

BS13 Green Space Audit

February 2022



Background

The 'postcode wildlife groups' aims to develop community-led wildlife groups across the city, with the hope that all fourteen Bristol postal districts' will eventually have an active and functioning wildlife group. We're hoping to achieve this aim by the end of 2022!

Collectively these groups aim to inspire and empower the community to become green space custodians by:

- Improving habitats,
- Monitoring wildlife, and
- Spreading the word by raising aware of our wildlife at a neighbourhood level!

One of the objectives for each wildlife group is to create a green space audit of their area. This audit not only showcases some of our wonderful wildlife, green spaces and community groups, but also shows the potential wildlife networks across the city. They also help identify areas of significant ecological value and highlight some important work being done by members of the community.

BS13 Summary

Situated in South Bristol, BS13 is fortunate enough to have a number of green spaces, including parks, nature reserves, allotments, meadows and fields. A large portion of BS13 is situated on Buglife's B-Lines, which is a biodiversity network (think of it as an insect or wildlife transport network that spans across the country). This highlights the potential of BS13 being an important wildlife corridor, not only within the city, but also across the country.

So far the BS13 Wildlife group has had an emphasis on engaging the community to share and record their wildlife sightings, and to be involved and empowered to conducting a range of different wildlife surveys, including otter surveys, bat walks and a harvest mouse nest search.

Wildlife Plans for the Group

BS13 Hedgehog Project

A new project we're hoping to get going this year! We've set up a webpage and facebook page (www.facebook.com/BS13.hedgehog.project/) to get started, but we'd really love to have someone to help with any social media/ online activities. If online activities aren't your thing, but you still want to get involved we'd love to have your help to get the project off the ground. Email Keith at kmway840@hotmail.com or me at kellyjsheldrick@gmail.com to find out more.



Malago River Alliance

There is a plan to set up an alliance for the Malago River and Pigeonhouse Stream with a common goal of improving the river way both as a human travel route and for wildlife. Both watercourses flow through BS13, BS3 and BS4, and

travel through several friends of and community groups. The plan is to set up an alliance with these groups, however additional support will be needed from the community to cover those sections of the stream/ river that don't have a specific friends of or community group. We also plan to organise a Malago River Walk in May. To get involved please contact Ben Barker at MyWildBedminster@virginmedia.com.

BS13 Front Garden Comp

For the first time this year there will be a front garden competition across BS13 – with the aim to engage the community to help pollinators across the area by planting pollinator friendly plants in gardens, fields and/or window boxes! The whole community have the chance to get involved and do their part for wildlife! Find out more by contacting Catherine at withersc48@gmail.com

Bat Walks

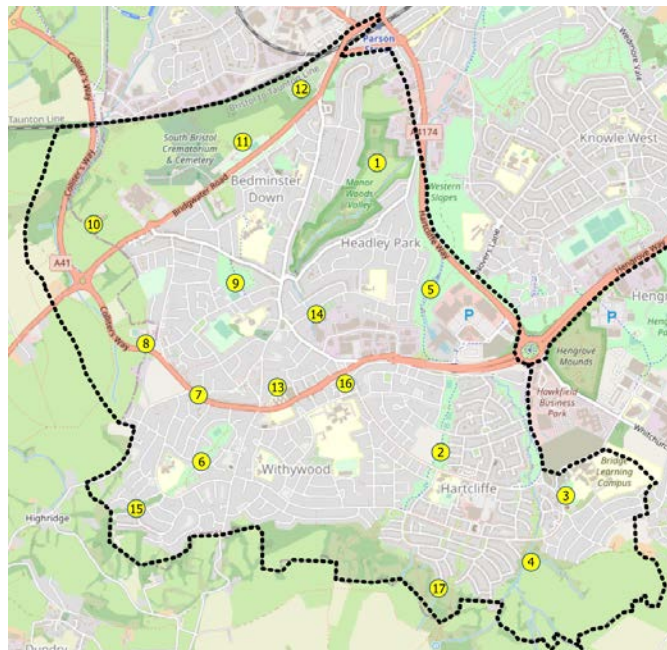
I've had lots of requests for bat walks, which is fab, but I'm only one person – so I'd love some help! If you or your group would like to learn how to lead a bat walk, then I'd love to hear from you. I can't promise it will happen this year, but we can definitely try and set something up. We (BS3 Wildlife) have 4 (heterodyne) bat detectors we can borrow for bat walks in South Bristol – and I'll likely treat the training walks as fundraisers so we can get a few more.

Acknowledgements

Just like many amazing things in life, this report wouldn't have been possible without the contributions and assistance of some fantastic people in the BS13 community and further afield! The most rewarding part of preparing this audit was meeting some inspiring people in the community that are doing some amazing things. I thank you all for your contributions and for being fabulous custodians for our local wildlife! If you'd like to contribute to future BS13 green space audits, please get in touch at kellyjsheldrick@gmail.com or via the facebook page: www.facebook.com/groups/bs13wildlife

BS13 Green Spaces Key

1. Manor Woods Valley Nature Reserve
2. Wilmott Park
3. Hartcliffe Millennium Green
4. Maceys (Pigeonhouse Stream Open Space)
5. Crox Bottom
6. Withywood Park
7. Highridge Common
8. New Highridge Common
9. King's Head Lane Park/ Open Space
10. Yew Tree Farm
11. Bedminster Down E Site Allotment
12. Bedminster Down C Site Allotment
13. Step Together Allotment/ Goulston Rd Allotments
14. Headley Lane/ Bishopsworth Allotment Site
15. The Ridings Open Space & The Coppice
16. Heart of BS13
17. Dundry Slopes



Map produced by Glenn Taylor

Manor Woods Valley Local Nature Reserve [1]

Manor Woods is part of the Malago wildlife corridor which, as well as the Local Nature Reserve, includes Manor Woods Orchard and the old quarries. It contains ancient standard and coppice woodland, post-war woodlands, a woodland planted in 2021, large and small wildflower meadows, open parkland, an orchard and the middle stretch of the Malago.



The woodland contains a range of fungi, lichens, ground flora, shrubs and tree species with associated woodland fauna. The wildflower meadows contain a range of important and interesting plants such as three species of orchid, many vetches, Pale Flax and Corky-fruited Water Dropwort. The meadows abound with grasshoppers, butterflies and has a significant population of Slow-worms.



The orchard contains mature apple and pear trees, all from seedlings and thus not true varieties, although the planting of named fruit varieties started in 2019 and continues into 2022. Apples are harvested and a proportion of their juice is donated to a local food bank.

The middle stretch of the Malago is home to a variety of aquatic invertebrates, including beautiful Demoiselles and Common Darter dragonflies. There is a healthy population of Three-Spined Sticklebacks, with Bullheads and European Eels, which sustain Kingfishers, Grey Herons and Little Egrets. Moorhens and Mallards breed, and usually a number of Teal overwinter.



Flora and fauna are being actively and systematically surveyed whilst butterflies and Slow-worms are regularly monitored. All species records are submitted to the Bristol Regional Environmental Records Centre (BRERC) and reports are published on our website.



Making this space even more wildlife-friendly is the raison d'être of the Manor Woods Valley Group. Regular volunteer working parties carry out activities such as coppicing; scrub clearance; non-native plant species' surveys and eradication activities; meadow cutting and seeding; tree planting and path maintenance. With the possible exception of the amenity grassland, all areas are valuable for wildlife. Apart from the amenity grassland, amenity trees and dense scrub, all areas are being actively managed for the benefit of wildlife but can be improved upon to a greater or lesser extent.

- Peter Loy-Hancocks, Friends of Manor Woods Valley Group Vice Chair & Ecologist (photos & text)

The Manor Woods Valley Group can be contacted via:

Email: manorwoodsvalley@gmail.com

Web: <https://manorwoodsvalley.org>

Facebook: Manor Woods Valley Group

Ali Siddorn also sent in some stunning photos of Manor Woods Valley and I've included a couple below.



Wilmott Park [2]

No information provided.

Hartcliffe Millennium Green [3]

Hartcliffe Millennium Green a local park with a play area, orchard and natural habitats. There is a Friends of Hartcliffe Millennium Green, which also run the BS13 Pride of Place monthly meeting. The group try to support the biodiversity in the park.

- Jan, Friends of Hartcliffe Millennium Green

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1847801935383710>

Maceys/Pigeonhouse Stream Open Space [4]

Macey's Lane (small piece of land at the lower part of Dundry Hill) - we try to keep the path from Macey Rd to Bishport Avenue open for school children to go to school. To the right of the path are the nesting sites for many birds in the area.

- Jan, Friends of Hartcliffe Millennium Green

Crox Bottom [5]

Crox Bottom is a steep sided wooded valley, made up mostly of willow, sycamore and ash. Central to the valley is the Pigeonhouse Stream, which flows out from the lake at the Lakeshore development and north to the Hartcliffe Way, where it makes its way down into the Interceptor. A public footpath follows the water, with a couple of benches for sitting, and also crosses behind the woodland beside the grassland area on the eastern edge. It is an area used well by the public, with bikes and pedestrians, dog walkers and young people all using the site.

There is a wealth of wildlife at Crox Bottom. Butterfly species include Brimstone, Peacock, Red Admiral, Small Tortoiseshell, Large White, Speckled Wood, Comma, Gatehouse and Meadow Brown. These are prevalent along the areas of grass left to grow long along the Eastern border and the southern entrance from Durville Road. Dragonflies such as Common darter and Southern Hawker frequent the pond area. Bird species sighted there include Grey heron, Mallards, Moorhens, Little Egret, Kingfisher, Grey Wagtails,

Blackcap (resident over the winter), Blue, Great, Coal and Long Tailed Tit, Bullfinch, Goldfinch, Greenfinch, Goldcrest, Redwings (during winter months), Song Thrush, Robin, Blackbird, Jay, Raven, Buzzard, Kestrel, Sparrowhawk, and Greater Spotted Woodpeckers. Mammal species include hedgehogs, brown rats, foxes, grey squirrels, and otter.

We have conducted several litter picks in the area to improve the general appearance and make it safer for wildlife and people. We have permission to install a Kestrel nest box on the site, which we hope to do before the Spring. We also plan to conduct bat and moth surveys in the area over the coming year so that we may construct a more complete list of the species using the area. We also hope at some point to begin campaigning for the status of Crox Bottom to be raised to Local Nature Reserve to give it the protection and publicity that it deserves.

- Caroline, Friends of Crox Bottom

Facebook:

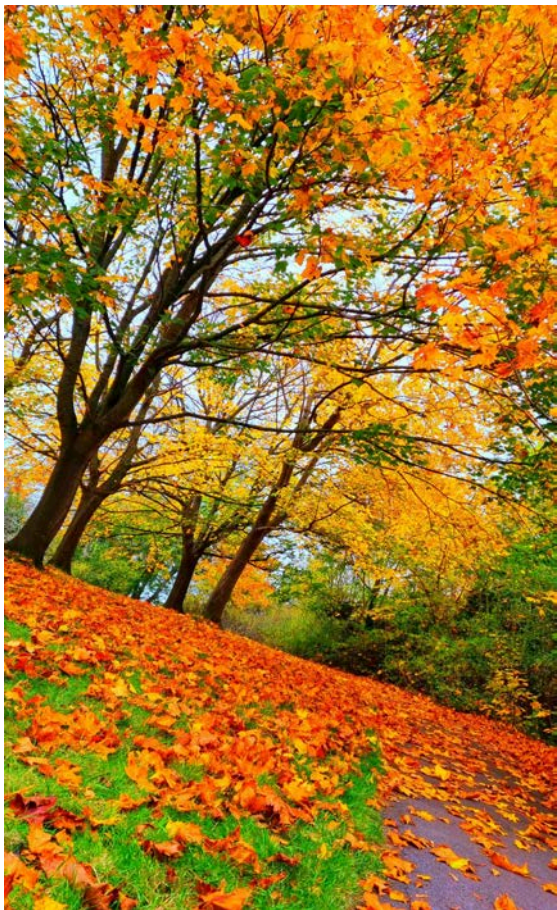
<https://www.facebook.com/CroxBottomFriendsGroup/>



Otter Survey on Pigeonhouse Stream with several friends of groups and the Greater Bristol Otter group

Ali Siddorn also sent in some stunning photos of Crox Bottom and I've included a couple below.





Withywood Park [6]

No information provided.

Highridge Common [7]

Highridge Common is a Site of Nature Conservation Interest. It is approximately 6 hectares of neutral grassland with patches of calcareous grassland and an ancient species rich wildflower meadow.



The mosaic habitat contains scrub, ditches, hedgerows, bunds, tall herbs, and grouped and single trees, including specimens of mature hawthorn. The spring fed pond silted in the early 1980's through lack of management. The spring now emerges below the old pond creating an area of running water and seasonally wet grassland and rush.



The habitats support a varied range of wildlife. It is particularly hotspot for bees, butterflies and other pollinating insects. It supports grassland and hedgerow

invertebrates and damsel and dragonflies that need water or damp ditches as part of their lifecycle.

Swifts nest on Highridge Road properties as they have done for generations and scream above the common. Tawny owl, sparrow hawk and kestrel are regular visitors on the hunt for forage. Bats are seen foraging above the grassland, hedgerow and neighbouring residential ponds. Mammals spotted include small rodents, stoat, moles, hedgehogs, foxes and the occasional weasel, rabbit or deer. Local residents informally litter pick as and when they are dog walking or enjoying the benefits of the natural environment

– Rachael Harvey, local resident (photos & text).

New Highridge Common [8]

New Highridge Common or the field adjacent to Highridge Common is a former farmed pasture field mitigated for loss of common land when the South Bristol link road went through. In the years since the nitrogen spraying stopped the field has naturally transformed into a species rich wildflower meadow utilised by wildlife and enjoyed

by local people.



– Rachael Harvey, local resident (photos & text).

King’s Head Lane Park/ Open Space [9]

This medium sized park is mainly laid to grass and has excellent views of Dundry and surrounding areas. Footpaths circle and cut through the park with a good number and variety of well established trees. There are

some wilder bushy areas in the corners. Spring bulbs are planted in various patches. Seagulls, crows and a variety of songbirds visit.

Facilities in the park include a football pitch with changing rooms, a fenced play area with play equipment and a number of well-placed benches. I am not aware of any organised groups attached to the park but believe that people pick up litter on an informal basis as the park is usually fairly litter free.

- Karen Clode, local resident

Yew Tree Farm [10]

Bristol's last working farm: A wildlife-friendly, organic farm. The BS13 Wildlife group had the pleasure of doing a harvest mouse nest search and confirmed harvest mouse presence on the farm last year. We also did a couple of bat walks, and recorded both lesser and greater horseshoe bats on the farm.

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/yewtreefarmandshop>



Female Adder - to protect the adders we won't disclose the exact location, but we've very lucky to have them present in BS13

Bedminster Down E Site Allotment [11]

Situated off the Bridgwater Road overlooking a popular dog-walking field is a small site consisting of seven plots. Approximate plot sizes: one @ 300m², the other six @ 150m². Including pathways estimate total site area 1,300m².

The site is bordered on two sides by mixed mature hedging i.e. Hawthorn, Elder, Blackthorn, Bramble, Dogwood, Dogrose, Ivy, etc. Another side bordered predominantly by brambles, and the remaining side by a mixed copse. The copse consists of at least a dozen deciduous specimens, but I'm unsure of their identity, sadly I think the grey squirrel population in the area has fatally girdled most of them!

In terms of the birds that visit: blue, great, coal and long tailed tits, dunnock, chaffinch, wren, goldfinch, greenfinch, great spotted and green woodpecker, blackbird, robin, magpie, rock dove and woodpigeon. Occasionally we've seen a buzzard and kestrel flying nearby, and I once spotted a sparrowhawk hiding in a tree. Occasionally we have seen rabbits on site. During the warmer months we have frequently seen bats flying along the hedge line feeding.

I put up a couple of birdfeeders on my site, as does my father who has a plot. He also has a small pond, and a couple of years ago some newts were spotted (no idea which species). My neighbour has put up a bee hotel on the side of her shed, and I have a birdbath that I try to keep topped up through the year. A number of flowering plants

are in situ aiming to help the pollinators: lavender, rosemary, phacelia, buddleja, pyracantha, rose, herbs, etc.

In putting up bird feeders no doubt I have encouraged brown rats to nest on my site within my compost heap and underneath my storage shed. My father has a similar scenario. However, as a small holder adjacent to the site keeps pigeons with associated feed, I have no doubt that a rat population has always been nearby!

The frequency with which the site is attended by plot holders has varied greatly over the decade I have been there. At any one time one or two plots would be changing hands or left to become overgrown. To my knowledge coordinated efforts to improve the site for wildlife have never been discussed.

- Paul Simon Owen, Plot Holder & Wildlife Champion

Bedminster Down C Site Allotment [12]

Bedminster Down C allotments drop down from the A38 towards the railway line so lots of the plots are on a hill/slope, which is quite steep in places with tall trees along

the top - the rest are more level and flat as it meets the railway. The site also borders a wooded area (which was once allotments too) so lots of types habitats. There are several plots that are hard to cultivate on the hillside and some areas there are left wild, so brambles cover those areas.

Mammals:

Bats, Moles, Field Mice, Deer, Rats, Rabbits, Badger, Grey Squirrel, Stoat, Foxes, Shrew

Birds:

Robin, Long tailed tits, Magpies, Woodpigeon, Jays, Heron, Wrens, Woodpecker, Grey tits, Tawny owl, Thrush, blue tits, Crows, Herring Gulls, Blackbird, Buzzard, Sparrow, Green Wagtails

Insects:

Ladybird, Centipede, Millipede, Mason Bee, Bumblebees, Dragonfly, Pond skaters, hoverflies, Cinnabar Moths, Garden Tigers, Cabbage White, Holly Blue, Ants, Whirligigs, Diving Beetles, Mullein Moth, Snails, Slugs, Parasitic Wasps, Common Wasps, Ground Beetle, Ground Spiders, Aphids,

Shield Beetle, Earwigs, Flea beetles, Damsel Fly, Peacock butterfly



Photo: Rachael Harvey

Reptiles/amphibians:

Slowworms, palmate newts, frogs and toads.

Plot holders have lots of ponds around the site, lots have bird boxes on sheds, lots of wildflower patches and flower patches, herb areas, areas of comfrey etc .We left a big patch of nettles on the side of the track last year as it was covered in Peacock butterfly caterpillars. Some do still use a bit of spray & slug pellets, but a lot more are doing organic/no dig now than a few years ago (we have had our plot for 15 years). The site isn't a 'super tidy' allotment site so there are a lot of slightly wilder areas!

- Melanie Wickham, Plot Holder & Wildlife Champion (text)

Step Together Allotment /Goulston Rd Allotments [13]

We have recently started an allotment project in Bishopsworth for vulnerable young people. The allotment is very much in the early stages and we are keen to make it wildlife friendly, as well as growing fruit and veg.

The allotment is run by Step Together and we have young adults volunteer with us on a Tues and Thurs afternoon. We are currently developing the site to grow fruit and vegetables, but want to make it nature friendly as well. So

far we have created bird feeders, planted some wildflowers, been planted with pollen-laden flowers for bees. There created a bug hotel and we have an old bath that we are are a few nest boxes scattered around and plans for more turning into a wildlife pond, which we are hoping might to be constructed. A nest of slow worms has also existed attract some frogs. We have also found slow worms on our for some years. Foxes have occupied the site for many plot so we are doing some research on how best to create a years with a number of successful litters. These help to safe environment for them. keep down the rat population, which are obviously attracted to compost heaps. I have to say that the adjoining householders do not universally appreciate the foxes and plot holders are told not to feed them.

If you want to know more about Step Together, this is the website: www.step-together.org.uk

- Melanie-Jayne Head, Step Together

Headley Lane/ Bishopsworth Road Allotment Site [14]

We have had quite a large pond area on the allotments for many years sited on a previous dumping ground. It had become semi derelict, but thanks to one particular plot holder with help, has been completely refurbished with a new liner following his fund raising on the site and we have high hopes for wildlife activity this year.

Other individuals have constructed small ponds on their plots, but not sure of the number. Some areas have also

Mature hedges, trees and saplings bound the whole allotment site, and trees have been added to strengthen the eastern boundary.

It is encouraging to note that with the ever-changing number of people taking plots, there appears to be an increased interest in protecting wildlife.

- Nick Thompson, Plot Holder & Wildlife Champion

The Ridings Open Space & The Coppice [15]

An orchard is being planted at the Ridings Open Space (at the top of the Ridings) and more native trees are being planted at the Coppice (by Chalcroft Walk). There is also hope to get a community group together, as well as create a meadow and do some bulb planting in the autumn.

The trees will be a great boost for wildlife, and a few years down the line the orchard will provide free fruit for local residents to pick and an amazing springtime show of blossom.

- David Fakray, local resident

Heart of BS13 [16]

No information provided.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/HeartofBS13>

Website: <https://heartofbs13.org.uk>

Dundry Slopes [17]

The Dundry and Hartcliffe Wildlife Conservation Group

(DHWC) started in February 2016 and took over from the Friends of Dundry Slopes, Valley Walk and the Maceys area. Primarily it is concerned with the Hartcliffe and Dundry areas where there are lots of parks and green spaces. Attempts have been made over the years to start individual groups for these, but with little interest shown the group decided to cover all of them and include smaller green spaces in streets as well.

The main spaces are Dundry Slopes, Valley Walk, the Maceys area and Crox Bottom. These are rich wildlife areas and part of a wildlife corridor running from Dundry along Pigeonhouse Stream and connecting with the Malago and then into the centre of Bristol. Secondary to these spaces are The Mounds and Hawkfield Meadows.

The street spaces are on Maynard Road, Faber Grove, Fulford Road, Hareclive Road and Bishport Avenue where

spring bulbs and wildflower beds have been planted to brighten them up. These have been well received.

We would like to undertake surveys in our green spaces, for example of animals and plants. We are hoping that specialist organisations and groups who have the expertise to carry out surveys will work with us.

There are large gardens in Hartcliffe, some of which are good habitats for wildlife. We would like to promote a scheme for local people to make their gardens more wildlife-friendly with wildlife patches, bug hotels and to help hedgehogs by making small gaps in their fences and walls to connect gardens together.

- Keith Way, Dundry & Hartcliffe Wildlife Conservation group

DHWC Greenspaces

- 1 Dundry Slopes
- 2 Maceys
- 3 Crox Bottom
- 4 Valley Walk
- 5 The Mounds
- 6 Hawkfield Meadows
- 7 Claypiece Rd Open Space
- 8 Inn's Court Open Space
- 9 Maynard Rd
- 10 Faber Grove
- 11 Fulford Rd
- 12 Hareclive Rd



Dundry & Hartcliffe Wildlife Conservation group

Website: www.dhwcg.wordpress.com

Email: dundryhartcliffewcg@gmail.com

Friends of Hengrove Mounds & Hawkfield Meadows

Website:

<https://friendsofthemoundsandmeadows.wordpress.com>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/friendsofthemoundsandmeadows>