



# EXMINSTER NATURE RECOVERY PROJECT

**Eighth Progress Report – December 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 have continued with over 25 working parties and events since July – seeking to enhance the village for both people and nature. The teams work has included;



- On going management and enhancement of the village orchard, including summer path cuts, hedge trimming, mulching and pruning. We added a fabulous bug post crafted by the team at NHS New Leaf.
- Work in St Martins churchyard included maintaining a balance between untrimmed wildflower areas and managing



vegetation around the graves. Checking and clearing the churchyard nestboxes, both of which had been occupied this year.

- The small wildflower bed introduced by the Deepway Community Centre was a riot of colour by early July. We plan to extend this in 2025 and have another couple of potential sites.
- New trees have been planted this autumn including a birch in the churchyard, two trees in the hedge at the Bowling Green and a donated oak sapling in the meadow. Also down in the meadow we planted a small extension of the central hedgerow, drawing on hazel saplings grown in the Greenspaces mini tree nursery.
- We've added some daff bulbs along Reddaway Drive and at the foot of Exminster Hill – a number donated by a supporting neighbour.
- In the Wilderness a team enthusiastically cut back some invasive bamboo and we were able to pass some of this to the New Leaf team to use in their bug hotels.

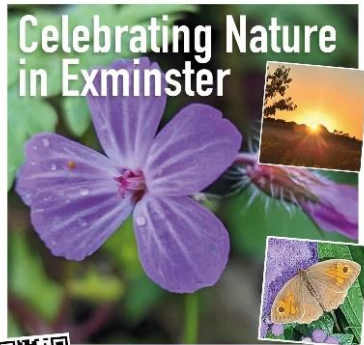


## Theme 2 – Community Engagement.

The Exminster Greenspaces Facebook group provides a regular flow of topical Greenspace and nature themed posts. We have continued to build a following with 659 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 continue to champion.





**The Exminster Green Spaces  
2024 PHOTO COMPETITION**

**EXMINSTER  
GREEN  
SPACES**

Classes for:

- A view of your favourite village green space
- A close up - flower, mini-beast or bird
- Any subject taken by under 16s

Prizes for winners. Closing date 22 September 2024.  
See 'Exminster Green Spaces' Facebook page for competition rules.

For the first time we ran a nature themed **photo competition** with prizes from kind sponsors. We had some lovely entries with the three category winners included below.

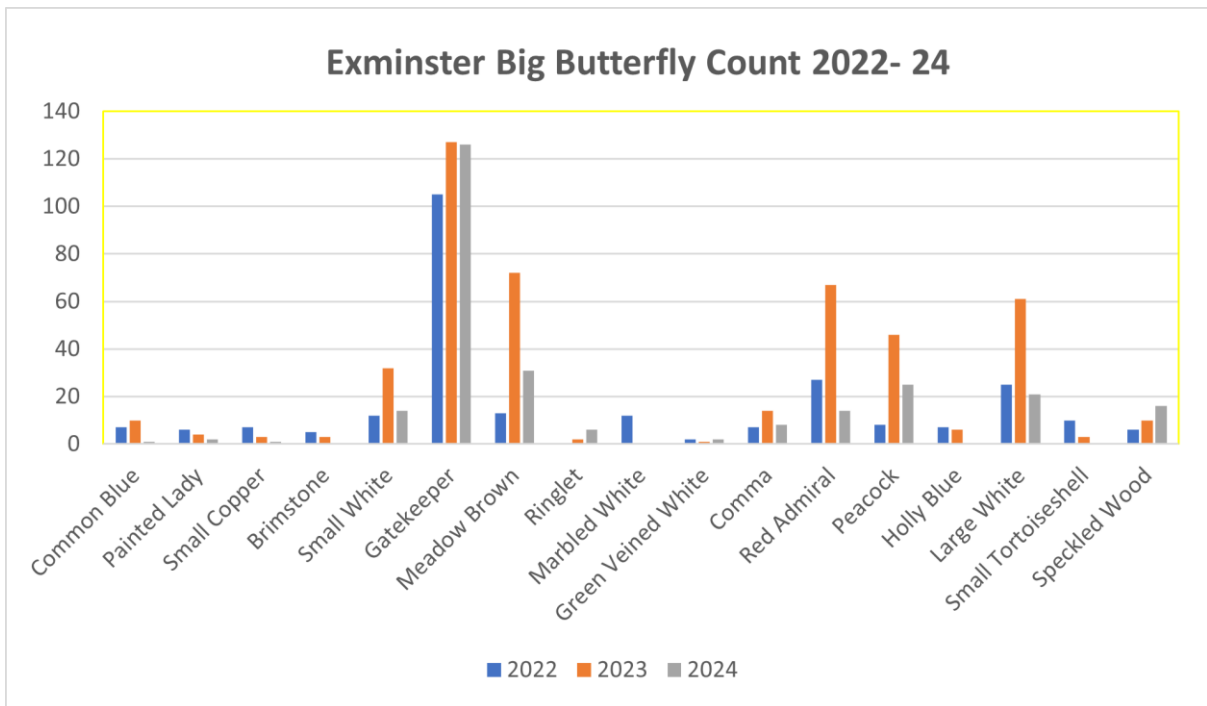


There have been a number of opportunities to attend community and group events this year to help build awareness and promote the work of Exminster Greenspaces and the wider nature recovery agenda. These included the **'Love Exminster'** event on Deepway Green in July where as well as handing out free tree saplings and sunflower seedlings, we had materials on hand to build simple insect water stations and bee hotels.

A small grant from the Devon Local Nature Partnership supported the purchase of a group feather banner in the summer which we can use at future events and working parties to help build awareness and profile of the volunteer team.



Over the summer bringing citizen science into play again (similar to the garden bird count in Jan), we collated local entries as part of the Big Butterfly Count. We now have three years data. This summer as suspected the numbers reflected a significant drop in butterflies compared with the previous year, possibly down to the wet Spring and early summer. Interestingly, numbers of the small gatekeeper butterflies held up and seemed in good numbers in sites like the village orchard.



## Themes 3 and 4 – Partnership Working and Exminster in the wider Landscape



Exminster Greenspaces continues to be an active member of the growing ACT Wildlife Warden Network across Teignbridge .

Opportunities to tap into the network's expertise have included attending a training session with a focus on running events for children and a farm walk to explore the topic of tree seeds and propagation.

November saw an inspiring gathering of community groups and nature focussed groups in Ivybridge to explore opportunities for further networking and to hear about the latest news on the development of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy. This was hosted by the Devon LNP as part of the 'Wild About Devon' initiative.



We hope to maintain a developing relationship with the Brook Academy in the new Matford development and the incoming residents as more of the new build properties are occupied. A group from the Matford Brook Academy came along to St Martins churchyard in early July when Greenspaces volunteers and Kelvin Boot a local ecologist helped the children explore the biodiversity to be found in this special place.

It was exciting to see and offer some advice to a new community group take shape in our neighbouring parish of Kenton – with the Kenton Nature and Greenspaces group. Hopefully some of our experience has been helpful as they take their first steps in supporting wildlife in Kenton.



## Snapshot of partner and supporting organisations

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

- Engaging with the development of the **Devon Local Nature Recovery Strategy** and Nature Recovery Network
- Launch of the Exminster **Community Kitchen Garden** – work on site to get underway in January –
- Expansion and establishment of new **wildflower beds**.
- **Fourth Village Wassail** - January 2025.
- **Greenspaces project planning for 2025** including new tree planting options.
- **Promoting Citizen Science events**

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.**

**December 2024**