

Greenprint Forum newsletter: autumn 2025

Since our last edition back in early June we've been privileged to attend guided tours of Pathways Care Farm in Lowestoft and RSPB Minsmere, and been hosted by the Countryside Team for a guided Nightjar Walk at SSSI Sutton Heath. **Our next knowledge-share visit is to Holton Pits on 23 October.**

If you would like to suggest a place that you would like us to arrange a visit to, or would like to host a visit yourself to showcase your work or project, please let us know anytime via greenissues@eastsoffolk.gov.uk. Registration for any events and activities that are organised by us on behalf of members of our network can be done via <https://bit.ly/46NpGr4>

We attended Planet Positive in Lowestoft in September, meeting fellow stall-holder and local artist Linda in the Studio with her life-sized creations Plastiman, Poly and baby Styrene, all made from rubbish found on the local beaches to help start conversations about the resources we use, the rubbish we generate and the impact it all has on the environment.



Most recently we've completed three Beachwatch activities, collaborating with local litter action stars Litter-free Felixstowe and Suffolk Beach Cleans (more from the latter in this edition!)



Ocean recovery newsflash

In September and October, a coalition of organisations with an interest in ocean recovery ran a repeat of June's fishing gear recycling initiative, again funded by RWE, this time in Southwold with the district council providing the site. Officers from the Eastern IFCA have been busy engaging with the commercial fishing fleet to alert them to the opportunity to pass on their end-of-life trawl nets, gill nets and other fishing gear for free recycling, with a team from Keep Britain Tidy carrying out initial segregation and sorting, and organising the specialist end-of-life pathways for these difficult to recycle materials.

At the time of publication the material is still being processed, but once again it is expected to be around a tonne of material no longer at any risk of posing a hazard to marine life.



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Visit to Donkey Meadow, Yoxford

At the end of August, Councillor Sally Noble and I visited Donkey Meadow at Yoxford, a new community initiative which recently received funding from the Greenprint Forum via our small grants scheme, Nature First. The Open Weekend provided activities for all ages as well as a cuppa and cake whilst chatting about the project and its progress.

Huge progress has been made clearing flytipped items inherited on the land such as mattresses, furniture etc and upcycling as much as possible. Paths have been made round the site, new trees planted, creation of beautiful dead hedges, trees coppiced and a channel has been cleared and restored to help improve drainage.

Future plans include restoring the pond, adding fruit trees to the two fine apples and delicious wild plum trees, bringing the polytunnel into use, upcycling the treasure trove of leftover items including an owl box, creating bug hotels from pallets and much more....

Thanks to Helen Barrett for an inspiring visit and making us so welcome. If you live in the area and would like to help, contact Helen Barrett on 07762 900484 .

Jane Healey, Chair of the Greenprint Forum



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Suffolk Beach Cleans: protecting our coastline, one piece of litter at a time

Suffolk's coastline is one of the county's greatest treasures – from sandy stretches to shingle shores, our beaches provide a vital space for wildlife, recreation, and community wellbeing. Yet, like many places across the UK, they face an ongoing challenge: litter and marine debris.

I became very disheartened on my daily dog walks as to the amount of litter being left on the beach and sea walk ways. This, and my childhood obsession with the Wombles, was why Suffolk Beach Cleans was created. I created a volunteer group working to tackle waste along our beaches while raising awareness about the importance of keeping our coastline clean.

We have a choice, either complain about a problem, or help to do something about it.

Since our inception in January 2024, we have organised regular clean-up events at South Beach, Pakefield, and North Denes. Volunteers of all ages have joined us to don gloves, grab litter pickers, and remove everything from plastic bottles and fishing gear to microplastics hidden in the sand. We have hosted clean ups for some of our local companies' employees looking to give back to the community.

I achieved a lifetime ambition of being featured in a film created by the Official Wombles charity and have the certificate to prove it (disappointingly no actual Wombles were present!) These efforts don't just make our beaches more pleasant to visit, they also help protect seabirds, marine mammals, and other wildlife that can be harmed by discarded waste.



Equally important to us is public engagement. My background is in teaching and these skills are utilised to run awareness sessions. We encourage families to take part so that younger generations grow up with a strong understanding of how their choices affect the environment. Our aim is to make beach cleaning accessible to all and our message is simple: every small action, from taking your rubbish home and picking up a single bit of litter, makes a difference.

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Suffolk Beach Cleans: protecting our coastline, one piece of litter at a time *(continued)*

The impact is clear. Together, we have collected hundreds of bags of litter, but perhaps more importantly, we have sparked hundreds of conversations about why protecting our coastline matters. I am proud that Suffolk Beach Cleans brings people together, not only keeping our beaches cleaner today but also helping to build a culture of care and responsibility for the future.

If you'd like to get involved, we always welcome new volunteers and supporters. If you are an employer looking for community volunteer opportunities please do reach out. You will find us on Facebook at Suffolk Beach Cleans, or by email at suffolkbeachclean@outlook.com. Whether you join a clean-up, or spread the word by sharing a post, you'll be playing a part in protecting Suffolk's precious coastline for generations to come.

Amelia Thorogood, Suffolk Beach Cleans

On Facebook: [Suffolk Beach Cleans](#)



Bats about Woodbridge

Transition Woodbridge ("TW") were delighted to receive a Nature First grant towards the cost of installing 6 bat boxes, 2 each at 3 local primary schools. TW have helped Dr Mark Bowler, Lecturer in Wildlife, Ecology & Conservation at University of Suffolk to monitor bat species in the Woodbridge/Melton area for the last 4 years, installing bat posts in people's gardens. 3 of the local primary schools have also hosted recorders. They have been treated to a school assembly on how the recording equipment works, identifying the types of bats in the area and their importance as indicators of insect populations. We hope this will provide a talking point for the children. We also hope to improve the image of bats, so often seen as negative especially around Halloween, and encourage understanding amongst the young people of their feeding and habitat requirements.



Jane Healey, Transition Woodbridge



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Empowering Nature: How nature can gain from the great grid upgrade

Saxmundham Town Council is aiming to become a national trailblazer in showing how major infrastructure projects can deliver real benefits to the communities they affect, rather than just disruption.

The imposition of national infrastructure often creates a sense of powerlessness in host communities as national priorities override local voices. Saxmundham is taking a different approach, seeking to empower both people and nature by calling for positive outcomes in the face of imposed development.

Saxmundham Town Council is formally objecting to a proposed converter station near the town, part of National Grid Electricity Transmission's (NGET) Sea Link project, which would connect Suffolk with Kent via an undersea cable.

But alongside its objection the council has produced a bold and imaginative vision for how NGET could offset the impact on the local area - supporting nature recovery, community wellbeing, and biodiversity - should the project receive consent.

Empowering Nature - Protecting Saxmundham is a grassroots initiative created by local residents who care deeply about the town's future. Drawing on community knowledge, values, and ambition, the document sets out a series of nature-focused proposals for community benefit, including:

- A green corridor from the converter station site to the coast along the planned cable trench and access road - enhancing biodiversity, creating wildlife habitat, and improving public access to nature.
- A boardwalk along the River Fromus - protecting sensitive habitats while enabling people to explore the town's natural heritage.
- A community nature fund to support wildlife-friendly improvements in gardens - such as water butts, bat boxes, and bug hotels.
- Healthy, affordable food initiatives including a community orchard and new allotments.
- Flood resilience and water harvesting measures to protect homes and support biodiversity.
- Environmental design measures at the converter station to integrate public art and habitat features.
- Local employment and training opportunities linked to the delivery and management of green projects.
- The re-establishment of the historic Great Wood, once located east of the town.

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Empowering Nature: How nature can gain from the great grid upgrade *(continued)*

Following public consultation, Empowering Nature – Protecting Saxmundham was formally endorsed by the Town Council. Since then, it has attracted support from Suffolk County Council, East Suffolk Council, several local town and parish councils, Suffolk Wildlife Trust, the RSPB, and Suffolk Coastal MP Jenny Riddell-Carpenter - placing local voices, landscapes, and priorities at the heart of the national debate.

Cllr Geraldine Barker (pictured below), Vice-Chair of Saxmundham Town Council and Chair of its Fromus Energy Projects Team, urges NGET to commit to meaningful community benefit if Sea Link is approved:

“We remain opposed to these plans. But if they do go ahead, we need to be ready with a positive and credible plan for what Saxmundham and the surrounding communities should receive in return,” she said.

“Our aim is for NGET - and ultimately for the Secretary of State - to view Saxmundham as a flagship case study where a potentially negative situation has been turned into something positive. We are calling on NGET to work with us. They are under no legal obligation to go beyond the minimum, but by doing so, they could demonstrate what genuine engagement with host communities looks like.

“Our vision of a better future along the Fromus valley can inspire others in similar situations across the country. We want local people to come forward and get involved – there is a lot of work to do. And we need NGET to make a major financial commitment to the affected communities.”

Read the full Empowering Nature proposal at: <https://www.saxmundham.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/Empowering-Nature-Protecting-Saxmundham.pdf>

Fran Abrams, Local Storytelling Exchange

<https://www.saxmundham.org/how-empowering-nature-began-a-community-led-vision-for-saxmundhams-future/>



Let's fix it!

Lowestoft Repair Cafe, a new community venture, had a successful launch on 10 July, offering a free repair service for household items. The afternoon was busy with customers bringing things such as a vacuum cleaner, a teddy bear, a silk kimono and a 100-year-old sewing machine. A total of 23 things were successfully mended with a further 8 which were not repairable. Customers enjoyed tea and cake in the cafe area whilst the repairs were carried out.

The 12 volunteers who ran the event were pleased to meet Councillors Louise Gooch and Malcolm Pitchers who presented a cheque from East Suffolk Council to help with start-up costs.

The aim of the group aim is to keep things from being discarded and replaced which is better for the environment and also saves people money.

Sessions will be held on the second Thursday of each month between 2-5 pm at Pakefield Church Hall. You can get in touch via the Facebook page 'Lowestoft Repair Cafe' or email lowestoftrepaircafe@gmail.com

Margo Upstone, Lowestoft Repair Cafe
on Facebook: **Lowestoft Repair Cafe**



Editor's note - this is just the latest repair initiative to emerge in our area that we're aware of - to find out where your nearest repair group are and when they meet, visit the [Directory of repair cafes and groups](#)



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Founders of GreenSnape named National Landscape Award winners

Derek and Lesley Walduck have been named 2025 winners of the David Wood National Landscape Award in recognition for their inspirational work leading the GreenSnape Community Group.

The annual award is presented to an individual, organisation or community group that has made an outstanding contribution to the Suffolk & Essex Coast & Heaths National Landscape.

GreenSnape Community Group was founded in 2017 to protect and enhance the environment in and around Snape for the benefit of people and wildlife.

Inspired by Derek and Lesley, the group membership has grown to 115 people of all ages in a village of 650 residents, while raising thousands in donations and grants for transformative projects carried out by volunteers.

The range of achievements by GreenSnape, led by Derek and Lesley, include landscape scale projects to restore and enhance Snape Common, Priory Wood, the village green and verges, while also organising conservation work parties, events, talks and visits each year.

Nick Collinson, Chair of the Suffolk & Essex Coast & Heaths National Landscape Partnership said: "Under the inspiring leadership of Derek and Lesley Walduck, GreenSnape stands as a powerful example of what passionate, dedicated volunteers can achieve when united by a common goal. Their work has brought a community together and will leave a lasting legacy on the landscape, wildlife, and village life for years to come."

Derek and Lesley Walduck said:

"We're very honoured to receive such a prestigious award and also very grateful to National Landscape for their support over the years, especially with a number of generous grants. We're very proud of our GreenSnape committee and volunteers for all their hard work and commitment.

"We have a great community in Snape with many supportive groups that we enjoy working with, in particular, Snape Parish Council, the Churchyard team and Snape School.

"It's important at a time when our area is so much under threat from energy infrastructure that we all do what we can to help our beleaguered environment at a local level."

From a press release supplied by
Suffolk & Essex Coast & Heaths National Landscape



Saving on costs with a slow cooker

With the colder weather approaching and energy prices continuing to rise, many households will be facing extra stress and financial difficulty with heating their home.

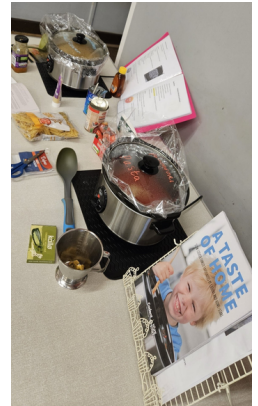
Suffolk Centres for Warmth, a project delivered across Suffolk by East Suffolk Council and funded by Cadent Gas, is helping people in vulnerable situations to reduce home energy costs including understanding the energy efficiency of their home appliances, energy bills, tariffs and access to grants and welfare benefit advice.

Over the past couple of years, the team have also been sharing the benefits of slow cookers, through 'taster' session to more than 800 people in Suffolk. Slow cookers are a simple way to reduce the electricity costs associated with cooking and offer a versatile way of creating a wide range of healthy meals. Using a slow cooker on low heat for 5 hours, only uses about 1 KW of electricity, which is less than 30p (at current price), making it considerably less than a conventional oven.

The sessions are being delivered within a wide range of community groups including health support groups and food pantries, with tried and tested recipes adapted to meet the audience.

Caroline Mackinson, Project Manager, Suffolk Centres for Warmth, said:

"The cost of living crisis has made people more aware of their energy use, air fryers becoming increasingly popular and slow cookers having something of a revival. We find most people still associate slow cooker with winter stews and soups. Those already using a slow cookers often stick to a few recipes and are surprised how versatile they are. Creating a simple pudding in a slow cooker in the heat of summer, not only saves money on your electricity bill but avoids adding extra heat to your home from the oven.



"We found that taste testing simple recipes helps give people confidence to try new food and recipes, as well as share their own experiences in a fun social setting."

With busy lives, cooking from scratch can feel a huge chore. Slow cookers require minimal hands-on time with 'set it and forget it' meals. A one pot meal can also significantly reduce time and energy spent washing up!



Using slow cookers compliments the messages from Food Savvy Suffolk, encouraging households to reduce food waste by planning ahead, batch cooking, loving their left-overs and discovering new food storage tips. Changing behaviour around food purchasing and cooking can help to cut financial and environmental costs. Slow cookers offer cost effective recipes that work well with cheaper cuts of meat and reduce reliance on overpacked ready prepared meals.

To find out more visit <https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/housing/energy-efficiency-and-warm-homes/suffolk-centres-for-warmth/>

Or follow us on Facebook: Warm Homes Healthy People

Call 0333 016 2000 and ask for Centres for Warmth or email ccfw@eastsuffolk.gov.uk

P.s - see the back page of this newsletter for a sample slow cooker recipe from the team!



Improving air quality in your home this winter

As the nights draw in and the temperature drops, many people start to use their open fires or wood burning stoves more frequently - some as the main source of heating and others who enjoy the ambience of a real fire.

This winter, East Suffolk Council is promoting information from the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) to ask; 'Could you be burning better?' We want to raise awareness around the tiny, harmful particles (known as PM_{2.5}) that burning produces both inside and outside your home. These can impact the health of you, your family, your neighbours and the environment.



Long term exposure to air pollution, over many years, reduces life expectancy mainly due to cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, strokes and lung cancer. Even short-term exposure over hours or days has been shown to impact lung function, worsen asthma and increase hospital admissions due to respiratory and cardiovascular illnesses.

So, what can you do?

Other than burning less often or for shorter periods, there are three simple steps that you can take to limit emissions and make a big difference: **Check it, Sweep it, Feed it.**



Check it regularly

- If you are buying a new stove check it is Defra approved
- Have a new stove installed by a qualified person certified by one of the following organisations: HETAS, APHC, BESCA, Certsure, NAPIT or OFTEC
- Check how to operate your appliance efficiently i.e by controlling the air supply – this will save you money as well as reducing particulates emitted
- Get your stove serviced once a year
- Use your stove in line with the manufacturer and installer's guidance
- Regularly maintain your stove or open fire; clean out ash, check firebricks for cracks, clean the stove glass and check the door seal, and clean the outside of a stove or open fire

Sweep it professionally

- Get your chimney swept at least once a year by a chimney sweep as soot and tar will build up inside which will reduce its efficiency and can lead to chimney fires.

Feed it the right fuels

- Check which fuel types are recommended for your appliance
- Only burn dry (seasoned) wood – if it has a moisture content greater than 20% it will create a lot of smoke, particles and tar deposits and is also inefficient. This can damage your health, the environment, your appliance, your chimney and your pocket.



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Feed it the right fuels *(continued)*

- If you buy wood, make sure it has the 'Ready to Burn' fuel label to give you confidence that you are using the cleanest available fuel. This labelling is also present on most manufactured solid fuels such as briquettes.
- If you source and season your own wood store it in a dry area, allowing the logs to dry for at least 2 years before burning.
- Don't burn treated waste wood that has been painted, stained or chemically treated (old furniture, treated pallets) or household rubbish – this will emit harmful fumes.
- The Forestry Commission has more information on [choosing and drying logs](#) (PDF).

For more information, visit:

Ø www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/air-quality and click on 'Biomass and Wood Burning'

Ø <https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/library/burnbetter/>



Supplied by the **Environmental Protection Team, East Suffolk Council**

Bookings now open! Keep the Heat thermal imaging cameras

Want to help others in your community stay warmer, reduce their energy bills, and carbon emission this winter? Then take part in Keep the Heat, Suffolk's Community Thermal Imaging Project.

If you're part of a community group or parish/town council you can borrow two thermal imaging cameras for up to four weeks (with the option to book again later in the season).

The cameras are stored with volunteer hosts across the county, making it easy to collect and return them.

Book your loan here: <https://keeptheheatbookings.innstyle.co.uk/>

Not sure how it works? Join our training webinar on 16 October to learn all about the project, how to use the cameras and make the most of the supporting resources. Register for the webinar via: <https://events.teams.microsoft.com/event/7c83e8da-fd77-45a7-b6b2-0ac49db715ad@109c6aec-5046-4a95-8f3c-84f63ba18af4>

This is a great way to raise awareness of energy efficiency in your community and help households spot heat loss.

Supplied by the **Suffolk Climate Change Partnership**



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Better Recycling 2026

The Government is requiring local councils to implement its enhanced recycling strategy, which aims to improve recycling rates and encourage a more consistent national approach to recycling across England.

To support the Government's strategy, from 2026 Suffolk Councils will be introducing Better Recycling, our new campaign to improve the recycling services we provide to residents. As well as the materials we already collect, we'll also start collecting the following from households directly:

- glass bottles and jars
- cartons e.g. Tetra Pak
- food waste (on a weekly basis)

Two of the most frequent questions we get asked are “why don't you collect food” or “why don't you collect glass or cartons”? These changes will ensure all households will be able to recycle or compost more of their household waste. The changes will also help the environment by increasing Suffolk's recycling rate, reducing the amount of waste that goes into our rubbish bins and decreasing the carbon impacts of Suffolk's waste and recycling collection service.

This is all vital in our efforts to combat the climate emergency and promote a circular economy that ensures precious resources can be repeatedly recycled and reused. It will also help Suffolk play our part in achieving the Government's aim to recycling or compost 65% of our waste by 2035.

More information, including answers to frequently asked questions about the changes, and a short video introducing the changes, is available via:



<https://www.suffolkrecycling.org.uk/recycling-composting/recycling-at-home/better-recycling>

Supplied by the **Suffolk Waste Partnership**



Wildlife Wise Project – New high tide roost fencing at Levington Creek

Wildlife Wise has installed 120 m of new fencing to protect a very important high tide roost on the Orwell Estuary from disturbance from dogs and people.

Wintering and passage birds which feed on the Suffolk's Orwell Estuary require places to rest, preen and socialise when the estuary is at high tide and the mudflats are no longer accessible. These areas are called high tide roosts.



Over 20 species can be seen at the Levington Creek high tide roost during autumn and winter, which is an area of saltmarsh. Significant populations of dunlin, redshank, grey plover and many others rest there.

Both Wildlife Wise Rangers and Suffolk Wildlife Trust staff and volunteers, who manage an adjacent area, have witnessed many dogs running off lead over the saltmarsh and given the high risk of repeated disturbance to such a significant community of birds, it was decided that fencing the area would be the most effective way of preventing disturbance. The new fencing is also accompanied by new signage asking people and their dogs to keep 'paws on paths'.



We are hugely grateful to the landowner for their support and permission for installing the fencing and we will continue to monitor the effectiveness of the fencing at Levington Creek.



Levington Creek Parking Area

In addition to the fencing, we have recently made improvements to the parking area at Levington Creek. There have been reported issues with people driving through the gate to the wildlife site, causing both disturbance and damage to the habitat.

To prevent unauthorised access, with the permission of the landowner and others with legitimate access requirements we have:

- Installed a lock.
- Installed bollards to prevent people driving around the gate.
- Pulled the gate post upright.
- Cleared a minor amount of vegetation to improve access to the public right of way and the dog waste bin.

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Wildlife Wise Project – New high tide roost fencing at Levington Creek

Disturbance from people and dogs at these high tide roosts results in:

- A reduction in the time spent resting due to running, swimming, flying away, or simply watching potential threats like people and dogs.
- This time spent fleeing or watching potential threats wastes crucial energy and can increase stress for the birds as well.
- Avoiding areas of otherwise suitable habitat. Birds may use poorer quality roosting sites instead.

All the above can reduce the chances of survival for birds which are particularly vulnerable over winter. In cold, wet and windy weather birds use a lot of energy to keep warm and avoid predators. During harsh winters, a prolonged cold spell can mean birds struggle to get sufficient feeding time in between tides and any disturbance in these conditions is more significant to bird populations.

Continual disturbance may result in a decline in birds as they cannot feed or rest properly and therefore they may not survive the winter or they may fail to raise chicks during the next breeding season.

Supplied by the **Wildlife Wise Team**

On the web: <https://wildlifewise.co.uk/>

we can be contacted via info@wildlifewise.co.uk

Follow us on Facebook @WildlifeWise



Contributors

We are grateful to the following who took the time to compose and provide content for this issue: **Amelia Thorogood, Fran Abrams, Jane Healey, Margo Upstone**, and the teams from **ESC Environmental Protection, Suffolk Centres for Warmth, the Suffolk Climate Change Partnership, the Suffolk & Essex Coast & Heaths National Landscape, the Suffolk Waste Partnership, and Wildlife Wise.**

This newsletter is always of most value when content is informed by its members. If you have a story about action you are taking or enabling that contributes to our shared vision that you would like to share, or would like your project (whether established, new, or emerging) highlighted in a future issue of our newsletter, we would be delighted to hear from you via greenissues@eastsuffolk.gov.uk

GREENPRINT FORUM VISION



New members always welcome

If you are already a member please share this newsletter with and encourage others in your network to join, and if you have received or found this newsletter and are not yet a member why not join us, membership is free and open to anyone, anywhere, who wishes to contribute to and/or benefit from our knowledge share network.

The easiest way is to go online and register via:

https://my.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/service/Greenprint_Forum_membership_application

You are very welcome to share this newsletter. The editor makes no claims or promises about the accuracy, completeness, or adequacy of the contents of this newsletter and expressly disclaims liability for errors and/or omissions.

Editor – Daniel Wareing, Environmental Sustainability East Suffolk Council; Secretary of Greenprint Forum



Spicy Thai Red Veggie curry in the Slow cooker

Ingredients:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 3 large sweet potatoes, cut into chunks | 4 tbsp Thai red curry past or 4 paste pots |
| 400 ml tin reduce fat coconut milk | 1 tbsp tomato puree |
| 400 ml passata | 3 cloves of garlic |
| 2 carrots- cut into chunks | Thumb sized piece of fresh ginger grated |
| 1 onion, chopped | Juice of 1 lime |
| 2 tbsp light or dark soy sauce | Salt and pepper (to taste) |
| 2 tbsp honey | Fresh coriander and lime zest, to garnish |
| 1 tbsp sriracha | Handful of sugar snap peas |
| 1 tsp chilli flakes (plus more if you like spicy) | |



Place all ingredients (except sugar snap peas, lime zest and fresh coriander) in slow cooker and cook on high for 2 to 3 hours, or low for 5 hours.

For the last hour (or less if cooking on high), add the sugar snap peas so they retain their crunch.

Top with fresh coriander and lime zest.

Serve with rice and flat breads.

Suitable for home freezing

Approx.. 490 calories per serving.



For more recipe ideas and energy efficiency advice:

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100069788424088>

@Warmhomeshealthypeople

