

# Greenprint Forum Newsletter summer 2026

Welcome to the summer issue of our newsletter, and what a hot and dry summer we've been having! We will probably all be able to relate to the confirmation from the climate change information service for Europe, Copernicus, that western Europe, including England, experienced its warmest June-July period on record – here's the link for reference [Climate Bulletins | Copernicus](#).

At the time of writing this copy, much of England remains in a condition of drought with all of the rest in conditions of prolonged dry weather [Dry weather and drought in England: 7 to 13 August 2026 - GOV.UK](#), and the announcement from central government of a temporary ban on the sales of disposable barbecues comes as a relief to those concerned about their potential to ignite fires (not to mention the risks their sharp edges pose to animals and people and the wasteful culture of "use once and chuck" that they represent).

Suffolk Trading Standards advise that reports of vendors continuing to sell disposable barbecues whilst the current conditions prevail can be made via their partner service, Citizens Advice Consumer Service on 0808 223 1133.

East Suffolk Council already has a prohibition on the use of barbecues (including disposable barbecues) and any other naked flame on land owned by the council without specific permission from the council. [Barbecues and Open Fires on Council Land Policy.pdf](#)

*Editor*

## Flying the flag for nature at the carnival

On a lighter note, the summer is also a time for celebration for many, and as a carnival goer myself it was great to see some local environmental action groups represented in the processions in the area, bringing messages of environmental care and positive action to a mainstream audience.

Felixstowe's Community Nature Reserve [Felixstowe's Community Nature Reserve](#) teamed up with [Felixstowe Fairtrade Forum](#) for the procession in Felixstowe (below left and centre), and whilst slightly out of our area, Clacton Volunteer Litter Pickers took first prize for their float, comprising a display of litter rescued from the beach (below right), at Clacton Carnival.

While on the theme of litter, if you're interested in direct action on litter in and around Lowestoft, be sure to follow [Litter Free Lowestoft](#) (who did such a great job keeping First Light Festival free of litter) to find out what they have planned for the Great Lowestoft Litter Pick this September!



One town.  
One week.  
One big  
clean up.



East Suffolk  
Community  
Partnerships  
*Bringing ideas to life*



*Editor*

## Invitation to site visit, 10:30 on 02 September – Rachel's land and woods, Holton

Fellow Steering Group member Laurence Moss and I visited Rachel Kellett's land at Kaliwoods in Holton earlier in August, for the opening of a new shed and rainwater harvesting system that our small grant scheme, [Nature First](#), had helped to fund. Rachel has invited members of the Greenprint Forum to attend a visit to the land, which includes newly planted woodland, a community garden, an emerging forest garden and an agro-forest area – read more here: [Land shed – thanks to Greenprint Forum and others – Kaliwood and Kinda Elders Nature First - planting the land](#) So if you are interested in these concepts and would like to join our visit to find out more and be inspired you will be very welcome, see our flyer for more info [Visit to Kaliwoods and Rachel's Land event flyer.pdf](#)



*Editor*

## A quick look back on our 30 Anniversary Inspiration Forum

An occasion to celebrate the achievements so far of those who comprise our network, with special mentions of the late Guy Ackers, founding member of our Steering Group and author of the Hedgerow Survey of Suffolk 1998-2012, and the late Neil Winship, active travel champion who initiated the original pilot of Quiet Lanes in 2013-14 which set the scene for the county-scale project led by our former Chair, Andrew Cassy, from 2019-2023.

Our special guest speakers on the day were Christine Luxton, CEO of Suffolk Wildlife Trust; Clare Matterson, DG of Royal Horticultural Society and volunteer active with local grass roots group Wild About Campsea; David Wolfe, environmental barrister and co-owner of Wakelyns Organic Agroforestry in north Suffolk; and Fiona Quinn, Head of Environmental Services and Port Health for East Suffolk Council.

Thanks to all of our speakers, stallholders, our Volunteer Steering Group who developed the programme, and everyone who attended and contributed to our conversations and made connections - and of course our Volunteer Chair, Jane Healey.

An illustrated report from the event can be found here: [30 Anniversary Inspiration Forum report](#)

*Editor*



# Nature Quest

## **Saxmundham Nature Quest 2026: A Community Collaboration for Biodiversity**

Nature Quest 2026 brought together residents, volunteers, local organisations and environmental specialists to survey the wildlife of Fromus Green while helping more people discover the biodiversity on their doorstep.

Held during the May half term, the event welcomed more than 60 participants, including 26 adults, 32 children and three Town Councillors. Although exceptionally hot weather meant the event hub had to be moved indoors to the Market Hall at short notice, the survey itself continued on Fromus Green and the day proved both productive and well supported.

The primary aim of Nature Quest was to record the plants, insects and other wildlife found on Fromus Green, providing valuable baseline information that will help inform future land management decisions. By understanding what species are already present, Saxmundham Town Council and East Suffolk Council can make better-informed decisions that support biodiversity over both the short and long term.

The event also reflected the Town Council's approach to integrating environmental objectives with community engagement. Rather than treating environmental work as a separate activity, the Council seeks opportunities to weave it into its events, partnerships, policies, and day-to-day work, encouraging a town where people and wildlife can coexist and thrive together.



Nature Quest was delivered through collaboration across the Town Council, with the Community Officer, Environment Officer, Water Environment Officer and Green Team volunteers working together from planning through to delivery. Their work was supported by East Suffolk Council, Suffolk Wildlife Trust, The Fairyland Trust, Saxmundham Blue Spaces, Saxmundham Library and other environmental specialists, combining expertise in ecology, conservation, education and community engagement.



Throughout the morning, volunteers, Town Council staff and East Suffolk Council officers collected plant and insect samples from the survey area before bringing them to the Market Hall. Participants helped identify and record each specimen before everything was carefully returned to its habitat later that day.

Together, attendees identified 39 plant species and 18 species of insects and other animals within the survey area. Demonstrations comparing wildlife found in long grass with regularly mown lawn helped explain how different management practices influence biodiversity.

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## Nature Quest (*continued*)

Visitors also enjoyed practical activities including mini pond demonstrations from Saxmundham Blue Spaces, advice on creating hedgehog-friendly gardens from Suffolk Wildlife Trust, and wildflower crafting workshops led by The Fairyland Trust. Families received Nature Quest activity kits to continue exploring wildlife at home, and one raffle winner was later presented with their own mini pond building kit.



The event provided much more than a single day's survey. The records collected contribute to a growing understanding of species distribution across Saxmundham and will help guide future habitat management. At the same time, the hands-on activities encouraged participants to look more closely at the wildlife around them and offered practical ways to support nature in their own gardens and neighbourhoods. The free Nature Quest kits, packed with information, activities and simple ideas for wildlife-friendly gardening and nature conservation, were provided to families to encourage ongoing learning and help inspire lasting changes that will benefit both local biodiversity and Saxmundham's wider environment.

Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with many participants expressing interest in future Nature Quest events, either revisiting Fromus Green to monitor changes over time or exploring other wildlife-rich areas around the town.

Saxmundham Town Council would like to thank everyone who contributed to the success of the day, which demonstrated how partnership working can deliver meaningful environmental outcomes while helping people of all ages connect with the natural environment in their own community.

**Jess Palmer, Community Officer for Saxmundham Town Council**



# Felixstowe Community Nature Reserve



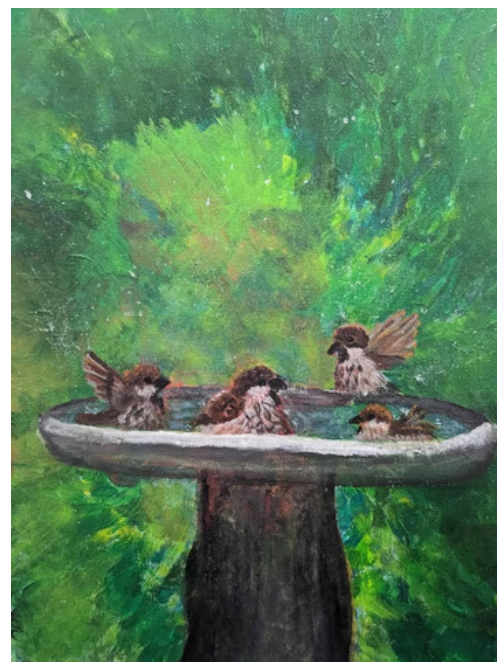
## Collaborations can help!

The environmental challenges facing us have never been greater. In recognition of that fact, Felixstowe's Community Nature Reserve is increasingly working with new partners to share skills and resources. Together, we have a greater impact, and a higher chance of helping our environment. In this feature, I want to share some of our recent collaboration stories. I hope they will inspire other groups to work together more closely.

Across the Felixstowe area, our Community Nature Reserve works increasingly with Felixstowe's Citizen Science Group, Felixstowe Fairtrade Forum, Felixstowe Indoor Market, Furtherfield, Felixstowe Radio, Spotlight on Felixstowe, Trimley Marshes Nature Reserve and Felixstowe News.

With the Felixstowe Fairtrade Forum for example, both groups recognise that we share a focus on environmental justice. With the Felixstowe Fairtrade Forum, that focus is on behalf of the farmers they support. With the Felixstowe Community Nature Reserve, our focus is on trying to improve local biodiversity. One of the most successful collaborations between both groups has been through the use of the Fairtrade teddy bear mascots (Fairtrade Ted and Fairtrade Tess) being photographed in local areas of natural environment such as the Abbey Grove area of woodland. By sharing pictures of Fairtrade Ted and Fairtrade Tess on the social media of Felixstowe's Community Nature Reserve, we find that the work of Felixstowe's Fairtrade Forum is introduced to people who never previously knew about them. Equally, Felixstowe's Community Nature Reserve is introduced to the social media audience of the Felixstowe Fairtrade Forum. In this way, both groups give free publicity to each other.

The sharing of skills is another important benefit of collaborations. With the Felixstowe Indoor Market, their owners (Helen Newman and Janette Brightman) are brilliant artists. Their creative work can imaginatively grab the attention of people as they scroll through social media. Helen and Jan have therefore become Artists in Residence for the Felixstowe Community Nature Reserve. In doing so, they have created work which stops people in their tracks, causing them to look at our Facebook and other social media, and to spend more time learning about our work. In return, the Felixstowe Indoor Market receives free publicity to help their business.



*right: wildlife art by Helen Newman*

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# Felixstowes Community Nature Reserve (continued)

Collaborations can also help with the practical work of wildlife conservation. With Trimley Marshes Nature Reserve for example, our Community Nature Reserve recently provided a group of 18 volunteers to help the Warden to plant tree saplings. In return, our Community Nature Reserve members had the opportunity to take part in an aspect of wildlife conservation which they had not previously experienced. Our members also learned a lot about tree planting.

We also try to collaborate with local young people. We do this through our Youth Ambassador (Luke Smout) and our Schools Ambassador (Gillian Atacocugu). Gill is a teacher of English for speakers of other languages at Suffolk New College. Her students have produced exceptional work in words and pictures to express their growing appreciation of environmental challenges. In doing so, they improve their confidence and creativity. For members of Felixstowe's Community Nature Reserve, it is a joy to see new work from Suffolk New College students.

Beyond the area of Felixstowe, our Community Nature Reserve also collaborates with other communities across England. Those neighbourhood voluntary groups adapt our ideas to help boost their local biodiversity. In return, our members are always fascinated to learn where our ideas are being shared. It's really encouraging! This map shows where our influence has developed so far.



left: Fairtrade Ted and Fairtrade Tess at Abbey Grove



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## Felixstowe Community Nature Reserve *(continued)*

Felixstowe's Community Nature Reserve also collaborates with our citizen scientists alongside Climate Ambassadors from the Eastern Region. The Manager of the Eastern Region Climate Ambassadors, Kit Marie Rackley has been hugely supportive in sharing news about the Felixstowe Climate Justice Agenda, our Climate Action Plans, and our Methane Reduction Strategy. To learn more, please watch this podcast.

At a European level, Felixstowe's Community Nature Reserve and the Felixstowe Citizen Science Group collaborate with Citizen Science Ambassadors from the 27 nations of the European Union through monthly Zoom meetings. In that way, our members get to learn from the experiences of like-minded people from across Europe. In return, we share what we do in those meetings.



*above: Fairtrade Ted and  
Fairtrade Tess at Langer Park*

Every April, Felixstowe's Community Nature Reserve and the Felixstowe Citizen Science Group share our work around the world as part of Citizen Science Month. It's a wonderfully exciting opportunity! In each of the last two years, our people from Felixstowe have shared examples of their work, through social media. In return, we have received encouraging feedback from North and South America, Europe, Africa, Asia and Australasia. It's a wonderful boost to local enthusiasm for our work.

At a time when finances are declining, volunteers are hard to find, and innovation is a constant challenge, I hope you agree that collaborations between groups can help to develop the work of wildlife conservation. It is through collaborations where skills and resources can be shared. Networks of like-minded people can be developed. And motivations to keep going with our conservation work can improve.

Find us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/FelixstoweCommunityNatureReserve>

**Dr Adrian Cooper, Founder and Chair of  
Felixstowe's Community Nature Reserve**



## Blyth Woods

The main focus for Blyth Woods since early 2025 has been the acquisition and management of a leased 1.8 hectare (*4.5 acre*) area in the centre of Wenhaston. Our aim was to transform it from a field of barley stubble, which was no longer viable for farming, to a wild space, partly new woodland and partly wild flower meadow. We call this new place St. Peter's Pightle.

Eighteen months and many work parties (including one in snow and some in blistering heat!) later we now feel well on the way to achieving our aim. Over 3000 native tree saplings have been planted, a tree nursery has been created, a pond had been dug and the wildflower meadow has exceeded our expectation of what would be possible in less than two years.

The barley stubble in the future meadow area was cultivated in early 2025, sown with a wildflower seed mix, and green hay was scattered. Later in the year the area was mown to control the spread of ruderal weeds.

Back in February 2025 we surveyed the field and its margins so that we could monitor the changes in plant life that we hoped would happen. We recorded 28 species, mostly plants that are weeds of arable crops. We expected to lose some of these in making the change to grass land but hoped the loss would be outweighed by the increase in other species.

On 4 July, with the woodland and meadow areas defined by mown footpaths, we were able to open St. Peter's Pightle to the public. As part of the activities of the day, we invited the visitors to take part in a Bioblitz to make a start on recording the wildlife. We were delighted that no less than 36 new plants were recorded as well as some of those in the original list.

Some of the new plants are from the wildflower seed, some from the green hay and some seem to have found their own way there! The total number of plant species recorded in the meadow now stands at 66. Not bad for a field that was barley stubble only eighteen months ago.



The visual impact has been even more impressive. Oxeye daisies covered the meadow a few weeks ago and now it is a sea of white from Wild Carrot. Among the grasses there are splashes of colour from Musk Mallow, Lady's Bedstraw and Knapweed.

The increased variety of plants has brought more insects which should in turn bring more insectivores. In addition to the plants, other wildlife has discovered the field. Snipe and Fieldfares have visited, and Blue Tits nested in the two provided bird boxes in 2025 and 26 and raised 16 chicks this year. Chinese water deer, Muntjac and Brown Hares have all visited and a Leveret was found in the meadow area.

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## Blyth Woods (*continued*)

Two quotes from the organisation Plantlife:

“The plants in a typical meadow can support nearly **1,400 species of invertebrates**, that’s a multitude of bugs, beetles, flies, spiders, grasshoppers, crickets, butterflies and moths.”

“Looking at a flower like Oxeye Daisy for just six seconds has been shown to lower your blood pressure”

St Peter’s Pightle can be accessed on foot by walking to the end of Church Lane in the centre of Wenhaston and taking the footpath on the left. Follow the footpath to the gate on the right.

To find the site using What three words: **///rural.polygraph.flanked**

For more information visit our website [blythwoods.org](http://blythwoods.org) or email: [Blythwoods1@gmail.com](mailto:Blythwoods1@gmail.com)

**John Rolfe, Blyth Woods Steering Group**

## Suffolk in Motion

Suffolk County Council is pleased to present Suffolk in Motion on 10 October at London Road (Copdock) Park and Ride. Suffolk in Motion is a free, family friendly travel experience day open to all.

Suffolk County Council will be promoting the travel choices available in Suffolk for you to explore our beautiful county. The event will be open from 10am-3pm.

- Let your little ones have fun on our balance bikes, complete the stamp trail and go head-to-head in our pedal-powered scalextric!
- Enter a prize-draw to win a signed Ipswich Town football shirt!
- Discover local walking groups and wellbeing walks
- Test drive and look around new and used EVs
- Learn about e-bikes
- Meet local EV owners and chat with them about costs, charging and more
- Find out about local EV pay-as-you-go car clubs
- Book a slot to get your bike fixed with the Bike Doctor.
- All attendees will be entered into a free prize draw! Prizes up for grabs include a signed Ipswich Town FC shirt, Afternoon tea for two and vouchers!



With transport at the heart of our day-to-day life, this will be a brilliant day for families to explore all the different ways they can move around Suffolk. Whether you are planning a day trip, looking to save money on your commute, or you would like to try cycling, Suffolk in Motion will give you the opportunity to try out a variety of options to suit you and your needs.

Free tickets and more information are available at [TicketSource](#), with all attendees on the day being entered into a free prize draw! We look forward to seeing you on 10 October!

**Supplied by Isabelle Millen, LEVI Project Support, Suffolk County Council**



# Insights from an environmental intern

I'm Harry Fisher, and I'm currently serving an internship with the Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change Team at East Suffolk Council.

## Why did you apply for the internship?

I have always been fascinated with the environment and became even more interested when I was able to link it to aspects of my course when looking at 'green chemistry' which focuses on how chemical process can be made sustainable and how chemistry can be used to better the environment. Whilst this internship focused on biodiversity, I could not give up the opportunity of working in a field that I am interested in and would like to work in myself one day.



## What have you had to do for your internship?



A key part of my internship has been conducting biodiversity surveys with some of my colleagues at 'Nature at Work' sites and the surrounding mown areas. These Nature at Work areas are mostly in open spaces or churchyards and are cut a lot less frequently so that vegetation is left to grow. I then take all the data collected from the surveys and analyse it to identify if leaving areas for nature does increase the biodiversity of the site when compared to the rest of the site that is mown regularly, as well as when compared to data obtained in past years.

## What skills have you gained and improved from the internship?

My data analysis skills have greatly improved over the course of my internship due to the number of sites that we have surveyed and the amount of data that I have had to handle. This has also resulted in me becoming very confident using software like Excel, which I had never used before.

## How have you found your internship?

I have enjoyed every second of my internship, the experience has been incredibly valuable, especially since I had never worked in an office environment before, and it has really helped me improve my skillset for future employability. The Climate Change and Sustainability Team has been amazing, everyone was so friendly and welcoming, and I cannot thank them all enough for their support and advice over the course of my internship.

## What's next?

I have just finished my first year of studying chemistry at the University of Lincoln. Whilst I'm still not exactly sure what I would like to do after completing university, I am certain that I want it to be something that has a positive impact on the environment and my internship at East Suffolk has reaffirmed that belief.

**Harry Fisher, Climate Change and Sustainability Intern at East Suffolk Council**



# East Suffolk Council launches Community Energy Programme

## What is East Suffolk's Community Energy Programme?

East Suffolk Council is delighted to announce the launch of a new community energy programme, launched in April 2026. The Programme will support the delivery of community-owned and led renewable energy projects – empowering communities to create a more sustainable energy system alongside offering local benefits.

Following a competitive bidding process, a consortium led by the Centre for Sustainable Energy has been chosen to deliver the Programme alongside Community Energy England and Ashden. As well as bringing experience in the community energy space, the three organisations include locally-based partners with a number of connections to existing groups across the district.

The Centre for Sustainable Energy consortium will support existing community groups in East Suffolk, as well as identifying and encouraging new groups through its 'Future Energy Landscapes' and 'Community Energy Go' pathways. These will help progress projects through the technical feasibility stage to submitting grant bids and ultimately installing community-owned energy assets.

## Who are we working with in East Suffolk?

To celebrate the launch of the programme, East Suffolk Council held an event at the end of May 2026, bringing together local community energy groups and other interested individuals. Around 50 attendees received an introduction on the programme, training on how community workshops would be run, and opportunities to connect with other groups.



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## East Suffolk Council launches Community Energy Programme *(continued)*



We received a number of expressions of interest following the event, and are pleased to be working with the following groups/areas:

- Halesworth/Halesworth ASH
- Framlingham/Greener Fram
- Woodbridge, Melton & Deben area/Transition Woodbridge & Deben Climate Centre
- Leiston/Net Zero Leiston



We will be running workshops in person with these groups across autumn/winter 2026, inviting the local community, surrounding Parishes and key stakeholders to decide what kind of renewable energy technology they might be interested in and where it could be installed.

There are a number of spaces still available to support groups through the Community Energy Go pathway, providing access to 1-2-1s with experts on a range of topics. If you are interested in exploring this further, please contact [katie.hickford@eastsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:katie.hickford@eastsuffolk.gov.uk)



*left: Partners from Ashden, Community Energy England, Centre for Sustainable Energy alongside Councillor Tom Daly and Katie Hickford from East Suffolk Council.*

East Suffolk Council have a dedicated page on Community Energy if you would like to learn more about the Programme, alongside links to useful resources including a rooftop solar PV assessment tool and a series of webinar recordings provided through Community Energy Go.

<https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/community-initiatives/community-energy-programme>

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# East Suffolk Council launches Community Energy Programme *(continued)*

## Introductory webinar on ESC's Community Energy Programme

To support the Community Energy Programme in East Suffolk (more about which on page 12, the Centre for Sustainable Energy is running an introductory webinar on community energy on 16th September, 1-2pm via Zoom. The agenda includes:

- What community energy is and how community-led renewable energy projects can work in practice.
- What groups need to think about when getting started, including governance, skills, funding and local partnerships.
- Examples of different community energy activities, from solar projects to energy advice and retrofit support.

For more information and to register your attendance, please visit <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/east-suffolk-community-energy-programme-an-introduction-to-community-energy-tickets-1996627715244?aff=oddtcreator>

**Katie Hickford, Net Zero Delivery Officer for East Suffolk Council**

## Screenings of the film People's Emergency Briefing



The UK faces a growing climate and nature emergency. Yet most people have never been fully briefed on what it means for our lives, our economy and our future.

This new film from the National Emergency Briefing sets out the risks facing the nation - and the credible, positive responses available - in a clear and accessible account designed for screenings in communities across the UK.

As of 18 August, screenings (National Emergency Briefing) scheduled in and close to Suffolk include the following, at a glance, that we are aware of:

- |                                 |                                |                             |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| • 27 August - Metfield          | • 11 September - East Bergholt | • 7 October - Earl's Colne  |
| • 27 August - Lowestoft         | • 11 September - Debenham      | • 9 October - Laxfield      |
| • 09 September - Boxford        | • 18 September - Hadleigh      | • 17 October - Oulton Broad |
| • 10 September - Halesworth     | • 23 September - Sudbury       | • 11 November - Lowestoft   |
| • 10 September - West Bergholt  | • 24 September - Stradbroke    | • 9 February - Colchester   |
| • 10 September - Needham Market | • 30 September - Harleston     |                             |
| • 11 September - Waldringfield  | • 5 October - Haughley         |                             |

Always check the website for full and current details of local screenings and also to find out more if you're considering bringing a screening to your community.

**Editor**



## News From KADWAG

It seems longer ago now, but Kelsale & District Wildlife Action (KADWAG) was launched at an inaugural meeting in Kelsale Village Hall on 22 January 2025, so we've been going for just over 18 months. The 25 members who signed up at the inaugural meeting have since grown to nearly 100. Therefore, we quickly ran out of copies of our Biodiversity Action Plan, so we revised, updated and reprinted it. The new edition has 72 pages including corrections and improvements to the quality of the photos, an expanded glossary and a new box showing how to pull Himalayan Balsam. Both editions were part funded by a grant from Nature First via the Greenprint Forum and we haven't looked back since.



We've kicked off teams on water quality monitoring on the River Fromus, Himalayan balsam bashing, habitat surveys and "recovery of the riparian ecosystem", all of which are featured in the items below. We've also put up another 20 swift boxes and started to put up barn owl boxes as well.



### The state of the river Fromus

To kick off our work on recovering the riparian ecosystem, we held a public meeting of the State of the River Fromus in Kelsale Village Hall on 15 April. First, we showed a film Tracing the River Fromus from The Arts Station in Saxmundham walking the Fromus from its origin in Coe Wood in Sibton to where it flows into the River Alde at Snape Marshes.



**Public Meeting on the state of the River Fromus**  
7pm, Wednesday 15 April 2026

Kelsale Village Hall, Bridge Street, Kelsale, IP17 2PB

This meeting will discuss the current state of the River Fromus, how it got that way and what could be done to improve it. It will address both improvements to the water quality and better management of the river flow to stop it drying out so much in the summer while threatening to flood the centres of Kelsale and Saxmundham in the autumn and winter. We will show a film produced by The Arts Station in Saxmundham of a walk along the Fromus from where it flows into the River Alde south of Benhall to its source in Coe Wood, Sibton. Please come and take part in the debate on our proposals.



Please join us for what should be both an entertaining and an informative event.

KADWAG Chair: Keith Dickerson

E-Mail: keith.dickerson@mae.com



David Findley of the Deben Climate Centre then addressed the current water quality which is very poor in places and how we could improve it. Next Ken Bate talked about 'Balsam Bashing' and how they had almost eliminated the alien invasive species last year. Finally a presentation from me on how we could 're-wild' the river to make it flow more naturally, with better management of the river to stop it drying out so much in the summer while threatening to flood Kelsale Village Centre in the autumn and winter.

Around 50 people from Kelsale and the surrounding area participated and the general feeling was that the meeting was excellent.



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East Suffolk  
Community  
Partnerships  
*Bringing ideas to life*



# News From KADWAG (continued)

## Himalayan Balsam bashing

This year, our 'balsam bashing' team led by Ken Bate dedicated a total of 210 hours to pulling and clearing the Himalayan balsam along the River Fromus and its tributaries. The second year of our eradication campaign has been a huge success - we've extended our work to Hurts Hall, south of Saxmundham, and to Benhall and Sternfield as well, so we're well on the way to clearing the area completely now. We've completed our balsam control work for this year now, as the seed pods are 'popping' and further pulling would increase the risk of spreading the seeds further downstream.



Looking ahead, we'll begin our efforts again in spring next year, starting at Vale Farm on the Gull Stream near Carlton Meres and extending down to Snape Marshes where the Fromus joins the River Alde. We won't stop until we eradicate the pernicious weed once and for all from our local waterways.



## Our New Water Quality Testing Lab

This year we've instituted a regular series of water quality testing events on the River Fromus and its tributaries. To support these we've set up our own water quality testing lab in Kelsale, where we test for levels of *E.coli*, Ammonia, Phosphates and Nitrates at around 10 locations along the Fromus, the Gull Stream and the brook that runs through the Brook Farm estate.



As a result, we've identified three points along the Fromus where water has unsafe levels of *e.coli*. These stretches of the Fromus are dangerous to human health and have resulted in dogs being severely ill after going into the water. We're now investigating these pollution events in conjunction with the Environment Agency.

Our newest project is to create a wildflower meadow using green hay from six different local sources and to spread it at New Close, one of the meadows at the Simpson's Fromus Valley Reserve in Kelsale. It's very important that the hay is cut from a local wildflower meadow, then transported and spread the same day at the new location. We carried out a species survey early this summer and will carry out a new survey next year to find out what difference it's made. Please wish us luck!

**Find KADWAG on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1035572138333422>**

**Keith Dickerson, Chair of Kelsale & District Wildlife Action Group (KADWAG)**



# Bird Decoys and Beyond: Bringing Wildlife to Life

It all started in late 2022 when I was in my shop and got chatting to Chris Keeling from the Suffolk Bird Group. We were talking about bird decoys and how the hand-painted china birds traditionally used for displays and conservation work were expensive and, unfortunately, prone to getting broken.

I decided to see if I could come up with an alternative. I sculpted, 3D-printed and painted a little tern, and from that first bird, something rather unexpected began to grow.

The decoys have since been used in a variety of ways, including being placed in suitable areas to encourage birds to breed and provide a sense of safety. On one occasion, a decoy was even placed alongside an injured bird to help settle it while it recovered.

They have also found a life beyond conservation work. The birds are now being used in displays and talks, giving children the opportunity to see the colours and markings of different species up close and, importantly, get a real sense of their size.

Word soon spread. Wez Smith from the RSPB, the National Trust and others heard about what I was making, and I started receiving requests for different coastal bird species. Since then, I've produced decoys for organisations and groups in different parts of the country, as well as fulfilling orders from overseas.



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# Bird Decoys and Beyond: Bringing Wildlife to Life

## *(continued)*

But the project has grown well beyond birds.

I've recently started making marine animals, with a spider crab being one of the most complex pieces I've created so far. It is intended for use in displays and educational talks. I've also been asked to make bird skulls so children can better understand the different sizes and structures of birds, as well as models of familiar garden birds.



Over time, I've made a wide variety of wildlife, including bats, house martin nests, robins, doves, blue jays, oysters, sea slugs, fish and seahorses, to name just a few. One of my favourites has to be the puffins I made and sent to Wales.

The material I use is called PLA, which is made from plant starches such as corn or potato starch and is biodegradable. It allows me to create detailed models while keeping them relatively lightweight and practical for displays and educational use.

And the work is continuing to grow. In fact, while writing this article, I've just received another order – this time from a group in Scotland for more Sandwich terns, which I've only just started 3D-printing.

I'm always happy to try sculpting new bird species and animals for anyone who needs them. I can't promise that I'll be able to paint everything perfectly, though – the Curlew remains very much my nemesis!

If you are interested in a wildlife model or would like to find out more, reach out to me or visit my bird decoy page on my website:

[https://mrcobblerandmrlocks-co-uk.scottspaintedminis.com/?page\\_id=499](https://mrcobblerandmrlocks-co-uk.scottspaintedminis.com/?page_id=499)

### Scott Fairburn, Mr Cobbler Shoe Repairs



## Contributors

Thanks as ever are due to all of our stellar contributors:

**Dr Adrian Cooper, Harry Fisher, Izzy Millen, Jess Palmer, John Rolfe, Katie Hickford, Keith Dickerson, and Scott Fairburn.**

If you would like to contribute content to a future newsletter to showcase good practice from an initiative or project you are involved with, we would love to hear from you via [greenissues@eastsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:greenissues@eastsuffolk.gov.uk)

## GREENPRINT FORUM VISION



## New members 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](https://my.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/service/Greenprint_Forum_membership_application)

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