

# Greener

## Brockenhurst Annual Report October 2023

### 1 Introduction

The Greener Brockenhurst committee brings together representatives of key village stakeholders including the Parish Council, our Primary School, our Churches, the Village Hall and local businesses and organisations, along with committed and enthusiastic residents. We also have a committed band of hard-working volunteers who work on our various sub-projects.

Our work over the past year is briefly described in following sub-sections.

### 2 Recycling Shed

The Recycling Shed continues to be well used by the community. We now collect 14 different types of waste that are currently not recycled by New Forest District Council. We are hugely grateful to our loyal team of volunteers who help run the shed. Unfortunately, we can no longer collect medicine blister packs as Superdrug felt unable to accept the quantities that we were collecting! For details of exactly what is being collected, please visit <https://www.greenerbrockenhurst.org/re-cycling-shed>.

### 3 Making Space for Nature

Our Making Space for Nature team has continued to develop and maintain the wildlife area in the grounds of St Saviour's church where a healthy variety of insects have established their habitats over the year. In November last year we coppiced a large hazel, cut more laurel back, cleared brambles and bundled up hazel branches into pea sticks for residents. Turf was lifted to extend the wildflower area. In April we planned and delivered a wildflower-seeding and bog garden-planting event with local children and their families. This was a lovely muddy afternoon and included a bug hunt led by team-member Dawn from the HIWWT. Sadly, for the second year in a row, most of the seed didn't take to provide the abundance of wildflowers and colour we were aiming for. It seems that the longstanding laurel that was removed may have left some toxicity in the soil so the next step is to try and resolve that. In August we held a Family Bat Walk led by Dawn which as well as a fascinating display of bats after dusk fell also included an opportunity for the children to see a lovely diversity of moths being released from a moth trap and an exploration of the wildlife trail in St Saviours church yard. Other projects our team have been involved in are giving an assembly at our local primary school on setting up a school eco committee and initiating a residents' survey in the village about species seen in gardens. If you would like to find out more about Making Space for Nature in Brockenhurst or would like to volunteer with our team, do please get in touch.

## 4 Nappy Library

The Nappy Library was set up to promote the use of cloth nappies by giving parents and carers the chance to ‘try before they buy’. The first quarter of this year was very quiet on the Nappy Library front with no bookings at all. After considerable effort on promoting the library by the team, we are pleased to report that we have had 15 nappy kit bookings this year. All bar one of our clients have feedback that they intend to continue using cloth nappies either full or part time with their babies. Given that each baby using cloth nappies saves a whopping 4000 disposable nappies from landfill, this feels like a worthwhile project.

## 5 Repair Café

This is our second year of running Repair Cafés and we’re going from strength to strength! We held two in our first year and three this year, with our third one being on 21st October, International Repair Day! The success rate at our last one was 91%, up from just over 50% at our first one. Over the whole period we’ve saved over 90 items from landfill, ranging from lamps to garden rakes, keyboards to vacuum cleaners, jumpers darned and zips fixed. The NPA has granted us funding which covers our rental costs and the donations received allow us to build a fund to continue once the grant finishes. We are ever grateful to all our volunteer repairers for their help - More volunteer fixers would be most welcome.

## 6 Plastic Free Brockenhurst

Last year, we joined the Plastic Free Communities campaign, calling ourselves “Plastic Free Brockenhurst”. Plastic Free Communities is a grass roots campaign, originated by Surfers Against Sewage, that empowers and connects people to reduce the use of avoidable, throwaway plastic.

Plastic Free Brockenhurst has pulled together key organisations and businesses in the village to put in place a five-point plan. The objectives included; setting up a community led steering group, instigating the SAS Plastic Free Schools education programme, getting local parish council commitment and working with local businesses, organisations and community groups to spread the word and minimise the amount of disposable plastics they use.

We have had fantastic backing for the project, particularly from the community groups in the village who have all shown great commitment and support for the campaign. We now have in excess of 12 Community groups who have signed their pledge to become community allies and consider ways to cut down on the amount of plastic they use in their activities. with the result that in June of this year, Brockenhurst was awarded ‘Plastic Free Community’ status by the charity.

Of course, Brockenhurst is very far from being actually free from single use plastic, but this is a first step along the way and we plan to continue to work with Surfers Against Sewage on this campaign to challenge our throwaway culture and protect the environment.

## 7 Working with our Village Primary School

Greener Brockenhurst was invited into the primary school to help set up a pupil-led Eco Committee. The children were amazingly enthusiastic and decided to join the Plastic Free Schools Campaign as a first step on their Eco journey. They have been active on this throughout the last school year and the Eco Committee was even recognised in the July 2023 Ofsted report for the school!

## 8 Active Travel

The promotion of active travel (walking and cycling) has always been one of our aims, so we were very pleased to be approached to collaborate with not one, but 3 local initiatives addressing this issue over the past year. It is still early days, but we working with / supporting:

- FOB with their Intra Brockenhurst Safe and Pleasant Walking /Cycling Routes initiative
- Lymington Transition Cycle Group who are doing brilliant work on trying to establish safe cycle routes between towns and villages in the south of the forest.
- The National Park Authority Cycle Working Group who are working to increase the number of permitted off road cycle tracks with the Verderers, alongside trying to devise ways of discouraging people from cycling where they should not.

In addition, we are in dialogue with the Parish Council over the loss of the cycle racks outside of Tesco.

## 9 Other standalone Events & Activities

### 9.1 Christmas stall

We had a stall at the Village Christmas evening, where we were able to publicise Plastic Free work and engage with the children with a variety of environment related games and activities. We were very pleased to win the “best dressed Christmas tree” award at this event.

### 9.2 Eco Gardening event

In March, the Making Space for Nature team held our first eco gardening event as part of the NPA’s Forest Awakening Festival. The aim of the event was to demonstrate how adopting nature-friendly practices in our gardens can boost wildlife and contribute to nature’s recovery. We had a wonderful variety and high quality of exhibits and more than 220 visitors came through the doors. There was a buzz in the hall from start to finish and Greener Brockenhurst as well as the exhibitors received much positive feedback from the visitors. It was very encouraging to see a growing interest in creating and improving conditions for wildlife, and all nature, through adopting a different approach to gardening and wildlife habitats.

### 9.3 Chats on Brookley Road

Twice over the past year we put up a gazebo opposite Tesco’s on a Saturday morning, and attempted to engage and chat to local shoppers. The first time we asked people what they love about our village and what their top concerns are. The second time, as part of the Great Big Green week, we encouraged those who stopped to chat to think about writing a letter to future generations about their hopes and fears for the future of our world.

## 10 Treasurers Report

<b>Greener Brockenhurst accounts - financial year ending 30 September 2023</b>					
		£	£		
		<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>		
Bank balance		3,361.56	3,290.36		
Paypal balance		198.53	265.64	(after deduction of deposits held)	
<b>Income statement</b>					
INCOME:					
Events		205.32	406.00		
Grants		772.08	4,189.00		
Donations		237.82	10.02		
Nappy rental		283.31			
		<b>1,498.53</b>	4,605.00		
EXPENDITURE					
Nappy library		350.42	1,673.32		
Repair café (venue hire)		287.25	189.00		
Making space for nature			510.73		
Eco-gardening event		430.34			
Insurance		289.03	289.03		
Venue hire		65.40	149.25		
Bank charges		72.00	72.00		
		<b>1,494.44</b>	<b>2,883.33</b>		
<b>SURPLUS IN YEAR</b>					
		<b>4.09</b>	<b>1,721.69</b>		
<b>Available cash</b>					
in Bank		3,361.56			
in paypal		198.53		(after deduction of deposits held)	
<b>Available cash</b>		<b>3,560.09</b>			