SUSTAINABLE WHADDON

Opportunities to enhance ecology and biodiversity
Opportunities to reduce our carbon footprint

Continuing the theme for working towards better Biodiversity as described in the last issue of The Whaddon News, Cilla's article encourages us to improve our gardens to enable wildlife to thrive.

Gardening for Wildlife - Cilla Parish

Gardens – most of us in Whaddon have one, and many houses in the village are blessed with generous plots. Every one of those gardens has the potential to become a haven for wildlife.

The UK is one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world. Habitat loss and changes in the way we manage our land have taken their toll. Gardens may seem small, but together they form one of the country's largest connected habitats. Astroturf, pesticides, extensive hard landscaping and large areas of closely mown lawn have all contributed to declining wildlife. As the countryside becomes more fragmented, gardens play an increasingly important role in linking habitats.

Autumn and winter are ideal times to improve your garden for wildlife. Trees and hedges establish well during the dormant season, making it the perfect time to tackle bigger projects before spring.

What is your starting point?

Work with what you already have. Do you have mature trees or hedges, a pond or borders, or are you starting with a lawn and patio? Think about how much time you want to spend gardening and whether you're aiming for a low-maintenance wildlife garden or enjoy being hands-on. This will help you decide where to focus your efforts.

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Improvements you can make

1. Plant a tree.
A tree adds height, structure and valuable habitat. If this summer taught us anything, it's not to fear a little shade. For smaller gardens, consider dwarf fruit trees, hawthorn or rowan.

2. Plant a hedge.
A hedge offers far more than a fence ever can, providing shelter, nesting sites, flowers for pollinators and berries for birds.

3. Create a pond.
It doesn't need to be large. Water attracts wildlife incredibly quickly. I dug a pond in our garden this spring; to start with it had lots of mosquito larvae in it (this is normal with a new pond) and that draws all the other animals in. We then had frogs, dragonflies, water beetles, water snails and even a small grass snake. Nature then balances itself out and the larvae are eaten before they get to adulthood. I knew that wildlife quickly establishes itself if you build a pond, but I have been astounded at the speed watching it in my own garden. “Build it and they will come” is a common saying about wildlife and ponds.

4. Plant shrubs and flowers.
Variety is nature's friend. Choose plants that flower across a long season to support pollinators. If you're new to gardening and find garden centres overwhelming: **Shrubs** provide long-term structure, **Perennials** return each year but die back over winter, while **Annuals** flower for just one season.

5. Let some grass grow.
A closely mown lawn has limited wildlife value. Leaving even a small area to grow into a mini meadow provides food and shelter for insects. And don’t limit it to ‘No Mow May’, keep



Hummingbird Hawkmoth -above



Above right- carefully placed nesting boxes

Photo below is Nepeta Walkers Low at Wimpole Walled Garden



Below- Bees enjoying nectar rich flowers

Photos by Cilla Parish



it long right up until September.
If you prefer a tidier look, mow a neat edge around it so it looks purposeful, or get creative and mow a maze.

6. Don't use chemicals.
Pesticides and weedkillers don't just affect the target species—they can also harm beneficial insects, reduce food for birds and damage soil health.

To completely alter your garden may be intense and expensive, but just doing one thing, planting one tree or a small container pond will be a start.

Two final recommendations:

- Plant **Nepeta "Walker's Low"** I've never grown another plant that's attracted so many pollinators, and it flowers for much longer than lavender.
- Watch David Attenborough's **Secret Gardens** on the BBC. Although all of the gardens on the program are well established and wealthy, even if you have a tiny garden there are ideas to take away from it.

No garden is transformed overnight, but every step helps. If everyone in Whaddon made just one change, together we'd create a remarkable difference for wildlife when it desperately needs it.

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The Big Garden Birdwatch

Sustainable Whaddon hopes to gather information on all species present in the parish and, over time, build up a picture of which species are doing well and which are declining.

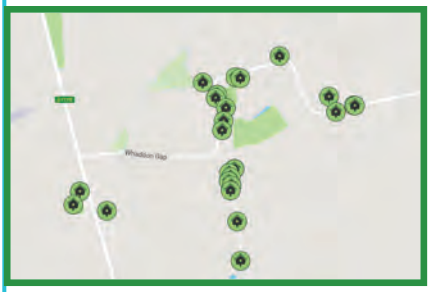
Jenny Grech

Homes for Swifts

SUSTAINABLE WHADDON

We now have an incredible 29 swift boxes in the Village – no doubt welcome homes for the swifts who will appear in the Spring following their long flight from West Africa.

The Parish Council have given us a further grant and we plan to install a further fifteen boxes and at least two "callers" in March. If you have a north facing wall, at least 5m/12ft high with a clear approach and would like to offer a swift a home and then please just get in touch – sustainablewhaddon@whaddon.org









National Emergency Briefing

SUSTAINABLE WHADDON

The National Emergency Briefing sets out the implications of climate and nature breakdown for health, food systems, national security and the economy from ten of the UK's leading experts. It presents a clear, measured overview of how the climate and nature crisis is affecting everyday life in Britain, and what the evidence says about risks and responses and supports an informed democratic discussion and ensures that public institutions, businesses and communities share a common understanding of the scale and urgency of the challenge. The fifty-minute film will be shown in late September in partnership with ZCC Bassingbourn, Sustainable Shepreth and us, Sustainable Whaddon, at the Old School House in Bassingbourn. The actual date has yet to be finalised but will certainly be publicised and further details of the film itself can be found on their website - https://www.nebriefing.org/

Meldreth Road Seed Exchange

Don't forget if you have any surplus seeds, then the seed exchange would definitely welcome them.



WHADDON GOLF CENTRE

01223 207325

www.whaddongolfcentre.co.uk

Tuesday to Sunday

Open to All

9 Hole Par 3 Approach Course

Driving Range

Tuition

Bar

Coffee

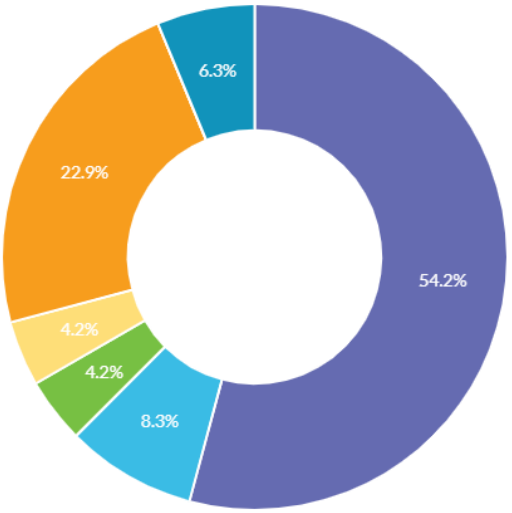
Snacks and Ice Creams

Newspapers

Sustainable Whaddon Energy Survey

The survey received responses from 48 households, and the results are shown below. Lots of interesting information was given by those who have adopted newer energy tech as well as from those who have not. These results provide useful baseline data and will be discussed at the upcoming meeting of the Sustainable Whaddon group. For now, many thanks to all who participated.

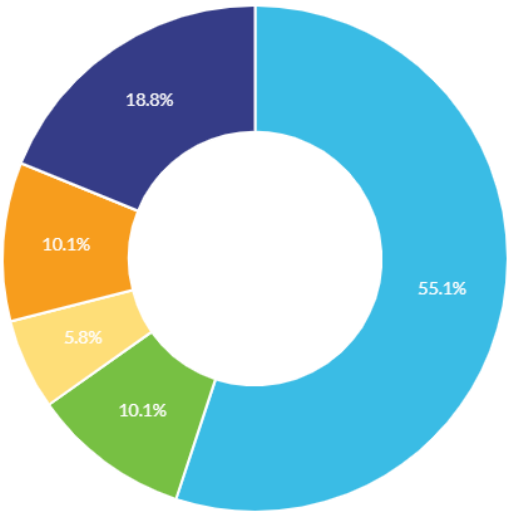
Q1: What is the main method you use to heat your home?



Choice	Total
A: Oil fired boiler	26
B: Propane/calor gas	4
C: Open fireplace burning solid fuel/wood burning stove	2
D: Electric storage heaters/other forms of traditional electric heating	2
E: Heat pump - air source	11
F: Heat pump - ground source	0
G: Wood pellet boiler	0
H: Other - please add below	3

Responses to H: wood burner with back boiler and propane; wood burning boiler, not pellet; Oil fired boil[er]

Q2: How are your household motor vehicles powered? Please tick all that apply. If you have more than one vehicle in the same category, please state the number/category in the box at the bottom.



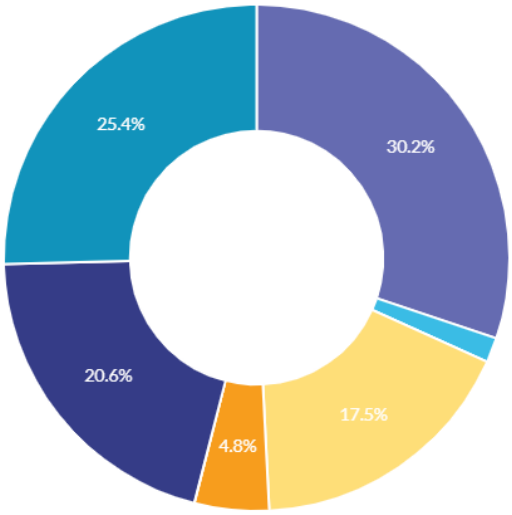
Choice	Total
A: No household motor vehicles	0
B: Petrol/diesel (not hybrid)	38
C: Plug-in hybrid	7
D: Self charging hybrid	4
E: Fully electric	7
F: Other (please state below)	0
G: Number of vehicles in same category if more than one. Please state number and which category in box below.	13

Of the households with multiple vehicles in same category, 9 stated 2 petrol/diesel vehicles, 1 stated 3 petrol/diesel, 1 stated 4 petrol/diesel and 1 stated 5 petrol/diesel. One other responded, but vehicles not in same category and already recorded.

Q3: Do you have an electric car charging point at home

Yes:	12 (25%)
No:	36 (75%)

Q4: Do you use any of the technologies listed here? Please tick all that apply.

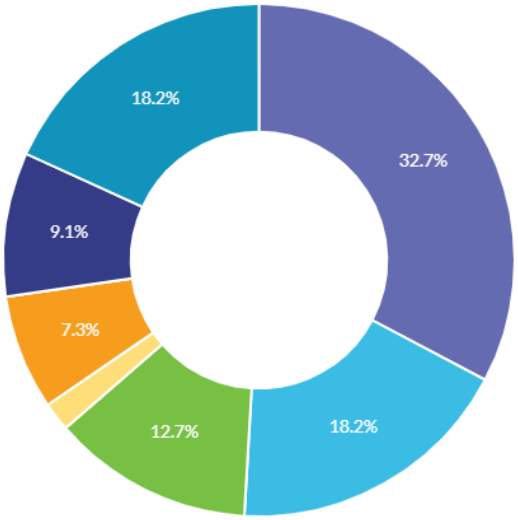


Choice	Total
A: Solar panels wired into house	19
B: Solar panel used independent of house wiring to charge individual items	1
C: Wind turbine	0
D: Battery storage for generated energy	11
F: Solar water heating	3
G: Heat pump - ground source	0
H: Heat pump - air source	13
Please describe below why you have adopted the ticked technologies	16

Responses to why technologies were adopted:

- Goal to generate 70pc of our electrical needs and move away from oil to heat a large house for environmental reasons plus economic investment.
- Environmental reasons plus cheaper electricity. The amount we sell back to the grid essentially covers our own consumption.
- Reduce carbon footprint.
- Air source heat pump is well suited to our house and provides a cost effective form of heating, but we also wish to reduce our carbon footprint.
- More economic. Eco friendly.
- Economy and ecology.
- Easy to set up [in reference to B: Solar panel used independent of house wiring to charge individual items] and powers devices such as mobile phone and ipad.
- Modern technologies used to reduce carbon emissions and of course to save money long term.
- Economic and environmental reasons.
- This is as of mid June when solar panels and a battery are being installed.
- Environmental benefit and economy.
- A and F come out of the same system; we are also looking to install D. We did it to do our bit for the environment.
- To reduce my electricity bill and oil usage.
- Air heating system that cools as well as heats (not air con).

Q5: If you don't use non-traditional/eco technologies to heat your home or run your motor vehicles what are the main reasons why? Please tick all that apply.

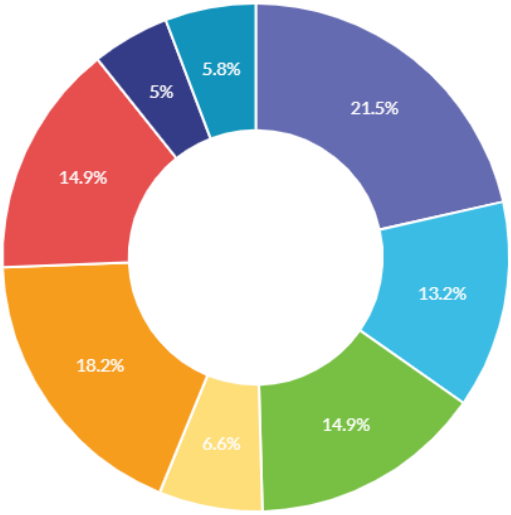


Choice	Total
A: High upfront costs	18
B: Lack of Infrastructure and practicality (e,g. limited car charging points, difficulty in retrofitting technology)	10
C: Doubt about truth of sustainability claims	7
D: Limited availability and awareness	1
E: Habit - prefer products that are familiar	4
F: Feel that personal action won't make a difference	0
G: Restricted by listed building regulations	5
H: Other - please state	10

Responses to H: Other:

- Unsure about effectiveness of an alternative heating technology and costs.
- We are in the process of replacing our oil boiler with an electric boiler (and fitting solar and battery options) - just waiting to save up the money :-).
- Restricted by landlord.
- Don't use air source heating as wouldn't generate heat to correct temperature.
- We would have solar panels but with a thatch roof it is not possible.
- We will once our house is built but currently in temporary accommodation.
- Large old house poorly insulated, research suggests heat pump not suitable.
- Planning to adopt eco-technologies for home heating/cooling in the future.
- We have a 10 year old LPG boiler which is in pretty good shape, so for the moment we don't need to change, but we could conceivably move to a pump system.
- Heat pump not currently feasible. Waiting for rooftop installation and boiler to heat water so I don't need a water tank.

Q6: Home insulation - please tick all the options that apply currently to your home. If you know your EPC rating, please add in the box at the bottom of the question.

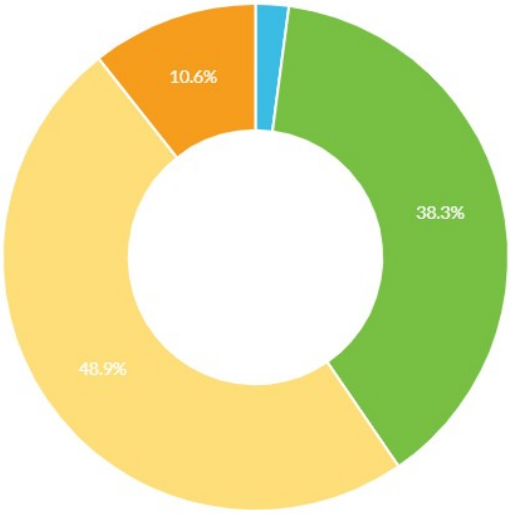


Choice	Total
A: Loft insulation at current recommended value e.g 270mm mineral wool or equivalent	26
B: Loft insulation, but below recommended value/ don't know	16
C: Cavity wall insulation	18
D: Underfloor insulation	8
E: Double glazing less than 15 years years old	22
F: Double glazing older than 15 years	18
G: Triple glazing	6
H: Other - please state in box below	7

- Mostly timber frame insulation in between timbers, some internal wood fibre insulation and some external- so not all insulation is 'cavity'.
- Working towards 270 loft, not sure how old windows are; new extension will have underfloor insulation and warm roof.
- Roof insulation.

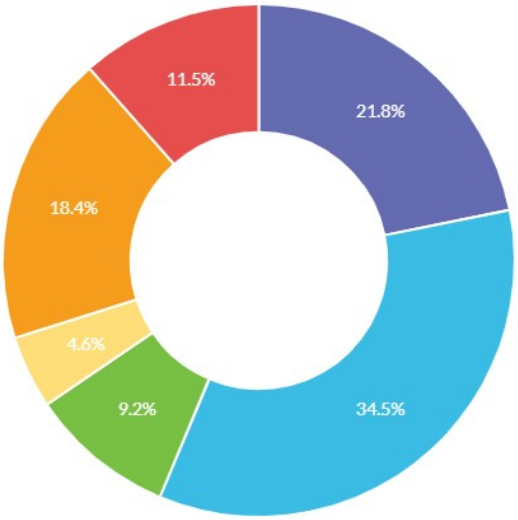
- External wall insulation.
- EPC – C.
- EPC is A plus 128 house is airtight with an MVHR (mechanical heat recovery).
- [Responded H but box left blank].

Q7: What is the approximate total annual mileage done by your household's motor vehicles?



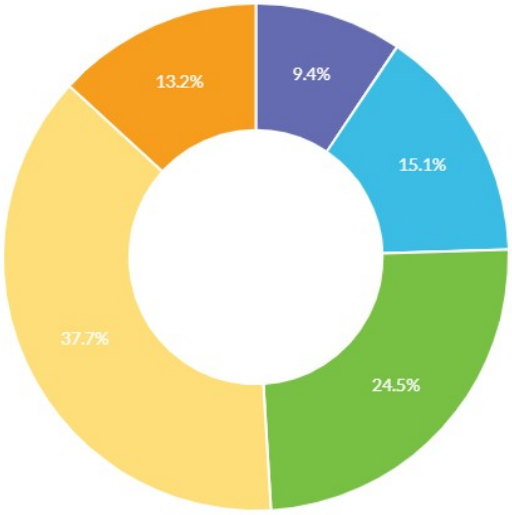
Choice	Total
A: Not applicable - no household motor vehicles	0
B: 0-3000	1
C: 3001-10000	18
D: 10001-25000	23
E: More than 25000	5

Q8: Does your household use any of the options below as alternatives to using your own motor vehicles? Please tick all that apply.



Choice	Total
A: Cycle	19
B: Train	30
C: Bus	8
D: Share lifts	4
E: Walk	16
F: Don't use alternatives	10

Q9: How often do you or someone in your household walk/cycle/use public transport or share lifts as an alternative to using your own motor vehicle? Please also describe the main barriers to using alternatives more often.



Choice	Total
A: Most days	5
B: At least once a week	8
C: At least one a month	13
D: Rarely or never	20
E: Main barriers to greater use of alternatives	7

Barriers indicated:

- Convenience and availability to destinations.
- A dedicated cycle path to a) Royston and b) Meldreth would be great.
- Lack of flexibility and convenience.
- Train cost. Bus service not convenient enough.
- Infrequent bus service and poor unsafe cycle access to Royston.
- No reliable public transport within walking distance going where I go most often.
- Convenience.

Q10: Please indicate if anyone in your household works from home.

A: No one works from home	23 (47.9%)
B: One person or more works from home	17 (35.4%)
C: One person or more works full time from home	8 (16.7%)

Q11: Are you considering using plug-in solar panels after regulations have been finalised (expected later this year)?

A: Yes	6 (12.8%)
B: No	20 (42.6%)
C: Don't know – need more information	21 (44.7%)