

SOUTH EAST ESSEX ORGANIC GARDENERS

NEWSLETTER NO: 127 – MAY 2016

<http://seeog.org.uk/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/43705483846/>



Soil Association

SEEEOG was formed in 1994, to promote the principles of organic gardening by:

- Composting organic waste
- Protecting wildlife
- Reducing pollution
- Encouraging species diversity

Membership is currently £8.00 per annum, £12.00 family.

Is your local school a member of SEEEOG? If not, we offer free membership on receipt of application form!

Venue, notes etc.

The Cheryl Centre, Growing Together Westcliff: please use the entrance in Prittlewell Chase, Westcliff-on-Sea SS0 9AG (corner of Fairfax Drive and Prittlewell Chase).

We want to know if you have difficulty with transport as we can then try to coordinate a lift for you.

Unless stated otherwise, our speakers start at 8.00pm sharp, but Growing Together is open from 7.00pm to prepare the room, etc.

The next committee meeting is on Thursday 12 May at Ron's, starting at 7.30pm. STILL WANTED: Minutes Secretary and a Librarian! Just a few willing hands, really!

Please notify Graham Oster-Ritter if you wish to receive your newsletter by post/email, or to change your email address: grahamoster@btinternet.com

For future reference, our newsletter copy 'deadlines' for 2016 are as follows:

July	Saturday 30 June
September	Tuesday 30 August
November	Sunday 30 October

Monday 21 March: Henry Webber, Mistletoe Trees

The mysteries of mistletoe reproduction and propagation were revealed by Henry in his talk. His very scientific approach comes from early intrigue at the family farm at Roxwell and now researching with his Ph.D. Starting with the idea of sustainability, he worked with fruiting colourful crab apples - but which varieties? And would flowering cherries work? All this he is working through, with success.

Fresh and sticky in crevices of branches of young trees, the berries are placed replicating birds between February and April. Important factors are light, temperature and fresh berries. Mistletoe is parasitic so it needs picking to preserve the tree once it achieves maturity after five years, when it will double in size annually. Its shoots go into the bark after three weeks but will not show growth for eighteen months, giving one or two shoots below the branch. There are male and female plants that tap into the water/nutrient system of the tree. All this is all very carefully recorded. Questions of disease and mistletoe, which tree varieties are preferred or succumb, and medicinal uses were also talked about.

Henry went on to talk of his other areas of research with precision agriculture - smaller fields and labour inputs being the most precise but human intensive. Looking at archaeology and farmers who can have different views about looking at the past history of land but there could be mutual benefits to be explored, chemical traces in soil etc that soil investigation can reveal to present and tell of historic cultivation and use.

Great to have these areas of research talked about and discussed, following in the footfall of Jonathan Briggs who has been at it for 25-30 years. Thanks, Henry.

<http://www.mistletoe.org.uk/mmatters/>

Saturday 14 May, May Fayre at Growing Together Westcliff, 11:00 to 14:00, with SEEOG stall

It will be a lovely event: Maypole dancing, music from some of the Famous Potatoes, hotdogs (and veggie alternative), homemade cakes, Punch and Judy show, vegetable plants, bedding plants, plenty of rhubarb for sale and their bumper raffle!

****Monday 16 May: Pesticide Action Network UK****

Dr Keith Tyrell, Director of Pesticide Action Network UK, will be talking about the pesticide-free towns and cities movement across the world and how communities are working to help pollinators in the face of government inaction.

PAN UK is delighted that Brighton & Hove City Council has voted to stop the use of the herbicide glyphosate and investigate the use of non-chemical methods for weed and pest control. The motion, introduced by Green Councillor Louisa Greenbaum, was unanimously supported in the Council meeting by members of all political parties. PAN UK looks forward to other towns and cities following this lead and taking similar action to protect the health of their citizens and their environments.

www.pan-uk.org/pesticide-free

Do please do all you can to attend this very important meeting – Keith Tyrell travels from Brighton and deserves a huge welcome and a big audience!

Saturday 21 May: 'Three Acres And A Cow, A History Of Land Rights And Protest In Folk Song And Story'

If you have an interest in the UK's history of protest and land rights, this could be right up your street. Saturday 21st May - Leigh-On-Sea The Fishermen's Chapel - New Road Methodist Church, New Road, Leigh-on-Sea, SS9 2EA.

The show starts with a 6.00pm potluck supper for a 7.00pm start - please bring a dish!

Tickets can also be bought locally from Adam without the £1 booking fee via squeezebox.folk@gmail.com or via <http://threeacresandacow.co.uk/leigh>

We should still have a few available to sell both at the May Fayre and at Group Night, as long as Adam doesn't need them.

For further information and tickets, please contact Adam (07535 534 217).

Wednesday 8 June: Essex Schools Food & Farming Day, Writtle College

As with last year, the show area is divided into five zones: Livestock, Crops, Machinery, Countryside & Environment and Food. Children and teachers will be escorted around the showground by a Farmer Steward and will have 30 minutes to spend in each zone, each of which encompasses a key element of the food and farming story with a range of interactive activities and demonstrations. The aim of the day is to give children a reasonable understanding of where their food comes from and the role agriculture plays in shaping the Essex countryside. This visit links with many areas of the curriculum. School groups will be assigned their very own "Farmer Steward" to guide them around the event and ensure that they gain maximum benefit from each exhibit.

You can read more about this event at <http://www.essexag.co.uk/event/essex-schools-food-and-farming-day-2016/>

Our theme will be, as required, 'Growing Vegetables' in their Crop Zone: Showing children examples of seasonal vegetables; how they are grown and the benefits of eating fruit and vegetables. We are also repeating our soil/compost area, which was so popular last year, and possibly highlighting FoE's Bee Count 2016, which runs from 19 May – 30 June.

PS: On a practical level, Jane is looking for a rotary sieve to borrow, as her one just wasn't enough, it was so popular.

Saturday 16 July: Visit to Paternoster House, Tiptree, 10.30 for 11am (car share)

Paternoster House is described on the NGS website as a 'Peaceful 5 acre garden rescued from a derelict state some 15 yrs ago. It has an enclosed flower garden, two meadows, orchards of apples, pears, stone fruit, mulberry trees and peaches. It has an ornamental kitchen garden with raised beds and extensive lawns with large shrubberies. There are some rare and unusual shrubs (large collection of viburnums) and plants, young and mature trees and three beautiful ponds.'

<http://www.ngs.org.uk/gardens/find-a-garden/garden.aspx?id=31899>

£5 a head, refreshments are extra, and Philip Fawcett (our soft fruit speaker) will be able to come along.

From A12 J24 (Kelvedon), take the B1023 to Tiptree - through Tiptree on B1023 at bottom of Factory Hill turn L to Tolleshunt Knights on Brook Road S bend onto Barnhall Road. Continue to 30mph sign, house on R.

****Monday 18 July: 'Garden Organic's Vision for the Future'****

The Chief Executive, James Campbell, an organic grower for 30 years, and with many years' experience in sustainability, will talk about the role of Garden Organic in the 21st century"

Garden Organic represents organic growers and gardeners - especially ordinary gardeners and allotment holders, community groups and not-for-profit growers - to protect and preserve the rights of organic horticulture, and to resist attempts to restrict and contain organic growing.

They work with a wide variety of like-minded organisations to promote the benefits of organic growing for plants, people and communities, to share best practice and to engage hard-to-reach and disadvantaged communities in organic growing practice, backed by scientific research supporting a range of beneficial outcomes. Not to be missed!!

Monday 19 September

Ben Lambert, Crapes Fruit Farm: Ben has been carrying out projects for his permaculture at the 94 year old orchard, Crapes Fruit Farm, near Colchester. There they grow both fruit and vegetables, so expect a mix of no-dig farming, bio-intensive, soil re-mineralisation, forest gardening and holistic orchard management.

Saturday 8 October: Apple Day at St. Laurence Orchard, 11:00 to 15:00

Monday 21 November:

'Diluted', a new garden talk about the gardener and their relationship to water is presented by SEEOG member, Darren Lerigo. To find out more, please visit: <http://modernmint.co.uk/water/>

Allotment Bird Survey 2016

This year is just a "pilot" and we have just "kicked-off", so now it is up to anyone who wants to play to work out what best suits their allotment site. If some allotment sites are unsure, we suggest they try out the casual observation approach to get a feel for it.

The aim is to use the results to help measure the contribution that allotment sites make in supporting wildlife in the urban environment. Graham A used BirdTrack at the end of January - only six Brent Geese and seven Turnstones whilst walking the sea front into Southend: he said he could have recorded many more if he had braved the cold and stayed longer!

Have you got any feedback for us? Has your Allotment Association registered with Birdtrack yet?

More at <http://seeog.org.uk/2016/01/seeog-allotment-birdtrack-2016/>

For more information, please email both ga.adamson@gmail.com and caroleshorney@hotmail.com

Allotment news

1. Do try to look at the article in the current issue of the Allotment & Leisure Gardener (Issue 2 2016): An example of why Allotment Societies need to monitor and contribute to Local Plans - see

<http://www.nsalg.org.uk/news-events-campaigns/protect-your-plots/>

A copy should be on our sales table or in the cupboard.

2. Charlie Dimmock and Alan Titchmarsh are joining a host of horticultural organisations in supporting 'Watch Your Back!' - a new health campaign urging men to review their sun protection habits and get their backs checked regularly for the warning signs of skin cancer. Research has revealed that men over the age of 50 are at the highest risk of developing melanoma; the most dangerous form of skin cancer. In men, the disease appears typically on the back, head and neck, in areas hard to spot, contributing to a later diagnosis than in women, making their condition harder to treat.

<http://www.nsalg.org.uk/news/celebrity-gardeners-urge-men-to-watch-their-backs/>

3. The very newly-formed Hockley Allotment Society has been waiting for confirmation that the Planning Officer (Christine Lyons) is leaving Rochford District Council next month. This means starting over and getting her replacement to feed the information both to ourselves and the developer about the progress of the allotments; also encouraging the developer to talk with an allotment committee about location and entry exit of site. We have now organised a person to be the point of contact, and form a committee, in the hope that the developer will keep us informed when the site is cleared. Fingers crossed, we seem to be inching closer to our goal. [facebook.com/hockley.allotment.society](https://www.facebook.com/hockley.allotment.society)

4) Finally, a cracking question on Gardeners' Question Time today (1 May): 'in Jeremy Corbyn, we now have a senior political figure who is an allotment gardener. Can the panel suggest any other senior figures who might benefit from allotment gardening and do you have any suggestions for what they might grow? SEEEOG members: your suggestions, please! <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b0788bc6>

Crapes Fruit Farm: Andrew Tann's mid-April update

Our earlier concerns at the apparent visual effects of the warm winter appear to have been allayed by a slow March. Later in the year some long term, delayed anomalies could still reveal. As it is, April has been quite typical, especially the latter half, with pleasant warm days and a touch of frost most mornings associated with anti-cyclonic conditions. All very well, but at 4am the risk of damage to blossom increases from now until late May. At present, just the plums are blooming, no earlier than average, and the apple buds look to be a little behind.

April to date has been good for rainfall here. Unlike the very dry spring of 2015, our land is plenty moist enough, which is great for succulent flowers, irresistible to bees and other insects. Bumblebees have surfaced much earlier this spring followed by the hive bees. Ladybirds have been visible within the trees for many weeks now. A hungry ladybird will consume a varied diet, including eggs of moths, which will shortly be challenging us once again. The silken, woven leaves which cling to the odd upper shoot of the apple trees are now revealing their dozens of newly hatched larvae of Vapourer moth which, in a month's time, will have grown rapidly on a diet of apple leaves! They have their own defence by exuding a toxin when touched, which for humans can result in a nasty rash!

The area for vegetables has been increased for this season. Yes, we will have beetroot again amongst our usual range of beans, cabbage, tomatoes and squash etc.

Preparation of the mailing list for the 2016 season is underway. We shall publish, in June, our newsletter of the apples available to send out this season. One new consideration is that with gradual changes in the weather during recent years, our latest keeping apples are behaving differently. We noticed this with Sturmer Pippin, especially, in 2015.

<https://crapes.wordpress.com/>

Ben's Diploma site is at: <http://dreadbensdiploma.weebly.com/index.html> - just hover over Projects at the top of the screen to view each of one.

Farmers' Markets 2016

These are the two markets where we have a stall and always appreciate help, produce and plants where available!

Leigh-on-Sea (buy fresh, keep it local!) at Leigh Community Centre, 71-73 Elm Road, Leigh-on-Sea, 09:00 to 12:00, apart from December, 08:30:

Fridays on 20 May, 17 June, 15 July, 19 August, 16 September, 21 October, 18 November; Saturday 17 December, 08:30 start

Rochford at the WI Hall, West Street, 09:30 to 12:00:

Saturdays on 7 May and 4 June – further dates to follow for the rest of the year

Garden Organic news

Three local schools in Hullbridge, Rayleigh and Rochford are taking part in The Rocket Science Experiment for The RHS Campaign for School Gardening and The European Space Agency, as part of Garden Organic's Growing Enterprise social and therapeutic horticultural project at Ryton Organic Gardens.

In September 2015, 4kg of Rocket seeds were sent up to the International Space Station where they experienced zero gravity conditions for six months. The seeds then returned to Earth where they have been packaged up in either 'Red' or 'Blue' packets. The aim of the experiment is to determine the effect that travelling in Space might have had on the seeds.

We'll keep you updated on the progress of the mission and will hopefully be able to arrange a local speaker in due course.

As members, we receive regular e-newsletters from Garden Organic which we then forward to our members. These are fairly brief and contain links to larger articles on the main Garden Organic website. This month, one of the links is to an article on 'How to set up your new allotment from scratch' which may well be of use to those of you who are new to growing – whether in an allotment or in your own garden. The page address for this is: <http://www.gardenorganic.org.uk/organic-allotment-growing>

A correspondent in the latest edition of The Organic Way (page 27 and on our website) has written in to say that (in his opinion) 'many councils are not sympathetic to the ideas espoused (in a previous issue) because they apply the National requirement that all allotment plots must be, at a minimum, 75% cultivated and will throw this "accepted National Standard" at you if you dare challenge them'. Has anyone had a similar experience? If so, we would love to hear from you!

GMWatch news

Farm minister George Eustice has granted consent for a new trial of genetically modified (GM) oilseed, despite new research showing that consumption of omega-3 oils of the type made by the GM plants can seriously harm butterflies.

The Canadian study was published days after a Government deadline for objections to the trial, but was forwarded to Defra by campaign group GM Freeze. Neither Mr Eustice's letter of consent nor the Advisory Committee on Releases to the Environment (ACRE)'s advice on this application make any mention of the researchers' finding that feeding "fish oils" to cabbage white butterflies caused them to grow heavier and have a higher frequency of wing deformities.

Liz O'Neill, Director of GM Freeze, believes that the new research is hugely significant. "Farmers might initially welcome the idea of deformed cabbage whites but this is a totally unexpected effect and that should make everyone worry. We have no idea why the omega-3 oils harmed the butterflies in the Canadian study and until we do know, we shouldn't be genetically engineering plants to produce them." <https://www.facebook.com/pages/GMWatch/276951472985>

You can keep up with the latest news and comment on genetically modified foods by going to their website at <http://www.gmwatch.org/news/latest-news>

Manure/Compost

This information is now on our website, apart from updates, of course, which we trust won't inconvenience too many people.

Members' contributions

1) America's First School District to Serve 100% Organic Meals
<http://offgridquest.com/food/americas-first-school-district-to-serve->

2) [Programme for Mediterranean Culinary Culture, University of Malta](https://www.facebook.com/Programme-for-Mediterranean-Culinary-Culture-University-of-Malta-1418932565022028/)
<https://www.facebook.com/Programme-for-Mediterranean-Culinary-Culture-University-of-Malta-1418932565022028/> (Simon)

3) Frank Marcus assembles cylindrical beekeeping pavilion in the Netherlands
<http://www.designboom.com/architecture/frank-marcus-architecten-beekeeping-pavilion-nijmegen-the-netherlands-03-02-2016> (Simon)

4) Just to let you know about John Walker, the earth-friendly gardener, has a new book out soon. We reviewed book 1 here - <http://modernmint.co.uk/digging-deep-in-the-garden/> We said this about it:

"Abrupt and direct (and his writing is far less gentle than the way he gardens), we love it – his is an authentic voice in an often dull crowd of garden writing. How great is it to hear someone speak up and say what they believe?" Hear hear!!

If anyone is interested, they can pre-order here and get their name in the book too!

<http://earthfriendlygardener.net/2016/03/24/digging-deep-in-the-garden-book-two-john-walker-earthfriendlygardener-books-environment/>

5) 'My Wild Neighbourhood' is encouraging connectivity of habitats for hedgehogs! The three simple steps you can do to help hedgehogs are:

1. Find out if you've got hedgehogs by surveying for five nights with our hedgehog footprint tunnel.
2. Connect your garden with neighbours' gardens by creating a hedgehog-sized hole in your garden boundaries.
3. Re-survey your garden to see if your neighbourhood hedgehogs have expanded their horizons!

To take part, please fill in this quick survey about you and your garden:

<https://wildlifetrusts.wufoo.com/forms/k107of9r16ohped/>

6) Since the end of the war, America's "Food for Peace" programme has shipped American-grown food in sacks across the world to feed the world's starving people. Virtually all experts agree it's an inefficient way to send aid, and the EU stopped doing it decades ago.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b037s8mk>

7) A movable chicken pen, this is moved every few days after the chickens have eaten the weeds.. the insects, scratched over the soil, fertilised the soil with their poo... and, of course, lay eggs. This pen supports around 15 chickens and produces a dozen eggs a day. Not exactly free range but as close as you can get it to be without endangering the chickens to predators.

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.513594725491357.1073741842.221415194709313&type=3>

8) Tomatoes, an Artist in Residence and your help for the Chelsea Fringe (plus a bonus for those who read carefully!) Have you grown a Green Zebra? From the blog: We have been looking at all the weird and wonderful varieties of tomatoes you can grow.

<http://modernmint.co.uk/best-tomatoes-to-sow/>

9) Have you ever eaten an orange banana? What about a green zebra? Try these and more wonderful and weird varieties of tomatoes this year, as recommended by Modern Mint.

<http://modernmint.co.uk/best-tomatoes-to-sow/>

10) Kamil likes to capture all the nutrients in his plot. Some weeds which go to seed, or have a persistent tap root, often get taken off the plot. He throws his in the water butt and fills with water; while they root, he uses the water as liquid feed and, after a few months, he tips it and mulches thinly using the muck. Note the water butts are open top as a tap would clog up and he doesn't use the water/muck on plants he is about to pick.

11) Borage – Why Is It So Good For Bees?

<http://kiwimana.co.nz/borage-good-for-bees/>

12) Some of the spring vegetables in action at Vincent's Eco-Farm..

<https://www.facebook.com/vincentsecofarm/>

13) Here's a good tip for growing plants: put the seeds in an eggshell filled with soil. When the sprouts start to grow, put the entire eggshell in the soil. The eggshell will protect the sprouts and, at the same time, will boost the soil with extra calcium!

<https://www.facebook.com/Greenscapesmalta/?fref=photo>

14) Malta has lost 1,744 palm trees to weevil since 2013.

http://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/64492/malta_lost_1744_palm_trees_to_weevil_since_2013?utm_source=dlvr.it&utm_medium=facebook

15) Palestinians create new seed bank to save their farming heritage in the Holy Land's hills.
<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/apr/23/palestinian-seed-bank-farming-heritage>

16) 'Food for thought' by Tim Lang, Professor of Food Policy at City University, London, and President of Garden Organic
<http://seeog.org.uk/>

With grateful thanks to Simon, Darren, Pat and Kamil

New members

When you join SEEEOG, not a lot will happen in the beginning. If you join on Group Night, you can collect a current newsletter from Carole, our Secretary. Alternatively, you can download a newsletter from SEEEOG's website at <http://seeog.org.uk/resources-information/newsletters/> - our website will also give you lots of useful information. In future, you will receive a newsletter bi-monthly either by email or post. We do not issue receipts or membership cards at present in order to keep down costs.

Norfolk Organic Group

We understand that things went as well as one could wish. Before the meeting, they had managed to procure a new editor and a programme secretary – which were the positions which were causing the problems for them. They had over 40 members at the meeting – not bad for a boring AGM – and four other members volunteered to assist on the Committee. They even managed to attract a non-member onto the Committee (so they signed her up and took her money on the spot). They will be starting events again in May with hopefully a full programme to follow.

Pesticide Action Network UK

Recent reports in the press referring to the current herbicide-free weed control trial in the Cotham area of Bristol have claimed that the “whole city stinks of vinegar” and that some residents are unhappy about this. These reports have completely ignored the significance of this trial and instead tried to undermine the very good intentions behind it, instead resorting to sensationalist reporting of what is a very important issue not only for Bristol but for the UK as a whole.

However, in one respect, the articles are correct: the trial is a farce, and will fail to provide any insight into how to manage weeds without pesticides. You can read the full story at <http://www.pan-uk.org/news/has-bristol-non-herbicide-weed-control-trial-been-designed-to-fail>

Pesticide Action Network North America

A new report by scientists at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) reminds us that we have a lot to learn about the risks of exposure to multiple pesticides at a time. Hmmmm. "Exposure to multiple pesticides at a time" — isn't that what we face in the real world? Yes, it is. Read on.

The researchers, who work with UCLA's Sustainable Technology & Policy Program, looked specifically at exposures to three fumigant pesticides: Telone (or 1,3-dichloropropene), chloropicrin, and metam sodium. Here's what they found:

1. Some California residents are exposed to all three pesticides, either all at once or over a period of time;
2. These pesticides can interact in ways that increase risks to human health; and
3. California's Department of Pesticide Regulation (DPR) is not assessing the risk of cumulative exposure — which it is, in fact, required to do.

You can read the whole story at <http://www.panna.org/blog/report-multiple-pesticides-magnified-harms>

Sign up to receive their action alerts plus the latest news. (Monsanto & Co. wish you wouldn't), all at <http://www.panna.org/>

SEEEOG library

A couple of us spent a good couple of hours last month trying to sort out our cupboard at Growing Together. We took everything out and tidied up the books and raffle prizes. Now it needs a wet Friday morning or afternoon (only Fridays are convenient for them) for us to go back and make sure the books are all labelled up. There's a vast amount of gardening magazines there as well – just take these and enjoy them!

Any book may be borrowed by members at a cost of 20p per book for each 2-month period. We would very much like to hear from anyone who could take out a few of the books from the cupboard and set them out on Group Night – there are some good titles in that cupboard, including a few that Pat kindly gave us on Potato Day and John Walker's 'Digging Deep in the garden', Book 1, which is excellent and just up SEEOG's street!

SEEOG talks

The Leigh on Sea U3A Gardening Group has invited Ron to talk about gardening organically on Friday 27 May from 2-4pm. They meet at West Leigh Baptist Church on London Road, on the corner of Lymington Avenue and opposite Waitrose. The meeting will be in the Glendale Room.

Soil Association news

The Soil Association claimed a victory last month in the campaign to stop glyphosate being sprayed on wheat before it makes its way into British bread. On 13 April, the European Parliament voted in favour of re-authorising the use of glyphosate but has limited this approval to seven years – with a number of significant restrictions. This includes strict limitations on pre-harvest desiccation, which has been the focus of the Soil Association's Not in Our Bread Campaign. You can read the full story at <https://www.soilassociation.org/news/2016/april/13/huge-setback-for-safest-ever-pesticide/>

You can sign up to receive Organic News, and read the news in full, from:
<http://action.soilassociation.org/page/s/organicnews>

South Essex Natural History Society's meetings

Their next Field Meeting is on Saturday 14 May at Belfairs Nature Reserve, meeting at the Warren Road entrance. Meetings start at 10.30 am unless otherwise stated. It is advisable to wear suitable clothing and bring your own snack if required. Members must make themselves aware of health and safety factors. Please don't bring a dog.

For any enquiries regarding meetings, or assistance regarding transport, please contact:
Pat Wortley (chairman) - 01702 588115 – or Roger Payne (Field Meeting Secretary): 01702 301548 or 07891 484 633.
r.payne@blueyonder.co.uk

Southend in Transition Community Plot update

Work in progress – The first community allotment by Southend in Transition – full information and photos at <https://sitcommunityallotment.wordpress.com/> and <http://seeog.org.uk/>

Trust Links

Growing Together Shoeburyness was successful in the Big Lottery Fund People's Projects Competition and wish to thank everybody who voted, shared and promoted voting for the project. The £25,000 will be used to improve and further develop the site by putting in permanent paths which will be suitable for wheelchairs and prams, installing reminiscence features such as a bus stop, post box and scented flowers to help those people living with dementia and building an outdoor play area for pre-school children. The funding will also help the site offer more sessions for local people to make the most of the therapeutic opportunities on offer.

Trust Links' May Fayre, at Growing Together Westcliff, is on Saturday 14 May 2016, 11:00-14:00, to which we have since been invited.
<http://www.trustlinks.org/>

Websites & information

1) The Wildlife Gardening Forum (WLGf) is a group of organisations and individuals who share a passion for the wildlife which enlivens our gardens, and who want more people to understand how important gardens are for wildlife, human health and wellbeing, and for a sustainable future.
http://www.wlgf.org/wlgf_website_005.htm

2) Article by Jeff Barber on the Wildlife Gardening Forum: Natural History Museum, November 2014
<http://online.flipbuilder.com/cwao/wlxr/#p=42>

3) This Unorthodox Gardener Stopped Tilling and Turning:

<http://gardensall.com/ruth-stout-the-innovator-of-deep-mulch-gardening/>

4) This A-Z guide to grassroots Britain will list more than 200 enterprises that will take you all the way from Allotments to Zero waste. You can find out how they work, what makes them tick and even how to set one up in your own hometown.

<https://unbound.co.uk/books/grassroots-directory>

5) The organisations behind No Patents On Seeds are especially concerned about increasing number of patents on plants, seeds and farm animals and their impact on farmers, breeders, innovation and biodiversity. These patents create new dependencies for farmers, breeders, food producers and consumers.

<https://no-patents-on-seeds.org/>

6) Dr Dara Stanley of New Holloway, University of London has been looking at the effects of neonicotinoid pesticides on 'efficiency' of bumblebee pollination of apples.

<http://www.woodlands.co.uk/blog/woodland-economics/poor-pollination-and-pesticides/>

7) An Innovative Farmers field lab has shown that heritage potato varieties are more blight resilient and have good yield, as well as passing a 'taste' test. Given the number of blight resistant potatoes that already exist, Ben Raskin, head of horticulture at the Soil Association, believes there is no need to develop new GM versions. These field labs are a great way to ensure the progression of research into existing products and techniques, which often has little commercial incentive.

<http://www.permaculture.co.uk/news/naturally-blight-resistant-potato-varieties-discovered>

SEEOG Committee

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