



# Link to Nature



# PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

Client management	Horticultural management	Logistical centre	Recycling Of plastic pots	Overflow of plants
				
Link Offices and private homes	Private homes & Town Hall	Ormond Road Allotments and Store Building	Jealotts Hill Pot Shed Town Market and Building	Norreys Church
Number of volunteers: <b>27</b>	Number of volunteers: <b>30</b>	Number of volunteers: <b>2 (main) + 4 (PT)</b>	Number of volunteers: <b>2</b>	Number of volunteers: <b>4</b>
Total number of hours per annum (10 months) <b>Approx. 1,700 hours</b>				

# DIVISION OF ACTIVITIES

## Link Visiting Scheme

- Contacting befriending friends and their volunteers
- Communicate pick up dates
- Collecting feedback and enquires about planting or looking after plants
- Running social media on Facebook
- Applying to grants to extend the project further

## Wokingham in Bloom

- Seed Packet Creation
- Sourcing compost and vermiculite
- Sourcing recycled pots
- Sourcing, potting up and growing plants
- Transporting finished "products" from volunteers homes to WHA "Store"
- Transport leftover to Share Wokingham

## Wokingham Horticultural Association

- Providing the space in their Trading Store for potting up events
- Help sourcing seeds, and collect unwanted seeds from WHA members for 2022
- Running "foster a plant" scheme for us
- Help potting up when our Bloom volunteers are not able to attend
- Help with horticultural advice
- Providing a "pick up" point for Link Visiting Scheme volunteers

## Share Wokingham

- Providing a storage and outlet to distribute seed packets and plants for local families
- Keep contact with families in need
- Providing Wokingham in Bloom a "pick up" spot for schools

# DRUMMING UP SUPPORT

WOKINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL  
& WOKINGHAM IN BLOOM

## RECYCLE YOUR PLANT POTS

Help us to achieve our sustainability goals

Every positive action  
makes a huge difference!

YOUR POTS WILL BE REUSED TO BRING  
HAPPINESS TO ELDERLY PEOPLE



IN HONOUR OF SIR TOM MOORE

# SEED GIVEAWAY



Help us planting sunflowers across the town as an act of remembrance and to honour his role in raising spirits and funds for the NHS.


**You can pick up your FREE packet today!**

We'd love to see photos as they bloom and grow – send to [marketandbloom@wokingham-tc.gov.uk](mailto:marketandbloom@wokingham-tc.gov.uk) 😊


**GIFT YOUR  
UNWANTED SEEDS**



**FOSTER  
TWO PLUG PLANTS**



**TO FEED THE BEES**



**AND LINK PEOPLE TO  
NATURE**



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



**ASK SHEILA OR PAULINE  
FOR DETAILS**

# END OF YEAR SUMMARY 2021

Total number of clients involved in project:

**30\*** (4 additional clients have signed up ready to start 2022 programme, with more to be added during January)

Total number of volunteers supporting project: **27**

Number of different plants and seed sets offered out to clients and volunteers in 2021: **13**

Total number of plants and seed sets distributed to clients and volunteers in 2021: **3,500 + (including Share in Wokingham and Schools)**

The project focused on **pollinator friendly plants**, such as Nasturtiums, courgettes, lavenders, beans, tomatoes, strawberries and herbs: thyme, mint, oregano and rosemary. In addition everyone received a bulb package, including crocuses, different alliums and Denby daffodils and tulips.

We held a Christmas wreath decorating workshop in November, which was attended by 13 Link Friends and 10 volunteers.



\* A further 4 clients were involved in the project but have since passed away or were unable to continue due to ill health

# ASPECTS OF THE LINK TO NATURE PROJECT THAT OUR CLIENTS PARTICULARLY ENJOYED

Having my own fresh green beans, tomatoes, lettuce & herbs

I was very surprised and pleased to receive plants from you. The strawberries were very tasty.

I enjoy working in my garden now and watching the bee, & butterflies among the flowers. It has made things worth while

Am grateful for all the time and effort taken on my behalf, especially the "Sunflower Quest"! My garden is my lifeline so am doubly appreciative!

Introducing plants to me which I would not normally grow

It was exciting to see plants and flowers developing, even though not always successful

In those difficult times it is such a pleasure to watch together with my volunteer, the seeds grow into plants and nurture them

Everything

I have loved planting & watching the plants grow which I wouldn't have done before.

It has improved my view of fresh air in my garden as I cannot walk without aid.

I have shared the history of the plants. I have looked forward to each installment and I have enjoyed a very small competition with my visitor Louise.

# DIRECT FEEDBACK ON HOW THE LINK TO NATURE PROJECT CAN BE IMPROVED

- Group meeting with a speaker from an estates garden (such as Saville gardens)
- Outing to a garden Centre or garden with other friends & volunteers
- There are often "share plants" - so possibly we could help by "spreading the load"?
- Partner with local garden centre for discounted items / café vouchers
- Provide a calendar for the year of what items will be available and when, with more flexibility for collection.
- A bit more advice on aftercare for the plants as we struggled to know what to do after they sprouted.
- Providing Link friends who are less mobile with raised planters (perhaps in collaboration with 'Men in Sheds' or other organization).
- Consider reducing the number of plants to grow as some Link friends found the volume overwhelming.

# FEEDBACK AND PLANS FOR 2022

## What volunteers have enjoyed and how the project benefitted their Link Friend:

- “[My Link Friend was] **mentally more cheerful** / started going into garden”.
- “Just to **watch the plants grow** and being able to compare notes with my Link friend”
- [My Link Friend] “**developed an understanding and interest in plants**, led her to check and ‘care’ for something and **took her away from the television**”.
- “It certainly helped to **improve my friend’s mental health** and gave her a renewed interest in her garden which had become completely overgrown with weeds during Covid”.

## Programme for 2022:

- Based on feedback received from the survey sent out to clients and volunteers in August, we will be:
  - **Reducing the frequency of plants** and seeds being offered out to every other month (rather than monthly)
  - **Including talks** and outings during the year
  - **Improving communication** to clients and volunteers to let them know the monthly activities further in advance
  - **Making use of a dedicated flower bed at a community garden in Wokingham** so that we can extend the project to clients without their own growing space

# PLANNER FOR 2022

	Agreed activity	Cross working through other Bloom groups
<b>January</b>	RSPB Big Garden Bird Watch – pack sent to each client who wishes to take part	
<b>February</b>	Bird Talk – informative lecture from Mike Saynor and Dr Alan Brompton about birds feeding, nesting and what to know about our lovely birds in Wokingham.	Holt Copse Conservation Volunteers
<b>March</b>	Sunflower growing competition and hellebores (to feed the early bees)	WHA + HPG
<b>April</b>	Talk about beekeeping from local keeper  Kits (used mugs filled with bamboo canes) for bee hotel to be offered out (for leaf-cutter bees) Plus: sapling for Link friends to foster	WHA  Local Beekeeping Association
<b>May</b>	Strawberries and Tomatoes	Cockpit Path Community Garden
<b>June</b>	Visit to Farley Hill Place Gardens	
<b>July</b>	Lavender and Dwarf French Beans	WHA + CPCG
<b>August</b>	Henry Street outing (or other garden centre)	
<b>Sept</b>	Bulbs and Cyclamen	Langborough WG
<b>October</b>	Talk from Carolyn Jenkins (TBC) at Reading Borough Council about rewilding projects in the area – packs of wildflower ‘bombs’ to be offered out.	
<b>Nov</b>	Christmas-themed craft activity – possibly a table decoration	WHA
<b>Dec</b>	Christmas party (Covid-dependent)	