

## **‘Wild About’ event/initiative**

### **Everything you need to know!**

#### **What it is**

- ‘Wild About’ was a project that was started in October 2023 after it was raised at the October meeting of the Framlingham, Wickham Market, Kelsale and Yoxford Community Partnership
- As you will read below, there are different directions you can take your local Wild About initiative
- The idea was first adopted for Wickham Market with the initiative there being called ‘Wild About Wickham’ – they decided to run a series of events
- The idea behind the Wild About Wickham event was to provide an opportunity for members of the public in Wickham Market to find out more about activities that are in the community such as gardening schemes etc but also to try and take information away about things that they can do at home
- The hope with Wild About initiatives is that the events/activities inform and enthuse members of the public in their local village/town about things they can do to do their bit for the environment and biodiversity and to get involved in things in the community
- A desired outcome from these events is members of the public leave the event knowing what they can do to support the environment and biodiversity in their own way in their local community
- There are also other Community Partnerships who are thinking about running their own Wild About events

#### **Name**

- The inspiration for the name comes from the Wild About Campsea which is a group of residents with an interest in wildlife who work with the Parish Council to improve biodiversity in and around the village. They have been doing some brilliant work since Covid and continue to do so! More information here: [Wild About Campsea » Campsea Ashe \(onesuffolk.net\)](https://www.onesuffolk.net/wild-about-campsea)

#### **Background about Wild About in action**

- The first event took place at Wickham Market Village Hall in February 2024 and was well attended – a variety of stalls participated including the local Parent Teacher Association, Tree Wardens, Transition Woodbridge, Green Print Forum and the Green Gym and Wickham’s Hedgehog expert (Niki)
- The follow on event was ‘Hogs, Frogs and Logs’ which was held on 27<sup>th</sup> April at Wickham Market Village Hall – this featured a talk from Suffolk Wildlife Trust and Transition Woodbridge
- The first event cost £300 to run – including hall hire, refreshments, free items to be taken away and promotional material
- Alongside Wickham Market’s events, Ufford (also in the Wickham Market ESC electoral ward) have done a number of Wild About Ufford events including:

- Ufford Gardening Club Seed and Plant sale - around 30 free Wildflower Seed packs donated by Notcutts were given away with guidance on how to start. Wildflower patch in your garden
- Family Day - “build your own bird box” for children as part of the all day event; very successful in attracting families to get involved (Paid for by Ufford Parish Council)
- Ufford Summer Show - stands from Transition Woodbridge and Suffolk RSPB plus more “bird box” kits
- Coming in November: Build a Stumpery in the Woods: this is family participation event.

## **Your local Wild About event/initiative**

- Your local Wild About initiative may be an event like Wickham Market to promote local nature initiatives and to promote information for people to take away or it may be something else
- It may be information stalls and tables where people can do mini craft activities
- It might be activities like bird walks, events outside in a local green space
- It might be an awareness campaign about a certain kind of wildlife in your community to raise more awareness
- It might be working with the local school on a nature project or engaging with them about a certain environmental topic or asking about what they would like to see locally - e.g. more bee hotels, more hedgehog highways
- It might be an addition to an existing project or new project - e.g. a wildflower meadow or new wildflower meadow
- You might want to focus on something in particular – e.g. swifts, bats, bees, hedgehogs, water
- You might want to raise awareness of facilities in the local area – e.g. woodlands

This list above is not exhaustive – it is really up to you what you want to do! You may also find it helpful to run a survey to gauge what local people would like (Appendix 1).

## **Setting one up – step by step**

To run a Wild About event or initiative, there are a few key steps we would recommend:

1. Put together a group of people who are like minded to share the workload
  - You will need a few people to be on hand in the planning and the running of the event/initiative on the day(s)
  - Feel free to assign roles to those who feel best suited e.g. promotion, health and safety
2. Decide what you want to do and plan dates etc
  - You may want to do an event or a mini project
  - You may want to focus on sharing information or bringing people together to think about the environment
  - You may want to do a survey with local people to identify the focus for an activity – a template survey you might want to use is in Appendix 1



- Once you have a good idea, think about dates and times
  - Think about the venue of an event – indoors or outdoors, if your community doesn't have a village hall or church, could the local pub or other businesses help to host? If they are happy to host and any hire fees can be covered then this could be an ideal location
3. Determine who is the lead organisation - that organisation will be the Public Liability Insurance holder whose insurance will be covering the event
    - If unsure, you could ask your local town or parish council if they are willing to be the lead organisation for risk assessment and insurance
    - They will also be the organisation that applies for and holds any funding for the event/initiative
  4. Reach out to local and nature organisations who might want to be involved
    - If you are partnering up with other organisations, identify who they are and ask if they would be happy to come along
    - Once they are confirmed, you can then mention them in the promotion
  5. Promote the initiative
    - Draft press release in Appendix 2 and poster attached
    - You might want to do an article for your newsletter, share on Facebook, promote through the church, school etc
    - Maximise awareness of the event so people know it is happening and what the 'draw' is for them
  6. Conduct a risk assessment for your event/initiative
    - Assess the risks and mitigations for the event
    - If needed, a template is in Appendix 3
  7. Let the Community Partnership know what you are doing and what the success has been
    - It is useful for the Community Partnership to know all the great things happening
    - Was it well attended? Was good feedback received? Is there demand for more activities? Do people seem more informed about local groups and things they can do for the environment? Have some groups seen increased volunteer numbers because of it?

## **Some pointers to consider**

### **Funding**

- Think about any funding needed to run the event
- This may be venue hire, giveaways for people to take away, refreshments, poster/leaflet printing
- If your local parish or town council is organising or involved, they may want to fund it or contribute towards it
- You may want to approach your local District Councillor to see if they would like to support from their Enabling Communities Budget:

- The Enabling Community Budgets (ECBs) are intended to support activities delivered by community, voluntary and social enterprise organisations.
- This gives each of the 55 elected members of East Suffolk Council a £7,500 Enabling Communities Budget to spend on community projects or to develop new projects in their ward to tackle local need.
- Below are just a few examples of the type of projects this fund has helped previously:
  - Purchase of play equipment
  - Village hall/Community Centre refurbishments or purchase of equipment
  - One-off events that will benefit the wider community – but please ensure that applications are sent to us at least 3 weeks before the event start date.
  - New community initiatives (can include staff costs/support costs)
  - Projects that will help and support people with disabilities and their carers
  - Purchase of defibrillators
  - Youth groups and activities
- If you are a community group interested in receiving ECB funding, please contact your district councillor to discuss your project idea.

## Costs

- Think about innovative ways to keep costs low
- Examples:
  - Venue hire fee could be waived if money is made on teas and coffees
  - Refreshments could be donated by a local supermarket or sponsored by a local business
  - There may be giveaways that charities have that you can give out free of charge – just the case of asking!

## Messaging and promotion

- Think about who this is aimed for – who is your target audience? How will they know it is for them? What is the draw for them to come along?

Useful links/leads to consider:

- RSCPA
- Suffolk Wildlife Trust
- Your local gardening groups
- Your local tree warden
- The Green Print Forum

## Good luck!

Any questions you have, please email [communities@eastsoffolk.gov.uk](mailto:communities@eastsoffolk.gov.uk)

## Appendix 1: Template survey

We are looking to do a nature and biodiversity event in the INSERT COMMUNITY called 'Wild about'. This is an initiative that the Framlingham, Wickham Market, Kelsale and Yoxford Community Partnership has started and it is about running events to educate and engage about nature and biodiversity. To see what this might look like in INSERT COMMUNITY, we want to hear your views! It would be much appreciated if you could give us your thoughts and then we will shape the event based on the findings.

1/ Would you attend a 'Wild About' nature and biodiversity event locally?

2/ When would you most likely attend an event? Weekday evening

- Saturday morning
- Sunday morning
- Saturday afternoon
- Sunday afternoon

3/ What sort of activity would you like to do at such as event?

- Information stalls to find out about different things available around nature
- Activity to get the family involved like fire setting or pond dipping
- Talks from organisations specialising in nature
- Other

4/ Where would you prefer the event to take place?

INSERT OPTIONS – might be venues or parts of the community

5/ Is there anything else you'd like an event to do or focus on when engaging and educating around nature and the environment?

## Appendix 2: Template press release

### INSERT COMMUNITY residents encouraged to go wild

Residents in INSERT COMMUNITY are invited to a free event to learn more about making space for nature in their gardens (INSERT PRECISE AIM).

Wild About events are an initiative started by the Framlingham, Wickham Market, Kelsale, Yoxford and villages Community Partnership and the first event took place in Wickham Market in February 2024. The Wild About INSERT COMMUNITY event takes place on DATE at VENUE (TIME). Residents are encouraged to come along and find out more about increasing biodiversity in their own gardens, and across the community (INSERT PRECISE AIM).

MORE AROUND THE EVENT – E.G. A range of community groups and organisations will be present at the event, including the X, Y and Z, all offering advice on making space for nature in the garden.

QUOTE FROM ORGANISER

MORE INFORMATION – E.G. REFRESHMENTS AVAILABLE

OPTIONAL – More events are planned throughout the year.

For more information about this event, please contact INSERT CONTACT NAME AND EMAIL/NUMBER

### Appendix 3: Template risk assessment

Person completing Risk Assessment:

Name of event:

Date of event(s):

Hazards	Who might be harmed and how	What are you already doing to control the risk	Further actions required to remove or reduce the risk to as low as reasonably practicable	How will the actions required be implemented?		
				Action by Whom	Action by Date	Done on
E.g. Slips and trips	Visitors – injuries Stallholders – injuries	Stalls not bringing equipment that will extend out and cause a trip hazard	Checking stalls before and during the event to make sure there are no potential hazards  Clear any spillages as quickly as possible to avoid slips  Report any trips/slips to organisers/venue	Organiser  Stallholders	Date of event	Date of event