



EXMINSTER NATURE RECOVERY PROJECT

Seventh Progress Report – June 2024



This project was developed under the umbrella of Exminster Parish Council's Environment Working Party and initially presented to the Council in April 2022. This is the latest summary of progress and activity. My thanks go to all those who have helped support and deliver aspects of the project to date.

More background and previous progress reports are hosted on the Parish Council's Biodiversity page found here;

[EPC-Biodiversity](#)

The Vision

Exminster working together to enable nature and wildlife to thrive. A village recognised as valuing biodiversity and an exemplary part in a wider nature recovery network.

Theme 1 – Building on existing voluntary action.

The Exminster Greenspaces volunteers started the year marking the tenth anniversary of the group being founded. Highlights of activity over the last 6 months include;

- Taking delivery of two fine hedgehog houses , built by our friends at NHS New Leaf – for the orchard and churchyard.
- In February Jerry Horn from 'Action for swifts' installed two swift boxes in the tower of St Martins Church and set up a sonic lure to ply over the spring arrival period.
- Two new trees were added to the garden of the Royal Oak, including a donated crab apple.
- A demonstration wildflower bed was created by the Deepway Community Centre.





- It was important too to keep on top of maintenance especially of the community orchard and our mini tree nursery area.

Theme 2 – Community Engagement.

The Exminster Greenspaces Facebook group provides a regular flow of topical Greenspace and nature themed posts. We have continued to build a following with 629 at the last count. [Facebook](#)

The Wildlife Gardening WhatsApp group continues to share tips, sightings and inspiration. This ties in with the Devon Wildlife Trust Wildlife Garden Award [Wildlife Garden Award | Devon Wildlife Trust](#) which we championed last year.



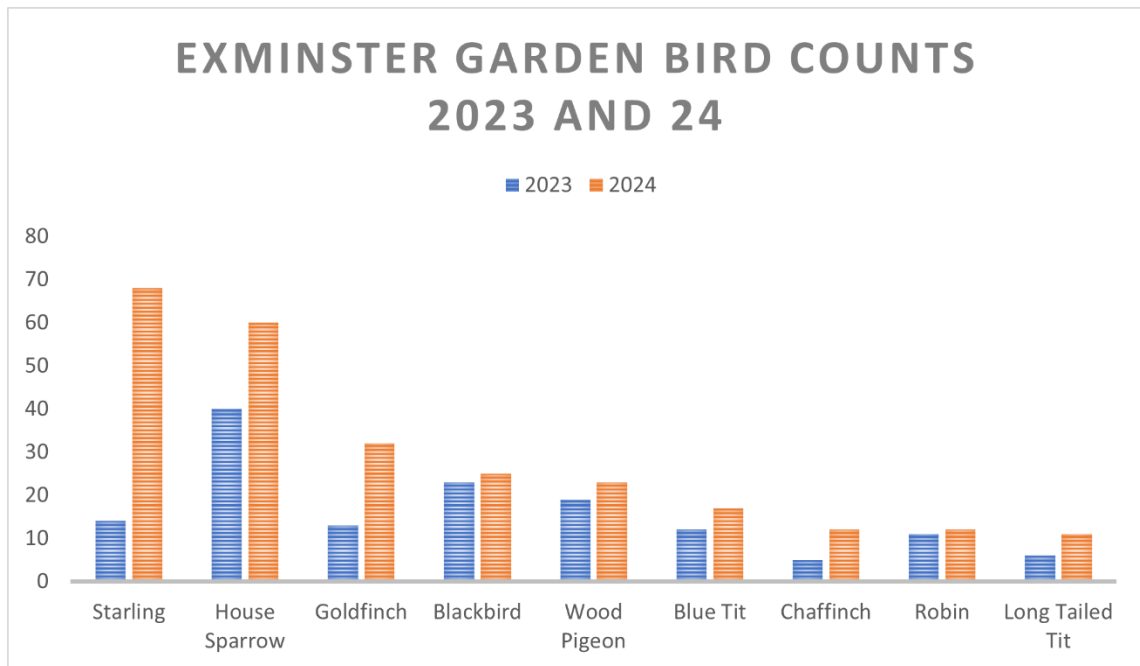


In January our third village Wassail was a great success, with dancing, procession to the orchard, singing and mulled cider. We attracted another big crowd and were able to highlight the benefits to nature from managing our organic orchard . The local cubs and WI chipped in to help out.

The Nature Recovery Project was the headline featured item at the Parish Annual General Meeting in March – as well as the presentation , we handed out 50 packs of free wildflower seeds for people to take away – prepared by some little helpers. We have also made time to set up at other community coffee morning and lunch time events- setting up stall to display tree saplings , wildflowers and be there to chat about our projects.



Promoting citizen science is seen as part of the objecting of building engagement. Early in the year we promoted the RSPB Big Garden Bird Count – collated returns for Exminster and published the summary, comparing returns to those from 2023.



In June , linked to the national event 'Churches Count on Nature' we held a very successful bat detection evening, based primarily in the churchyard with the help of DWT and the Bat Conservation Trust. The pips and noctule bats were on good form. Readings will be fed into the National Bat monitoring records.

Theme 3 – Partnership Working



Exminster Greenspaces continues to be an active member of the ACT Wildlife Warden Network across Teignbridge . A day long celebration event was organised in Dawlish this spring with a crowd of locally based Wildlife Wardens sharing experience and inspiration.



Earlier in February , we took part in the Devon Local Nature Partnership community forum in Okehampton – looking ahead to our participation in the creation of the local nature recovery strategy.

Beyond the core village further discussions have developed on the enhancement of a 'Green Wildlife Corridor' between the Matford Development, through the Ridgetop Country Park and down to Exminster – working with Matford Brook Academy, the developers of the Matford Community Centre – ISG Ltd, the Greenspaces team of Teignbridge District Council and NHS New Leaf. Following an initial 'walk the route' session, we could see a number of areas where the habitat connections might be strengthened over time – possibly enabling an expansion of dormouse ranges From known habitats in the Ridgetop park) and improved connectivity for bats and other species.



Matford- Ridgetop – Deepway – Exminster Green corridor

Snapshot of partner and supporting organisations

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exminster Parish Council• Devon Wildlife Trust• RSPB• Teign Housing• Exminster Community Primary School• St Martins Church• Westbank Community Health and Care• Riviera Tree and Garden• St Martins FC	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teignbridge District Council• ACT Wildlife Warden Network• Brook Academy – Matford• Exeter Pre Prep School• Devon LNP• Devon Bat Group• Exe Valley Lamb• Exminster Cubs• NHS New Leaf• Pottles Court• The Manor
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Future work

- Engaging with the development of the **Devon Local Nature Recovery Strategy** and Nature Recovery Network.
- Building Exminster **biodiversity records** – including promotion and analysis of butterfly count returns and Matford Academy churchyard survey (July)
- Exploration of plans for a centrally based **Community Kitchen Garden** – currently developing a project proposal.
- Roll out of summer 2024 nature themed **photography competition**
- Refresh of Greenspaces Trail and map – draw on parallels with Chudleigh Nature Trail.
- Autumn/winter 24/25 **tree and bulb** planting.

We are always open to new suggestions, ideas and offers of help - just get in touch via any of the contact points below.

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Exminster Environment Working Group and Greenspaces Volunteer team.

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