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Forthcoming events and activities

Blewbury Garden Market – Saturday mornings, 9.15 to 11.15, Blewbury filling station

Our 13th year! Every Saturday from 23 April through to late September.

Buy and sell plants, village garden produce, flowers, preserves and baked goods. Bring things to sell between 9.00 am and 9.15. Set your own prices; you get 90% (we keep 10% to cover our expenses).

Baked goods (home-made bread, pastries and cakes) especially welcome! If you have questions, phone Eric at 07935 232 296 or email info@sustainable-blewbury.org.uk.

If you would like to help on our stall (typically once every few weeks) please contact me (Eric) at the above phone number or email address so that I can tell you what's involved – it's fun and not onerous!



Sustainable Blewbury AGM – Thursday 28 April, 8.00 pm, Melland Room, Clubhouse

Come to our AGM to find out what we've been doing recently. Tell us your views on our activities, what we should be doing, and hear about our newest projects: a new nature reserve and our Blewbury chalk-streams group. (Look out for the Chalk Stream Community team at the village Jubilee event on 5 June. Come and say hello, explore stream mini-beasts and race a trout!)

In addition to the essential business of the AGM, which we will try to keep as short as possible, we plan to show an excellent, award-winning *short* film about Watlington's chalk stream, the Chalgrove Brook. Watlington, like Blewbury, is a spring-line village at the foot of a chalk escarpment – in their case the Chiltern Hills. Groups in and near Watlington are working to restore their local chalk stream and its environment.



Next Repair Cafe, 12 June – we plan to have these regularly

Our April Repair Cafe was successful for our experts as well as their ‘customers’. So much so that all the experts have volunteered to return to the Village Hall on 12 June, including **two** knife and tool sharpeners and a professional bike repairer.

Recent events and activities

Village clean-up and litter pick, 12 March

Many thanks to everyone who helped with our village litter-pick! We had an excellent turn-out and collected a huge amount of litter, with the most from the ditch on the east side of Bessels Way. Star finds were £5 and £10 notes, an old camera trap and an old boot (possibly matching one found last year!). Thank you to the Red Lion for offering drinks afterwards and to Biffa and the District Council for providing the equipment and collecting the rubbish.



Village Hall car park clear-up, 20 and 26 March

Working parties trimmed vegetation, bushes and trees around the car park to allow tidier planting and minimise intrusion on parking spaces. Impacted leaves and mud around the edges was cleaned up in the second session.



Repair Cafe, 3 April

The third in our series of waste-reducing repair cafes, for free repairs to a wide range of things including electronic and electrical gadgets, toys and furniture, tool sharpening, clothing and textiles, and mechanical items including bikes, was another success. As expected at this time of year a lot of garden tools needed sharpening. We had an excellent, professional bike repairer and expertise on fixing odd faults on old electronic goods and kitchen gadgets.



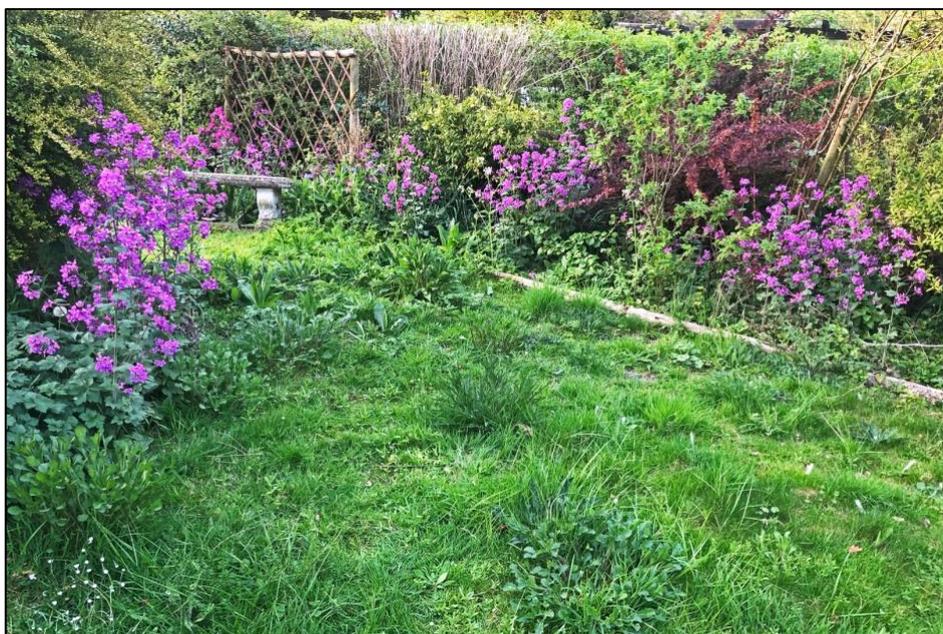
We were pleased that so many people brought us their items for repair on such a cold day. We hope to see more of you at our next Repair Cafe, which we *promise* will be warmer, and we would also like feedback from you – tell us what was good or not so good, and if there is anything else you would like us to attempt to fix for you!

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ARTICLES

Creating a wildflower area in our garden – a diary update by Jo Lakeland

I first published this diary in [Newsletter Number 45](#) (May-June 2021)*, but we started to plan it an entire year earlier, in June 2020. It was never meant to be a wildflower lawn, which is usually an area of annual flowers in a sunny area. If you look at the plan in [Newsletter 45](#), you will see that our wildflower area is surrounded by shrubs and trees, in partial shade, wrapped around the grand children’s swings. And it is largely perennial, planted on chalk.



Our first problem was that the garden had been an orchard, so the grass mixture included a lot of rye grass. Rye grass grows strongly, so could smother the young flower seedlings. The solution was to sow Yellow Rattle, a hemi-parasitic annual that takes some of its nutrients from the grass’s roots. It germinated well and I was pleased to see that its seeds germinated again in 2022. The photo to the left was taken a few days ago. It shows the young Yellow Rattle surrounding a Hoary Plantain, one of the plug plants. Today, they are twice as tall!

Which illustrates another concern – there is a wide range of sizes in the plants. The Rattle grows to 45 cm, but some of the other flowers will be much larger. The Small Scabious in the right-hand photo grows to 30 cm, but the Field Scabious could reach 90 cm. Will the smaller plants be smothered?

Autumn 2021

The photograph in the [2021 July/August Newsletter](#) shows the start of the next phase, when the thick grass was about 40 cm tall and everything has been blown over into a wet mess. In theory I was meant to mow the entire area with a mower set to 9 cm, but the highest setting our mower will do is 7 cm. Having planted 260 plug plants I just could not risk uprooting some of them, so in September I was on my knees with scissors



cutting the grass around every tiny wild flower plant. Was it worth it? Yes it was. I estimate about 25% of the plants survived, and I am looking forward to seeing their flowers.

Spring 2022

The last photograph (below) is a puzzle for you – how many wildflower varieties can you recognise without seeing their flowers? This picture includes Honesty, Ox-Eye Daisy, Teasel, Yarrow, Cow Parsley, Hedge Cranesbill, Yellow Rattle, Ladies' Bedstraw and several more I cannot recognise. I hope the next newsletter will include a photograph of their flowers.



Finally, a warning – do not expect establishing a wildflower area to be labour saving – it was probably the most labour-intensive gardening I have ever attempted!

* Links to *all* Sustainable Blewbury Newsletters are at: sustainable-blewbury.org.uk/newsletters.htm.

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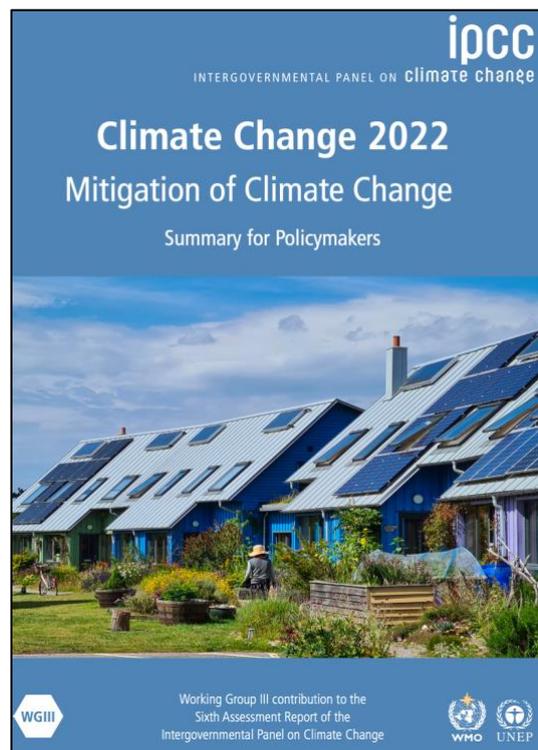
Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) latest report

The latest IPCC report – *Climate Change 2022: Mitigation of Climate Change* (Working Group III contribution to the Sixth Assessment Report) – can be downloaded from: ipcc.ch/report/sixth-assessment-report-working-group-3.

I won't try to summarise this important report, as many others who know a lot more than I do have already written analyses. But the report makes it very clear that we are at a very serious and urgent point in time. However, with the Covid pandemic not yet over and the horrors of the war in Ukraine dominating the news, the situation is not being treated with enough urgency by many politicians as well as the news media.

Recently the IPCC pointed out that although emissions should be halved by 2030, that does **not** mean that they can continue to increase (as they are doing now) until then, which will make the task even more difficult. They must start to drop **now** if there is to be any hope of limiting the temperature rise to 1.5°C.

Despite all the lip service being paid to the need to reach net zero as quickly as possible, the UN Secretary General's



short speech at the launch of the report included the following:

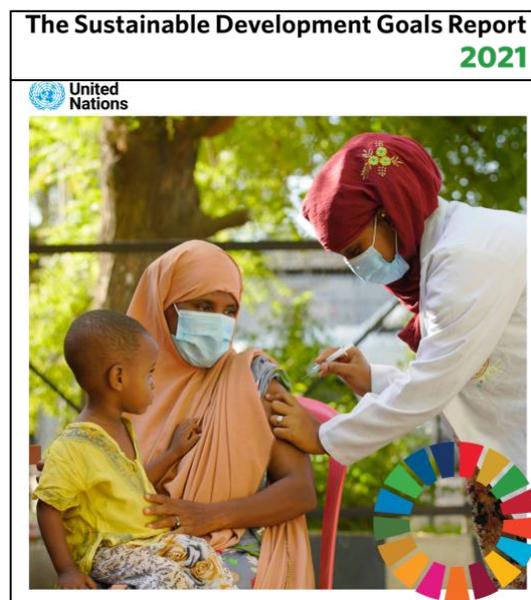
"The latest IPCC report is a litany of broken climate promises. Some government and business leaders are saying one thing but doing another. They are lying. It is time to stop burning our planet."

What follows are comments (threadreaderapp.com/thread/1511009927640371200) on the IPCC report. They are by lead author **Prof. Sarah Lynn Burch**, of Waterloo University, Canada. Many people have found them useful.

1. For the first time we're seeing evidence of real, sustained decreases in greenhouse gas emissions from some countries. But take a breath because ...
2. Average annual greenhouse gas emissions over the last 10 years were *the highest in human history*. We are not on track to limit warming to less than 1.5 degrees C.
3. Put another way, without rapid, deep emissions cuts across *all* sectors and regions, 1.5 degrees C is out of reach. Do we know what we need to do to make those cuts? Absolutely yes.
4. Options now exist across *all* sectors and regions that can cut our emissions by at least half by 2030 (which is what is needed to avoid the worst impacts of climate change).
5. Here's a kicker: we can't reach our broader sustainable development goals (vibrant nature, clean water, no poverty, healthy communities, etc) if we don't address climate change, they just won't work. For more about these goals, the UN's 2021 report on Sustainable Development goals can be downloaded from tinyurl.com/4ykm9774.
6. Justice is central to accelerated transitions. It leads to deeper ambition, stronger partnerships. A low-carbon economy can create more jobs *that last*.
7. There are very promising signals on renewables. Costs of solar, wind and lithium-ion batteries have come down by up to 85% over the last 10 years. This is key because reducing emissions requires electrification of transport (fast), industrial processes, buildings, etc.
8. Coal has to go. Coal without carbon capture and storage has to go down by 76% by 2030. That's ... really fast. We would also need to *prematurely* – i.e. before the end of their designed lifespan – shut down oil and gas infrastructure by 2050 (read ... stop building new stuff!).
9. Flow of finance is currently dramatically insufficient. It needs to go up by 300–600% to spur the scale of action needed. But there's enough global capital and liquidity to close this gap.
10. Individual choice *alone* makes only modest contributions to greenhouse-gas reductions. Building codes, urban planning, vehicle efficiency standards, carbon pricing, low-carbon infrastructure *make it easier* for individuals to make better choices.
11. I have more to say but I'll pause for a moment and just say the next few years are absolutely critical. We're not on track to 1.5 degrees but we also already have the tools we need create healthy, just, resilient, low-carbon communities.

Prof. Burch followed up with brief sector-by-sector comments shortly afterwards (at: threadreaderapp.com/thread/1511393209619992577).

Transport accounts for **15% of global greenhouse emissions** [partly from farming, from industry and other sources – note that there is overlap with what follows]. Cars and mass transit need to be electrified with clean energy. Biofuels and hydrogen are needed for aviation and shipping. Active transport is key, and for that we need compact, complete communities.



Industry produces **24% of global emissions** and decarbonizing this one is *tricky*. Net zero would require **new** production processes, hydrogen, and likely carbon capture and storage. For steel and some other basic materials we have low/zero-greenhouse gas processes near commercial stage. Yay!

Agriculture, forestry and land use produce **22% of emissions**. This one is so exciting because soils can become a *much* bigger carbon sink. A move toward plant-based diets where possible, reducing food waste and restoring ecosystems will be huge.

Buildings require action *this decade*. And that means a massive, accelerating retrofit of existing buildings not just sexy new zero-carbon buildings. No more gas or oil for heat, more insulation, etc. We now have examples of low or zero carbon buildings in **all** climates.

Cities ... ahhh cities are where so much comes together. They're responsible for around **70% of greenhouse gases**. Need to: co-locate jobs and housing, support walking/cycling, weave nature throughout. Heaps of cities are setting net zero targets.

Ah yes, the **energy sector**. Responsible for **34% of emissions** - a *major* transition is needed. Keeping to 1.5-degree target means eliminating most fossil fuels. Carbon capture and storage for the rest. Majority of oil and gas reserves are "*unextractable*" in a 1.5 degree C or 2 degree C world.

Turns out that climate change is largely a political and social problem, not simply/only a technical one.

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'Historic': global climate plans can now keep heating below 2°C, study shows

A somewhat more optimistic view (tinyurl.com/2p93k6an) has recently appeared. Recall that the original Paris climate-change agreement of 2015 aimed to limit global heating to 2°C and that 1.5°C was an aspiration, although since then the IPCC has pointed out that 2°C would be significantly worse than 1.5°C. A recent paper in Nature (www.nature.com/articles/s41586-022-04553-z) points out that if all the national pledges made so far are actually implemented, the temperature rise might be less than 2.0°C. **But note the scientists' warning that the goal of limiting global heating to 1.5°C or 2°C will fail without immediate action** (bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-61110406).

The two preceding items were assembled by Eric Eisenhandler

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The Sustainable Blewbury newsletter is produced and edited by Jo Lakeland and Eric Eisenhandler.

Opinions expressed are our own.

We would be delighted to include more articles written by YOU in this newsletter.

We have a wide-ranging and *expanding* programme of activities in and around the village.

Participating is fun and can make positive contributions to village life and to our local environment as well as assisting in the fight against global climate change.

If you'd like to get involved, or to receive this free Newsletter, email us at

info@sustainable-blewbury.org.uk or phone John at 01235 850372.