

NATURE CITIZEN

England & Wales · Charity number 1166223

Details

Status Registered

Legal form CIO

Registered 2016-03-29

Register [View on the Charity Commission register](#)

Contact

Address The Cairns
Stackwood Road
Polstead Heath
Colchester
CO6 5BA

Phone 07513484302

Email lisa@naturecitizen.co.uk

Website www.naturecitizen.co.uk

Activities

Objects: 1. TO ADVANCE THE EDUCATION OF THE PUBLIC IN:A) THE CONSERVATION, PROTECTION AND IMPROVEMENT OF THE PHYSICAL AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT; AND B) GOOD NUTRITION, HEALTH, THE FOOD CHAIN AND THE NATURAL ECO-SYSTEM2. TO PROMOTE THE CONSERVATION OF THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND ITS FLORA AND FAUNA AND BIODIVERSITY FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT, IN PARTICULAR BUT NOT EXCLUSIVELY BY:A) PROMOTING UNDERSTANDING OF THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND THE IMPORTANCE OF NATURE SPACES; ANDB) PROMOTING THE SURVIVAL OF BEE SPECIES AND OTHER INSECT POLLINATORS

Activities: Raise awareness of the importance of the natural world on our lives, how we are connected to it and that by taking action to protect it will help ensure our future health, wellbeing and food security. Pilot the Nature Citizen Community Project (In Suffolk)to bring a Community together with a shared purpose of creating their own Nature Spaces collectively building a Nature Network to help wildlife.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information
- **What:** Education/training, The Advancement Of Health Or Saving Of Lives, Environment/conservation/heritage
- **Who:** Children/young People, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- Essex
- Suffolk

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-09	£420	£711	-	-
2024-03-09	£397	£214	-	-
2023-03-09	£594	£2,308	-	-
2022-03-09	£527	£112	-	-
2021-03-09	£1,193	£327	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
RACHEL CLARE WHITE BSC RGN	Chair	2015-06-03
CLARE PATRICIA REEVES		2015-06-03
EMMA FRANCES DANIELS		2015-06-03
MARY CHRISTINE MURDOCH		2015-06-03

NATURE CITIZEN

England & Wales - Charity number 1166223

Accounts

Nature Citizen – Cherishing All Life CHARITY NUMBER 1166223

Charity Commission Annual Return 2025

Trustees Annual Report 10th March 2024 to 9th March 2025

Nature Citizens charitable purposes are to be of public benefit; to educate and promote the importance of the Natural World on our lives and action we can take to conserve, protect, and improve the natural eco-system.

The Charity continues to achieve these objects and community engagement through **‘The Nature Citizen Community Project’** which includes:

The Nature Citizen Community Garden and Mini Woodland

In this ‘Demonstration Nature Space,’ with the help of volunteers we continue to manage the garden with nature in mind, purposely planting for the pollinating insects, have a variety of habitats to encourage many different insects, and this year added a pond.

In The Mini Woodland area, we have planted more native woodland plants to increase food sources for the insects.

We were delighted to host the local Gardening Clubs ‘Annual Garden Party’ in Summer 2024 to highlight what can be done to provide an abundance of food, water, and shelter for nature, even in small areas.

Two of the Village School Children have achieved their Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award by volunteering with Nature Citizen, one is continuing and doing their Silver Award.

The Garden is also our meeting place with the Trustees, volunteers, and members of the community and warmly referred to as ‘The Charities Head Office’

Together Growing a Nature Network & Promoting the importance of Nature Spaces

There are now 22 Participating Gardens across the village who have created their own Nature Space, which are contributing to increasing biodiversity locally. Each participating garden we visit, we give suggestions, send information packs and gift plants and trees if needed, showing how they can all provide food, water and shelter for the insects and small creatures.

We grow local native tree saplings and plants to gift to others, ensuring that all are included, reducing economic barriers.

Whist the participating gardens we can measure, the reach and impact on the wider network is tricky to measure.

-As of March 2025, 25 articles have been written for the local monthly newsletter, which is delivered to every home in 4 local Parishes with a population (according to the 2021 Census) nearly 4,000 people.

-Article written for the Summer 2024 edition of The Dedham Vale Society magazine.

- We continue to offer Public Talks and visits to the Community Garden.

- We continue to put posts and videos on the online platforms Facebook and Instagram.

-The trees planted in the woodland are still registered on the Queens Green Canopy Memorandum website.

-The Nature Citizen Community Garden and the Charity’s efforts continue to be on the Dedham Vale Wilder Together Website.

-Continued membership of Community Action Suffolk.

-The ongoing project of the ‘History of Our Village and the changing landscape’ is coming along nicely.

The Charity’s simplified message is:

Bee a Nature Citizen, create a Nature Space and Together we grow a Nature Network.

Providing food, water and homes for the little creatures that keep the world going.

If we all do a little wherever we are in the world, this will add up to helping a lot.

Sustainability and contributing to the Net Zero Agenda

Sustainability and Self Sufficiency continue to be at the core of all our decisions, actives, policies, and procedures. Examples are:

The Charity has never bought any new plant pots used to grow plants for the community garden or gifting; they are donated, reused, and then returned to reuse again. Any surplus pots are taken to a plant-pot recycling point.

We use home made compost to grow our own plants and trees from seeds and saplings, reducing cost, use of plastic and transport miles.

No chemicals are used to grow or support plants in the Community Garden, cutting pollution and potential harm to the insects feeding on nectar from the plant's flowers. This also shows how we can all have organic gardens and that use nature-based solutions such as mulching for healthy soils, increasing plant diversity and habitats to encourage beneficial predatory insects such as ladybirds, hoverflies, and lacewings.

The water used to water plants we grow is from collected rainwater wherever possible, which is not only better for plant health, but saves using mains water, lowering utility costs, and lowering energy use for water treatment.

We mostly use hand tools that have been donated, as they do not need power thus reducing energy consumption.

Wood used in the Garden has been donated for reuse, preventing it going into the waste stream.

We leave many plant seed heads to feed the birds over winter, helping sustain wildlife.

Leaves are left in borders to act as mulch and enrich the soil, adding nutrients naturally, perennials continue to be planted as over time both actions help in reducing the need to water and protecting the soil from erosion.

Seeds and surplus plants are collected and redistributed to others which saves them buying new plants and seeds reducing transport miles in the process.

The pruned branches are cut up and added to the dead hedge habitat removing the need to have a bonfire (which releases carbon quickly) or transport miles to the tip.

Wherever possible we car share and use bicycles.

Information packs are emailed to Parishioners electronically saving paper and printer ink, we make our own posters and focus our activities locally.

We share our sustainability messages though talks, articles, and posts on social media to spread the message to others.

We continue to keep our carbon footprint low by combining Trustee meetings and activities at the Nature Citizen Community Garden and WhatsApp group calls, with regular updates and reports sent via email. Trustees verify the Trustee Annual Report via email in support of reducing travel miles and keeping the Charities carbon footprint at net zero.

The Charities activities (all time spent is voluntary hours) during the year have been:

Some examples of Voluntary hours/time spent.

-Approximately 250 voluntary hours at least has spent at the NC Community Garden and Mini Woodland.

-Two School Children have completed volunteering for their Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award (minimum 26 hours)

-Many hours have been spent on the NCNN (Nature Citizen Nature Network) which include 22 Participating Gardens, growing and gifting plants, spreading the word through talks, showing people around the community garden, writing articles, and posting on social media.

-Attending Parish Council meetings. Working with the Parish Council to deliver a green agenda.

-Running the Charity. Writing Policies, risk assessments, writing reports, updates, email correspondence, Trustee WhatsApp Meetings, Attending Community & Charity Meetings, continued evaluation and updates of The Charities Policies and Procedures.

-Continued Professional Development and Research - attending webinars and virtual events.

With thanks to : The Friends of Nature Citizen and Trustees for gifting plants and donating plants from their gardens and their time volunteering in the Community Garden. Also all the Parishioners who are taking part in growing a Nature Network across the village. Peter Irvine and Heather for donating wood chips for the new paths. The cash donations to pay for help redoing existing paths and building the new paths. The Gardening club donation for hosting the Annual Garden Party. The local Parish Council for their ongoing financial contribution that enables the Charity to cover its basic running costs & donating the allotment plots for The Community Garden, both of which enable the Charity to continue with its environmental activities. Simon Goodchild for helping by keeping the Nature Citizen domain name, hosting, secure certificate & email account at direct cost and donating his time for doing this. All these donations are very gratefully received, as they save time and money to enable the Charity to take action to meet its aims of increasing biodiversity.

Below is information about and photos from the Garden, including articles and posts from Nature Citizens Social Media platforms.

The Nature Citizen Community Garden & Mini Woodland – A Demonstration Nature Space.

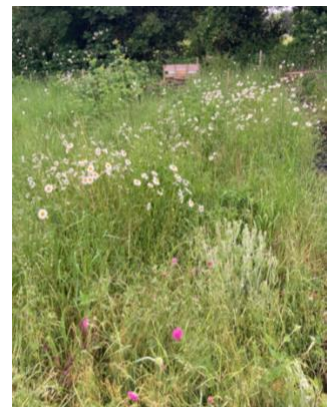
Creating a Nature Space and Gardening with Nature in Mind – diversity is the key.

The mosaic of habitats and a variety of successional flowering plants provide all year-round food, water, and shelter for insects & other wildlife.

Examples of the different areas that are in the garden are: A flowering lawn, showing that you can provide a large area of pollen and nectar throughout the year without it looking wild!



A wild 'no mow ever' long grass area that over time has more grass tussocks/clumps, providing all year-round shelter for insects, small mammals and reptiles and we are seeing more ant hills too. More wildflowers, shrubs and perennials have been interplanted to increase food sources and the grass left to grow and to seed, provides food for the birds. Black compost bins that warm in the sunshine has sloe worms and ants living in them.



Log piles, dead wood and log circles containing nettles that are food plants for caterpillars.



The upturned logs and stag beetle piles are decaying over time, this is providing a reliable source of food for beetle larvae, and the variety of Fungi has increased.



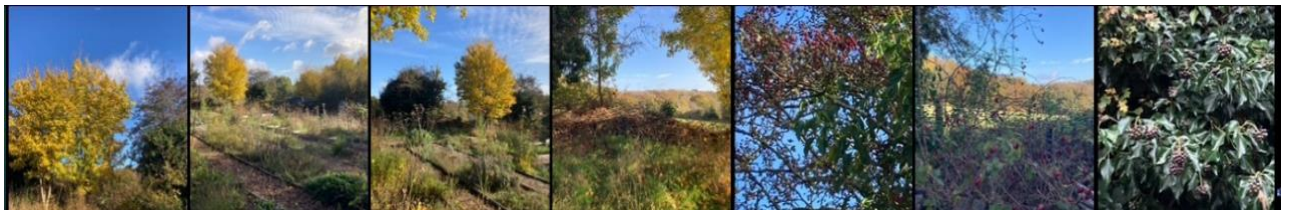
Bramble clump - the flowers provide pollen and nectar for insects, the berries later provide food for birds, small mammals and insects. With trimming it regularly it has become dense which provides shelter for wildlife. Mini water sources throughout the Garden that have stones in to prevent insects from drowning.



We keep adding plant debris to the compost heaps and, leave them unturned and undisturbed because insects, reptiles and wildlife make homes, hibernate in them and find refuge. Beetle Larvae are enjoying it too!



Dead hedges, trees and shrubs around the edge of the NCCG provide cover, nesting sites and food (blossom and berries).



Plant stems and seed heads have been left uncut to feed the birds and small mammals also providing shelter for insects over winter.



Fallen leaves are left over winter to act as mulch and cover for insects in the winter and return organic matter and nutrition back into the soil.

Wildlife homes (bugs, insects, birds, small mammals, hedgehogs etc). The Solitary Bee Home is a new addition to the Garden.

Mini Woodland Area - Dead hedges made from branches run throughout to create connected habitats, those at the edge of the woodland has bramble growing through them, as they are a great food source. The woodland floor cleared of bramble to allow other plants to grow, and we have added woodland plants which are flourishing. The wildflowers, surplus from the Community Garden, that are planted on the edge of the path is a great added nectar rich food source for insects but lovely to see too. There is also an untouched dense thicket area that's been left to create a nesting site for birds,



Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award – Well done for all their efforts and voluntary contributions to increase biodiversity locally by creating Nature Spaces.

Gifted plants and trees from Nature Citizen, homemade solitary bee home, pond built and the plants and trees planted.



New pond built at the Community Garden, bug hotel built, helped with the redoing of the paths at the Garden, planted seeds and made new dead hedges.



A shed has been donated to replace the old one, and we have repurposed the usable parts as a dry shelter for insects and over time as we prune the the shrubs, we will fill it with the branches, which will provide another different type of habitat. New paths have been repaired and laid. We have started edging the wild (no mow) area with donated wooden boxes.



All our photos are taken by us at the Community Garden or in our Nature Spaces and we use these for all the social media posts, articles, information sharing, updates and annual reports. It's imperative to raise awareness about the importance of the natural world on our lives, the insects that often don't get the recognition they deserve and what we can do to help conserve them and their habitats.

Nature Citizen
16 Jul 2024 · 🌍

Giving Nature a Helping Hand 🍀 The solitary bees are sheltering on a rainy day 🐝🍀🍀
Nature Citizens - by helping Nature such as creating Nature Spaces those collective efforts add up to growing a Nature Network, providing food water and shelter for the insects whose natural processes we benefit from contributing to keeping us fed, watered and sheltered. It's a win win, so even if you're not that into Nature, by helping Nature we are helping ourselves and keeping the Nation fed, because at the moment we are not paying for the pollination of food crops, a natural process that we are benefitting from for free!!!! We are part of Nature and as Citizens our actions have an impact on Nature and if we all give nature a helping hand we are doing our bit to help halt and reverse the decline in insect populations that we so need for our survival 🍀🌍



Below is the Article in the Dedham Vale Society Magazine

NATURE CITIZEN: POLSTEAD COMMUNITY PROJECT

In 2019 Polstead Parish Council kindly donated an area at the Polstead Allotments to the Nature Citizen team to create a Community Garden. It has become the Charity's head office, educational hub and is a 'Demonstration Nature Space'. We specifically showcase plants which are beneficial to all kinds of pollinators in a range of different habitats which encourages a diversity of insects.

The Community Project aims to bring people and nature closer together by encouraging the public to create nature spaces of any size. In turn this provides a continuous supply of food, water and shelter for wildlife and will naturally contribute to growing a nature network of connected habitats across the village.

Our work consists of:

- Maintaining the garden.
- Public talks and writing articles.
- Posting on social media.
- Visiting parishioner's gardens to advise them on creating their own nature space.
- Assisting with design; providing an electronic 'Creating a Nature Space Information Pack'.
- Gifting homegrown plants (trees, shrubs, hedging, wildflower plugs and seed).

In return, parishioners can invest their time and money (rather than donating) to the charity in their own nature space.

Another part of the Community Project is the history of our village and the changing landscape. We are collaborating with community groups, inviting parishioners to share their knowledge, stories and memories. We also look at old maps to see how land use has changed over time.

Creating the Garden.

The first task was clearing the plot and cutting back all the invasive blackthorn to the hedge line. We designed the garden to ensure that many creatures could be catered for within this 25 x 25 metre plot.

Flower Beds.

Long, narrow beds divided by pathways have been planted with a wide variety of annuals and perennials to provide a continuous source of nectar for bees and other pollinators throughout the seasons. It is important to vary flower shapes, sizes and colours, particularly as insects have different length proboscis and emerge at different times of the year. Single flowers are preferred as double flowers lack essential nectar. Shrubs have been added to the existing trees and hedging surrounding the plot. These provide cover, nesting sites and food in the form of blossom and berries.

Flowering Lawn.

There are millions of gardens in the UK (more than all the nature reserves put together) and a flowering lawn is another valuable source for pollinating insects. We mow on a high cut, allowing existing low flowering plants in the lawn to bloom, seed and spread. We have planted spring bulbs that come up

in February, before the first cut, as early bees (both wild and honey bees) are emerging from hibernation and looking for food. N.B. species crocus are especially beneficial.

Long Grass Area.

This is the part of the garden (which is no mow ever, except for the paths within it) where we have left the grass complete undisturbed and over time it's matured into dense clumps of grass tussocks. This mostly untouched area has become a all year-round environment for insects, reptiles and small mammals, allowing their populations to build up.

We leave ivy to grow in the trees and hedges, the flowers are an important source of pollen and nectar for insects in the autumn. The berries provide a food source for over-wintering birds and the dense foliage provides shelter for much wildlife in the winter months. Seed heads are also important food sources for birds and small mammals.

Black compost bins have been placed in a sunny position attract slow worms. The compost heaps are left undisturbed and unturned because insects, reptiles and wildlife hiberna in them.

Stone piles, leaf piles, log piles and dead hedges are ideal for kinds of beetles, including Stag beetles, with insect and beetle larvae feeding on decaying wood. At no point have we needed to have a bonfire, as each year the dead hedge has decayed enough for the next lot of pruned branches.

Fallen leaves are left to provide cover for insects to hiberna under and mulch around plants, suppressing weeds and insulating the soil over winter, helping retain moisture, add nutrients and building soil as they break down.

There are log circles containing the nettles which is the fox plant for particular caterpillars (Peacock and Tortoiseshell) and a bramble clump that with regular trimming has become dense creating an over-wintering home for mice and voles as well as the blossom being an important food source for midsummer butterflies and the berries feed many creatures.

Wildlife homes (such as bee hotels) have been introduced too. A pond and mini water sources are scattered around the garden with containers of varying sizes placed at different heights. All have pebbles and stones in to help insects access the water without drowning. No chemicals are used in any part of the garden. Plants have been grown from seed and cuttings but many have been donated.

The question is: where do we go from here? All gardens develop as they grow older but that is dependant on the individual caring for them. One thing we know for certain, no matter how much, or how little, you do, if you build it the wildlife will come to you.



The Community Garden at Polstead. Photo, Lisa Matthews.

Ways you can support the charity:

- Create a nature space and help reverse biodiversity loss.
- Become a participating garden, contributing to the nature network of connecting habitats.
- Donate your excess plants and tree saplings so they can be gifted to others.

Please do come and visit or join us to garden with nature in mind at the Community Garden.

Follow us on Facebook: Nature Citizen and Instagram: nature citizen as this helps the charity reach a wider audience. For more information, please contact Lisa Matthews via email : lis@naturecitizen.co.uk or mobile: 07513 484302.

Thank you.

NATURE CITIZEN Cherishing all life

Nature Citizen is a small local environmental charity which is run voluntarily. It aims to increase the abundance of biodiversity locally. The Nature Citizen Community Project is based in Polstead.

The main purpose of setting up Nature Citizen as a charity was to be of public benefit. The aim is to educate and promote the importance of the natural world in our lives. To demonstrate in a practical and simple way how we can all conserve, protect and improve the natural ecosystem around us. We all rely on the natural processes and cycles of the planet for our survival. By creating a network of habitats in our gardens and localities it is possible to reverse the decline of beneficial flora and fauna now and for future generations.

Lisa Matthews.
Charity Number 1166223

With thanks from the Nature Citizen Team

Trustees have verified the Trustee Annual Report via email in support of reducing travel miles and keeping the Charities carbon footprint at net zero.

Rachel White (Chair),

Mary Murdoch, (Treasurer)

Clare Reeves (Secretary),

Emma Daniels

Melissa Matthews (Founder and CEO) known as Lisa

NATURE CITIZEN

England & Wales - Charity number 1166223

Accounts

Trustees Annual Report 10.03.23 to 9.03.2024 for the Parish Council and Charity Commission

As stated with the Charity Commission, Nature Citizens charitable purposes are to be of public benefit, to educate and promote the importance of the Natural World on our lives and action we can take to conserve, protect and improve the natural eco-system. The overall message is as the Charities name implies that we as Citizens are part of Nature and not separate from it, we rely on the natural processes and cycles of the planet for our survival, therefore it is in our best interest to preserve what we have and restore what we have lost in a way that allows people and the planet to flourish, that we can all take action and create a Nature Space, whatever the size and by doing so, all those collective efforts will naturally grow a Nature Network of connected habitats resulting in an increase in the abundance of biodiversity, contributing to mitigate the global concerns of declining flora and fauna, that the solutions are in our hands by helping Nature we are in turn helping ourselves and securing the future for generations to come.

The Nature Citizen Polstead Community Project is how The Charity continues to achieve these objects and community engagement through the:

-Nature Citizen Polstead Community Garden and Mini Woodland– this is a ‘Demonstration Nature Space’ and the Charities Head Office where we meet with Trustees, volunteers and members of the community. In this, we show how to purposely plant for the pollinating insects and create a variety of habitats to encourage many different insects. The Woodland has continued to be cleared of bramble and woodland plants planted to increase food sources for the insects. The trees planted in the woodland are still registered on the Queens Green Canopy Memorandum website. The Nature Citizen Community Garden and the Charity’s efforts continue to be on the Dedham Vale Wilder Together Website and have attended their meetings.

-Together Growing a Nature Network – There are now 20 Participating Gardens, whose contributions of creating their own Nature Space are adding to growing a Nature Network across the village and each year we aim to add more, helping with the charities aim of increasing the abundance of biodiversity locally.

Making the most of our voluntary time and reducing all the ‘red tape’ involved with recruiting volunteers is vital, therefore a large part of the project is exchange. We visit Parishioners, share information about gardening with nature in mind, discuss ideas about what could be done in their gardens to provide food, water and shelter for insects, offer help with design, send them a personalised electronic ‘Creating a Nature Space Information Pack’ and gift them homegrown plants (trees, hedging, shrubs, wildflower plugs and seeds) if they wish. Those that have excess plants have also contributed to gifting plants and in return the Parishioners invest their time and money they may donate to the Charity in their gardens to creating a Nature Space.

-Promote the importance of Nature Spaces – through public talks (The Polstead WI and Polstead Garden Club), posts on online platforms (Facebook and Instagram), articles in the local LSPN newsletter and Information Packs.

With the continued decline of many habitats, insect, wildlife and wild plant species numbers are still falling. Therefore, one of the main aims of the charity is to keep delivering the simple message... ‘if we can all do our little bit in our part of the world’ it all adds up to contributing to local, national and international targets of nature restoration and reversing biodiversity loss.

The Charity’s simplified message is:

Bee a Nature Citizen, create a Nature Space and Together we grow a Nature Network.

Providing food, water and homes for the little creatures that keep the world going.

If we all do a little wherever we are in the world, this will add up to helping a lot.

-History of our village and the changing landscape – collaborating with community groups, inviting parishioners to share their knowledge, stories and memories, looking at old maps and seeing how land use has change over time.

The Charities activities (all time spent is voluntary hours) during the year have been:

- Continued evaluation and updates of The Charities Policies and Procedures
 - Continued membership of Community Action Suffolk
 - As the Trustees are so involved in the actual activities of the Charity, we continue to keep our carbon footprint low by combining meetings and activities at the Nature Citizen Polstead Community Garden with regular updates and reports sent via email and WhatsApp Group calls.
- Some examples of Voluntary hours/time spent.

- Approximately 346 voluntary hours at least has spent at the Nature Citizen Community Garden and Mini Woodland.
- Many hours have been spent on the NCNN (Nature Citizen Nature Network) which include visiting Parishioners Gardens and a local primary school, producing personalised information packs, the parishioners time creating their own Nature Space or adding to what they already have as part of their continued commitment to providing an all year round Nature Space, growing, watering and delivering plants to their gardens and the Community Garden. There are now 20 participating gardens in the village, which the Charity aims to continually increase.
- Publishing posts on social media and in the Local Newsletter reaching 4 local villages.
- Attending Parish Council meetings. Working with the Parish Council to deliver a green agenda.
- Running the Charity. Writing Policies, risk assessments etc.
- Writing reports, updates and email correspondence
- Trustee WhatsApp Meetings. Attending Community & Charity Meetings.
- Three School Children have started volunteering for their Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award.
- The Charity had a Display table at the Village Kings Coronation Luncheon
- Continued Professional Development and Research - attending webinars and virtual events, conferences and courses (online), further education/studying topics such as Soil Regeneration, Soil Food Web, British Society Soil Science, United Nations World Soil Day, Agroecology, Bee Conservation, Regenerative Farming, attended Groundswell, National Capital, Clean Rivers, Wildlife Trusts - Wild Live, Zero Waste, Colchester Natural History Society events, etc.

With thanks to the Friends of Nature Citizen and Trustees for donating plants from their gardens and time volunteering in the Community Garden.

With thanks to all the Parishioners who are participating in growing a Nature Network across the village.

With thanks to Eric for donating home-grown compost to enable to grow so many plants and enrich the soil at the Garden.

With thanks for the kind donation of a shed, the tools can be stored in dry conditions.

With thanks to Simon Goodchild for helping the Charity by keeping the Nature Citizen domain name, hosting, secure certificate and email account at direct cost and donating his time for doing this.

With thanks to the local Parish Council for their ongoing financial contribution that enables the Charity to cover its basic running costs and donating the allotment plots for the Nature Citizen Community Garden, both of which enable the Charity to continue with its environmental activities.

All these donations are very gratefully received as they save time and money to enable the Charity to meet its aims.

With thanks from the Nature Citizen Team

Rachel White (Chair), Mary Murdoch (Treasurer), Clare Reeves (Secretary), Emma Daniels.

Lisa Matthews (Founder and C.E.O)

If you wish to see more information and some pictures of progress from the last year that will be going in the Charity Commission Report, please continue...

Sustainability and becoming carbon neutral.

Sustainability continues to be at the core of all decisions, activities and policies and procedures.

Examples are:

The plastic plant pots used to grow plants for gifting are returned and reused, cutting out needing to buy new.

Home grown compost is used to grow our own plants and trees from seeds and saplings, reducing cost, plastic use and transport miles.

No chemicals are used in the growing of plants or in the Community Garden, eliminating pollution.

The water used to water plants we grow is from collected rainwater wherever possible, saving water.

Hand tools are predominantly used, reducing our carbon footprint.

Materials used in the Garden have been from what others were going to throw away, preventing it going into landfill or being burnt, thus reducing the quick release of carbon dioxide.

Seed heads of plants are left to feed the birds over winter, helping sustain wildlife.

Leaves are left in borders to act as mulch and enrich the soil, perennials continue to be planted as over time both actions help in reducing the need to water and protecting the soil from erosion.

Seeds and surplus plants are collected and redistributed to others which saves them buying new plants and seeds reducing transport miles in the process.

The pruned branches are cut up and added to the dead hedge habitat removing the need to have a bonfire or transport miles to the tip.

Wherever possible we car share and use bicycles.

Information packs are sent to Parishioners electronically saving paper and printer ink, we make our own posters and focus our activities locally.

We have regular Charity Trustee meetings when we are working at the garden helping reduce our travel miles and Charities carbon footprint even further, also

Trustees have verified the Trustee Annual Report via email in support of reducing travel miles and keeping the Charities carbon footprint at net zero.



Nature Citizens table at the Kings Coronation Celebrations

Nature Citizen – Cherishing All Life CHARITY NUMBER 1166223

Below are pictures from just three of the participating gardens - example of a 'gifting of trees and plants' drop off, two ponds that have been built and a wildflower strip all contributing to the 'Together Growing a Nature Network' across Polstead.



Below are articles from the local newsletter the LSPN, we started contributing monthly articles in February 2023.

Nature Citizen *cherishing all life* Charity Number 1166223 (Article 16) May 2024

Bee a Nature Citizen, create a Nature Space and Together we grow a Nature Network.

Providing food, water and homes for the little creatures that keep the world going.

If we all do a little wherever we are in the world, this will add up to helping a lot.



No Mow Ever! Nature Citizen Community Garden... It's so lovely to see the cowslips and dandelions in the long grass area. In the Garden we have created a variety of habitats to encourage many different insects and long grass is just one of those. We never cut the grass except for pathways (as shown in the picture above) and over time this mostly untouched area has become a great all year-round hidey home for insects, reptiles and small mammals. We have also scattered seeds and introduced plants to provide more food (the nectar and pollen from the flowers) for the pollinating insects such as bees, butterflies and hoverflies.

The Community Garden based at the Polstead Allotments. The Charities aims are to increase the abundance of biodiversity locally. Ways to support the Charity: Join in the Nature Network and become a Participating Garden, donate your excess plants and tree saplings that will be gifted, all are welcome to visit or lend a hand at the Community Garden, follow us on Facebook (Nature Citizen) and Instagram ([nature_citizen](https://www.instagram.com/nature_citizen)).

For more information, please contact Lisa Matthews via email lisa@naturecitizen.co.uk or mobile 07513 484302. Thank you.

Nature Citizen *cherishing all life* Charity Number 1166223 (Article 5) June

By creating a Nature Space, together we build a Nature Network, providing food, water and shelter for the little creatures that we so rely on for our survival.

Giving Nature a Helping Hand... providing Solitary Cavity Nesting Bees, a place to lay their eggs. These Solitary Bee homes have a viewing window to be able to see inside. These bees use mud to make individual cells, fill it full of pollen for their young to feed on, lay an egg then seal it up with mud. These people made Bee Homes to replicate nesting tubes the bees would use in the wild. I've positioned ours to receive the sun all day, locating it close to flower and water sources. The key is to have plants that are in flower for as much of the year as possible, so there is a constant food source available.

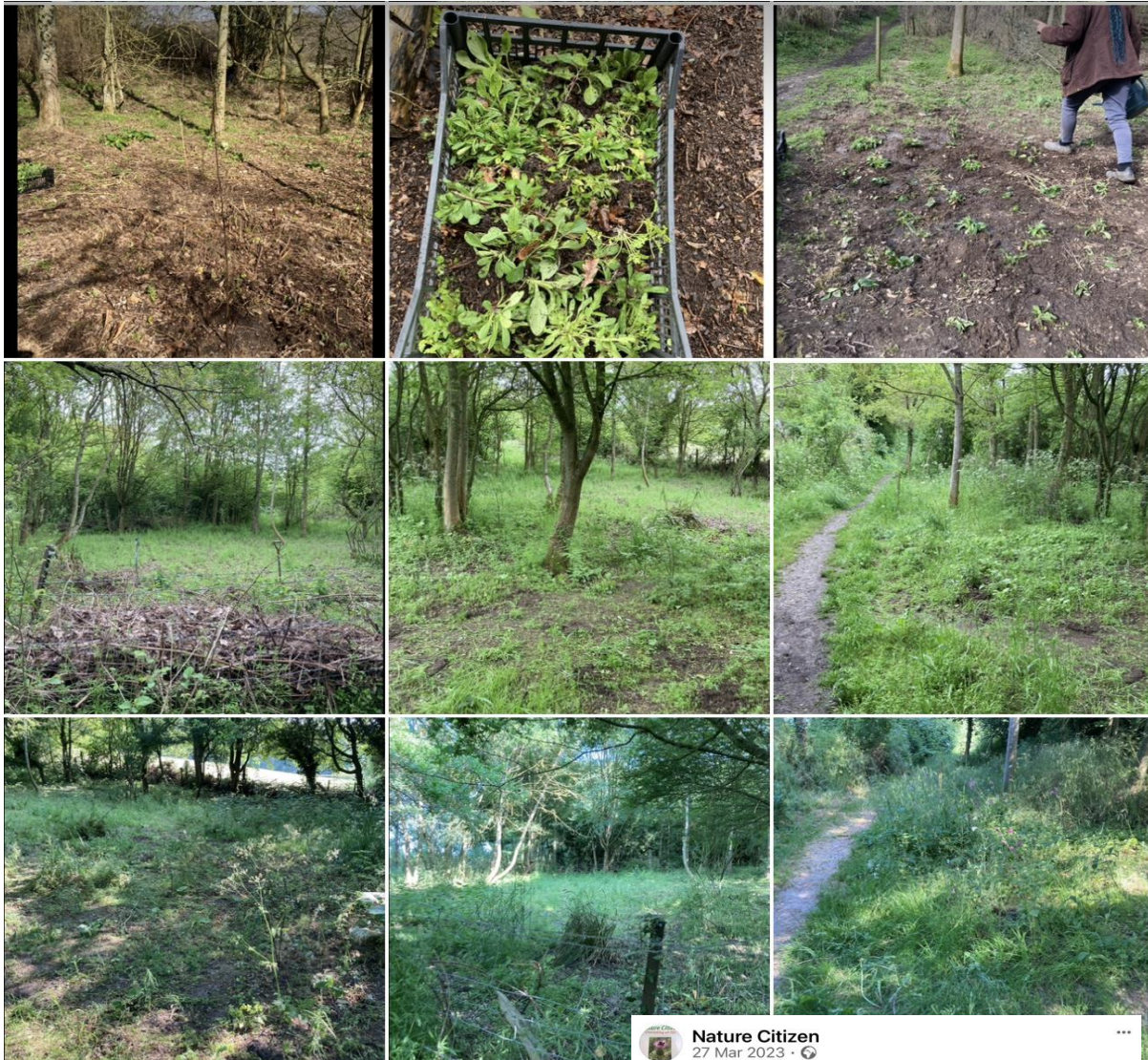
If we each create a Nature Space, to provide food, water and shelter for pollinators and other beneficial insects, these actions collectively add up to building a Nature Network of connected resources, contributing to the efforts of reversing the decline of insects.

Nature Citizen is a local voluntarily run charity based in Polstead, aiming to increase the abundance of biodiversity locally through the 'Together Building a Nature Network Project'. Please contact Lisa Matthews via email lisa@naturecitizen.co.uk mobile 07513 484302 for more information and ways to support the Charity is to join us to 'Garden for Nature' at the Nature Citizen Community Garden in Polstead and follow us on Facebook (Nature Citizen) & Instagram ([nature_citizen](https://www.instagram.com/nature_citizen)). Thank you.



Nature Citizen – Cherishing All Life CHARITY NUMBER 1166223

The woodland has benefitted from the bramble cutting and woodland floor clearance, dead hedge building, and woodland plants planted. Wildflower plants from the community garden have been planted along the public footpath at the woodland edge. We also found puffballs.



Nature Citizen.... Giving nature a helping hand
14 Trees Planted for the Queens Green Canopy
Adding new varieties, increasing biodiversity in this woodland area, 3 Crab Apple, 2 Hazel, 2 Hornbeam, 1 Wild Pear, 2 Damson, 1 Holly, 3 Buckthorn. 🌳💚🍏



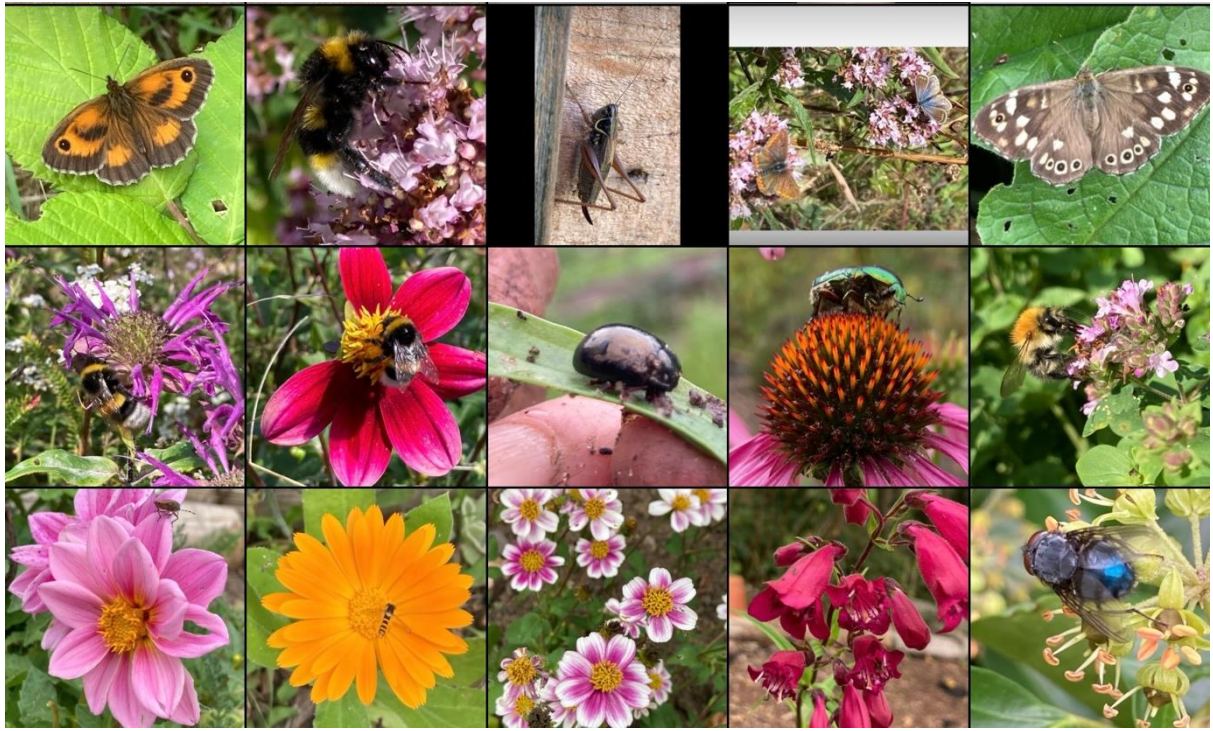
Nature Citizen – Cherishing All Life CHARITY NUMBER 1166223

The Nature Citizen Community Garden.... Over time we have added home grown and donated plants to extend the time of flowering plants to provide as much food as possible from as early as February and as late as November and then we leave the seed heads overwinter and early spring to provide food for birds and small mammals and shelter for insects.



Lots of residents and visitors in the Polstead Community Garden







The Nature Citizen Community Garden & Mini Woodland – A Demonstration Nature Space.

Creating a Nature Space and Gardening with Nature in Mind – diversity is the key.

The mosaic of habitats and a variety of successional flowering plants provides all year-round food, water and shelter for insects & other wildlife.

Examples that are in the garden are:

A flowering lawn, showing that you can provide a large area of pollen and nectar throughout the year without it looking wild!

A ‘no mow ever’ long grass area that over time has many grass tussocks/clumps established, providing all year-round shelter for insects, small mammals and reptiles, more wildflowers have been interplanted increasing food sources, black compost bins, which has sloe worms and ants living in them.

Compost heaps have been left and not turned because insects, reptiles and wildlife make homes, hibernate in them and find refuge.

Log piles, dead wood and dead hedge (ideal for all kinds of beetles and other insects). We have recorded the Stag Beetle sightings with the PTES (Peoples Trust for Endangered Species).

The log circle containing the nettles which is the food plant for caterpillars.

Bramble clump, the flowers provide pollen and nectar for insects, the berries later provide food for birds, small mammals and insects. With trimming it regularly it has become dense which provides shelter for wildlife.

Fallen leaves are left over winter to act as mulch and cover for insects in the winter and return organic matter and nutrition back into the soil.

Seed heads have been left uncut to feed the birds and small mammals over winter.

As the logs are decaying over time the variety of Fungi has increased.

Mini water sources that have stones in in case insects fall in they won't drown.

Wildlife homes (bugs, insects, birds, small mammals, hedgehogs etc).

Trees and shrubs around the edge of the NCCG provide cover, nesting sites and food (blossom and berries).

Mini woodland with dead hedges with bramble growing through them, an area left to create a dense thicket for birds, the woodland floor cleared of bramble to allow other things to grow, wildflowers planted on the edge of the path which is not only great for insects but lovely to see too.

The last two pages are some examples of social media posts on the Nature Citizen Facebook page

Nature Citizen – Cherishing All Life CHARITY NUMBER 1166223

Nature Citizen
18 Mar 2023 · 🌐

Nature Citizen - cherishing all life - Charity Number 1166223.

🌻 By creating a Nature Space those efforts do build a Nature Network and increase the abundance of biodiversity in your local area 🐝🌻🌻🌻🌻🌻🌻🌻🌻
The solutions are in our hands! Individual actions really do make a difference and collectively they can have a big impact. Without bees and other invertebrates our world would be a very different place, they are vital to the life cycle of many plants and trees! This includes the variety of food we eat, the flowers we enjoy and the plants and trees we use.
Bees and other pollinating insects feed on the pollen and nectar that are in the flowers, they have different length tongues (proboscis) and are about at different times of the year. Therefore if you have room or know someone that does have room available, know that by planting a variety of plants that are in flower at different times of year for as much of the year as possible, that vary in shape, colour and height is the key to providing an ongoing plentiful supply of food for them. By ensuring they survive, this in turns helps us to thrive 🐝



Nature Citizen
8 Apr 2023 · 🌐

🌻 Creating a Nature Space together building a Nature Network to increase the abundance of biodiversity....
So what does a Nature Space look like?
Well that can look like whatever you wish to create, have the space, time, resources and inclination to create'
For me a continual question is 'what else can I do and what more can I squeeze in'?
As insects are small and hugely varied, having a variety of mini habitats is really helpful. For example a pile of branches and logs in the sunshine will attract different insects from a pile that is underneath trees in the shade.
Scanning... Do we have something out in flower at the moment so theres food for the bees and other pollinating insects?
Do we have water available, has the bird bath dried out etc.
Do we have a home for them, even if its a pile of leaves. It doesn't have to be complicated, you don't need to be knowledgeable or go to great expense, in fact much can be done at no cost at all.
Below is a simple example of a Nature Space in a small area
The Rosemary herb is flowering (food) the recycled glass jar with stones in so the insects can get out is kept full (water) and we've drilled different size holes in left over piece of wood for solitary bees to lay their eggs (home)
🐝🌻🌻



Nature Citizen
22 May 2023 · 🌐

🌻 22nd May is the United Nations International Day for Biological Diversity, often shortened to Biodiversity which means the variety of life of earth. The Theme this year is from agreement to action : build back biodiversity. When biodiversity has a problem, humanity has a problem.
www.un.org/en/observances/biological-diversity-day

Nature Citizen also recognises the importance of Nature, that we are part of it, that individual actions really do collectively add up and that we can increase the abundance of biodiversity by creating a Nature Space in whatever room we have available. Taking action to provide food, water and shelter that we fundamentally strive for as humans is a gift and service to cherish all life.
When you have a variety of plants and habitats, you give food and homes to a variety of insects, which in turn feed a variety of animals and so on.....All of this abundance helps pollinate plants that provide us with food, flowers, trees and medicines for example, also decompose materials, build healthy soils, cleans air, rivers and oceans. Biodiversity keeps the balance of good bacteria and viruses. We are learning more and more of the importance of biodiversity, it's value is tremendous and not fully recognised and appreciated, but this intricate web works together to maintain balance and support life. 🐝🌍

Nature Citizen
1 Jun 2023 · 🌐

🌻 Giving Nature a helping hand....Sharing our space with Nature and living in harmony 🌱 What more can we do!
There are millions of gardens in the UK (more than all the Nature Reserves put together) and lawns can be a fabulous food source and home for beneficial insects. Helpful actions include; mowing on a high cut allows the flowers to grow, having even a small area of long grass, not using chemicals, planting bulbs such as crocuses that come up in February, laying flags on an area of short grass to weaken the grass to then sow seeds or plant low growing plants such as clover, chamomile and creeping thyme which smell wonderful when walked on. If circumstances allow and you like the idea to have a flowering lawn and areas that are left to grow adds to the mosaic of mini habitats creating food and shelter for beneficial insects and adding to the abundance of biodiversity in your local area. If not there are lots of other ideas such as growing herbs, planting nectar rich plants in a border etc.
Bee a Nature Citizen, create a Nature Space and together we build a Nature Network, doing our bit in our part of the world, to take action where we can to try and halt the concerning decline in insect numbers that are part of the intricate web of life that enable us to live the lives we do
🐝🌱🌻🌻🌻🌻🌍

Nature Citizen – Cherishing All Life CHARITY NUMBER 1166223

Nature Citizen
18 Jun 2023 · 🌍

🐛 Biggin up the bugs! 🐝🐜🐞🐟🐡🐢🐘🐙🐚🐛🐜🐞🐟🐡🐢🐘🐙🐚 Thank you for keeping the world turning 🌱🍄🐛🐜🐞🐟🐡🐢🐘🐙🐚

Nature Citizen
5 Jul 2023 · 🌍

😊 Nature Citizen helping contribute to Citizen Science Projects...PTES (Peoples Trust for Endangered Species) are asking for people to record any Stag Beetle sightings for their STAG BEETLE COUNT as they are on the decline and their status is Nationally Scarce and population unknown, mainly due to loss of habitat and tidying up by removing dead and decaying wood. The PTES have great advice on their website to help encourage stag beetles and loads of interesting facts about them too. In the Nature Citizen Community Garden (a demonstration Nature Space) we have a pile of wood, dead hedges and upturned logs at the edges of bark paths and over time these are aging and the beetle larvae are feeding on the decaying wood. The photos are of female stag beetles as the males have longer mandibles that look like stag antlers.

Nature Citizen
30 Jun 2023 · 🌍

😊 Really enjoyed Groundswell, wonderful to see so many interested in regenerative farming, a return to our traditional way of farming with new technologies set to enhance farming too 🌱🍄🐛



Nature Citizen
2 Dec 2023 · 🌍

😊 Giving Nature a helping hand..... Leaving the cutting back of plants until spring is really helpful to wildlife, the seed heads provide a much needed food source for birds and small mammals, the plants also provide shelter for invertebrates to hibernate overwinter, as the plant leaves decompose they provide organic matter and nutrients improving the health and structure of the soil, the roots have a fungal network attached to them by leaving the plants undisturbed helps the underground life too 🌱🍄🐛

Nature Citizen
13 Dec 2023 · 🌍

😊 Celebrating the wonder of soil!
Much of life on earth relies on soil for its survival. Soil is an ecosystem that is made up of broken-down rocks, organic matter (dead plants and animals), soil micro-organisms (fungi, bacteria and living creatures) air and water. Soil is extraordinary and much of the life in the soil has yet to be discovered, named and understood. Soil has layers of soil and it's the top layer of soil where plants grow, with over 95% of the food we eat originating from soil and our food security relies on healthy soils. Medicines such as antibiotics and anti fungals are derived from microorganisms living in the soil, because theres so much life in soil yet to be discovered, there is great hope that new medicines can be found.

NATURE CITIZEN

England & Wales - Charity number 1166223

Accounts

Nature Citizen – Cherishing All Life CHARITY NUMBER 1166223

Charity Commission Annual Return 2023

Annual Trustees Report 10th March 2022 to 9th March 2023

Nature Citizens charitable purposes are to be of public benefit as stated with the Charity Commission, to educate and promote the importance of the Natural World on our lives and action we can take to conserve, protect and improve the natural eco-system.

The Charity is continuing to achieve these objects through **The Nature Citizen Community Project**.

The overall message is as the Charities name implies that we as Citizens are part of Nature, that the solutions are in our hands, that we can all take action and create a Nature Space, whatever the size and by doing so, all those collective efforts will naturally build a Nature Network of connected habitats resulting in an increase in the abundance of biodiversity.

The Nature Citizen Community Project at the moment has three main areas of engagement:

- The Nature Citizen Community Garden – The Head Office and Demonstration Nature Space, to meet and also showcase how we can all provide a habitat for bees and other beneficial insects.
- Together Building a Nature Network – going out to visit the community, encouraging them to create their own Nature Space, which contributes to increasing the abundance of biodiversity locally.
- To promote the importance of Nature Spaces – through talks, online platforms, articles and Information Packs.

The Charities activities (all time spent is voluntary) during the year have been:

- Continued evaluation and updates of The Charities Policies and Procedures
- Continued membership of the Foundation for Social Improvement and Community Action Suffolk
- As the Trustees are so involved in the actual activities of the Charity, we have continued meetings at the Nature Citizen Community Garden with regular updates and reports sent, contributions made and then verified by the Trustees by email in attempts to reduce the Charities carbon footprint.

Voluntary hours measured.

Approximately 315 voluntary hours at least has spent at the Nature Citizen Community Garden
Approximately 50 voluntary hours has been spent on the NCNN (Nature Citizen Nature Network)
Approximately 700 voluntary hours NCNN – residents time on their individual Nature Space
Approximately 27 voluntary hours has been spent on the on the Polstead Mini Woodland
Approximately 20 voluntary hours spent on visiting the Farm and Dormouse Survey

Some examples of unmeasured voluntary hours/time spent.

- Raising plants for the Community Garden and to gift out to Parishioners for their Nature Space.
- Delivering plants to for parishioners Nature Spaces that are taking part in the Nature Network.
- Publishing posts on social media and in the Local Newsletter
- Attending Parish Council, Community & Charity Meetings. Having a stand at the Village Christmas Fair. Working with the Parish Council to deliver a green agenda.
- Running the Charity. Writing Policies, risk assessments etc.
- Writing reports, updates and email correspondence
- Curating information packs for the community on 'How to create a Nature Space – Gardening and Farming with Nature In Mind' to distribute electronically or printed if requested.
- Research, attending webinars and virtual events, conferences and courses (online), further education/studying topics such as Soil Regeneration, Soil Food Web, Agroecology, Bee Conservation, AgriTech Conference, Regenerative Farming, National Capital, Clean Rivers etc.
- Continued Professional Development Qualifications
Lisa attaining Level 2 Certificate in Understanding Climate Change and Environmental Awareness
And passed The Field Studies Council Bee Nesting Ecology and Conservation Course.

The Nature Citizen Community Garden (NCCG) - this 'Demonstration Nature Space' is gardened with 'Nature in Mind' to increase the abundance of biodiversity, to share not only with insects and other wildlife, but with the Parishioners and the wider community both online and in the local newsletter. Visitors and passers-by continue to give encouraging comments of how much they enjoy seeing the garden and how lovely its looking. The planting continues to provide food for bees and other

Search Facebook

Posts About Photos Mentions

Nature Citizen
7 Aug 2022 · 🌍

🌻 What a difference a year makes, the same purple Salvia is flowering at the end of July in 2021 which has already gone to seed in the dry conditions in 2022.

We haven't artificially watered the Nature Citizen Community Garden and this Demonstration Nature Space has very sandy soil. Plants have been adapting to the heat and dry conditions by not growing as big and finishing flowering and producing seed earlier. To make the garden as environmentally conscious as we can, we didn't want to use precious water resources to keep the garden pretty therefore many plants have not flourished like last year. What we are doing is thinking about the long term by making compost to add organic matter to the soil which in future should help with retaining moisture in the soil, growing plants from seed and adding them later in the season to continue the food for the pollinators and rethinking what we are planting for potential long term changes in the climate to ensure the insects have a continued food source. Because of the prolonged lack of rain we recently and reluctantly started spot watering where necessary especially the new plants with shallow roots and plants in flower as we still need to feed the bees and other insects that rely on pollen and nectar from plants. It will only be next year when we find out whether the unwatered plants have survived or been lost to this extreme prolonged heat and lack of rain over the last year.



beneficial insects, with an increased variety for as much of the year as possible. This year was particularly harsh with an unusually long period of time without rain and because of the huge amount of water would have been needed to sustain all the plants, we chose to let nature takes its course. As a result, we had plants that were smaller, less productive and some unfortunately were lost and many we will not know until later in the year to see if they come back again. So, we are starting again in some ways.

Luckily around 500 annual plants were grown last year, that were intended to give out into the community, but instead were used on the Garden to continue to stock the established garden, providing a late food source to the bee populations that visit ready for hibernation over winter.



Below are pictures showing the variety in colour and shape of some plants that did grow this year, demonstrating that lots of bees and other insects visited the Garden throughout the year.

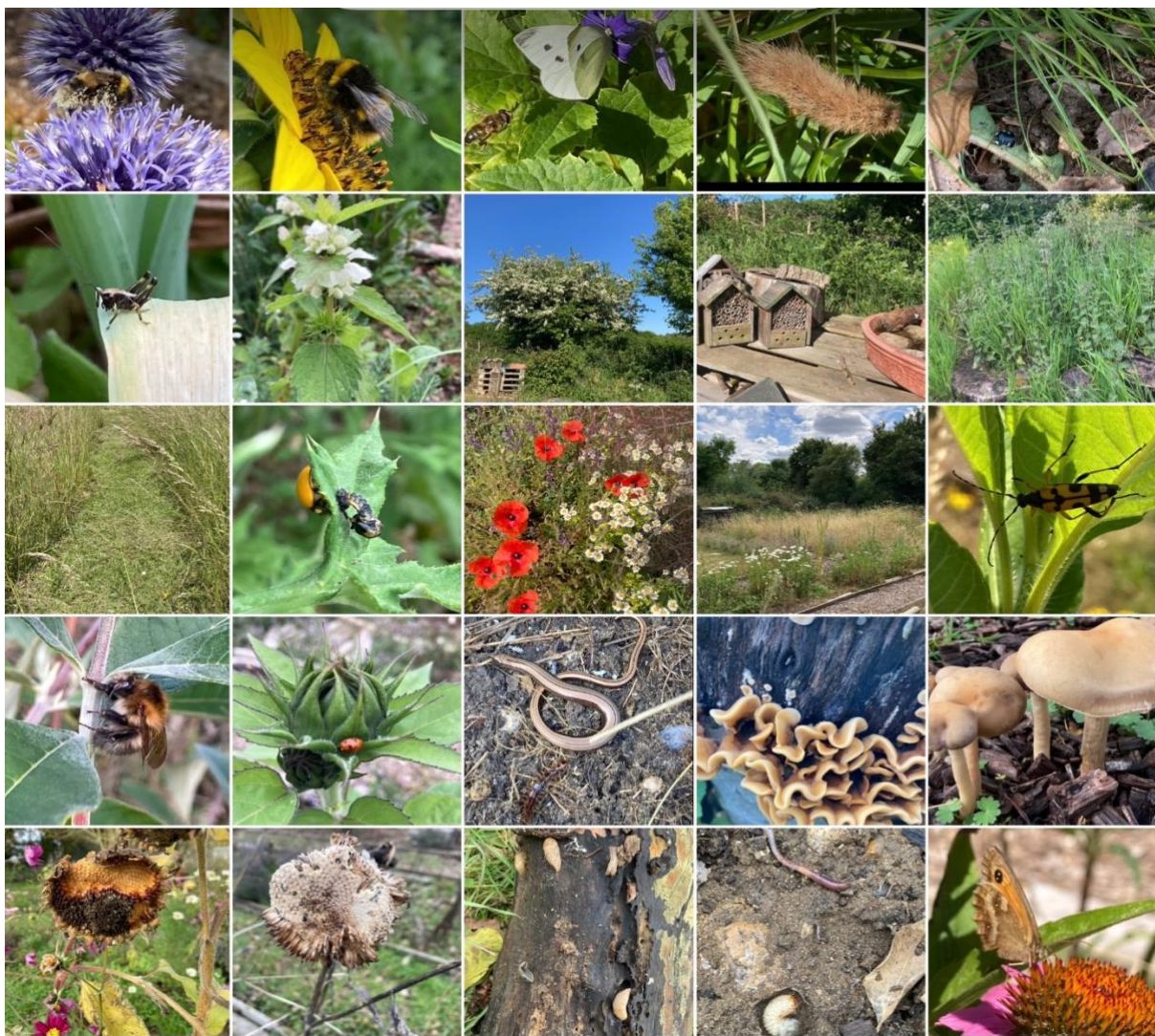


With thanks for the kind donation of a Pergola, the Charity now has a Head Office where we can meet whatever the weather. Providing shelter in the rain and protection from the sun, creating a wonderful community hub that's transformed the Garden, 'A Meeting Place in our Nature Space'.



The shed that was already on the plot was moved, the overgrown area was cleared, concrete to act as plinths was poured into holes under the posts to make it secure in all weathers, the pergola was made and as we hadn't appreciated how much of a slope the plot is on a lot of earth had to be excavated to be able to walk underneath it safely. A huge effort all round with a great result!

Creating a Nature Space and Gardening with Nature in Mind – diversity is the key. Still going strong is the mosaic of micro habitats and a variety of successional flowering plants that's providing all year-round food, water and shelter for insects & other wildlife allowing their populations to build up. Examples of these are: The flowering lawn. Different height grass. Long grass left with wildflowers. Grass tussocks/clumps. Black compost bins placed in a warm sunny position. Compost heaps – left and not turned because insects, reptiles and wildlife hibernate in them and find refuge. Log piles, dead wood and dead hedge (ideal for all kinds of beetles and other insects). The log circle containing the nettles which is the food plant for caterpillars. Bramble clump. Fallen leaves left to act as mulch and cover for insects in the winter and return organic matter and nutrition back into the soil. Seed heads have been left uncut to feed the birds and small mammals over winter. Increased variety of Fungi. Mini water source. Wildlife homes (bugs, insects, birds, small mammals, hedgehogs etc). Trees and shrubs around the edge of the NCCG provide cover, nesting sites and food (blossom and berries). Below are pictures of just some of the mini habitats and wildlife that live and have visited the Community Garden within the last year....



With thanks to the Friends of Nature Citizen and Trustees for donating plants from their gardens, and the Gardening Club for donating their surplus plants from the 2022 Christmas Fair. With thanks to Eric for donating home-grown compost to enable to grow so many plants and enrich the soil at the Garden. Thank you to Nicky for donating the Trailer for the bike, used to deliver plants locally helping the Charity meet its Sustainability Goals. All these donations save the Charity having to spend huge amounts of money to meet its aims.

The Charity asked the residents of one of the participating gardens to kindly let us know if we'd been of any benefit and the feedback was as follows..... 'Last year we were fortunate enough to acquire a small piece of land adjoining our existing garden. It was immediately obvious that we wanted to put the land to use as a Nature Space to encourage wildlife and we reached out to Lisa at Nature Citizen for help. Nature Citizen has been invaluable in providing everything we needed to get started - numerous cuttings for a hedge, a willow tree, many kinds of wildflower plants (we often would arrive home and find a stack of trays filled with all kinds of plants), a forest of butterfly loving buddlia and much more, and of course lots of great ideas (the dead hedge is great example) and advice. Our wildlife garden got off to a good start with help from Nature Citizen, and it's nice to know that it's part of a bigger community of people and nature spaces - sharing ideas, plants and enthusiasm - for the benefit of nature and future generations. As a result, we have put in lots of hours planting trays of plants provided by Lisa - both of us together putting in around 8 hours a week at the weekends and a few more in the lighter evenings of spring summer. I estimate around 700 hours total in the last year. I can't put a figure on how much we have saved financially by virtue of the free plants, advice and friendly visits, except to say that it's been invaluable. Thanks Lisa and Nature Citizen. Mandy and Phill'



Here's some ideas on how can we help them!

*Have plants in flower for as much of the year as possible. Variety in flower shape, colour and height is the key.

*Have water available. Any size, I have upturned shells in my plant pot, and recycled jars with stones in them so if they fall in they don't drown.

*Provide homes (shelter and nesting sites) e.g.hollow stems, drilled holes in wood, undisturbed compost heaps.

*Give others bee friendly plants to put in their outside space.

*Encourage your work place to have their own Nature Space.

*If you have a lawn, cut your grass on the highest setting and allow the low flowering plants to spread, collectively flowering lawns would provide vast amount of food.

*Plant late autumn and early spring bulbs for bees to stock up before hibernating and when emerging in spring.

*Avoid using chemicals in your gardens and find natural alternatives where possible.

Our individual actions add up to make a massive collective difference 🙌😊 The solutions are in our hands!

By cherishing the bees we are cherishing ourselves 🍯

Bee a Nature Citizen, create a Nature Space and together we build a Nature Network 🐝❤️🌻🌍



A real joy to have four visits (January, April, June and October) over the course of a year to a local Farm. They kindly showed me around their Farm and to participate in the ongoing Dormouse Survey, overseen by an Ecologist. Here is a wonderful example of landowners, working with an Ecologist and volunteers to help a protected species, the Hazel Dormice, on their Farm. The Landowner built by hand and his own design, 50 nest boxes, topped with welsh slate to extend the longevity of the nest boxes and to protect the nests from predators. The coppiced Hazel Trees within the mixed tree woodland provides ideal habitat for these tiny creatures. With each survey, the nest boxes are checked, observations documented, any Hazel Dormouse are weighed, gender and health recorded. The state of the nest boxes are checked and replaced where necessary. This is such vital work as the Hazel Dormouse is considered endangered and each survey is added to the National Recordings.



Together Building a Nature Network- Farmers as well as Gardeners play a large part in protecting species and enhancing biodiversity. As with 'Gardening with Nature in Mind, so there is 'Farming with Nature in Mind' - seeing what areas of the farm could be shared with Nature. Great examples of Nature Spaces on The Farm are : A pond, with sloping banks and a ramp for animals to climb out. Different height grasses. Woodland areas. Double hedgerows to increase density for cover. Ivy growing up trees to provide cover and late food for bees. Deadwood left for beetles. New hedgerows planted. Re wilded area on poor soil areas. Seeded plants left for ground nesting birds.

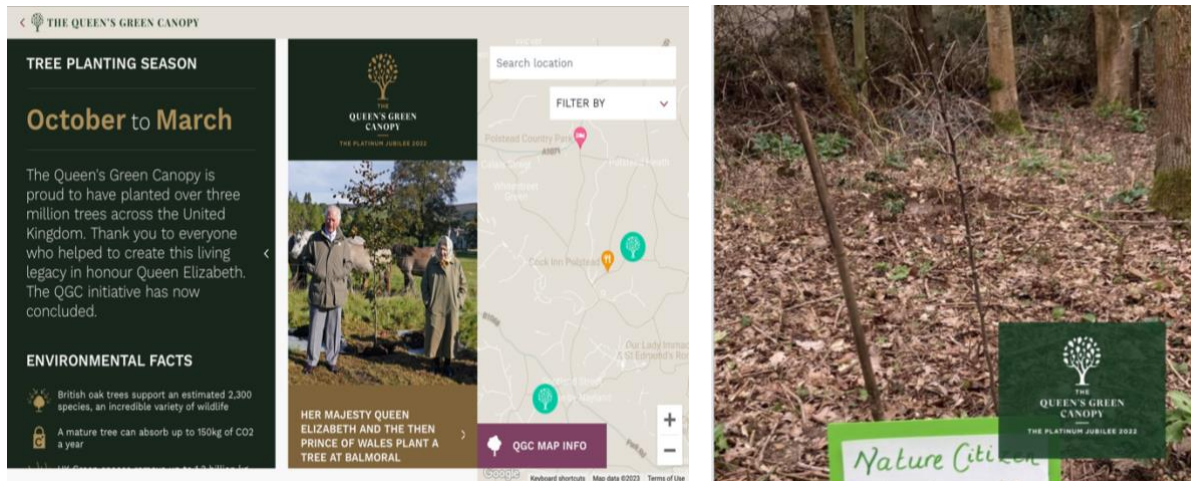


Mini Woodland Area

The Parish Council asked Nature Citizen to manage the Mini Woodland that is on the lower allotment plots next to the Nature Citizen Community Garden. The aim is for it to be managed for the benefit of wildlife. Site visits, meetings and plans were drawn before work commenced in mid-February 2023. The area had become very overgrown. Works on The Woodland started with a risk assessment being formulated, two thirds of the woodland floor has been cleared of bramble, a start has been made to remove the rusty broken wire fencing, at least 150 discarded dog poo bags and litter was collected and binned, some low branches removed, dead hedges started and leaf and branch piles have been made creating an excellent habitat and eliminates the need for bonfires or the removal of it off site saving both time and carbon, planting of plants and seeds has begun, to date 27 voluntary hours have been spent on clearing and planting the woodland so far. Below are pictures of before, during and what has been achieved so far.



We're delighted to have been part of the Queens Green Canopy, fourteen homegrown trees were planted in memoriam to honour Her Majesty adding new varieties and increasing biodiversity in this newly managed woodland area, three Crab Apple, two Hazel, two Hornbeam, one Wild Pear, two Damson, one Holly and three Buckthorn. These have been added to the QGC Map.



Community Engagement

Whether it be in the Community Shop when the Charity was asked to take part in the green button scheme, via newsletters or word of mouth, the main message and invitation that is being distributed amongst Parishioners is **'Nature Citizen – Cherishing All Life'** Nature Citizen is a small local voluntary run Charity with cherishing Nature at its heart. The 'Nature Citizen Community Garden' is a demonstration Nature Space at the Allotments, where we Garden with Nature in mind and all are welcome. We are creating a mosaic of habitats and purposeful planting for pollinators and other beneficial insects for as much of the year as possible. The aim is to encourage others to create Nature Spaces of any size, which will naturally contribute to a Nature Network across the village aiming to increase the abundance of biodiversity locally.'

As well as Community engagement within the village or with The Nature Citizen Community Project, the Charity also puts an article in the local monthly Newsletter delivered to every household in four adjoining villages.

The Charity continues to reach people through Face Book (Nature Citizen) and Instagram (nature_citizen). Gathering information from Facebook Business Suite, NC now has 155 followers. 36 Posts have been written this year and with shares, collectively they have reached 18,123 people. On Instagram we now have 55 followers, have published a further 25 posts. Whilst there's no data available to show how many people the posts have reached; the posts received a total of 369 likes and the 1 video had 46 views.

Sustainability

Sustainability and Net Zero Carbon Emissions are important to the Charity. We re-use plastic plant pots, use home grown compost to grow our own plants and trees from seeds and saplings , do not use chemicals, repurpose materials in the Garden that others were throwing away, leave the seed heads of plants to feed the birds over winter, mulch borders and plant perennials which over time become established both reducing the need to water, collect seeds and surplus plants to redistribute to others which saves them buying new plants and seeds reducing transport miles in the process, we reuse cut branches to make a dead hedge habitat removing the need to have a bonfire or transport miles to the tip, car share and use bicycles, send information packs to Parishioners electronically saving paper and printer ink, make our own posters, focus our activities locally.

A trailer has been purchased for my bicycle to deliver plants around the village for Parishioners Nature Spaces. I am confident that we are a carbon neutral charity as the plants, trees and seeds that we grow in the Garden and give out take in more carbon than we use. We have regular Charity Trustee meetings when we are working at the garden helping reduce our travel miles and Charities carbon footprint even further.

Conclusion

The Charities main objectives are to be of public benefit, to educate and promote the importance of the Natural World on our lives, that we are part of Nature and rely on the natural processes and cycles of the planet for our survival, that it is on our best interest to preserve what we have and restore what we have lost in a way that allows people and the planet to flourish.

With the continued decline of many habitats, sadly insect, wildlife and wild plant species numbers are still falling. Therefore, one of the main aims of the charity is to keep delivering the simple message... 'if we can all do our little bit in our part of the world' it all adds up to the contribute to local, national and international targets of nature restoration and reversing biodiversity loss. As the Charity's name Nature Citizen implies, we are part of Nature and not separate from it. The solutions really are in our hands, by helping Nature we are in turn helping ourselves too.

With thanks to Simon Goodchild for helping the Charity by keeping the Nature Citizen domain name, hosting, secure certificate and email account at direct cost and donating his time for doing this.

With thanks to the local Parish Council for their ongoing financial contribution that enables the Charity to cover its basic running costs and donating the allotment plots for the Nature Citizen Community Garden

Trustees have verified the Trustee Annual Report via email in support of reducing travel miles and keeping the Charities carbon footprint at net zero.

Rachel White (Chair)

Mary Murdoch (Treasurer)

Clare Reeves (Secretary)

Emma Daniels

Founder and C.E.O – Melissa Matthews (known as Lisa)

TRUSTEE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS MARCH 2022-2023

Nature Citizen – Charity Number 1166223

Receipts and Payments for year ended 9th March 2023

Opening Balance b/f 10/03/2022 £1,934.56

Receipts		Payments	
Donations	£450.00	Charity Insurance.	£112.00
Amazon Smile donation.	£ 44.12	Website and associated costs.	£423.73
Cash Donation	£100.00.	Phone and calls	£275.92
		Promotional exp. & printing	£278.59
		Compost/seeds/plants.	£402.51
		Community Garden equipment.	£319.12
		Community Project equipment.	£140.96
		Travel costs.	£191.20
		Continued Professional Dev.	£164.08
		Closing Balance c/f 09/03/2023	<u>£220.57</u>

TOTALS. £2,528. £2,528.68

Trustees have verified accounts via email due to meeting sustainability goals by reducing travel miles minimising the Charities carbon footprint and reducing exposure to covid and winter viruses.

Rachel White (Chair)

Mary Murdoch (Treasurer)

Clare Reeves (Secretary)

Emma Daniels

C.E.O – Melissa Matthews

NATURE CITIZEN

England & Wales - Charity number 1166223

Accounts

ANNUAL TRUSTEE REPORT 10th March 2020 - 9th March 2021

The Charity's activities (voluntary time) during the period 10.03.2020 - 09.03.2021 were:

- Continued development of the Policies and Procedures Manual
- Trustee meetings indoors were cancelled due to covid. Therefore continued discussions were held when we regularly met outside to work on the Nature Citizen Community Garden.
- Continued Nature Citizen's membership with The Foundation for Social Improvement (F.S.I) and Community Action Suffolk.
- Raised awareness of Nature Citizens aims and the importance of helping insects and other wildlife via social media and passers by the Nature Citizen Community Garden. With the arise of Covid -19 and all the uncertainties and restrictions, we decided to put on hold all our Community Activities.
To ensure we continued to fulfil Nature Citizens charitable purposes we started a 'virtual community' online with a Face Book (Nature Citizen) and Instagram (nature_citizen) Page.
On Face Book, from 3rd April 2020 to 6th March 2021, we now have 108 followers, published 43 posts which collectively have reached 4,909 people.
On Instagram from 2nd April 2020 to 6th March 2021, we now have 42 followers, published 79 posts, (unfortunately there's no data available to show how many people the posts have reached).
- Accepted the continued donation from the local Parish Council of 3 allotment plots for The Nature Citizen Community Garden (NCCG) and we've been working hard to continue the creation of this 'Demonstration Nature Space' to share with the Community. This will become a lovely place to meet, to share ideas and information as to how we can all contribute to helping increase biodiversity in our gardens and show how we can all garden with wildlife in mind. The main message is that all our collective efforts can add up to build a connected Nature Network across our village, benefitting all.
In the last year 120 metres of borders and 125 metres of paths have been made. At least 1,500 plants planted, grown from seed or cuttings and donations. All the plants planted are beneficial to insects.... Purposeful and Successional Planting for Pollinators, provides a variety of food and for as long as possible throughout the year.
Approximately 400 voluntary hours have been at the NCCG, but this does not include all the voluntary hours that were spent:
 - sowing, growing, pricking out, re potting and watering of the plants for the NCCG.
 - shopping for items for the garden, unloading donated goods, signage writing etc.
 - taking pictures, editing, researching and publishing posts on Social Media.Many new micro habitats have been created in the NCCG as one of the main purposes of this demonstration Nature Space is to increase biodiversity and garden with wildlife in mind.
These include: Stag beetle log piles, compost bins for slow worms, mini water source, nettle patch, dead hedge, compost area, long grass, wild flowers,

bramble circle for hedgehogs, grass tussocks for lizards and slow worms. Hand made wildlife homes such as bat box, bee hotel, bird boxes and hedgehogs home were placed around the site. There are also Trees and shrubs around the edge of the Garden providing cover, nesting sites and food for a variety of insects and other wildlife.

Donations this Year and big Thank yous too:

The Parish Council for the continued donation of the unused plots at Polstead Allotments, paying CO10 to trim the bottom hedge and for their kind donation of £250 which contributed towards NC annual running costs.

Emma for raising £130 which helped pay for seeds and compost to help feed the bees.

Mary for donating £100 to buy plants from Beth Chatto Nursery.

Dave for making a hedgehog home and bench for the NCCG.

John for donating the decking to help make the edges of the paths.

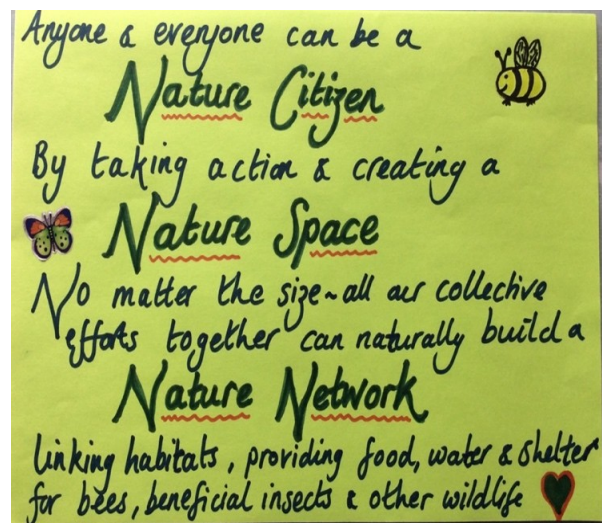
Friends of Nature Citizen donating plants from their gardens.

Eric for donating his homemade compost.

The Trustees and Friends of Nature Citizen who donated their time to help.

Below are some pictures over the last year, to show you all a snippet of the work that has been carried out in the Nature Citizen Community Garden.... We are taking great pleasure in creating this 'Demonstration Nature Space' to show how gardening for the little creatures that make the world go around, not only benefits other wildlife but peoples health too.

Nature CitizenCherishing all life



Some examples of Nature Citizens posts, published on Face Book

Nature Citizen
28 May 2020 · 🌍

👋 This sign was all done for The 'Nature Citizen Community Garden -Bringing people and nature closer together ' ready to start The Nature Citizen Community Project. Although lockdown has meant no gatherings, the restrictions have presented an opportunity (of time) to start engaging with an online community!! 🐝❤️🌻



👋 Nature Citizen Community Garden.... these Michaelmas Daisies are attracting a lot of different insects. By providing a variety of flowers for as much of the year as you can, you are providing a constant food source for insects and these little beings are what make the world go around. We benefit from their actions such as pollination, which helps provide the variety of food we eat, the flowers we enjoy and the trees we use. So in gratitude to the little ones keep planting 🐝❤️🌻



Nature Citizen
27 Dec 2020 · 🌍

👋 Nature Citizen Community Garden....creating a Nature Space ❤️
Today's efforts were continuing to edge the paths, creating new borders for more plants to feed the bees and other beneficial insects 🐝🌻
We're using decking planks that were going to be chucked away. Whilst they aren't suitable for decking anymore, they still have some life left in them and have been kindly donated, so we are repurposing them for edging.
❤️🌍



👋 Nature Citizen Community Garden.... The first year of planting and the flowers are blooming lovely 😊 providing much needed food for the bees and other beneficial insects 🐝❤️🌻



+7

REUSING PLANTING FOR POLLINATORS

**Some of the donated items
Hedgehog home**



Handmade bench



Pallets to make compost areas and Decking planks for edging



A huge big thank you to Mary for donating £100 to fill part of the bed with a variety of plants from the Beth Chatto Nursery. They came with very good root stock, but the tops were cut for safe transportation so we look forward to seeing them grow and showing you pictures of them in next years annual report.



👏 A huge big thank you from us all at Nature Citizen to the wonderful Emma Baker who has kindly raised £130 🙏 for us to continue creating Nature Spaces, collectively building a Nature Network, which links habitats, providing food, water and shelter for bees, beneficial insects and other wildlife 🐝❤️🌻🐞🐛🦋🐌🍄

My front lawn became the nursery 😊



We continued to build the paths, edge them and dig over the earth to make borders. The cardboard we laid proved to be a very good mulch and kept the growth down for when we were ready to plant.☐



From the sowing of seeds to an abundance of food for the bees ☐ Purposeful planting for the pollinators and other beneficial insects. Different shaped flowers for as much of the year as possible ... this



successional planting provides food and increases diversity

We left a wild area of long grass, tussocks and black compost bins for the sloe worms. Stacked pallets ready to make an insect hotel with the



children. This area of the Nature Space was singing with crickets, beetles and other beneficial insects too 🐞🐞🐞🐞

The log circle containing the nettles are a wonderful food source and support over 40 species of insects including butterflies 🐞🐞🐞🐞



🌻 Nature Citizen Community Garden...creating a Nature Space.....providing shelter, food and water for wildlife 🐞

This is our dead hedge....another great habitat for wildlife, which has also provided solutions for us...it's created a boundary for free, acts as a mulch minimising vegetation growth and a place to put branches without the need for having a bonfire or a run to the tip.

Over time it breaks down and we just keep adding to it, along one part of the dead hedge we've used branches as stakes to contain the larger branches from keep falling down. 🌻🌱🌻



Trustees have verified The Trustee Annual Report via email due to covid restrictions.

Rachel White (Chair)

Mary Murdoch (Treasurer)

Clare Reeves (Secretary)

Emma Daniels

C.E.O - Melissa Matthews

TRUSTEE ANNUAL ACCOUNTS MARCH 2020-2021

Nature Citizen - Charity Number 1166223

Receipts and Payments for year ended 9th March 2021

Opening Balance b/f 10/03/2020 £653.00

Receipts

Donations
£112.00
Cash donation.
£215.00
Plant sales

£978.44.
£120.00.
£ 95.00

Payments

Charity Insurance.
Compost, seeds, plants.

09/03/2021. £1,519.44

Closing Balance c/f

**TOTALS.
£1,846.44**

£1,846.44

Trustees have verified accounts via email due to covid safety measures

Rachel White (Chair)

Mary Murdoch (Treasurer)

Clare Reeves (Secretary)

Emma Daniels

C.E.O - Melissa Matthews