The sign encouraged walkers to pick up a basket and collect any litter that they came across. Is this something that Lions could initiate with help from a local supermarket.



Another approach taken by some local cafes has been to offer a free coffee or tea for people who collected a black bag of rubbish. Could Lions get involved in encouraging this?

Around the world: Focus on Sweden

In the UK it is becoming trendy to recycle or upcycle goods. In Sweden, there is also a changing culture. [ReTuna shopping mall](#) is a two-story complex of second-hand stores on the outskirts of Eskiltuna, a small riverside city 70 miles west of Stockholm. In 14 specialist shops covering everything from clothes to DIY tools, everything for sale is recycled. This store is doing extremely well. The mall opened its doors in August 2015 and is located next to the Retuna central recycling centre. It is easy for visitors to sort materials they are discarding into the containers and then drop off reusable toys, furniture, clothes, decorative items, and electronic devices in the mall's depot.

The business concept is working: In 2018, ReTuna Återbruksgalleria had almost £1,000,000 in sales for recycled products in 2018.

With large numbers of high streets with empty shops could this become a viable project for any Lions Club to become a partner with local authorities, shop owners etc, to adapt this for our local needs.

Recycling Clothes

As anyone who has worked in a charity shop will know, the most common type of donation is clothes and, at the risk of being sexist, more women's garments are donated than men's clothing. Even more depressingly, many garments will have hardly ever been worn. Despite the high cost of some clothing and the very low price charged in charity shops, often at give-away prices, many people are unwilling to buy second hand clothing.

Many garments are produced in countries with very low labour costs which often coincides with poor water availability. The quantity of water used in clothes production is very high. In the UK, there is increasing environmental awareness and an emerging cultural change regarding recycling. Can we, perhaps, do something about this? Posh Frocks Reloved Lions Store – perhaps even wedding dresses. You might even become the go-to place for school proms.

If you have a high student population, what about a regular pop-up shop to recycle clothing? Young people have less entrenched attitudes towards second hand clothes and it could be a revenue source as well as reducing environmental impact. Everyone's a winner!

School uniform recycling

School uniform recycling stalls are popular in many areas. At the rate young people grow, uniforms can be in very good condition but of no use to the owners. Recycling them in uniform stalls is environmentally friendly and may well answer a social need as well.



PDG Teresa Carberry (inset), Past Mayor of Mold tells me that there is high demand for shoes and winter jackets as well

Upcycling

Too many items are used on a single use only basis. Thinking outside the box can give an item, which has fulfilled its purpose, a new lease of life.



Some spare geraniums and tin cans



A rail bought for a fiver from a charity shop, an old pallet and some old cord

Please send in any novel ways in which you have done the same.

Garden nature wardens

Our gardens are really mini nature reserves and with lockdowns, many people have become more aware of the wildlife with whom we share them. Even in my fairly small garden, wrens, song thrushes, wood pigeons, blackbirds, coal tits, dunnocks and goldfinches have bred as well as the newts, frogs and damselflies in my pond. Not so obvious are the thousands of mini beasts also thriving in it. Despite having planted many hostas, often regarded as snail food by gardeners, this year, very few have been damaged as the nesting thrushes have been hammering the snails. No toxic chemicals used and providing a food source for a declining species.



A couple of seriously hammered snails

Many Lions are keen gardeners. Planning to make our gardens more user friendly for our wildlife does not necessarily detract from creating a beautiful garden. Our practice, however, often works against nature. In autumn we cut back plants. Hollow stemmed deadwood of some plants may well be the shelter of an overwintering insect. Please leave cutting back until spring. Another autumn job is sweeping up leaves under bushes and trees. Leaving them be provides nourishment and shelter for another group of insects as well as providing some insulation to the soil. Spring bulbs are good for providing early pollen for insects. The prolonged cold weather of a late spring leads to a low supply of insects which, in turn, creates a food shortage for many birds. Not clearing up dead leaves gives a little help. The more people doing it, the better.

Boundaries are often marked by wooden fences these days. Taller shrubs can provide shelter and protection for smaller birds and may also reward you with a nest as well as giving a greater sense of security to birds so that they will come closer to you.

Plastic flowerpots and seeds

How many plastic flowerpots are used once and then binned? Every summer, hundreds of thousands of these enter the system when we buy plants from nurseries or garden centres. Why not come to an arrangement with another agency to have an unmanned stand to recycle these on a help yourself / donate basis.

Left over seeds from packets could also be saved from going to waste, by recycling in the same way.