

# Staying Connected 3

A newsletter for our dementia-friendly walking group—  
created by the Woodland Trust and City of Trees

## What's in the Garden? - Birds of the week

Today's video from Russ Hedley is called 'The Great British Bird Off'. In this video, Russ teaches you how to tell the difference between two very similar birds—the great tit and the blue tit—and invites you to take a side in a bird watching contest!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nfP3gW2WTbc>

On the Estate, we are starting to see birds return from migration such as swallows and willow warblers. Some of our other bird species are enjoying the spring too, including owls, herons, curlew, and lapwings—our volunteers snapped a few photos which we can share with you here:



**Tawny owl (photo by David Butterfield)**



**Heron (photo by Richard Cooke)**



**Woodpecker (photo by Bev Tabor)**



**Short eared owl (photo by Bev Tabor)**



**Willow warbler (photo by Richard Cooke)**

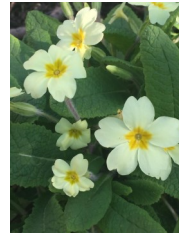
**Thank you to the Smithills Estate Wildlife volunteers for these photos.**

## Bloom and blossom

In the last newsletter we focussed on bees. We don't know about you, but we noticed LOTS of bees in the garden over Easter, buzzing around the new flowers which are blooming. This week we are looking at the flowers themselves –what's growing at the moment?

Lots of the plants we call weeds are actually really brilliant for bees and butterflies. You might have dog violets and dandelions growing in your lawn or the cracks in the paving—that makes your garden a bee's dream! Pollen and nectar are main food sources for bees, providing them with protein and sugars.

Aside from flowers, it's also the time of year for tree blossom—hawthorn, cherry and crab apple. Do you have any of these trees in your garden?



What plants are flowering in your garden? A few common examples above—dog violet, marsh marigold, garlic mustard and primrose. We'd love to see what's growing where you are! Have you noticed that particular plants are popular with bees and butterflies?

How many of the species on our spotter sheet have you seen? All of the photos on the sheet were taken in Bolton in the last week.

### Get Creative

This week Trianna has been creating sound maps of the garden. We have made sound maps before on one of our walks—essentially it's a way to focus on the various sounds in the garden (birds, insects, water, kids playing, people talking) and representing the direction you hear them on paper. It really makes you concentrate on how much is going on in the garden! Trianna shows you how to do it here:

<https://youtu.be/Qr3R8qA6RBw>

Send us a picture of your garden sound maps!

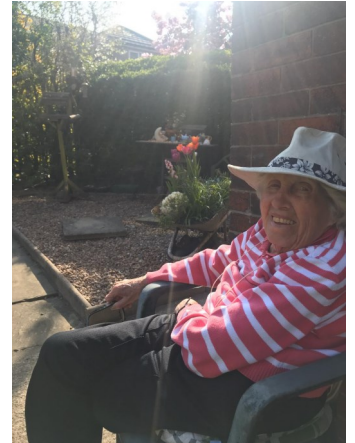
## Photos from us, and photos from you



**Karen from the Old Vicarage spotted this squirrel on a daily walk around Smithills Hall**



**Julie and Keith's garden is looking fabulous—beautiful borders there!**



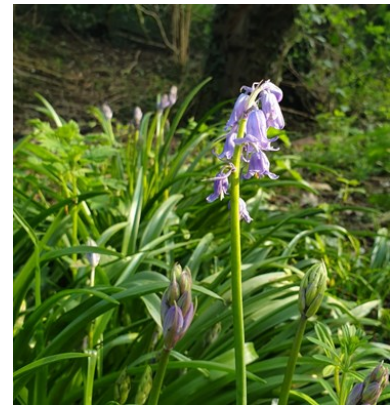
**Joyce enjoying the lovely weather in the garden**



**Following our bee theme last week, Peter and Gerry took this excellent picture of a busy bee!**



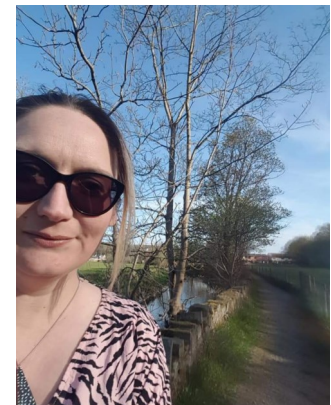
**Pete usually volunteers on our dementia friendly walks but at the moment he's enjoying time with his dogs, Bracken and Freya.**



**Trianna spotted her first bluebell of the year on a daily walk**



**Charlotte has been out walking with baby Stevie**



**Vicky tried to spot kingfishers on her walk last week**

## **Smithills podcast**

We're really pleased to be able to bring you a bit of Smithills from your home—the podcast we recorded not long before lockdown is now live!

Listen to Alex, Pete, Tracey and Vicky chatting to Adam Smith about all things Smithills here:

<https://soundcloud.com/user-925977600/>

and read Adam's blog about his visit here:

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/blog/2020/04/smithills-podcast/>

## **Keeping in contact**

Through this newsletter we aim to bring you a little bit of nature, and a craft activity—but we also want to keep up the chat. Send in your wildlife sightings and photos, or just tell us about how you are doing! You can do this in the following ways:

**Email— [smithillsestate@woodlandtrust.org.uk](mailto:smithillsestate@woodlandtrust.org.uk)**

## **Finally... a word from us**

It's great to have everyone join us during this time. We hope you have enjoyed our newsletter. We hope that when we return to our walks together, we return stronger and happier. Please look after each other and keep safe.

[www.woodlandtrust.org.uk](http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk)

[www.cityoftrees.org.uk](http://www.cityoftrees.org.uk)