

SHROPSHIRE ORGANIC GARDENERS

Spring 2023

Newsletter 47



Chair on her knees

For gardeners, allotment holders, window box owners, who wish to grow without chemicals and meet with others.

THE JOY OF SOGS!



Mashed potatoes need a Tattie bittler!

Thanks to Graham Patient, who has now moved from Shropshire, we have perfect mashed potatoes, as he gave Frank a bittler to say thanks for giving him lifts to Potato day. This is a Scottish tool.

If there are any woodturners out there, these would be ideal to sell at Potato Day 2024.

Maralyn

SHROPSHIRE ORGANIC GARDENERS

We are a group of growers of fruit, vegetables and flowers with gardens, allotments or smallholdings in various places in Shropshire.

Winter meetings on the first Wednesday of the month at 7.30pm.
Summer meetings from May to October are usually at weekends, and consist of visits to members' gardens, outings, practical workshops, demonstrations etc.

See the programme on the back pages.

We are regularly involved in putting on displays at green days/climate events/local and sustainable food events.

Subscription rates: £12 per person per year
Visitors: £3

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SHROPSHIRE ORGANIC
GARDENERS- SOGS

Members only group;

Soggies Surviving
Join the Conversation.

FROM THE EDITOR

We send our condolences to Rachel, whose mother died recently. She has worked tirelessly for SOGS and I hope she finds time to remember her – maybe by sitting in the garden listening to the birds.

There have been some great talks in the last few months, with lots of old and new members gaining insights into worms, compost and storage just what we are all interested in! With so much going on in the UK and round the world, these have been very grounding. The Summer programme is looking equally interesting, and an opportunity to get out and about round the county.

Many thanks for those of you who have submitted articles, snippets, and thoughts. This saves you from constantly reading my flippant style and gives a balance to the newsletter. Please offer to write up a visit and do send in anything you fancy for the Autumn/winter newsletter. Always good to have things in store – as us gardeners know. It may appear to be getting very Shrewsbury-centric, so do let me know what is happening around the County.

Watching gardening programmes on TV and reading the “what to do this week” in newspapers, I prefer to think about what NOT to do! Here are my tips. Do send yours for next time to share.

- a) Don't cut anything down till mid March. It has then dropped or died to such an extent that it is easier, and the birds remove it for nesting. Then the bugs and beasties will have a safe haven over the winter.
- b) Leave the annual weeds for ground cover in herbaceous borders etc. Only remove the perennial thugs. I even leave celandine (shock, horror, I hear you shout) Pretty flowers, ground cover to stop water evaporating, and can be removed when putting in a new plant.
- c) Eradicate weeds. Rename them wildflowers then you won't have any!

HAPPY GARDENING!

Maralyn

1. Blue plastic bucket for watering, car-washing, etc. 2. Red plastic bucket for mopping floors, cleanup from painting, plumbing disasters.

3. Green metal pail for compostable table scraps.

...and that's my Bucket List.

CHRISTMAS BRING AND SHARE at DRAPER'S HALL.



As usual, we shared a feast of wonderful food, chat and company. There was a plethora of garden paraphernalia on the bring and share table too, and I am sure many went home not only with full stomachs, but some useful items to use in their gardens and allotments. A special thanks to the Kitchen elves who made the tables look seasonal, put out plates and cutlery, and washed up. Such an important part of SOGS success.



Shropshire Good Food Partnership

Talk by the Founder – Jenny Rouquette
2nd November 2022



This was our first evening meeting of the winter, the first in our new venue at Drapers Place and Jenny's talk was about the first year of the Shropshire good Food Partnership. It all felt very positive and even a bit exciting.

The Partnership objective is simple when you say it quickly:-

“ Creating a local food system that is good for people, place and planet”

but as the presentation developed the wide scope of actions needed were revealed. Far from being daunted the progress to date showed how much work has been done in 1 year in setting up an organisation fit for the task and ensuring it hit the ground running.

The areas of interest that are relevant range from considering the effect of the food chain on the climate crisis and the implications of Government policy all the way down to the local initiatives of growing food on small bits of

available land via, of course, the important contribution of local commercial growers and suppliers.

The SGFP has been set up as a Community Interest Company (CIC) which gives it a status that reassures potential funders (already it has obtained over £100k) and along with the strong organisational arrangement shows serious intent. There are four directors and then a steering group of more than a dozen people with expertise in different areas. That may sound like it is a “top down” exclusive arrangement but that couldn’t be further from the truth. Jenny wants people to get involved in every way - for example on working groups, running events etc and everyone is invited to sign up to the “Good Food Charter”.

Cynics might say we’ve seen this sort of thing before, and there are many examples of local initiatives, but the scale of ambition for the SGFP is much greater. It is also obvious that the experience Jenny has brought to bear has been key to such a great start for the venture.

There is a fully informative website including more info on getting involved:- www.shropshiregoodfood.org and if you want to get in touch the email is hello@shropshiregoodfood.org

UPDATE FROM DAPHNE DU CROS from SGFP:

This year marks the launch of our ‘**Good Food Movement**’ campaign, which seeks to empower individual citizens to make incremental shifts in their daily choices to influence a better food system.

MARCHES REAL FOOD AND FARMING CONFERENCE



15th-16th September, 2023, at Linley Farm, Shropshire.

We're also pleased to be announcing the first ever Marches Real Food and Farming Conference. The aim of this conference is to bring people together around agro-ecological farming and food systems, to inspire each other, share good practice, build networks and create the community that can bring about the transition we need. Our Call for Proposals can be found on our website:

(<https://www.shropshiregoodfood.org/post/call-for-proposals-speakers-panel-sessions-marches-real-food-farming-conference>)

SHROPSHIRE GOOD FOOD TRAIL

Advance Notice - This will take place 24th June - 9th July.

Follow along @shropshiregoodfood on Instagram and Facebook to find out how to get involved, and to see the line-up of events, visits and activities we have planned for the Food Trail.

THE SHROPSHIRE RURAL SEED BANK NETWORK has launched!

This initiative is training up a small number of seed savers to run local seed banks in their communities. Training support is being provided by the Gaia Foundation Northern Seed Savers Group. The aim of this project is to build up knowledge of seed saving, community food security and to safeguard seed biodiversity.

Short Tailed Voles – From Maggie

I was just wondering if anyone else has had a problem with short tailed voles in their gardens. They have been eating seedlings, eating the tops of onions, undermining the cucumbers and tomatoes in the green house and the beetroot and french beans in the raised beds. I have been constantly filling up holes and covering the roots of my vegetables. Is there any way of discouraging them apart from trapping them in mouse traps?

Send in your queries, tips or happenings. Ed

Worm Farming for World Peace

Anna de la Vega runs the Urban Worm social enterprise.

11th January 2023



Anna is heavily influenced by Ernest Schumacher who wrote *Small is Beautiful*, and has travelled the world researching different methods of worm farming. Fritz Haber invented the process to make ammonia, used to make nitrate fertilizer. The nitrates were used to make bombs in World War 1. Anna's mission is to extend the use of worm compost as fertilizer, rather than synthetic chemicals, made these days by Big Tech Agrofarming. Hence the connection to her title – compost, not bombs!

Vermiculture- Vermi = Latin for worm, hence vermiculture.

A worm farm can be anything; a plastic bag hanging from a tree, a bucket, a wheely bin or a long kind of raised bed called a windrow. Worms need oxygen, drainage and food. They eat food waste and all kinds of manure, dog waste or even human waste. Oxfam have tiger worm toilets for refugee camps!

Vermicompost - compost that has been worked through by worms -

- is nutrient dense
- a little goes a long way
- it doesn't scorch plants, but don't waste it
- contains beneficial microbes

Worm casts should be added 10-20% to compost. Good for water retention and hanging baskets. A handful in a watering can makes worm tea which is excellent fertilizer. The liquid **worm leachate** ('worm wee') can become anaerobic (it would be smelly) if it's all too wet and may contain harmful bacteria. Use carefully, in well diluted small amounts e.g. on houseplants.

Deep burrowing garden earthworms are not suitable. You need the little red tiger worms, often found in manure, or Dendrobaena worms, or Yorkshire worms. (Why Yorkshire?) You can buy tiger worms from fishing shops; there's one in Battlefield, Shrewsbury. Your worm farm should ideally be at 10c-30c but they will survive lower temperatures by squirming into a ball together. Add shredded paper on top for insulation. Keep them moist; food waste is usually wet enough, though if it gets too wet, add corrugated cardboard- they love it!

1000 worm farmers project.

Anna has 1000 packs of worms to give away, funded by the National Lottery, for anyone who wants to set up a worm farm. 10% of schools have applied. There are only 19 left, so get a wiggle on (sorry!)
Lots more information in the website www.theurbanworm.co.uk
or email anna@theurbanworm.co.uk

Chrissie Bridge

Worm farms in
Amsterdam City!
Is this something we
could replicate in the
towns of Shropshire??
Ed.



Did you know that Charles Darwin wrote a book on earthworms?
It has the catchy title 'The formation of vegetable mould through the action of worms'

I wish people wouldn't make fun of my compost pile.

It's so biodegrading.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF PEAT FREE COMPOST PRODUCTS.

**Richard Cave, Technical Sales Manager for Melcourt industries Ltd.
SILVAGROW COMPOSTS (SILVA = FOREST)
1st February 2023**

There was a fantastic turnout for what proved to be a fascinating talk about how peat free composts for nurseries and garden centres have evolved. Richard was a nurseryman before joining Melcourt eight years ago, and obviously had a passion to get it right for growers. He discussed the business from the early years – Melcourt was established in 1983, using bark chips and fines. They supplied bark for landscaping, playgrounds and even reptile terrariums... diverse uses. As the business grew and expanded, and more people became aware of the necessity of being peat free, Melrose continually adapted their products to meet the needs of growers, doing scientific experiments in the lab, and in the nurseries. Pictures showed trials in polytunnels, plant and tree nurseries with many different species involved.

The business is now around the country, with an interesting one in Lockerbie using the fines from the residue of a biofuel power station. One hundred forests are harvested, with 24 sawmills and 3 processing sites. Keeping these in different areas reduces the carbon emissions of transportation. The bark is laid in rows, as those of us who have been to the Green Waste farm have seen, and as these are turned, they slowly move towards the end, when they are ready. In lockdown, when peat was hard to get and everyone was growing, they had a big increase in orders, and didn't leave it quite as long, so there were complaints. They hadn't expected this, but by customers getting in touch, they realised that they needed to take on the orders they could accommodate, and not please everyone! Richard's honesty and openness was a breath of fresh air when customers are so often fobbed off. Do ring them if you buy their product and have a problem. Whilst this could be your issue, they can advise, and can also sample your compost and, if they receive lots of issues with a batch, can identify the problem.

Composted bark lacks the air pockets in peat, so drainage is a problem, and other ingredients are needed. Coir from India can supply this, and Melcourts ensure that this industry meets standards for both workers and product. They are hoping to move to a UK ingredient. Green waste compost, which is Soil Association approved but there can be contaminants, is an option. Interestingly, Urea was not Soil Association accredited. I have always encouraged visitors to wee on the compost and wondered why, but a google

STORING AND PRESERVING VEGETABLES

1st March 2023

On a chilly St David's day evening over 50 Soggies enjoyed a very engaging and informative talk by Sam Davies, with important additions and clarifications from Kate Davies. Plus, we were treated to a live demonstration of making sauerkraut by our very own Chair Rachel - bashing your cabbage into submission seemed to be the key! I had not been able to go on the visit last Summer to Sam and Kate's smallholding in Corvedale, Shepherd's Barn (see Autumn 2022 Newsletter), but was fascinated to learn how they store and preserve vegetables and fruit, so as to be self-sustaining year-round.

Sam first outlined the science of what makes fruit and vegetables spoil – the action of detrimental enzymes, bacteria, mould, fungi and yeasts. Then he explained all the processes they use either to halt or to inhibit the action of these micro-organisms, enabling them to enjoy their produce over many months. These processes include heating; denying light or air; maintaining a constant temperature and the correct humidity; mixing with sugar, salt or yeast; curing, drying and dehydrating; and encouraging the right micro-organisms to multiply through fermentation. This last one has a very long history all over the world and is definitely having a moment, not only preserving food but also giving it additional health benefits. There were plenty of helpful examples that we could take away on whatever scale we grow, some simple and others more involved, and advice about the varieties that store best.

I was personally very taken with their practice of harvesting cabbages to leave a long stalk and then hanging them upside down to store. I was also surprised to learn that Sam and Kate don't store potatoes in sacks or wrap their apples; all to do with limiting the spread if one goes rotten. Plus, I didn't think I would get away with devoting a spare bedroom to onion storage either! A lively Q&A session followed, illustrating how knowledgeable SOGgies are about how to maximize their harvest, and probably also that there is often more than one way to achieve the same objective. Little did we know as we departed that snow and ice were only a week away, parts of the UK having the coldest night since 2010. This has probably extended the Spring 'hungry gap', making it more important than ever to eke out last year's bounty in the freezer, cupboard, cold-store or even spare bedroom!

And it will certainly remind me this Summer to follow Sam's motto, 'Eat fresh, store the best of the excess.'

Caroline

Recommended books!

River cottage handbook no
2: Preserves
Pam Corbin
Harper Collins
ISBN 978 0 7475 9532 8
10 9 8

How to store your garden
produce
Piers Warren
Green books
ISBN 978 1 900322 17 1

Wild Fermentation
Sandor Ellix Katz
Chelsea Green publishing
ISBN 9781603586283

The Preservatory
Lee Murphy
Random House
ISBN 9780147530066

Also a copy that I have
and use for Sauerkraut
with Caraway Seeds:

River Cottage Handbook
No 18: Fermentation
Rachel de Thample



Recommended by Rachel, everything to do with garlic.

The Garlic Farm, IOW.

<https://www.thegarlicfarm.co.uk/>

Catch up with Karuna, the Permaculture site in Picklescott.

Karuna – the Nest. Community café etc

<https://blog.permaculture.org.uk/articles/help-build-nest-karuna-insight-design>

Potato Day 2023

Saturday 4th February, 2023



After two years of ‘hybrid’ Potato Days, we finally got back to something like normal this year. 2021 had to be operated as a click and collect only, from a barn in North Shropshire (a very welcoming one as it happens); 2022 was back at Wattlesborough Village Hall, but with a large element of click and collect still in place.

This year, we dropped the click and collect entirely, partly because it is a lot of extra work, but largely because we know from the feedback of visitors that people do like to come along to choose their seed potatoes, use the cafe and the tea and cake stall, and browse the other stalls.



Given the crush we had in the main hall last year, particularly around the café tables, we decided to make more room in the hall for people to move around and to put most of the stalls in the side hall. Again, judging by the feedback from visitors and stall-holders, this seemed to be appreciated. We had invited a total of 10 stall-

holders to use the side hall, although in the end we just had seven, because of some late withdrawals. However, those who did turn up, had busy days, including Master Composters and Right To Grow, Shropshire Wildlife Trust, Greenacres Farm, Callum's Herbs, Flamingo Paperie Cards, and of course Tools For Self-Reliance, who again did a roaring trade. Steve and Bill ("The Potato Men") defied a sea of troubles to turn up and engage visitors with their amazing range of knowledge.



A new thing this year was sales of peat-free compost from Melcourt Industries, following on from the bulk order for members in the previous month and a very informative talk from Richard Cave. We will follow-up with another bulk order next year (again, this will be before Potato Day)

As for the potatoes themselves, this year we had 40 varieties (as opposed to last year's 47), and most of them sold well, particularly Bambino, Carolus, Charlotte, Nicola, Pink Fir Apple, and Sarpo Mira. It was encouraging that most of the 13 organic varieties sold well. This year we tried five different varieties from Northern Ireland, which again seemed to go well; if those of you who bought some of these could let me know the results, I would be very

grateful. Our seed potato suppliers, Brighter Blooms, were again superb, and also attracted lots of people to their own stall.

The unsold potatoes again went to Maddocks Farm Shop for further sales, and we donated some to Seedy Saturday, Greenacres, and Oak Farm. As ever, all the volunteers did sterling work again, from setting up tables, and offloading potatoes from van to trays on the Friday night, to stocking and running the kitchen and tea & cake stalls (both making healthy profits), to selling potatoes, raffle tickets (prize from Maddocks Fruit and Veg) and memberships, to managing the car park and the 'meet and greet', to finally dismantling everything, tidying away, and sweeping up. There was a little local difficulty on the parking front, but we'll sort that for next year; this was due to the sheer number of people turning up; at least 480, mostly between 10.00 and 1.00; even by official opening time, we had 'clicked' 103 visitors in the hall! Next year, we will have 'bouncers' to hold back the tide prior to an earlier opening.

And finally, thanks to Rachel for again holding it all together, and even finding time to be interviewed by Genevieve Tudor for Radio Shropshire (who is now a member).

Next year's event has already been booked at Wattlesborough, but make a note in your diary that is it on 10th February 2024, the second Saturday in February.

Ian Thom



TOP TIPS FROM MEMBERS:

*Put mint oil (or mint?) with stored apples to deter mice.
Maggie*

Put tansy under doormats to deter ants. Maralyn

The best way to garden is to put on a wide-brimmed straw hat and some old clothes. And with a hoe in one hand and a cold drink in the other, tell somebody else where to dig. Anon

STREET ALLOTMENT PROJECT GROWS AND GROWS!



Hi Everyone! Casper from Street Allotment Project, Shrewsbury, giving you the round up on the last quarter.

It's been quiet on the plots but we started much earlier this year with our Allotment Sundays to make sure everything is prepped for the coming season. Back in autumn, we'd sown winter rye and vetch as green manures and all of the beds were green throughout the winter. The plants have now been chopped down and worked into the soil to increase the nutrient levels and organic matter. In addition we've been hurling on a top dressing of year-old leaf mould and horse manure mix.

In other news, we've been given permission for our sixth site of about 100 SqM at the Grange Youth and Community Centre on Mount Pleasant Road, Shrewsbury. This has been sitting for most of the winter with a layer of hardwood chips and cardboard which, fingers crossed, will have done its weed-suppressing job and given us a headstart on the soil. The Grange Youth and Community Centre has a kitchen and we've decided to create a Kitchen Garden, so produce can be whipped out of the ground and plonked on a plate (We'll put a chef in the middle of that transaction and are hopeful some of their wizardry will bring it to beauty).

On this plot we'll be implementing all our ideas in one, so a 7 year rotation of crops, increasing biodiversity through planting of wildflower edges around the beds and the use of green manures throughout the season both

undersowing and post harvest sowing. The Grange has some raised beds already and we've even found a rather healthy rhubarb tucked away.

The master plan for this year is productivity, so very much looking at ways of bringing seeds on and where we can succession plant for longer seasons and bigger crops.

Our newest excitement - or my newest excitement because it comes with a gadget - is 'soil blocking'! Rather than using pots of seedling compost, a no-peat seedling mix is made up in a large bucket and the soil blocker gadget shoved in and with a press of the handle, four perfect (occasionally) 2 inch cubes with a seed divet on the top are produced. We have created nigh on 700 of these cubes into which just today we've started popping seeds. The buy-in for me was the reduction in plastic use and of transplant shock as the entire block simply drops into the ground. We shall see.

The last time we met, Maralyn introduced us to Maggie and Peter Anderson and brazenly asked whether he knew of some 1000 litre IBC tanks, as we wanted to install some on our Belle Vue plot. Less than 3 days later we were picking up two of these water butt beasts which, with the snow and rain over the past few days, are very nearly full! We can't thank SOGgies enough for sorting this for us, it really will improve the health and wellbeing of that site, as well as the cost of watering for the Community Centre. And seeing as SOGs has once fulfilled the role of 'fixers', we're wondering whether anyone knows of a spare 15m - 20m of that blue 22mm water pipe that can be used for creating cloches? Perhaps? Our Belle Vue Youth Club site will be all brassicas this year and we'll need to net over them.

Hopefully we will be at Shrewsbury Flower Show and the Food Festival this year, spreading the word of allotmenting, growing of vegetables and Shropshire's Right To Grow policy.

If the season works out as we've planned, there'll be more food reaching our volunteers and with the wider community than ever before. For us, this is exactly the point of the effort.

WHY NOT JOIN IN VOLUNTEER SUNDAYS WITH CASPER?
theshed@streetallotmentproject.org

**SOIL
BLOCKING
RECIPE**

2 PARTS COIR
3 PARTS SEED COMPOST
1 PARTS SOIL
2 PARTS VERMICULITE

ADD WATER UNTIL MOIST
BUT NOT SODDEN. CREATE A
SQUEEZED BALL OF MIXTURE
TO TEST. IF IT HOLDS ITS SHAPE
YOU SHOULD BE GOOD TO GO




**Thanks, Casper, for the
recipe.**



From The Archives: Early Days

Following on from the first meetings in February and March 1990, what was then known as SOG began to be very active. The April meeting attracted 26 people (up from 15), perhaps partly due to a talk on Companion Planting by Lilian Willmore.

The first SOG coach trip was organised to the Henry Doubleday Research Association in Ryton, Coventry. Cost per person for the coach was to be £4, £1 entry to the gardens, and 50p for the guided tour.

SOG also supported the Friends of the Earth Peat Day, and it was felt that people were beginning to be aware of the need to use alternatives. It was suggested that SOG could organise a bulk buy alternative in the not-too-distant future. I haven't discovered whether this did happen in the early 1990s, but it definitely happened in 2023; better late than never.

Planned events for that summer included a Whixall Moss guided walk, a visit to Margaret and John Westhead's garden in Acton Burnell (with a pot-luck supper), and a visit to Lilian Willmore's garden at Nant-y-Caws near Oswestry.

By May 1990, SOG had become SOGS (possibly inspired by a conversation about BOGS – Border Organic Growers and Smallholders). The May minutes included the following: “A big thank you to Dave (or Bob) for his talk on Green Manures”. I hope Dave (or Bob) appreciated it. The coach trip to Ryton had by now turned into a car-sharing trip.

Meetings for the rest of the year were a trip to Meole Brace Allotments, a visit to Radbrook Horticultural College, a talk by Sue Stickland “Of All Muck and Magic” (which led to an increase in membership), and a social evening in December. As The Old Post Office was proving to be an unsatisfactory venue, meetings were being moved to The English Bridge Workshop, and if this didn’t work, “we can discuss it again with a view to finding somewhere else”.

The first SOGS AGM was held in March 1991, and it was reported that the group was flourishing, and had found a comfortable place for winter meetings at St. Nicholas Hall by the United Reform Church on Coleham Head. The finances were in credit, but only by £22.83, so membership rates went up to £4 (concessions £3).

The final words in the notes were: “Best wishes for a successful growing season!”.

Ian Thom



*Why do potatoes make good detectives?
Because they keep their eyes peeled.*

*What is worse than finding a worm when you bite into an apple?
Finding half a worm!*

What do you call it when worms take over the world? Global Worming.

*What do you call a retired vegetable?
A has Bean.*

*What is small, red, and whispers?
A hoarse radish.*

WINTER SALADS

Maggie Anderson

A few years ago Sue Stickland invited us to her place to show us some Winter salads she was growing in her polytunnel. I was intrigued and decided to grow some myself in our greenhouse. Following Sue's instructions, I sowed the seeds in August and planted out the seedlings in September. They thrived and we had salads almost every day through the Winter and Spring until the early lettuce started. Since then I have branched out and added some outside salad crops to the inside ones. Some of them are wild plants. If you don't have a greenhouse, you could try growing them in a cloche.



Winter salads in greenhouse

The plants I grow in the green house are rocket, a variety of mustards, stridolo, mibuna, mizuna, purslane and lambs lettuce. The outside ones are land cress (grows through the cold weather) and lemon balm (just sprouting in March). Also in February I start adding wild garlic (ramsons) and the very young shoots of ground elder - a good reason not to persecute your ground elder.

Self seeded Purslane

When the rocket goes to seed I cut it off and tie it in a bunch and hang it in a different part of the greenhouse where the seeds drop and start growing. I don't sow the lambs lettuce either as it seeds freely. So does the purslane.



Strodolo. Italian perennial salad which flowers and seeds

SOG'S SPRING/SUMMER PROGRAMME 2023

Out of courtesy to our hosts for each visit, Rachel will email the full membership a month before each visit to see whether you will be attending so numbers can be confirmed and refreshments organised. strivens58@btinternet.com or 01743 891607

May 14th (Sun) - 1.30pm
Greenacres Farm
Greenacres Farm, Walford Heath, SY4 2JA
Tel: 01939 291109

Greenacres Farm is a 16 - acre smallholding run by Shropshire Council for adults with learning disabilities. Situated 9 miles north of Shrewsbury, just off the B5067, the service provides a range of learning experiences in a realistic working environment. There are two free range poultry units and a registered egg packing station. The poultry bedding is composted to fertilise the soft fruit, vegetables and sensory garden. The site has a solar panel array, a wildlife pond, reed bed and lagoon.

June 11th (Sun) - 1.30pm
Pili-Pala Farm
just south of Llanfyllin

A regenerative market garden specialising in soft fruit and veg, with some flowers. Cultivating just under an acre, the site is around 4.5 acres of south facing sloping pasture. They are chemical free and use a "no-dig" approach, focussing on soil health. They hope to have the new farm shop up and running stocked with veg and fruit to buy. Full details to be provided. Upper limit on numbers is 40.

**July 16th (Sun)
1.30pm Re-wilding Gardener Elen Sentier
Park Farm House, Nr Smethcott,
Church Stretton SY6 6NZ**

Elen (helped by her husband, also a Master Composter) has been a rewilding gardener for more than 20 years, with a portfolio of three award winning gardens at RHS Hampton Court Shows. Depending on the number of members interested this might be split to a morning and an afternoon visits. Please bring cakes.

**August 16th (Sun) - 2.00pm
Visit to members garden, Maggie and Mel, Kinnerley
[address details will follow]**

After quite a few years, we revisit Members, Maggie and Mel's lovely smallholding out at Kinnerley. Please bring cakes.

**September 16th (Sat) - 1.30pm
Hollies Agroforestry Farm
Peter Aspin - Soulton, Wem, Shropshire, SY4 5RT
Tel: 01948 840073.**

The Hollies is an organic holding of 40 acres in N. Shropshire which, until 1996, was a dairy farm, a beef herd, and since 2014 has reared young stock for a local dairy farm. A system of silvopastoral agroforestry is practised whereby trees, perennial ground cover crops and livestock are produced on the same piece of land. Please bring cakes. Shropshire Agroforestry Project.

October Visit and Date to be Confirmed



SOGS IS A MEMBER OF GARDEN ORGANIC



**What more could SOGGIES want?
Lots of lovely compost to feel.**

So many different types for different uses.

Do experiment and send me your findings.