

## Wild About Stockton Heath AGM 20<sup>th</sup> March 2023 Chairs Report

Welcome everyone to our first AGM. Born out of a Parish Council initiative, the first get together of WASH was held in March 2021. Although it was October 2022 before we obtained our first grant, by then we were well established as a community group.

In the 21 months to December 2022 we have raised £8,000 in grants and donations, and have been active in twelve projects and events. Through the dedication of the committee, volunteers and friends, everything has been accomplished in such a frugal way that we have achieved everything on a spend of only £2,900.

For me, the highlight has been the greening of the alleys (backs) that not only brought pollinator friendly corridors to the area, but it also improved these oft forgotten areas and brought a community of residents together for the day creating lasting connections.

Our Nature Hub days have also been a great success, with sell out talks in the library and well attended family friendly activities in Alexandra Park.

### **Events, campaigns, and projects**

#### **Social media awareness campaigns:**

- Hedgehog Awareness Week
- No Mow May
- 30 Days Wild

#### **Community Events:**

- St Thomas' Church Nature Hunt
- Celebrating National Tree Week
- Wild About Nature Day
- Wild About Trees Day
- The Holly and the Ivy talk

#### **Direct Action:**

- Forge Ivy Bed
- Greening the Alleys
- Parish Council Tree Planting
- Biodiversity at St. Thomas' Church:
  - Wildflower Strip
  - Hedgehog houses
  - Leaf-mould crate
  - Bucket pond
  - Church's crab apple trees
  - Community compost bin

More information about all the above can be found on our website

<http://wildaboutstocktonheath.org.uk/>

## **The future**

As we add to our projects, we need help with on-going management. We have been busy building our network and now have 15 volunteers offering practical help, they are vital to our future. So are further grants and donations, please contact [milton.wimpenny@gmail.com](mailto:milton.wimpenny@gmail.com) if you would like to volunteer with us or donate. You can also sign up and/or donate today at the WASH information table.

Our overall plans for the next year and beyond are to:

1. **Continue protecting and improving the biodiversity of St. Thomas' Church**  
St Thomas' Church is in the heart of the village and the cooperation we receive is fantastic. We will continue to develop this space with more planting for pollinators and creating wildlife habitats.
2. **Expand the Greening of the Alley project (phase 2) and, protect/improve phase 1.**  
We will build on the success of this project. We are currently canvassing residents on the East of London Road, (around the Gaskell Street area).
3. **Increase the land being managed for nature.**  
Improving biodiversity is greatly enhanced by the creation of nature corridors, connecting patches of fragmented habitat to form a functioning ecosystem where wildlife can spread easily. We will be working with local landowners, schools, and neighbouring groups and individuals to create these corridors through WASH projects or ensuring our aims and efforts are co-ordinated.
4. **Continue our Nature Hub events.**  
Our Nature Hub events in the library and Alexander Park are improving the knowledge and awareness of the difficulties affecting our fauna and wildlife and what we can do individually to help. These will continue for as long as we have funding. We hope to be to deliver a talk specifically for our youngsters in the next 12 months.

## **Thank You**

I would like to thank the whole committee, our volunteers, and our supporters for everything they have done in the last 21 months. It has been hard work at times, but we are all very proud of what we have achieved, and excited for the future - continuing our work in the community and giving nature a helping hand.

Milton Wimpenny  
Chair – Wild About Stockton Heath