



ChalCAN Newsletter December 2023



As 2023 ends this seems like a good point to review what ChalCAN has been up to in 2023

The energy group has

- given free draughtproofing/insulation surveys and advice
- supported the installation of insulation in some homes
- continued to explore possibilities of a local community run solar farm and wind turbine

The Biodiversity group has

- run a series of events (composting, pond building, environmentally friendly gardening, bird and bat walks, and a moth breakfast)
- planted trees and hedgerows and distributed free sapling trees
- planted 200 wildflowers
- continued to maintain key sites– Abnash, Parish Bank and Sycamore Spinney at Middle Hill

The Transport group has

- talked to parents at schools about road safety and parking issues
- helped install bike racks at five locations
- created a family friendly cycle route
- held community walks
- started to explore an e-bike rental scheme

Food and Waste

- a new group supported by ChalCAN has been exploring a local composting scheme
- a scheme to send spare garden/allotment produce to local food hubs was promoted
- we promote the use of local repair cafes and schemes to reduce waste or increase recycling



Recently installed bike rack at Eastcombe Scouts Hall

ChalCAN Biodiversity – working with the community.

We are always on the lookout for new ways to work alongside local groups and organisations in joint efforts to protect and improve our local environment. So, we are very pleased to be currently teaming up with Bussage Primary School on several exciting projects.

The school already has a strong record in taking the lead on a range of green issues. It's Eco-Schools Green Flag Award is in recognition of efforts to protect the environment, not least a recent pupil-inspired campaign to install solar panels at the school. Now, working with Biodiversity Action, children, staff and parents have taken on the challenge of planting a 100 metre long stretch of native hedgerow across the bottom of the school field. The planting was delayed due to the weather, but we are hopeful for January.


In another initiative, the enthusiastic pupil eco-council is helping us to champion the stretch of verge alongside the footpath to the rear of Bussage shopping centre. We have been working on it for the last year, planting new trees and wildflowers to make it more attractive and biodiverse. Given all this new care and attention, we felt it deserves a more attractive name than its present description as 'the patch of grass behind Tesco'! So, the pupil eco-council has come to our rescue by taking on the task of coming up with a more attractive name! Once they have arrived at just the right name for this path or walk or way- whatever they decide-then we will have a little ceremony with the children to unveil a new plaque.


If you have any ideas on other local organisations who would welcome a helping hand in developing an environmental project, do let us know.




Work on the bank at Abnash


In the meantime, do check out our [Twelve Steps for a Greener Christmas](#)


 **Gifts:** Buy local, fair trade/eco-friendly or second-hand gifts or make your own. Give a pledge or treat.


 **The tree:** Rent or buy one with roots for re-use. If it's cut find one that's FSC certified. Avoid buying an artificial tree - but if you have one re-use it!


 **Lights and decorations:** Switch to LED lights; try handcrafting or baking your decorations.


 **Wrapping:** Use easily recycled paper, hessian, tissue or fabric. Tie with ribbon.


 **Christmas cards:** Make your own, send e-cards, send ones with the FSC mark, or plantable cards.


 **Crackers and advent calendars:** Buy eco-friendly crackers or make your own. Re-use last year's advent calendar.


 **Pass on the plastic:** Look for wooden toys; try handcrafting or baking your decorations.

 **Christmas Food:** Cut down on meat; buy local produce; plan meals carefully to reduce waste.

 **Cheers:** Look out for organic and/or locally produced wines and beers.

 **Wear it well:** Try to buy clothes made from sustainable fabrics, swap with friends or buy pre-loved.

 **Save Energy:** Don't over-do the heating; turn off lights and get a smart meter.

 **Focus on what matters...**family, friends, community and for some an important religious festival...not stuff!

Best wishes to all our supporters and please encourage others to lend a hand and extend our work in 2024. Keep in touch by contacting info@chalcan.org.uk. Follow us at on Facebook or check out our website: www.chalcan.org.uk