



Action on Climate in Teignbridge's Wildlife Warden Scheme's End of First Year Report to funders and supporters October 2020 – October 2021



www.actionclimateteignbridge.org

Our main aim for the first year of this scheme was to provide basic 'introductory training' to at least 50 Wildlife Wardens across Teignbridge. We didn't fully know how the scheme would evolve or how popular it was likely to be, as there were no similar schemes at the time, but we surpassed our aim within the first half a year. In Teignbridge, we certainly don't suffer from a lack of people who are passionate about helping wildlife; the sheer number of people who have expressed interest has been very uplifting!

We would like to say a big thank you to our funders, without whom this would not have been possible. We are funded by the Devon Environment Foundation (who have also provided funding to cover part of the second year of our scheme), the Nineveh Trust, Cllr Jackie Hook (DCC Locality Fund), Dartmoor National Park Authority, the Teignbridge Energy Community's Community Fund and by individual donors.

We would also like to thank everyone who has supported our scheme in other ways; we couldn't do it without you. And of course, a big thank you to all of our brilliant Wildlife Wardens.

Here is an overview of our first year.



- Training
 - There are 81 trained and active Wildlife Wardens across 32 out of the 53 Teignbridge parishes/Newton Abbot Wards. There are also applicants from other parishes who are awaiting training – we'll have another course very soon.
 - We have provided 17 introductory training sessions on Zoom.
 - We have provided 9 species identification training sessions 'in the field'. This includes 7 wildflower ID sessions, 2 aquatic invertebrate ID sessions and 1 bat walk. Thank you, Dave and Sue Smallshire (from ACT's Ecology Group), for leading some of these sessions.
 - We have provided 4 wildflower seed collecting sessions, where Wildlife Wardens also learnt about species identification. A total of 17 Wildlife Wardens attended these sessions meaning that lots of parishes now have a plentiful supply of locally sourced wildflower seed to sow.
 - We have provided 3 'Leading Volunteers' training sessions on Zoom to a total of 17 Wildlife Wardens so that they can safely lead volunteer groups of their own.
 - We have organised a tree and wildflower nursery training session as well as a Fungi Day for Wildlife Wardens. Both events are happening in November 21.

- We invited Wildlife Wardens to a Planning meeting, which covered many aspects of the Planning process. We shared the best ways that we can protect and create wildlife habitats.
 - We have written various training documents that can be found on our website.
 - We have organised 2 Zoom talks for our Wildlife Wardens. The first speaker was Jess Smallcombe from the DBRC who explained how Wildlife Wardens can submit wildlife records. The second talk was given by Cath Jeffs from the RSPB who spoke about the success of their cirl bunting recovery project.
 - We organised three farm walks which were offered to Wildlife Wardens and other groups. The first two walks were at Ambios' Lower Sharpham Farm, where 14 Wildlife Wardens learnt how they are managing their land through rewilding. The third walk was at Deane House Farm in Stokeigntonhead. 5 Wildlife Wardens (plus 12 farmers, 2 people from the NFU, 3 councillors and 3 local people) learnt how the farmer, Peter French, manages his land under environmental stewardship schemes. He has succeeded in increasing numbers of species such as the cirl bunting on his land whilst making a profit from farming!
 - We organised a walk with Chudleigh Wild (who are part of the Wildlife Warden Scheme) so that other Wildlife Wardens could gain inspiration from what they have achieved.
 - We ran a field trip at Audrey Compton's farm for a group of 60 Environmental Science A-level students from Exeter College. One of our Wildlife Wardens teaches the course.
- Resources
 - We have uploaded lots of useful resources to our website which acts as a central hub of information for our Wildlife Wardens <https://www.actionclimateteignbridge.org/>.
 - We created an 'Activity' (group) in iRecord where our Wildlife Wardens can submit wildlife records. 118 records have been submitted, including 95 different species. Many Wildlife Wardens submit records in other ways, so this is only a proportion of the total number of records submitted. We will promote iRecord by organising a practice session for Wildlife Wardens.



- Communication with Wildlife Wardens, councils and the general public
 - We have set up individual ACT email addresses for all Wildlife Wardens who want them. We have also created group email addresses for all parishes and Newton Abbot Wards.
 - There is a Facebook discussion group and an email discussion group (Groups.io) for Wildlife Wardens. We have also discussed the possibility of creating a WhatsApp group.
 - We have contacted all parish and town councils in Teignbridge to introduce the scheme and ask if they could help us by appointing Wildlife Wardens. Recently, we worked with Teignbridge District Council to put together the 'Wild About Teignbridge' event. The main purpose of this event was to help parish and town councils find out more about their legal responsibility for protecting and enhancing biodiversity – and to find out what the DLNP, Teignbridge District Council and Action on

Climate in Teignbridge have been doing to help. It was attended by 9 District Councillors, 15 Parish Councillors, 5 wildlife wardens, 3 Teignbridge District Council Officers, 5 members of Action on Climate on Teignbridge as well as the 4 speakers (which included Audrey).

- We have spoken to members of the public about wildlife and how to help wildlife at 5 different events. We held stands at the Devon County Show (thank you, DLNP, for inviting us), ACT's Great Big Green Week event at Newton Abbot, Sustainable Dawlish's GBGW event, Ogwild's Rectory Field open day and Exminster Environment Group's Autumn Fair. In doing so, we reached hundreds of interested people! Our Wildlife Wardens have also publicised the scheme at their local events.
- Sharing a blueprint of our scheme with groups outside of Teignbridge
 - We have shared information with several groups who are in the process of setting up similar schemes outside of Teignbridge. This includes a group in Mid-Devon, Torrridge District Council, the Wilder Communities Team at the Devon Wildlife Trust, the DLNP's Wild about Devon initiative as well as other individuals from across the county.
- Other work
 - We have responded to 5 major planning applications.
 - We submitted a detailed response to TDC's Local Plan Sites Consultation, including comments on all of the sites listed.
 - With the help of Shaldon Wildlife Wardens, we sent a complaint to the MMO about the dredging of Exmouth Marina and deposition of sludge into Lyme Bay (which has particularly had an impact in Teignmouth).



Here are some of the wonderful projects that our Wildlife Wardens have been involved with over the last year (it may not be a complete list, as it only includes projects that our Wildlife Wardens report back to us on):

- Habitat creation and management
 - At least 16 wildlife sites have been created or are being managed by Wildlife Wardens. This includes small plots of land and larger sites of up to 15 acres in size (some Wildlife Wardens also manage their own private land which isn't included). Wildlife Wardens have organised numerous volunteer work party days to manage these habitats and get local people involved.
 - Wildlife Wardens from across 6 parishes have been involved in tree planting projects.
 - 3 hedgerows have been planted on council-owned land and farmland. There are plans to plant more in the near future.

- At least 7 sites (not including road verges) are being managed by Wildlife Wardens to increase the diversity and abundance of wildflowers.
- Wildlife Wardens from across 4 parishes are managing their road verges for wildflowers or are currently in discussion with their local council about this.
- An orchard is being planted in Ashton and Wildlife Wardens from other parishes have planted fruit trees.
- Wildlife Wardens in Chudleigh designed, created and planted a large wildlife pond in a private garden for free.

- Community engagement
 - Wildlife Wardens from at least 3 separate parishes have given advice to landowners on how to manage their land better for wildlife.
 - Wildlife Wardens from 2 separate parishes have run wildlife gardening schemes and competitions. One of these schemes has involved over 80 households. Many Wildlife Wardens have encouraged wildlife gardening in other ways such as writing articles in parish magazines and giving away free seed.
 - Wildlife Wardens from across 14 parishes have written articles about wildlife for their parish magazines.
 - Wildlife Wardens from across 6 parishes have given away free seeds or have set up 'seed swaps' in their villages/towns.
 - Wildlife Wardens from at least 3 parishes are tackling litter by raising awareness, organising litter picks and/or reporting fly-tipping events.
 - Wildlife Wardens from across 3 parishes have worked on projects to help wildlife on roads. This includes organising toad patrols and putting up signs such as 'ghost hedgehogs' (plaques along road verges to mark the locations of hedgehog casualties) to make motorists think about the consequences of driving fast.
 - Wildlife Wardens from at least 2 parishes have distributed posters with information about wildlife, wildlife gardening and wildlife identification.
 - 1 Wildlife Warden creates a monthly podcast, which has been a great success. Wildlife Wardens from a couple of other parishes have worked on other audio related community engagement projects.
 - Wildlife Wardens from across 8 parishes have engaged with members of the public through events. Some organised their own events whilst others held stands at existing local events. Wildlife Wardens from 3 of these parishes have engaged with local primary schools. For example, 80 primary school children participated in an art competition organised by a Wildlife Warden and each child was given a pack of wildflower seeds to take home. Many other Wildlife Wardens have helped at events organised by ACT.
 - Wildlife Wardens from 2 parishes are working with their local councils to design nature trails.

- Gathering data, and protecting habitats and wildlife
 - Wildlife Wardens from 2 parishes have been involved in writing biodiversity audits for their local councils.
 - At least 10 churchyards and other sites have been surveyed and species records have been submitted.
 - There has been at least 1 successful application for a Tree Protection Order by a Wildlife Warden.
 - Wildlife Wardens from across 3 parishes have worked on projects to help wildlife on roads. One aspect of this involves submitting records of road casualties.
 - Several Wildlife Wardens responded to TDC's Local Plan Consultation. Others have responded to planning applications within their parishes.
 - Wildlife Wardens have responded to numerous government consultations (for example, the recent beaver consultation), and various online public petitions.
 - At least 10 Wildlife Wardens are surveying the water quality of rivers and streams for the Westcountry Rivers Trust.

- Many of our Wildlife Wardens are actively involved in other citizen science schemes. Here is a list of schemes that we promote <https://www.actionclimateteignbridge.org/citizen-science-projects/>
- Working with other groups
 - The Wildlife Wardens are working with many organisations, including the Devon Wildlife Trust, the Devon Biodiversity Records Centre, the Woodland Trust, Natural England, the Westcountry Rivers Trust, Butterfly Conservation, Moor Meadows, Plantlife, Teignbridge District Council, Devon County Council and many others.



What next?

- Our main aim for the second year of this scheme is to have groups of at least 3 Wildlife Wardens in every parish and Newton Abbot ward in Teignbridge. Unsurprisingly, we found that Wildlife Wardens can achieve much more when they work as part of a group.
- We will continue to support other groups who are interested in setting up similar schemes outside of Teignbridge.
- We had to limit publicity while we were starting so that demand for joining and being trained didn't overwhelm us. Now we will look for more publicity – both to fill gaps in our District's Parishes and to spread the idea as widely as possible.
- We will continue to provide a variety of training sessions to meet the needs of our Wildlife Wardens. This will require the knowledge and support of members of ACT's ecology group as well as other local experts (including some of our very knowledgeable Wildlife Wardens).
- Covid permitting, we will try to organise social events so that the Wildlife Wardens can get to know each other better and exchange ideas.
- We will help Wildlife Wardens to find ways of connecting habitats. This will include more training in using online mapping tools and also helping Parishes to coordinate their efforts so that connections don't stop at Parish boundaries!
- Having a Wildlife Warden Coordinator has been very important. There are so many people who want to help and many of them bring wonderful skills to the team – but they also need training and support in order to help wildlife effectively. So, we will continue to look for local funding, particularly through our local Councillors and from our Councils so that we can sustain the Wildlife Warden Coordinator's Post.



[ACTION on Climate in Teignbridge](https://www.actionclimateteignbridge.org)

ACTION on Climate in Teignbridge is a CIC registered in England, number 12278894.

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ACT supports Teignbridge District Council, town and parish councils, community groups and residents to make the district carbon neutral, sustainable, resilient and healthy.