



Sustainability in Colwich & the Haywoods ([SinCH](#))

info@sinch.earth

Green Fingers Newsletter 6 - Autumn 2022

Welcome to autumn!

Apologies for the long delay which is due to the various events we have taken part in and developing SinCH's brand new [website](#). There's lots of advice on there and we will be updating it regularly so please check it out.

You might want to check out the archive of [Green Fingers newsletters](#).

Lucy's update

It has been great fun watching and waiting to see what wildflowers are going to pop up after sowing them in our lawn over winter. It's fair to say it has been an experiment and not quite as spectacular as we'd hoped. We enjoyed a sea of buttercups in May and June which drew in lots of bees, and we have new clumps of Bird's-foot Trefoil which appear again and have been really popular with pollinators. We'll keep an eye out for more new flowers - keep your green fingers crossed please!

Another change for this year, is growing green beans for the first time. I picked up the seeds at a SinCH sustainable coffee morning last year. Knowing that bean and legume plants fix nitrogen back into soils, I thought I would plant them in the same tubs I previously used for pumpkins. Pumpkins are very greedy plants and I thought it would be worth replacing nutrients that would have been used up last year.

Last year, we had some food delivered with sheep's wool insulation packaging. Thinking that it might come in useful (but not sure when!) we kept it just in case.

Whilst at a garden centre considering buying new liners for my hanging baskets, I found my opportunity to reuse this fab material.

I'm sure you'll agree it works well.



We've loved seeing birds taking the wool occasionally for their nests and after some research I've learnt it can go into our compost bin when we've finished using it.

Research is being done to explore wool and other similar products to replace peat in compost and we're happy to try this out ourselves at home.

Happy gardening from Lucy.

Sarah's raised beds

Sarah is lucky to have 4 raised beds but over the years they have been let go so 2022 was the year that Sarah brought them back into use.



The food security issues globally and the cost of living are also good reasons to grow as much at home as possible! Not to mention the taste of home grown veg.

The first step in March was to clear the weeds before they really started to grow and add some compost and manure. Initial sowings were broad beans, cabbages and potatoes – a row each for early, mid-season and late varieties. Next up, once the danger of frost was passed, were tomatoes and a courgette.

A useful source on raised beds can be found at the RHS website- [click here](#)

October is a good time to plant up containers and raised beds, both with hardy flowers, bulbs and winter salad vegetables. [click here](#).

Simon's Wildlife Gardening

One tip I picked up this year is a way of spreading out my Forget-me-Nots so I have more next year. They are good for early pollinators early in the season so I was keen to have more so I'm now busy splitting up the clumps and replanting them elsewhere.

In October it's time to plant crocus and daffodills which are useful for pollinators in the early spring. I've found an unused bank in the front driveway which dries out in the summer so I'm going to town with the bulbs using a "lasagne" approach to extend the flowering season – see [here](#).

Last autumn I planted some allium bulbs in the front garden and they have really done well and are a big attraction for the bees and hoverflies. It's not too late to put more in this year.



In the late summer I managed to get my long awaited pond sorted so I'm looking forward to seeing what it attracts.

Bee the Change

People may have missed SinCH's popular Bee talk on the 8th July, given by local bee expert Ron Rock.

If you missed out check out the blog at SinCH's website [here](#) for the key points.

In October don't cut down your ivy! It's an important source of food for wasps, butterflies and bees. Look out for Ivy mining bees! [Click here](#). This little solitary bee looks a bit like a honeybee, and relies on ivy as its main food source.

Also check out actions you can take for bees in October here and for winter- active bumblebees [here](#).

No Mow May

It's been great to see areas being left for No-Mow-May along Main Road and at the allotments. There was also lovely naturalistic planting at the Community Garden in Cliff Road so congratulations to all involved.



Shugborough has kindly offered SinCH members a guided walk through their No Mow May areas next May so watch out for details nearer the time.

Lamb & Flag Coffee Mornings

If you have spare produce, plants or seeds why not bring them along to our monthly coffee mornings [at the Lamb & Flag pub, 3rd Wednesday of the month, 10.30-12.00} and see what other treasures you can pick up for a small donation.

Community Garden

Congratulations to Angela and her Bloomer colleagues who started a community garden in the grounds of the Village Hall this year. SinCH was pleased to be able to help with advice and by sourcing soil and compost.



For more information on the club please contact Angela at angelahardwickpink@gmail.com

Your input please

We'd like to know what's been useful and what else you'd like to see featured.

Please share your thoughts, experiences and photos. If you have got a question about how to do things, or need some advice and support please get in touch.

Fancy getting more involved in our work? Contact info@sinch.earth or use the contact form on the website at

We have a Green Fingers steering group to generate ideas and to help organise activities so please contact us if you are interested.

SinCH is also working up some ideas to support the delivery of the Parish Council's Green Infrastructure Plan – this will involve identifying opportunities to develop projects to improve biodiversity within the Parish