

# WIRRAL EVERGREEN

Issue 35 Winter/Spring 2021

The Magazine of the Wirral Environmental Network



YEAR 2020

## SOME POSITIVE NEWS

- The ozone hole over Antarctica closed
- Germany is changing 62 military bases into nature reserves
- Whales came back to the Atlantic ocean after more than 100 years
- Great Britain reported the smallest number of people that became infected with HIV in history
- China, as the biggest air polluter in the world, committed to achieving zero emissions by 2060
- The number of victims of terrorism decreased for the 5th year in a row
- In 2020 people saved 48 animal species from extinction
- Scientists discovered 20 new animal and plant species. They also rediscovered some they thought were extinct
- Kazakhstan became the 88th nation that committed to abolish the death penalty
- Elephant population in Kenya doubled
- Saudi Arabia and Palestine banned child marriages
- Demand for oil decreased for the first time in history and Denmark even promised to end its mining
- Scotland will provide menstrual aids to all women for free
- In Africa, polio has been completely eradicated. They owe it to the vaccine
- Vaccine against Covid-19 became the fastest developed vaccine in history

### Wirral Environmental Network

Working to advance the education of the public about the environment and its protection

**Patrons:** Pat Sykes (MBE), John Guillebaud, Tina Fox, Jonathon Porritt, Charles Secrett, Dr Joanna Sharples.

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We do not inherit the world from our parents. We borrow it from our grandchildren.

## Wirral Speaks on Climate Change



In December 2020 Wirral residents gathered for the online event 'Wirral Speaks on Climate Change'. Superbly hosted by **Roger Phillips**, it was wonderful to be joined by **three of our Wirral MPs, Wirral Council Chair of Climate Change and Environment Committee** and **seven sector speakers**. Each had 5 minutes to talk about their area followed by 1 hour of Q&A.

The full recording of the evening is available on You Tube (search for 'Wirral Speaks on Climate Change').

**“broad ranging, professional and well-presented” ~ “some excellent points from our speakers and searching questions from the audience” ~ “Inspiring” ~ “fantastic showing of some real shapers” ~ “impressive range of knowledgeable and committed people”**

**“Wirral is being seen as an area that is prioritising climate action!”**

Conversation covered a vast range of topics including Wirral's climate change strategy, green spaces and mental health, carbon footprinting, eliminating plastic at source, impact of climate change on health, reducing carbon and increasing biodiversity in development, local & renewable energy, energy efficiency and planning bus re-regulation, soyabean imports and much more.

The evening finished with panelists answering a final question:

**“Will the panelists tell us what they plan to do in the next 2-3 months that will help the UK meet its net zero targets and what one action would you ask attendees, viewers and listeners to take?”.**

**Alison McGovern, MP for Wirral South** will be watching for the impact of Brexit and asking the Chancellor to do better in the budget. She asked viewers and listeners to visit Port Sunlight River Park - have some nice time in a beautiful green space.

**Angela Eagle, MP for Wallasey** will push the government to get the policies for net zero correct and try to get more radical environmental policies within her own political party. Viewers and listeners should eat less red meat.

**Margaret Greenwood, MP for Wirral West** will continue to campaign against governments plans to change the planning regime. She will do this to help to protect green spaces near to urban areas and protecting species. Viewers and listeners should carry on campaigning.

## ..... reducing carbon emissions



**Angela Samata, Director of Grow Wellbeing** will get as many families and young people into the forest as possible. She suggested we could help by supporting Grow Wellbeing via 'acts of kindness'.

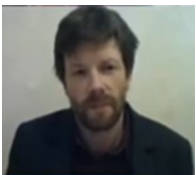


**Annie Merry, Faiths4Change** is committed to reducing her carbon footprint and getting to net zero. Viewers and listeners to have a go at calculating their own personal carbon footprint either back of Cool2 strategy or the WWF online calculator.



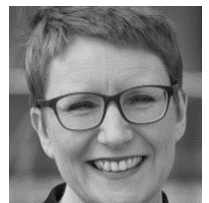
**Brendan Kenny, co-founder of Changing Streams** focused on reducing plastics at source will continue to develop Changing Streams to reduce plastic. He asks viewers and listeners to swap out one item that uses plastic.

**David Tarpey, Cinical Lead for Respiratory Medicine at Wirral University Teaching Hospital** is reducing carbon emissions by making a move to an electric car via the NHS car leasing scheme. He asked others to recycle their inhalers and to stop leaving cars idling outside public spaces, particularly at hospitals, schools, public buildings and where people are vulnerable.



**James Johnson, Local Energy North West Hub** will be talking to Energy Projects Plus about Green home grants. Personally he will aim to shop locally more often.

**Jo Holden, Sustainability Director at Peel Land and Property** will be counting carbon in Egerton Village. She asked viewers and listeners to 'count your carbon'.



**Liz Grey, Chair of Wirral Council's Environment, Climate Emergency and Transport Committee** will keep pushing the carbon literacy training in the council so that every Councillor and every officer will be carbon literate. So they know the facts. She asked residents to make a noise - support any action that is trying to make the situation better and object to anything that is making the situation worse.

**Peter Owen, Chief Executive at Energy Projects Plus** will continue to run projects that improve energy efficiency in homes. He asked viewers and listeners to go to the back of the Cool Strategy and use the template to review their own personal impact on the environment.



## Member Contributions

### Magenta Living are Fostering Trees

Thanks to the Wirral Tree Wardens and Wirral XR, Magenta received 70 whip trees for planting across their estate. Block Champions volunteered to look after the baby seedlings until they are ready to be planted in the ground.

Tree specimens have been approved and the Magenta team are deciding where they are to be planted...the Right Tree in the Right Place!



#### Thyme for a poem

Plant 3 rows of peas – Peas of mind, Peas of heart, Peas and quiet.

Plant 5 rows of lettuce – Lettuce be kind, Lettuce be patient, Lettuce be faithful, Lettuce love one another, Lettuce pray.

Plant 4 rows of Squash- Squash gossip, Squash indifference, Squash selfishness, Squash prejudice.

Plant 4 rows of Thyme – Thyme for family, Thyme for friends, Thyme for each other, Thyme for ourselves.

Plant 3 rows of Turnips- Turnip for meetings, Turnip for appointments, Turnip to help a friend in need.

Sown with care, watered with patience and cultivated with love.

*Anon*

*(Sourced from a gardening magazine;*

#### Flower names – where do they come from?

Surprisingly, many of our favourite flowers are named after Greek young men who came a cropper!



#### Crocus and Smilax



Crocus was a mortal youth who pined without success for the nymph Smilax. Out of pity the gods turned him into the saffron flower. Smilax the gods turned into a brambly vine, many species of which are still around.

#### FYI The Heart Symbol



Those experiencing domestic abuse can go into a Boots or indie chemist and seek help. If they say the code word 'ANI' they'll be taken to a private room and asked if they want to call 999 or a domestic abuse helpline. ANI stands for Action Needed Immediately.

The abused person may make a heart symbol with their fingers to whomever they are communicating with and move their hands backwards and forwards—this is also a cry for help.

## Member Contributions

### All things bike..

#### Wirral cycle servicing and repairs

If your bike has been hibernating, with spring just around the corner, now is a good time to dust down your bike. If it needs a bit of care, then CyclingUK has some simple bike maintenance guides or Wirral has a number of bike repair shops open on the Wirral many will collect your bike and deliver it back to you.

- Barry's Mobile Maintenance (collection) – 07738 11 42 43
- The Bike Shop (Moreton) – 0151 606 0101
- Bikes and Boards (West Kirby) – 0151 625 5533
- Birkenhead Bike Shop – 0151 647 9966
- Cycle World (Upton) – 07749 759134
- Halfords (Bidston, Wallasey and Bromborough) – 0151 630 4216 and 0151 343 3180
- Hype Urban Bikes – 07793 753 527
- K Cycles (Eastham) – 0151 327 1594
- Off the Rock Cycles (Wallasey) – 07515 730550
- Tracs (normally Wirral Country Park and Neston Community Centre, currently collection only) – 0151 319 2455
- Wirral Cycle Service (collection) – 07713 751993

#### Refurbished bikes, training and more



Wirral Community Cycle Hub – refurbished bikes, bike safety checks and cycle training (subject to Covid)

Hype Urban Bikes - A bike workshop that fixes and sells reused bikes and coordinates bike events, rides and trips.



Bike Right - cycle training or learn how to service your own bike – kids, adults, family groups, businesses

Want to do more? Give Mersey Cycle Campaign a follow. They focus on campaigning for safer cycling, traffic calming and a better, healthier environment.



## The Launch of the Mersey Green Map

From Margaret Smith from Transition Liverpool.

We came together (virtually, of course) on a dark Thursday night to witness the birth of the **Mersey Green Map** – an ambitious collaborative event that has real, practical potential to build a network of organisations and people across the Liverpool City Region – all of who are committed to putting people and the planet before profit.

**Simon Hamilton** from Transition Liverpool introduced the Map, explaining that it is a collaboration between the Solidarity Economy Association, Transition Liverpool CIC and Wirral Environmental Network. Simon gave us a glimpse of the potential of the Map – not only to publicise businesses and organisations – but also to create and nurture a network of support.

We then heard from [Colm Massey, Solidarity Economy Association](#) who explained the focus of the Solidarity Economy which works locally, nationally and internationally to promote democratic decision making.

To view or add a business or organisations to the Map simply visit the Get Involved > Wirral Organisations Page on the [Wirral Environmental Network Website](#)  
Got a question? E-mail the group at [merseygreenmap@gmail.com](mailto:merseygreenmap@gmail.com)

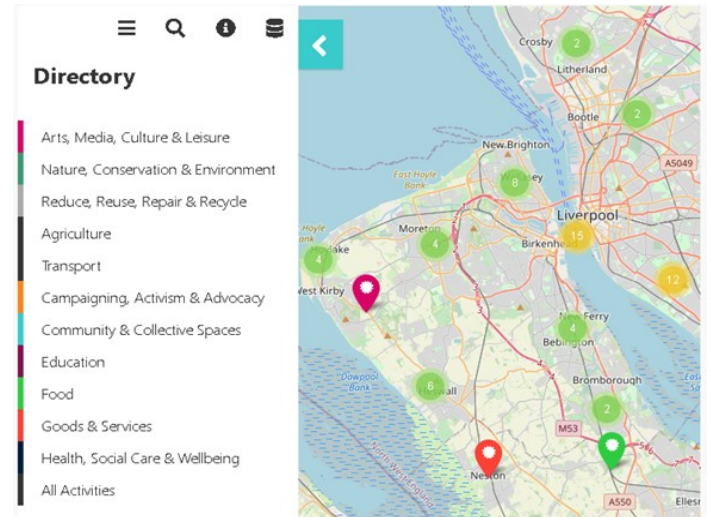
**Patrick Hurley, Liverpool City Councillor** told us about recent developments in Liverpool, the introduction of EV charging points and the work to develop and support cycling in the city.

**Margaret Smith (Transition Liverpool)** introduced us to the Map and thanked the many people and organisations who have been working together to get us to this point – in particular Dinah and Lucy Dossor, Brian Irving and Jago Smith, Liverpool Quaker Meeting and Olivia Hanks, Naomi Graham and Colm Massey.

We then enjoyed demonstrations of how to add organisations to the map. The aim is that very small organisations will be able to add themselves, as well as bigger groups. After the survey is completed an authorisation process ensures that locally based, people and planet friendly organisations are included – and that profit focused and “green washing” organisations are not.

**Laura Robertson-Collins**, Liverpool City Region Cabinet Member for Environment and Sustainability, congratulated all those involved in what she described as a “fantastic development.” Laura pointed out how the pandemic had demonstrated the importance of local services and the vital importance of being connected to nature. She told us that the **Liverpool City Region Climate Action Plan** is now under development and the organisations represented on the map have a vital role to play.

**Paul Riley** Director of Transition Liverpool CIC said; “The Liverpool City Region could be the greenest in the UK, the map has the potential to demonstrate and build critical mass for the benefit of all.”



## and more about the Mersey Green Map

**Councillor Gideon Ben Tovim: Mayoral Advisor to Steve Rotherham on the Environment** spoke about the work going on across the City Region to promote sustainability – including access to two funds, the Green Investment Fund and the Community Environment Fund. These are designed to stimulate growth in the sector and, coupled with a focus on improvements in travel, development of initiatives by the Waste Authority, extension of the Mersey Forest and a commitment to retro fit existing housing stock, there is real potential for change.

**Lisa Hoyle** spoke of the commitment of Liverpool Quakers and Quakers across the region to supporting the Mersey Green Map and expressed the hope for further involvement as the initiative develops.

**Councillor Lawrence Brown** spoke of local initiatives in his ward of Greenbank to support small businesses, promoting joint working and building mutual support and how this was fundamental for local communities to flourish.

**Councillor Pat Cleary** envisaged the potential of the Mersey Green Map to provide a network of support but equally important, to provide a forum for communicating with decision makers, lobbying for a voice for smaller organisations for the benefit of the whole community.

**Joe Pusey from the Circular Economy Club** spoke about the shared interest and common cause – hoping that the two groups will work together for the greater good.

**Naomi Graham, representing Wirral Environmental Network** pulled the various strands together explaining that WEN had been working since 1985 to build a strong coalition and the map was a very significant step along the way to building a resilient local economy. Working together, we have the potential to lead the way.

There was a lively chat feed through the course of the event – discussion about accessibility issues for people with disabilities and questions about the potential to expand the Map beyond the City Region Area both supporting the ongoing work to develop Mersey Green Map as a common good for the planet and for people.

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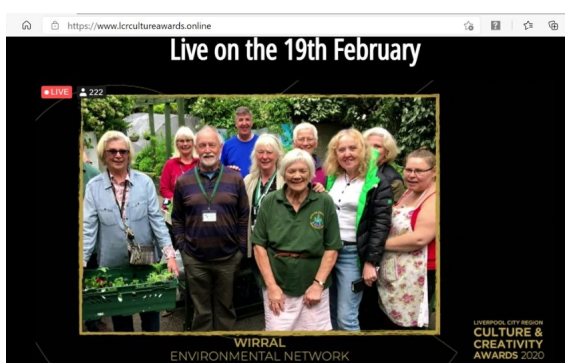
### Other local lists and support for the Circular Economy in Wirral and Liverpool City Region



**Wirral Spend Independent** - <https://www.wirralspendindependent.com> – Set up by a local resident to support local, independent businesses and reward its customers for shopping with them'

**Independent Wirral** - <https://www.independentwirral.co.uk>

**Liverpool City Regions' new Circular Economy Club** - <https://www.circulareconomyclub.com/organizations/merseyside-recycling-and-waste-authority>



### STOP PRESS

WEN were nominated in the recent high-profile LCR Culture and Creativity Awards for an Impact Award for Environmental Sustainability, but lost out to Friends of Princes Avenue - Congratulations to them!

### Becoming more eco friendly

I know you're only one person, and you don't think it will make a difference, but it does! There are 66 million people in Britain, we can all do a little to help.

### What to do with those hard to shift items

#### Single use plastic

Think ahead and don't pick it in the first place! A bit of forward planning and a few purchases will smooth the way to lessening the plastic in your life. Try a portable cutlery set, metal straws, beeswax paper, paper food bags, net produce bags, a charcoal filter water bottle and reusable coffee cups (also used for juices and tea).

If it does make it into the house put it in an Eco brick - <https://www.ecobricks.org/> - what they say...

"Ecobricking is a powerful way to take personal responsibility for your plastic and begin your plastic transition journey. Best of all, through ecobricks we can reconnect to the million year story of putting compacted carbon to ecological service..."



### Recycling the 'non recyclable'

TerraCycle can collect and recycle almost any form of waste, whether it's coffee capsules from your home, pens from a school, or plastic gloves from a manufacturing facility. They partner with individual collectors, as well as major consumer product companies, retailers, manufacturers, municipalities, and small businesses. With your help, they are able to divert millions of pounds of waste from landfills and incinerators each month.

#### Two of the best!!

*Blister packs for pills* - Various collection points like Birkenhead Superdrug, 205 Grange Road. - <https://www.terracycle.com/en-GB/brigades/medicine-packet-uk>

*Pet food sachets*— <https://www.terracycle.com/en-GB/brigades/petfood>

#### Other public drop off locations on the Wirral

Crisp packets—<https://www.terracycle.com/en-GB/brigades/crisppacket>

Dental care items - <https://www.terracycle.com/en-GB/brigades/colgate-uk>

Make up packaging - <https://www.terracycle.com/en-GB/brigades/maybelline-uk>

Writing instruments - <https://www.terracycle.com/en-GB/brigades/bic-uk>



Birkenhead Superdrug is participating in the [TerraCycle UK](https://www.terracycle.com/en-GB/brigades/medicine-packet-uk)

Medicine Packet Recycling Scheme. Drop off any brand of empty blister packets in store. The material collected is extruded into plastic pellets to make new recycled products. More information and a map of other drop off locations here: <https://www.terracycle.com/en-GB/brigades/medicine-packet-uk>

The number of collection locations

### Decluttering

If you're having a spring clean this Easter - check out your local pet and wildlife rescues. They often make it easier to donate, are local and have suffered during these terrible times.

Or the following charities where you can post items for free using Royal Mail.

<https://www.smallsforall.org/>

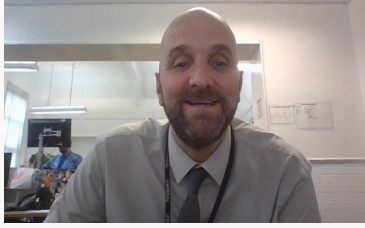
<https://www.carolinehirons.com/2014/09/new-posting-address-for-give-and-makeup.html>

British Heart Foundation - Quality donations can be posted free of charge -

<https://www.bhf.org.uk/shop/donating-goods/post-your-donations>







### **Neil Garnett, General Manager – Parks & Countryside Wirral Council**

Neil, in his new role, advised that Wirral under his department has now been split into six areas instead of four. The new six areas are :- Wallasey, Birkenhead, South, Central, West and North. If you have any query, or just some help and support, please contact Neil Garnett, General Parks Manager. Neil will be only too happy to help and direct you to the appropriate person in his team to speak to.

CONTACT DETAILS : 07867 500563 : neilgarnett@wirral.gov.uk

Wirral Council has 40 allotment sites and welcomes all members of the public who want to get involved in allotment gardening as it is a healthy, enjoyable and positive activity. It is important that new tenants make contact with fellow plot holders as many plot holders will be happy to help and share tips, ideas and allotment produce.

Some sites are 'self-managed' which means the allotment plot holders have a lease from the council to manage the whole allotment site. Plot holders on a self-managed site, should contact the site's committee for any support or advice required.

If a plot is on a council-managed site and a tenant requires further advice or support, contact the Site Secretary, whose role it is to act as a link between the council's nominated Parks and Countryside Officer for each site (usually the Local Parks, Allotments and Countryside Team Leader) and the plot holders (tenants) of the particular allotment site. Each site may also have an allotment society which can provide support, in which case the Site Secretary can provide the contact details for that site's allotment society. Additionally, the details of a site's Allotment Society (where one exists) may also be found on the site's noticeboards.

There are a range of different styles of allotment gardening. Some people want to grow as much fruit and vegetables as possible to reduce the cost of buying produce from supermarkets and other shops. Some people want to grow organically, other people want to use chemicals. Some people focus on growing prize winning produce. Some people want an allotment as a place to keep pigeons or livestock. Other people want to grow flowers or undertake wildlife gardening. Some people want their allotment to be a place where they can simply enjoy a little gardening and pottering outdoors.

Within reason any of these activities can be appropriate on an allotment as long as the plot is classed as suitable for the type of activity (for example, a horticultural or animal plot) and is generally tidy, well cultivated and does not cause a nuisance to other plot holders or neighbouring properties

Free sources of information for new plot holders include:

[The Wirral Allotment Society](#) The society aims to provide advice and support and is open to all plot holders

[The National Allotment Society](#) This website includes a section for the less experienced allotment plot holder on what can be done on an allotment on a monthly basis, fruit and vegetable plant profiles and a section on differing growing methods

[The Allotment Regeneration Initiative website](#) includes a range of fact sheets on practical issues and a plot holders guide covering subjects of interest to plot holders (and people wanting to rent an allotment plot)

# Would you consider becoming a Trustee?

## WEN's Journey

The Environment has never been higher on people's lists of concerns. But what action can people take that will make a difference, to Climate Change, to species becoming extinct, to pollution, to waste...there are so many aspects that it is hard to know where to start!

Wirral Environmental Network has been active in this space since 1985, and has shrunk and grown as the times have changed. From its earliest form as Wirral Green Alliance, through its time as part of Local Agenda 21 (LA21), and into its current shape as Wirral Environmental Network, the educational charity has been helping local people to take practical action on the environment for decades. Some of you may remember the Green Fairs, successful projects with schools over many years (resulting in Woodchurch School Farm amongst its achievements), the initial incarnation of community repaint before passing the baton to Recipro, and the continued work that Kenny and Carol have been doing with an expanded community gardening portfolio (in bloom, alleyways, and much more!).

The years following the financial crisis in 2008/9 were difficult for WEN, but it has kept on delivering, and remained a resource for Wirral residents and groups who have wanted to find practical ways to make our environment better, and "Working to reduce Wirral's Carbon Footprint".



## Would you consider becoming a Trustee?

### **Moving forwards**

After many years of shrinking budgets, the current period of Climate Emergencies, School Strikes, and so on, has seen a resurgence of interest. The platform of the Liverpool City Region's "Year of the Environment" in 2019, and Wirral Council's Climate Emergency declaration in July 2019, gave WEN a key role. New people – including 3 new Trustees – have brought a fresh perspective, and renewed energy for taking WEN to a new level. A relaunched Website and updated logo, together with strong linkages to Community Action Wirral, have all helped give a new lease of life to WEN. The membership has grown in size as people have become more tuned in to the environmental challenges in front of us over the next few years.

The "Network" aspect of WEN has come into increased focus in the last few years, through Social Media and the compilation of WEN's "Big Green List", capturing the 250+ green organisations which are active on Wirral. And through a partnership with Transition Liverpool in 2020, many of these organisations are being added to the online Mersey Green Map, showcasing what is happening across the Wirral to a wider audience.

WEN has had to adapt to COVID-19 and some meetings have moved online, helping us to stay connected through the lockdown period. For the first time, we held our AGM online, which meant Prof John Guillebaud, one of the charity's longstanding Patrons and founder of the Environment Time Capsule project at Ness Gardens and Kew Gardens, was delighted to be able to attend.

In 2020, WEN were part of a partnership bid (with Energy Projects Plus and Faiths4Change) to the National Lottery's Climate Action Fund, for a multi-million pound investment into "Sustainability Central". The ambition and vision outlined in the bid was a step-change away from what had been happening over the previous decade – and would have transformed WEN into a very different organisation. We were very close to achieving this and were in the final short-list, missing out eventually through the narrowest of margins.

WEN rounded off 2020 with co-hosting the virtual event "Wirral Speaks on Climate Change". This featured 3 of the 4 Wirral MPs, plus Wirral's lead councillor on Climate Emergency, Environment and Transport, along with a cast of other key local speakers on the environment, and chaired by BBC Radio Merseyside's Roger Phillips.

### **A new chapter**

After much consideration, Pete Exley, who has steered WEN through over 10 years of very difficult times, decided in 2020 that it was time to hand over the reins to a new Chair and Treasurer, and we are now on the search for the right people to help us take this next step on our journey. Another longstanding WEN Trustee, Christine Snowdon, decided to step down at our last AGM, after many years of service. Very sadly, Paul Wiggins, one of our Trustees, passed away suddenly during 2020.

This means we are now looking for a new Trustee to help take the WEN story forward into its next chapter. We would be interested to hear from anyone who could offer experience in Finance ; Fundraising ; Marketing ; Legal / Charity governance context & HR ; Strategy ; Project delivery ; Stakeholder analysis & networking ; Communications & media.

WEN is very much on the way up – the times have changed, and WEN is brilliantly placed to make the most of those changes, after many years of being a beacon in the darkness.

If you are a member of WEN and are interested in becoming a Trustee, speak to Naomi about what it involves and how to apply. If you aren't a member, why not become one?

## What are you hoping for this year from WEN ?

WEN is looking for ideas from you about what you would like them to offer in the coming years.

Covid-19 lockdown rules permitting, WEN already runs gardening courses, craft and gardening groups, Fairs, plant sales and lots more but is there anything else that you would like us to consider? Contact [wen@la21.net](mailto:wen@la21.net) with your ideas.

Rachel Summers has been working with Wirral Borough Council (WBC) and this is what she says:

When lockdown is over, I'm hoping more Wirral residents might consider getting together, in partnership with WEN and WBC, to tidy, plant up and maintain any small strips of land in their neighbourhood that don't seem to belong to anyone or are the council's responsibility but look unsightly & unloved.

Setting up a working party can be a great way to meet like-minded neighbours and approaching the Local Team Leader, Parks & Countryside Services, WBC, can lead to a very fruitful partnership.

## Support our charity by becoming a member



### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Membership category subscription rates:

- Individual £8 (waged) £6 (unwaged), Household (same address) £12
- Group (voluntary/community) £10, Businesses £20

Name/Name of Group or Business .....

Membership category (eg group/individual) .....

Contact Name and Address: Name .....

Address: .....

Phone: .....

Email: .....

Position in Group/organization (if applicable) .....

I/We apply for Membership of Wirral Environmental Network and send payment of £.....

By: Bank transfer/standing order/cheque (Please circle payment method, Reference should be your name/group name)

Bank Transfer/Standing Order to: Sort code 08-90-86      Account number 50113675

Signed ..... Date .....

WEN is an educational charity with 25 years experience of working with schools and community groups. Our aims are to educate the public about living sustainable and healthy lifestyles. We achieve this through running courses on growing your own food, public discussions, organised events, working in schools to support teachers and in many other ways. Our work is supported by a large number of members and volunteers committed to the charity ideals.

*Wirral Environmental Network publish this newsletter as a community information tool. Please note that the views expressed may not be those of Wirral Environmental Network, its trustees, staff or volunteers.*