

Newsletter

May 2021

We ♥ Frith Wood, Bussage

More than 50 trees, mostly ash affected by dieback, were felled in the part of Frith Wood owned by Chalford Parish Council. The wood was left looking in need of serious TLC, with track marks and a lot of strewn logs and branches.

The wood is used heavily, and at this time of year the effect of too many informal paths is obvious on bluebells and anemones. So, encouraged and led by ChalCAN's Biodiversity Action, around thirty volunteers over the last month have made natural hedging from the branches, encouraging people to keep to the bigger paths. Piles of branches have also been left for wildlife.

Woodchip has been used to improve the surface of the main path, indicating where people might best walk. The wood is looking much happier, and the felling can now bring light and life to the woodland floor.

The work has been very well received. There is so much love for what one resident describes as 'The cathedral of Bussage'. From felling to a better future for Frith Wood!

THANK YOU to all who have helped.



Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHPs); the future of domestic heating...

What are they? Installed on the side or back of your house, ASHPs transfer heat from the air (even at very cold air temperatures) to water in your central heating or hot water systems. Powered by electricity they are extremely efficient. There are popular misconceptions that ASHPs cannot be used in old houses, and that they only work with oversized radiators or underfloor heating. Some upgrading of radiators and plumbing may be needed, but this can frequently be achieved by having double or triple depth instead of oversized radiators.

Do ASHPs reduce carbon emissions? Yes. Electricity is increasingly being generated by renewable sources in the UK, so emissions from ASHPs are lower than oil or gas boilers. If you are supplied with electricity from a company which generates from renewable sources, carbon emissions can be effectively reduced to zero.

Will I save money? This depends on many factors related to your property and potential installation. Trustmark installers are required to conduct a heat loss survey (and noise assessment) to confirm the requirements for your system. For a detailed answer we suggest consulting with an independent energy advisor. As a brief overview:

Installation Costs: It's far more expensive to buy and install a heat pump compared to a gas boiler; costs are frequently in excess of £10k. However, you may be eligible payments over 7 years through the Renewable Heat Incentive (runs to March 2022). Payment depends primarily on the 'heat load' of your property (as stated on the EPC), and frequently covers most of the cost of installation.

Running Costs: An effective ASHP installation should have similar running costs to a modern gas boiler, and save money when compared to an oil boiler. But it depends on the specific details of your property, installation and how effectively the system is used.

Where to find out more? Please read over page...

Where to find out more? ChalCAN energy group is organising an information evening on ASHPs in the near future, or contact us.



Comments from Chalford residents

From a 10-year old installation:

'We understand the technology has moved on and is now definitely quieter – an advantage when the neighbours behind are as close as ours are. Our decision to install was made because we wanted a sustainable heat source. Our heating and hot water bills are relatively low; if we replaced a couple of large elderly double-glazed windows and improved our cavity wall insulation, we'd have much lower bills than average for a house of this size.'

A new installation in an old house:

'We are still getting used to a mindset which requires that we leave the heating on at lower temperatures rather than turning it on and off as we would have done on a daily basis with the old combi. The hot water is now a far more sensible temperature, only needing a dash of cold to make the water shower-appropriate. We have a new 200L tank in the old airing cupboard; sufficient for 2 bathrooms and up to 4 residents.'

A new-build, including an ASHP:

'Overall, we are delighted with our low cost and sustainable system. It does take a while to get used to running underfloor heating with an ASHP – it takes longer for the house to warm up, but once it's there it holds its heat so well.'

A potential installation:

'We are looking into the possibility of replacing our 20-year-old gas boiler with an ASHP, in the hope of saving money, future-proofing our heating set-up, and perhaps protecting the planet along the way. The boiler is 20 years old so is probably about 75% efficient, and will need replacing in the not-so-distant future. However, our situation would undoubtedly require extra cost due to the nature of the house, and the fact that our current radiator layout is over 30 years old. In our situation, it looks like running an ASHP instead of a gas boiler could compare approximately in cost to mains gas at current prices.'

Advice leaflets from Centre for Sustainable Energy and Energy Saving Trust



Chalford Parish Bursts into Life!

Late Spring is an especially lovely time. It brings an explosion of new life to our fields, woods and waterways. Hedgerows and verges are at their best, with speedwells, cowslips, campions, buttercups, vetches and the first of the orchids all in flower. Our oak, ash and beech trees finally come into full leaf and are in flower. All the migrant birds have arrived, not least the wonderful swifts which cut through the air above our roof tops. A great time too for butterflies – Orange Tips, Brimstone, Holly Blue and Speckled Wood are just some of those on the wing.



Later this year ChalCAN's Biodiversity Action will be launching a Conservation Trail which celebrates our local environment. The route around the Parish visits some of our rich natural areas and sites where we are working to restore biodiversity. The Trail is supported by the Parish Council. Look out for more news of this next month.

Meanwhile, let's all enjoy this wonderful time of the year!



ChalCAN is now on Instagram! Follow us at @chalford.can

Go to chalcan.org.uk or follow us on Facebook  for lots of useful ideas

Grow Your Own, Stage 2: *Baby Greens on your windowsill*

- *Have you always thought you needed a garden or allotment to grow your own veg? Think again*
- *Have you ever thought growing your own food was too difficult? We have got the answer*
- *Do you want to easily improve nutrition for you and your family? Read on*

Baby or microgreens are really easy to grow, are great for your health and taste good too. They are basically young vegetable plants and have a concentrated nutrient content and pack a fabulous flavour punch. They are quick and cheap to grow too, most can be eaten after 7-21 days so great for the impatient amongst us!

There are loads of different types, including peas, sunflower, cauliflower, radish, broccoli, celery, lettuce, carrot and loads more. Microgreens can have up to nine times the nutrient levels of fully grown vegetables. What's more the nutrient content is concentrated which means they contain higher vitamin, mineral and antioxidant levels than the same quantity of mature greens. And they look good on the windowsill. They are great sprinkled over any meal, used in a very healthy smoothie or just picked and eaten throughout the day.

Step by Step Guide

1. Find a container with holes in it and choose a warm sunny position. A kitchen windowsill is ideal. If you have a seed tray, use that. If not pierce some holes in a used tinfoil pie liner or similar. Plastic punnets that you buy your fruit in or takeaway trays can be repurposed. I have used a clay pot that I found.
2. Pop a tray or newspaper underneath to absorb the excess water
3. Half fill with some compost, sprinkle all your seeds, then cover with a thin layer of compost.
4. Water regularly so the compost doesn't dry out.
5. Watch your little baby veg grow in days and you can cut and come again once they reach 3-4cm.

6. Eat and enjoy!



Free Kits... Free Kits... Free Kits

If you'd like to have a go at growing your own, we are giving away some kits. Each kit contains an instruction leaflet, compost and seeds. All we ask is that you let us know how you got on and maybe send us some photos. *Good luck and we hope you enjoy growing and eating these little gems.*

This Grow your Own scheme is another ChalCAN and Parish Council initiative to help tackle climate change by encouraging all of us to learn more about our carbon footprint.

For more information or to get involved please visit chalcan.org.uk or contact Penny Starr (*info@chalcan.org.uk* or Tel 01453 887204) to have a chat. We'd love to hear from you.

To get a pack contact Penny or pick up your pack at the Parish Office

If you would like to get involved with ChalCAN or help with any of these projects, please contact Penny at info@chalcan.org.uk Tel: 01453 887204

PLEASE PASS THIS ON TO FRIENDS, NEIGHBOURS AND FAMILY

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