



December 2024

Edition 1



"A Greener Town, a Brighter Future"

Dear Fordingbridge Greener Living Friends,

Now we are coming to the end of 2024, we wanted to share the latest Fordingbridge Greener Living information, firstly to refresh long-standing volunteers and interested individuals but also to raise awareness of our initiatives and hopefully gain more involvement with the wider community.

This newsletter is a re-baseline of who we are, our purpose, a summary of our initiatives, upcoming events and what to look forward to in 2025.

We hope you find this informative and interesting, as always, we are open to feedback. If you are interested in learning more or getting involved, please make contact using the details at the end of the newsletter.

Many thanks and best wishes for the Christmas holidays.

Fordingbridge Greener Living Committee

Who are we?

Fordingbridge Greener Living is an association of residents and businesses who are responding to our climate emergency and want to make a difference. Initially the group generated ideas for ways that individuals could personally reduce their carbon footprint. As the group gained momentum, we began to think about more tangible ways that we could help Fordingbridge become 'greener' and become a more environmentally sustainable town.



Purpose

To develop Fordingbridge into a greener town by delivering sustainable and environmentally friendly projects and sharing 'greener' methods and positive ideas which educate and encourage community involvement at all levels for the future benefit of this town and its environs.

Our Projects

Community Fridge and Freezer

This initiative was set up to reduce food waste and also help anyone who may be in need in the town. It is supported by local shops who have surplus stock that would otherwise be thrown away. Our main supporter is the Co-op but we also do obtain goods from local bakeries and also surplus from the community garden at times.

The fridge and freezer is located in the Fordingbridge Library, so is only available during Library opening times. You do not need to be in receipt of a voucher to use our fridge but we ask that you only take what you need.

If you can volunteer to help maintain the fridge, please contact us.

Opening Hours:

Monday: closed

Tuesday: 09.30 – 5.00

Wednesday: 9.30 – 5.00

Thursday: closed

Friday: 9.30 – 5.00

Saturday: 9.30 – 1.30

Sunday: closed



Community Garden and Orchard

This is a joint project between Fordingbridge Greener Living and Fordingbridge Town Council and has been supported by the Co-op Community Fund. It is a space for community members to meet, socialise, grown food and flowers. Produce from the garden is available to users and any surplus will be made available to the wider community via the Community Fridge. Community funds have been used to purchase new fencing and several items of equipment including children's tool and accessibility equipment. More recently a wormery has been donated and we hope to create a mini wormery in the future.



Future Plans

- Local school/nursery/children's group visits.
- More raised beds to be installed to increase food production and make beds more accessible.
- Creation of a wildlife corner.
- Creation of a mini wormery.

Keep your eyes peeled for upcoming events.

The Community Garden is located at the following address and can be accessed via the gate next to the garages in Picket Close at the back of the allotments, all volunteers welcome.

Fry's Field,
Picket Close,
Fordingbridge,
SP6 1JY



Community Composter

We received just under £5,000 from Hampshire Waste to buy a Ridan Community Hot Composter in 2022, this does not need any power to run and currently allows 40 member households around Fordingbridge to deposit their food waste and make use the compost created. In the last year we have had 4 compost collections shared between the member households.

The composer is located in the Fry's Field Allotments, close to the Community Garden, and anyone from the local community can apply to become a user of the composer however its use is currently at full capacity and therefore we are not accepting new applicants at this time.



Repair Cafe and Children's Outdoor Clothing Swap

The concept of the Repair Cafe is to reduce the number of items being thrown away and save money. People can bring broken or damaged items and learn how to fix them with our volunteers who specialise in electrical, mechanical, sewing and soft toy repairs. We ask for a voluntary donation for any repairs that are completed.

In the last year we have saved 340kg of CO2 from going to landfill and an estimated £560 of savings to the users.

The Repair Cafe is held at the **Avonway Community Centre, The Annex** **on the 3rd Saturday of each month between 10:00 – 12:00**. No meeting in December 2024.



The repair cafe is also the home of the children's outdoor clothing swap where we encourage the community to bring unwanted children's outdoor clothing such as coats, waterproofs, wellies, school shoes, hats, gloves and scarves. We ask for a small donation if you have nothing to swap. If you cannot find anything to swap we provide a token to allow you to take something for free next time.



Click this link to learn more about other registered repair cafes www.repaircafe.org/en/



Community Recycling Shed

The community Recycling shed can be found by St Mary's Church Hall and aims to recycle items that cannot be recycled at the kerbside. Each of the volunteers has taken on to look after one or two of the boxes and either take or send the contents for recycling. A full list of what can be taken is on the website. Most bins are emptied once or twice a month.

By using the shed, you are:

- Preventing waste from being incinerated
- Contributing to stocks of recycled materials, thus preventing more raw materials entering the consumption chain
- Raising money for good causes



A reminder that we also have a Tetrapak recycling bin in Fordingbridge located in the car park opposite the Recreation Ground. This is managed by NFDC who has now rolled the scheme out to other towns in the district.



Community Energy

Some of our FGL members have recently attended the Home Energy Advice Training (HEAT) training which is provided by New Forest District Council (NFDC). It aims to reduce fuel poverty in the area by offering free advice to households on how to save energy.

This can include a thermal imaging survey being conducted on request by fully trained individuals. NFDC's aim is to visit 400 households this winter to provide this free service.

If you are interest in having your house surveyed or to be trained, please make contact. We would also love to hear from anyone who can to help us carry out surveys.



Hampshire Swift Project

Fordingbridge Greener Living has an initiative with Fordingbridge Town Council and Hampshire Swifts to help the increase in Swift nest sites across the town. As individual householders we can help conservation of these beautiful birds by having a small bird box installed on your property, for a small fee, by Hampshire Swifts.

Throughout 2024 a total of 15 bird boxes have been installed around the town and therefore we hope that swifts will have a bright future in Fordingbridge in years to come.

Please contact us if you want to know more or find out about the conservation plans across the county: www.hampshireswifts.co.uk

What else can you do to help swifts and other insect feeding birds? Make your garden and open spaces as insect friendly as you can! For ideas on how to do this for next year:

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/garden-inspiration/wildlife/rewild-your-garden>



River Avon – Bathing Water Status

Since we achieved Defra approval for Bathing Water Status in April, we along with the Environment Agency and Wessex Water have been testing the water in the river weekly to monitor for levels of harmful bacteria. These results have been available for anyone to see and information on how to do that is on the sign by the river. For most of the summer, bacterial levels were low, but a couple of high weeks has resulted in an overall classification of 'Poor' water quality. This was not unexpected and we will be putting increased pressure on Wessex Water to stop outflows from the sewers into the river and on the Environment Agency to look into the source of other pollution.



Wessex Water is currently installing a sophisticated water monitoring system at The George pub which in future be able to predict the water quality and publicise results.

Annual General Meeting

Our AGM took place on 30 October, thank you to all those who attended. It was a good opportunity to come together as a group to discuss current initiatives, share ideas for the future and also review the accounts for Financial Year 24/25 to date. Minutes and reports will be available on the website shortly.

Dates for the Diary

Repair Cafe/Children's Outdoor Clothing Swap

18 January 2025
15 February 2025
15 March 2025
19 April 2025



Bathing Water update meeting

February 18th 7.00pm at Avonway Annex.

The results of the first year of monitoring will be presented and there will be an opportunity to discuss these and ways forward with Matt Wheeldon – Regional Director of Wessex Water and Jim Flory – Area Environment Manager for the Environment Agency. Refreshments will be available.

Reminders

Easy Fundraising

With Easy Fundraising, every time you buy something online from a supplier who is part of the scheme, a donation will be given to your chosen charity. In the year we raised £139 from supporters, just buying what they need via Easy Fundraising. Do sign up.

www.easyfundraising.org.uk

The Green Gram – Community Refill Shop

23 High Street, Fordingbridge

www.thegreengram.org



Green Gram provides affordable plastic-free groceries offering a wide range of wholefoods, loose leaf teas and whole bean coffees, eco-friendly detergents and toiletries, as well as a selection of household products.

Everything is supplied without single use plastic packaging so you can buy as much or as little as you need! Customers are encouraged to bring their own containers to refill, but a selection of donated jars and bottles are available.

Contact Details

Email : fordingbridgegreenerliving@gmail.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1321462448635262>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/fordingbridgegreenerliving/>

Website: www.fordingbridgegreenerliving.org

Next Newsletter Edition : April 2025.