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## *Sustainable Blewbury news*

### *Tropical forests, people and climate change: Talk by Dr. Catherine Long*

**Monday, 26 March in Manor Barn, 8.00 pm**

*Our last talk, about restoring England's threatened chalk streams, was very local for us, but Catherine will be talking about very different problems that affect millions of people in parts of the world most of us have never visited. Knowing about them could help us to help them, so why not find out what is happening in their parts of the world?*



Catherine (who grew up in Blewbury) will talk about her work supporting local communities and indigenous peoples in Africa and Latin America to secure their rights to control and manage forests – and to engage in global debates on climate change and other issues that affect their lives directly. This includes deforestation and its causes, along with some success stories about community and indigenous managed forests, as well as recent information about biofuels and wood pellets that affects the UK directly. *Profits will be donated to the Rainforest Trust.*

**Tickets £6.00 including wine & nibbles, on sale at the Post Office, or on the door (if not sold out).**

### *Sustainable Blewbury AGM*

**Monday, 23 April at Winding Way Cottage, South Street, 8.00 pm**

We will summarise our activities in the past year and elect officers, followed by informal discussion and refreshments. If you are interested in what Sustainable Blewbury does, please join us. Everyone will be very welcome.

### *25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration!*

Blewbury Environment Group was founded in 1993 by Blewbury Village Society. It evolved into SB around 2009, so 2018 is our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary year. We are planning a celebration in September, and by next month we should be able to give you some details of the event.

### *Camera-trap wildlife videos*

Last year we bought two video camera traps for Blewbury Primary School, to record wildlife in and around the village. When they detect motion, they automatically take a short video clip: colour in daylight, black and white at night. We have put links to some of the results on a map of Blewbury. A *trial version* is on our website, at



[www.sustainable-blewbury.org.uk/Mapping.htm](http://www.sustainable-blewbury.org.uk/Mapping.htm). The map currently has videos from three locations. Each star shows one type of animal. Click on a star to see what it shows, and then click on 'More info' to see the video (note that the videos are stored in YouTube).

### Interesting web links

- **Arctic heatwave:** While we were feeling the effects of the cold and snow of the “Beast from the East”, the Arctic has been having another record-breaking warm winter, with temperatures often more like what is normal for May and less winter sea ice than ever recorded – for the second year in a row. Temperatures often fluctuate in the Arctic due to changes in the strength of the polar vortex, the circle of winds, including the jetstream, that deflect warmer air from further south. The polar vortex seems to be weakening, so that heat peaks are becoming more frequent, extreme, and longer-lasting – never more so than this year See for example [bit.ly/2I9wvqI](http://bit.ly/2I9wvqI).
- **Wind power:** Curious to know how much of our electricity is coming from wind, and how wind has performed over the past few days? Have a look at [1010uk.org/winddial](http://1010uk.org/winddial).
- **Climate news:** If you tweet, you may also like 10:10 CLIMATE ACTION’s tweets page, which features constantly changing climate news from all over the world. See [twitter.com/1010](https://twitter.com/1010).



### Wildlife corridors

By John Ogden

We have talked about creating a wildlife corridor in previous articles but what do we mean? What we had in mind particularly was to plant hedgerow trees to fill in gaps where hedges had, in the past, been largely rooted out to increase field size. Hedges provide excellent habitats for birds, animals and insects, and our environment is all the better for them – and modern agricultural science now recognises the benefits of biodiversity for the health and prosperity of farms. Many hedges were rooted out in the middle of the last century in a process sometimes described as prairie farming, and this is very noticeable on the downs above Blewbury.



Sustainable Blewbury identified one area where we felt a new hedge could be created. If you would like to see this, take a walk up Cow Lane or Rubble Pit Lane (the path to the Chalk Pit) until you come to the track along the top of the escarpment that links them. Along this track are the remnants of an old hedge, with just a few thorn trees remaining, and it was our intention to restore this hedge. To that end Hans Meijer, from the village, began discussions with Beeswax Farming who own the land. To our delight Beeswax have taken the initiative and planted the hedge themselves and at their expense! It is very gratifying in many respects, not least because with mechanical assistance they have completed the job in a fraction of the time it would have taken our volunteers!



Beeswax has planted approximately 500 metres of a double row of hedgerow trees – predominantly hawthorn, the classic British agricultural hedge plant, interspersed with hazel, dogwood, holly, buckthorn and some wayfaring tree (a type of viburnum) and spindle (a type of euonymus). Of course, at present all you see are rather insignificant ‘whips’, around 60 – 80cm in height and protected by plastic spirals. But in 5–10 years or so we should be able to enjoy a fine hedge along that section of the downs and a much improved environment for nesting birds, small mammals and pollinating insects. It would be good to carry on with the process and continue hedge planting across to the top of Woodway Road – but that is for another day.

All of this interest started a year ago when we planted a group of trees on land alongside the Chalk Pit. Again, it was Hans who initiated this. He obtained a grant of 100 small trees from the Woodland Trust and organised a group of volunteers to plant them. All seem to have taken, and we can look forward to a small wood in due course.

Trees and hedges are wonderful for wildlife and we would like to pay tribute to Beeswax and to Ed Hall, their farm manager, for their foresight and initiative. And also to Hans, whose enthusiasm and persistence has brought this about. Sadly, Hans is critically ill at present – we hope he makes a full recovery and continues his excellent work.

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***We have a substantial programme of activities in and around the village and we urgently need more volunteers in all areas. Getting involved is fun and can make a very positive contribution to village life and local environment. If you'd like to get involved in what we do, or to receive our free Newsletter, email us at [info@sustainable-blewbury.org.uk](mailto:info@sustainable-blewbury.org.uk) or phone John Ogden at 01235 850372.***