

## Greenprint Forum Newsletter, June 2018



June has been a month of #30dayswild. This is the national Wildlife Trusts annual challenge to get more people outside and active and sharing their love of nature via social media. The thought behind this campaign is that the more connected people are to nature the more they will act to protect and enhance it and the happier they will be. Indeed [research](#) carried out in 2016 by Richardson et al indicates that the initiative is successful in increasing connection to nature, also bringing associated benefits to happiness, health, and pro-nature behaviours. Find out more at: [www.wildlifetrusts.org/30DaysWild](http://www.wildlifetrusts.org/30DaysWild)

One of the most enjoyable parts of this for the Editor is stopping to watch invertebrates. Did you know there are more than 40,000 species of invertebrate in the UK: creatures without a back bone?

You don't have to know the species or their role, you can just appreciate them. If you do want to know more a few favourite sites are:

[www.suffolkbis.org.uk](http://www.suffolkbis.org.uk)

[www.uksafari.com](http://www.uksafari.com)

[www.buglife.org.uk](http://www.buglife.org.uk)

[www.opalexplornature.org](http://www.opalexplornature.org)

This edition includes: A new way to buy Solar Panels, the Green Lady Eco Store, the Deben Pool refurbishment, Rubbish Walks, experiences of an EV Driver, Suffolk Hedgerows, Master Composters, The Suffolk Punch Trust Heritage Gardens, Suffolk Cloth Nappies and so much more.



## BUYING SOLAR PANELS MADE EASY!

Suffolk County Council is working in partnership with Babergh & Mid Suffolk District Councils, Forest Heath District Council & St Edmundsbury Borough Council, Ipswich Borough Council and Suffolk Coastal & Waveney District Councils to deliver Solar Together Suffolk.

Solar panels are not complex but buying a solar system can be daunting. Solar Together Suffolk is a group buying scheme that helps you through the process, keeping you informed at every stage.



### HOW DOES IT WORK?

1. Registration: you register from now until 22 August for free and without obligation at [www.solartogethersuffolk.co.uk](http://www.solartogethersuffolk.co.uk). To register you simply provide details about your roof, such as its size and orientation.
2. Auction: a supplier 'auction' will be held on 22 August, when our approved solar suppliers will bid for the work. The more people that register, the better the deal should be for each household.
3. Personalised offer: from 10 September you will be contacted with a personalised offer, based on the specifications of your roof. This includes your costs and return on the investment of a solar panel installation.
4. You decide: the decision is then yours as to whether you want to accept your offer. There is no obligation to continue. You will have until 19 October to decide and will be invited to visit an information session.
5. Installation: if you accept the offer, the winning supplier will contact you to survey your roof and set an installation date. All installations are planned to be completed by the end of March 2019.

For detailed information about likely costs, return on investment period, the amount of energy you can expect to generate and lots more go to [www.solartogethersuffolk.co.uk](http://www.solartogethersuffolk.co.uk) or contact our freephone UK helpline on 0800 048 8402 with your questions.



## A business made from helping others access low plastic goods

Article and photos by Magnus Monahan



A vision, passion, hard work and determination are needed to make a business a success. The Green Lady Ecostore in Lowestoft is an example of this.

Michele Watts on retiring from the NHS started selling eco products at festivals and other events. After a while she found the demand was there for a permanent shop. The first location was at Moulton St. Mary but as the business grew she decided to move into bigger premises by the seafront in Lowestoft.

When interviewed Michelle said 'just by making a few changes we can collectively make a difference, David Attenborough in the film Blue Planet has made more people aware of this. People really are starting to take action to reduce plastic waste and keep beaches clean. I am passionate about this and try every product before I sell it, only those that work and I like are sold. Where possible I try to source local products.'

The store stocks a great many items including:

bamboo hairbrushes, bamboo toothbrushes with 62% castor bean oil and 38% nylon bristles (the closest vegan compostable toothbrush that currently exists on the market), natural deodorant in a wooden tube, soap nuts, eco eggs, refillable laundry detergent, shampoo bars, bamboo towels, loose leaf tea and a plastic free safety razor.

Find out more about this store at [thegreenladyecostore.co.uk](http://thegreenladyecostore.co.uk) or pop in for a visit at 162 London Road South, Lowestoft. You will also be able to meet Michelle at our next Greenprint Forum on Wednesday 26th September.



## Master Composter

Article by Magnus Monahan

Suffolk's master composter scheme is now into its 10<sup>th</sup> year. The scheme is run as a partnership between Suffolk Waste Partnership and Garden Organic and trains volunteers to spread the word about the benefits of composting.



Around 45% of household waste is suitable for composting. As well as cutting down on volumes of waste for collection, composting will also provide a great fertiliser for your garden or allotment. Homemade compost is one of the lowest impact alternatives to using peat in the garden and can be made without using plastic at all. Every year in the UK peat extraction for the gardening industry is responsible for 400,000 tonnes of carbon emissions.

There are many different ways of composting, from open heaps, to high tech bins. There's no right or wrong system to use but Suffolk County Council does subsidise some bins so it's worth taking a look at the offers on <https://getcomposting.com>



The image to the left shows some of the different types on offer.

**Note** The standard composting process takes 12-18 months to get a useable product. The process can be speeded up by regularly turning the compost or by using a hot bin system. It really depends how much time you want to put in and how quickly you want your compost. Some people like to chuck their waste in and forget about it and others like to get a bit more technical with it.

Two 'composters' to know:

### **A pet that turns waste food into compost**

The wormery—a great tool to engage children. Like all pets needs careful handling and feeding.



Top tips:

- Keep in the shade—you do not want crispy, fried worms, equally keep them warm (perhaps bring them indoors over a cold winter).
- Add a handful of raw and cooked vegetables and plate scrapings in one corner. Avoid too much fruit peelings, dairy, oils, meat, tough leaves and woodier material. Once most of this has gone add another handful to another corner (this way you can keep track of how much they are eating).
- Keep moist but don't over water.

More information can be found at: [www.rhs.org.uk](http://www.rhs.org.uk) or if you become a member of [Garden Organic](http://Garden Organic).

### **A potent drain cleaner and compost accelerant creator (£9.99)**

Are you fed up with buying drain cleaner in plastic and worried about its impacts? You might like to consider a Bokashi kit – two bins with taps and bokashi bran.

The Bokashi system is effectively an anaerobic fermentation process. Any type of food waste can go into a bokashi bucket, you just add a handful of bran and microbes (you can buy or if you are really dedicated make) each time you add food and then press down to compress the mix to get rid of any air pockets. Drain liquid every couple of days to keep conditions ideal for the microbes, use this within a few days to clear your drains (it is very acidic). Then when one bin is full put the lid on and leave then begin to fill the next one. After a couple of weeks take the sealed off bin and tip contents into your compost bin (it is too acidic to go directly into soil near plants) and then start again.

More information can be found at: [www.bokashicycle.com](http://www.bokashicycle.com)



## Suffolk Punch Trust Heritage Garden

Article and photos by Magnus Monahan



The Suffolk Punch Trust is best known for its work breeding the endangered Suffolk Punch horse but it also works to protect the historic plants of Suffolk through its heritage garden. In fact the horses were even used to plough the land in preparation when the garden was set up in 2009.

Today the garden has grown to include around 50 different species of Suffolk garden plant which fit one of these criteria.

- Plant bred in Suffolk by a Suffolk company or person living in Suffolk
- Cultivated plants which occurred in Suffolk
- Plant named for a Suffolk place or object
- Plant named for a Suffolk person
- Plant with direct link to a Suffolk person

A stroll through the gardens gives a glimpse into some great Suffolk history with plants named after the likes of artist Anna Zinkeisen, composer Benjamin Britten, plantsman Sir Cedric Morris and poet Edward Fitzgerald.

The garden is the only county wide collection to be awarded the prestigious National Collection status by Plant Heritage. This scheme recognises gardens that document and preserve specific groups of plants for the future.



The garden is managed without the use of artificial fertiliser, pesticides and herbicides. Pests are hand controlled and weeds pulled by hand. Tools are wooden handled. Composting is carried out onsite.

The garden also contains a vegetable patch which is used by three local schools and serves as an excellent educational resource. At the end of the garden is a wild flower orchard. The grass is hand cut by scythe once a year and left to nature the rest of the time, which provides a brilliant habitat for wildlife (such as the gatekeeper butterfly pictured below).



The garden is maintained by a small group of volunteers led by local Artist Margaret Wyllie and they are always on the lookout for more help. Tools and expertise can be provided.

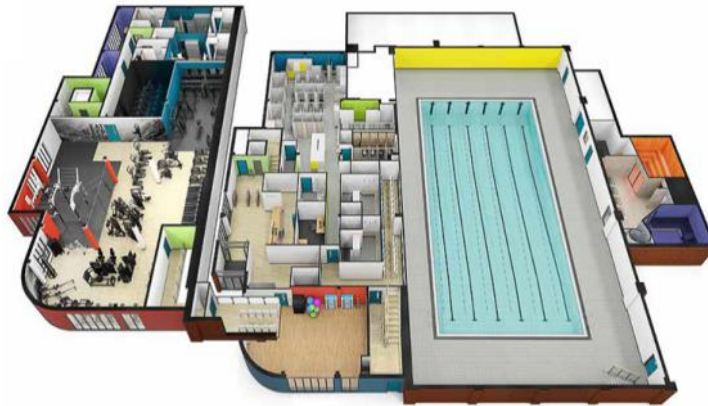
If you would like to get involved contact [Margaret.wyllie@outlook.com](mailto:Margaret.wyllie@outlook.com) or [info@suffolkpunchtrust.org](mailto:info@suffolkpunchtrust.org).

Opening hours for the Suffolk Punch Trust can be found on their website <http://suffolkpunchtrust.org/>



## Solar Powered leisure facilities in Woodbridge

The £3.4 million renovation and expansion of the Deben Leisure Centre in Woodbridge has just been completed. This was first project in Suffolk Coastal Council's leisure facility redevelopment plan which will also include work on the Leiston Leisure centre and review of the facilities in Felixstowe.



Floor plan of the new centre

Alongside the existing pool the Deben centre now boasts: a dance studio, spin cycling room, sauna & steam rooms and much expanded gym. Accessibility was an important consideration and every effort has been made to ensure the building can be enjoyed by everyone, regardless of age or disability.



High-tech new gym equipment



Newly-retiled pool area

In terms of environmental measures the centre now has 30kWp of solar panels. This is projected to save 162 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions over the next 20 years and will reduce the running costs of the centre by £3000 a year. In additions LED lighting and water efficiency measures have been installed, the grey water system has been kept and cycle storage has been improved. The outside of the building has been fitted with swift boxes with the help of the Suffolk Save our Swifts campaign. Unfortunately during the construction some trees had to be cut down but these have now been replaced with five new fruit trees planted at Peterhouse Crescent by Transition Woodbridge.





## East Suffolk is an Environment Agency Priority Catchment!

A new initiative by the Environment Agency is targeting watercourses in East Suffolk.

Priority Catchment Officers Nicola Robinson and Trevor Bond are focusing on reducing diffuse pollution, improving habitat availability and increasing ecosystem resilience to climate change.



Their work is part of a wider campaign across East Anglia that seeks to rehabilitate rivers that are failing for multiple elements under the Water Framework Directive (WFD). Whilst each of the 21 sub-catchments in East Suffolk are different, the pressures they are under are broadly similar. Nearly half of the rivers are not achieving targets for phosphate and several do not contain the diversity and abundance of fish, plants and insects that would be expected.

To improve the situation, the Priority Catchment Officers are involved in a variety of partnership projects across East Suffolk. The Yellow Fish project with Groundwork East is aiming to improve water quality by ensuring “only rain goes down the drain”. Most recently the team has been visiting schools in Suffolk’s market towns and inviting children to be River Detectives, recording the different species they see in and around their local rivers. Working in collaboration with the East Suffolk Internal Drainage Board, the Environment Agency enhanced a 2km stretch of the River Wang by introducing large pieces of wood to the channel. These flow deflectors oxygenate the water and create habitats for fish. Future work is looking at natural flood management opportunities along the River Blyth, implementing effective measures for reducing soil loss from agricultural fields, and developing a network of River Wardens across the area.

Nicola and Trev are always looking for new opportunities and would love to speak to you if you have any ideas about how to improve the rivers of East Suffolk. Get in contact by e-mail [trev.bond@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:trev.bond@environment-agency.gov.uk) or by calling 020 3025 8510.





## Love the River—Loathe Litter

On a sweltering Sunday afternoon a group of intrepid 5th Woodbridge Sea Scouts together with volunteers from Deben Rowing Club, set sail for the opposite riverbank to clear it of rubbish. On the town side, 23 volunteers and the Sea Scouts' families set about clearing along the riverbank and litter picking the surrounding areas of the Boating pond, Kingston Fields, the Community Hall and Railway Station car parks.

2 buoys, 1 200ltr drum, a large piece of polystyrene probably off a pontoon, an old link of chains, a tyre and other bits and pieces of sailing equipment were some of the rubbish the Sea Scouts collected!! 32 bags of rubbish were left quayside for Suffolk Coastal Norse to collect! Our thanks go to Deben Rowing Club, River Deben Association, Transition Woodbridge, Veronica from the Town Council and, of course, the 5th Woodbridge Sea Scouts and explorers, including their families!

## A Coast and Estuary Warden's stroll from Felixstowe to Hemley and back through Kirton and Trimley

Walking is relaxing, a stress releaser and a great way to really see the countryside of Suffolk. This walk took a day and involved a very simple map and recording sheet from Suffolk Coast and Heaths and the camera on a phone. Litter was thankfully sparse along most of the river wall walk. Milk bottles—one shredded by the grass cutter, plastic wrapper, cigarette butts, a drinks bottle, can and balloon string were the items picked. Some items would have needed a canoe and/or careful mud bank negotiation so these were left. Signage along the route is good. It is all easy to walk along and several walkers were seen. Most of the litter found and collected was outside the Warden area between Hemley and Trimley—with a whole jar of cigarette butts collected, many from outside the primary school!

A couple of days later a very simple survey monkey form was completed online and photos submitted by email.



Being a volunteer Warden is most enjoyable. Find out more at: [www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org/volunteering/volunteering-learn-more/coast-and-estuary-wardens/](http://www.suffolkcoastandheaths.org/volunteering/volunteering-learn-more/coast-and-estuary-wardens/)

## Driving a BMWi

Article content courtesy of Steve Bailey and Charles O'Donoghue from [EV Driver](#)

Car courtesy of [Lancaster BMW Bury St. Edmunds](#)

Two EV Driver staff members attempted to travel 404 miles in one day, in a BMW i3 with a range extender, type 2 and CCS socket, 30kW battery and a 12-litre extender tank. Did they make it back?



They were attending the eMotorWerks UK Installer training day at a hotel in Stoke-on-Trent. The challenge was to drive this Plug in Electric vehicle from their office in Melton, Woodbridge to the venue attending a training session starting at 10.30 am and then returning that afternoon at 4.30pm. 202 miles each way and a 6-hour meeting. This meant getting the car the night before and charging it overnight, planning ahead to identify charge points before leaving one hour earlier than they would otherwise have done to allow for charging time.

### How did you find the charging points?

We used Zap Map app on the phone and found it relatively easy to use with a few glitches on loading. This is 7.2MB, so okay if your data plan is in the GB.

### Did the charge points you selected meet your needs?

First Charge point: Holiday Inn near Rugby: Rapid 50kw Polar charger. Annoyances: only showing percentage charge, needed to preload money rather than just pay for what was used. Bonus: App easy to download, 80% charge (70 more miles) in 30 minutes costing £7.22.

Second charge point at the Moat Hotel Stoke-on-Trent: 7kW. Annoyances: Hotel staff not being aware of charging point location or type, standard 3 pin socket so total charge in 2 hours only just enough to get to an alternative charge point.

Third charge point at M6 service station: Ecotricity 50kw station Annoyance: having to register and app crashing a few times. Bonus easy to shut down at 95% charge (90 more miles) in 1hr 30 minutes costing £8.30.

Final charge: Rockingham area service station, Rapid 50kw Polar charger. Annoyances: app crashing and need to download app again. Charged to 28kw gaining us 90%. Bonus: only charged admin fee.

**Would you drive this car again?** Yes definitely. Over 400 miles covered for less than £20!

## Tackling the packaging challenge, 20th June 2018



The journey there—active travel

Outside of work time to ensure #30dayswild time and exercise the decision was made to walk 20 minutes to the train station and then an hour and 20 minutes from the station to The Co-Op Wherstead Park. Half of the walk was rather busy traffic wise and it was hard not to stop and pick up litter. The second half up Bourne Hill and into Wherstead was lovely. Swifts, House Martins, Sparrows, Blackbirds and other birds sang and shouted.

The conference was organised by The Co-Op, funded by the European Regional Development Fund and supported by the Environment Agency, Groundwork, NWES, Carbon Smart, Norfolk County Council and Suffolk County Council.

It was well attended by businesses that form part of the Co-Op supply chain.

Speakers:

[Hadleigh Maid Chocolates](#)—looking to reduce use of plastic whilst retaining product visibility, quality and shelf life.

[Hodmedods](#)—has trialled various methods to enable transport, keep shelf life but reduce plastic.

Suffolk Waste Partnership—key is to ensure packaging is reduced and has a feasible end of existing life use. If recycled content possible it should include.

[Frugalpac](#)—a removable plastic inner to ensure that the paper outers can be recycled at any paper mill in the UK. Currently researching alternatives for even that small amount of plastic.

### Key Points

- Customers are demanding less fossil fuel based plastic packaging and business owners are responding to this and their own concerns: some because of issues raised in Blue Planet and some because that is their ethos. Smaller businesses and those that are family run are leading the way. Taxes on raw material to internalise environmental externalities and boost recycling markets have been raised. A [circular economy](#) is the way forward.
- Action has to be carefully planned with the whole environmental and social impact in mind throughout the products lifecycle. These considerations always needs factor in product design requirements, marketing and competitiveness. Many will run trials and gradually change.
- Potential solutions mentioned—please note the hyperlinks are just examples other suppliers may well be equal to or better.

[Cellulose tamper tags](#), [Paper packing tape with latex adhesive](#), [Earth pouches](#), [heat seal](#), [grease resistant plastic free paper board](#)

**Our next event** Plastics Know Your Place, part two — Riverside, 4 Canning Rd, Lowestoft, NR33 0EQ.

Wednesday, 26th September. There will be food, stalls, speakers and discussion time. For those of you that did not get to see a plastic tide there may be a viewing. Please put it in your diary and if you can come and if you would like to be considered as a stall holder email [greenissues@eastsoffolk.gov.uk](mailto:greenissues@eastsoffolk.gov.uk). Let me know if you would like to see the film as well. If there are enough takers we will run that first.

#### **How can you help?**

- If you know of a person who could engage an audience on microplastics in UK waters please contact us.
- We need helpers on the day to meet and greet, take photos, to write up the event and to help clear up.
- We need catering sized teapots if anyone knows of any we could borrow.
- We need volunteers willing to promote the event so we can get a great attendance for our speakers and brilliant discussions going.

#### **Upcoming events run by members of the Greenprint Forum**

**Organic Pilates & Feel Good Food with the Oak Tree Farm.** (June 30th 10am - 4pm) £40 a person

Morning Pilates sessions (beginners welcome) - some gentle stretches and strengthening exercises, then a tour of the Oak Tree Farm with Head Grower Ryan who will talk about growing food in an environmentally friendly way, lunch at the Farm which will include seasonal farm produce, a visit to the cut flower garden, rare-breed pigs and chickens.

**COMMUNITY ENERGY and NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING WORKSHOP** (4th July 2018) Free

Conference Room, SALC Offices, Claydon, Ipswich. 9.30 am to 12.30 pm. Including lunch

In partnership with Suffolk County Council and supporting the “Greenest County” Campaign across Suffolk, the Suffolk Climate Change Partnership invite all to attend this free workshop giving you the opportunity to learn more about renewable energy. This workshop will be of particular interest to those members who are in the process of or considering producing a neighbourhood plan. The session is an introduction to the potential benefits within your community as well as helpful “next steps” on where to get more information and support to assess which renewable energy technologies are suitable. To find out further information and book click on this link - [www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/community-energy-and-neighbourhood-planning-tickets-47016234824](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/community-energy-and-neighbourhood-planning-tickets-47016234824).

#### **Plastic Free July—be in with a chance to win**

This July Suffolk Cloth Nappies is challenging families to make changes to their waste output by analysing their bin contents (just briefly...we aren't talking bin diving!), identifying things they could do to reduce it and tracking their progress throughout the month. Suffolk Cloth Nappies will be randomly selecting a winner at the end of the month who will receive a hamper of products that will help them continue their journey in reducing plastic consumption. How can you help? Donate a plastic free item to go in the hamper. Spread the word.

How can you take part? [www.greensuffolk.org/recycling/reduce-and-reuse/nappies/local-information-and-support/#Click on the map](http://www.greensuffolk.org/recycling/reduce-and-reuse/nappies/local-information-and-support/#Click%20on%20the%20map)



### Who we are

For those of you that don't know, the Greenprint Forum is a voluntary network facilitated by Suffolk Coastal and Waveney District Councils to help deliver their [business plan](#). Specifically enabling community environmental action to improve lives and strengthen our economy. Whilst our focus is on east Suffolk anyone, anywhere can join for free to help inform and learn from our thinking. Please do be aware that we have one passionate part time staff resource (two days a week dedicated to this), a steering group of 12 who give of their knowledge while being active in their own communities/ organisations and all other effort is voluntary or requires funding to be gained to pay for it.

### How to contact us

[www.twitter.com/GreenprintForum](https://www.twitter.com/GreenprintForum)

[www.facebook.com/GreenprintForum](https://www.facebook.com/GreenprintForum)

[www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/environment/east-suffolk-greenprint-forum/](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/environment/east-suffolk-greenprint-forum/)

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