



PLANET WIMBORNE

Planet Wimborne Newsletter

January 2026

Happy New Year everyone! Lots to look forward to this year - not least because Wimborne is Town of Culture in 2026. As it says on the Town Council website:

“Our theme, ‘Bridging the Past and Future’, will deliver a year-long programme of events and activities that will strengthen our community and improve access to culture for everyone. We will combine heritage and traditions with innovative technologies and create a programme of events that appeal to residents and visitors of all ages”.

Planet Wimborne is planning to be involved in a number of different activities connected with this programme of events, which will be officially launched on 18th February. In the meantime, keep an eye on the Town of Culture website for news of what’s happening: <https://wimborne2026.com/>.

This edition of the PW Newsletter provides an update on what’s been happening in the area. We would welcome any stories for our next edition. Please email planetwimborne@gmail.com.

Wimborne Music Quiz

As a contribution to Wimborne Town of Culture, Planet Wimborne has been working on a walking trail around the town, focusing on its musical heritage. So here’s a few questions to test your knowledge about local musicians:

1. Which Wimborne musician had a massive international hit in 1976, entitled ‘*Year of the Cat*’?
2. Which former Mayor of Wimborne was a member of Wimborne’s longest-running punk band, *The Void*?
3. Who was recently awarded the Hometown Harmony Award for his services to local musical culture?

4. Which classical composer from Wimborne studied with Vaughan Williams, and wrote choral works including *'The Singing Friar'* and *'The Christmas Triptych'*?
5. Which internationally renowned folk musician has recently written songs about his childhood in Wimborne, namely *'Fairy Falls'* and *'Suburban Pines'*?

Quiz answers below.

Planet Wimborne News

Join the Steering Group!

At present, not all of the Community Groups are represented on the Steering Group, so if you would like to join the latter, please get in touch. We still need volunteers to join our Campaigns sub-group. Please email planetwimborne@gmail.com if you are interested in helping with this, or any other roles within PW.

Invitation to Planet Wimborne AGM

You are invited to come along to our AGM on Wednesday 21st January 2026 at 7pm for a 7.30pm start at the Lion Hotel. This is an opportunity to meet the Trustees and hear about our work over the past year and what our plans are for the coming one. The agenda and papers will be available through the website in due course.

We look forward to seeing you there.

Call for members for a new Community Energy Group

Following on from our last newsletter, we are keen for a new community energy group to be formed. The new group will focus on the opportunities for the installation of renewable energy to cut bills and carbon emissions. Please email planetwimborne@gmail.com to express an interest in joining this group.

To whet your appetite, please take a look at the Winderful wind app (<https://winderful.uk/>) to see UK wind production and you can see the current energy mix of the National Grid here: <https://grid.iamkate.com/>.

Dorset COP 2025 - Turning environmental ambition into action

Over 300 delegates attended the third Dorset Conference of the Parties (COP) on Saturday 1st November 2025 at The Exchange,

Sturminster Newton. The COP aims to provide an opportunity for community led groups to inspire each other, share experiences and build networks. There was a full programme of talks and workshops covering many themes, from energy, waste, food, transport to how to communicate about climate justice in a changing world.

Highlights included:

Howard Johns of People Owned Power (POP)

(<https://www.pop.energy/>) gave an inspirational talk about how they are empowering communities to install roof top solar and battery systems to turn their towns into power stations.

Members of Planet Shaftesbury

(<https://www.planetshaftesbury.org/>) talked about their green wheel concept to create wildlife corridors to support nature recovery in the town.

Mark Chivers (Zero Carbon Dorset) (<https://www.dorset2030.com/>) provided a much valued workshop on how climate activists and communities need to fight for social justice and counter the far right rhetoric on climate change.

The COP provided the space for people to hear inspiring stories that are already happening from around the county and take that energy to create change. The date and location for the 4th COP will be announced in due course. You can find out more about the Dorset COP here: <https://dorsetcop.info/>

National Emergency Briefing

At the National Emergency Briefing on the climate and nature crisis in Westminster on 28th November 2025, over 1,200 people heard leading UK experts set out the escalating threats facing our country - and how genuine emergency action will protect lives, livelihoods and national security.

The organisers of the event are keen to spread the word. You can see the introduction from Chris Packham and the 9 expert briefings here: <https://www.nebriefing.org/>.

You can also take action (<https://www.nebriefing.org/take-action>) by calling for a televised national emergency briefing or writing to your MP to ask them to watch the briefings. Planet Wimborne did contact Vikki Slade about the briefing but she was unable to attend (although she was well aware of the event and its importance). We understand Cllr Nick Ireland, leader of Dorset Council, did attend the briefing.

There is a documentary film about the national emergency in preparation and we have registered an interest in hosting it.

Planet Wimborne and U3A

U3A is a volunteer-run organisation that offers a programme of activities for those no longer in permanent employment. PW is currently developing a group that will focus on green issues and the activities of its associated community groups. It is hoped that the sessions will begin in late April 2026, and run for the ten week summer term, with 2 hour sessions every two weeks, in the first instance. We anticipate a broad range of activities, including field trips, discussions and practical tasks. The groups will be open only to U3A members, but we hope that this collaboration will increase awareness of Planet Wimborne in the local community. Further details will become available at <http://www.wimborneu3a.org.uk/>

New plan to restore and protect Dorset's environment

A new local nature recovery strategy (<https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/dorset-s-local-nature-recovery-strategy>) has been adopted to help restore and protect Dorset's natural environment over the next decade. The Dorset Local Nature Recovery Strategy maps out opportunity areas and clear actions to reverse declines in nature. It was developed by Dorset Council in partnership with BCP Council and Natural England and reflects the views of local farmers, communities and environmental experts.

The strategy will guide planning, land management, climate resilience, and public health. It sets out practical steps to meet the national goal of protecting or managing 30% of land, rivers, and seas for nature by 2030. It also sets out 13 priorities, supported by detailed habitat maps showing where efforts will make the biggest difference. These include restoring grasslands, woodlands, hedgerows and heathlands through better planting and improving rivers, lakes, and wetlands, including Dorset's rare chalk streams. Other priorities include protecting coastal areas, creating space for natural habitats to recover and enhancing urban green spaces.

The strategy showcases how farmers are adopting more sustainable practices to boost biodiversity. Reinstating natural processes is also a priority, such as floodplain reconnection and peatland restoration. It

also sets out how to support farmers to adopt floodplain reconnection and peatland renewal.

Using nature-based solutions to respond to climate change and connecting people with nature are key planks underpinning the strategy. There are also actions setting out how to safeguard 55 high priority wildlife species.

Delivering the strategy will involve partnerships with landowners, local groups, and businesses, supported by funding opportunities such as biodiversity net gain and farming grants.

You can also get involved by joining Nature Recovery Dorset (<https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/nrd-network>) where you can record your own actions or read about what others are doing to get ideas.

Wimborne Town Trails

Planet Wimborne is involved in a Town of Culture project to deliver monthly town trails to engage as wide an audience as possible in cultural events and activities. PW is working in partnership with Wimborne Minster Town Council (WMTC) and Wimborne BID and are keen to deliver a mural trail around the town. This would involve both external murals and artworks in businesses. Such mural trails have proved popular as a way to attract people to visit towns, such as in Putney (<https://positivelyputney.co.uk/putneys-spring-art-trail/>). The underpass mural, completed in 2025 involving Wimborne BID, Beaucroft College and a local artist, is a great example of what we want to achieve (<https://stouravonmagazine.co.uk/street-art-masterpiece-unveiled-a-s-wimbournes-new-mural-officially-opens/>).

Salisbury provides another example (<https://www.salisburyjournal.co.uk/news/24292424.tech-moon-completes-salisbury-riverside-creatures-mural/>).

The provisional monthly trail list (showing who is leading them) is:

Jan - Wimborne Music Trail (Planet Wimborne (PW))

Feb - Pre-loved trail (PW)

Mar - Re-launch Bee Trail (PW)

April - Paint river across town (PW with BID and Town Council)

May - Literary festival trail (BID)

June - Mural trail - both internal & external featuring artwork of all kinds (PW/BID/Town Council). Businesses will be encouraged to install artwork.

July - Re-launch Tree trail (PW/Town Council)

Aug - High Street Safari (BID to investigate theme options)

Sept - Food festival trail (BID)

Oct - Re-launch Green Trail (PW)

Nov - Dinonovember trail (BID)

Dec - Xmas window trail (BID)

Each trail will link a number of points of interest that can be followed around the town on foot (or by mobility aids) and the surrounding area. They will be designed to appeal to as wide an audience as possible with facts and figures about the topics and will be as accessible as possible (although there may be some access issues). Where possible the trail will extend out from the town centre to link to the suburbs. Each trail description and supporting information will be available on-line and also as leaflets stocked at key outlets, such as MED, FairGround Shop, Town Council office etc.

Each trail will need to demonstrate its economic, social and environmental impacts (both positive and negative) as these are the three pillars of sustainability and will include a call to action for people to take for themselves, fellow citizens or the planet. In this way all the trails' themes will include sustainability in their design and engagement with audiences.

Wimborne Community Theatre receives Grant from Talbot Village Trust

WCT is thrilled to have received a grant from Talbot Village Trust of £5000. This will enable the group to begin the next stage in developing a community theatre production on the theme of HOME which will be performed in summer 2026 by WCT members and other local people of all ages.

WCT has already been asking local people *Is Home a place or a feeling?* and these ideas and thoughts will be reflected in the performances, as well as showing historical stories relating to Wimborne and surrounding area.

Jeff Hart, Chair of WCT steering group, said, *'Wimborne Community Theatre is very grateful for the TVT grant. This will enable us to develop our next project 'Home' which we have recently trialled with a small production on Wimborne Minster Green. We have new*

members, a track record of over 30 years and an ambition to mount our best production ever! Wimborne is the 2026 Dorset Town of Culture and we are hopeful 'Home' will be part of this exciting project.'

Nicholas Ashley-Cooper, Chairman of Talbot Village Trust, said: *"We are delighted to provide funding that enables Wimborne Community Theatre to take the next step in developing this ambitious community-led production. Their work plays an important role in giving local people a voice and creating shared cultural experiences. We are proud to support a project that brings creativity, heritage, and community spirit together."*

WCT has been making community theatre in the landscape or in unusual non-theatre spaces for over thirty years. This next production will be directed by Dorset-based theatre director, Rohan Gotobed, and workshops will commence in early 2026.

Recently joined member, Saff Pab, said, *'I love how inclusive the group is, no matter your age, gender, health, anything, you are welcome in this group; it really gives a sense of community. '*

Long-time member, Dave Arkell said, *'Every stage of a project is organic from start to finish, and we are all valued as participants'*

Gill Horitz, said on behalf of WCT, *'Many of our productions begin by listening to local people's ideas on a particular theme, as part of the creative process, and from these ideas and stories we shape the narrative of the play.'*

If you would like to find out more about WCT, take a short Survey about HOME or would like to get involved, please contact us at info@wimbornecommunitytheatre.co.uk OR browse the website: www.wimbornecommunitytheatre.com



WCT with members of Jubilate Choir, performing in 'Home Sweet Home?', Phase 1 of the HOME project, as part of Wimborne Green Festival, October 2025

Spotlight on Community Groups in PW

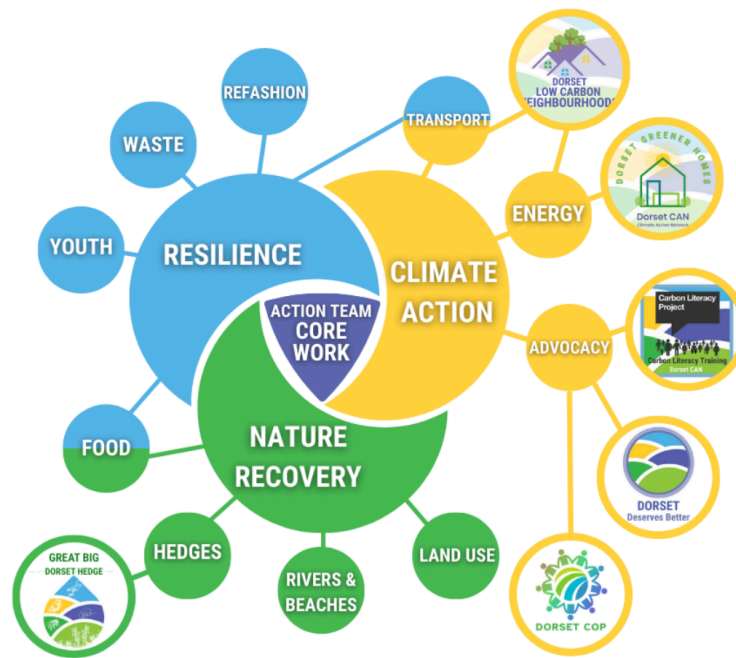
We are aiming to profile each of the Community Groups belonging to Planet Wimborne here in this Newsletter. So if your group hasn't been featured yet, please send us a brief description and details of current activities. For this issue, we'd like to welcome Dorset Climate Action Network.



DorsetCAN (Dorset Climate Action Network)

DorsetCAN is a network of community groups and individuals working together for a shared vision of a clean, green, sustainable Dorset. DorsetCAN works to inform, help and encourage families, businesses and individuals across the county to 'do their bit' to reduce their carbon footprint and minimise our contribution to the climate and nature crisis. We also work to engage with and encourage Dorset Council and BCP Council to 'do their bit' to make this happen. We act as an umbrella organisation to all the many affiliated climate and eco orientated groups across Dorset, providing support where needed. Linking likeminded groups together our Network is always growing and getting stronger. Find out about our current campaigns, events across Dorset, Action Teams, recent newsletters, updates, ideas, case studies, examples and contacts. Above all, please [join us](#) - it's free and you don't have to take an active part. The more members we have, the louder our voice is and the more we can achieve. Stronger together!

Further information: <https://www.dorsetcan.org>



QUIZ ANSWERS: 1. Al Stewart. 2. Phil Webb. 3. Rob Hoare of Square Records. 4. Christopher Le Fleming. 5. Roo Panes.

Things happening around Wimborne

You can see what is coming up [here](#). Some key dates for September and October:

10th January Saturday, 10:30 - 12:00. Wimborne Win on Waste. Save your waste and help good causes! Take items to Wimborne Methodist Church Hall, Kings Street

25th January Sunday 11.30 Wimborne War on Waste hosting a litter pick starting at Fair Ground shop in Corn Market. All ages welcome and kit available to be borrowed.

26th January Monday, 7 pm An evening of song featuring many of our local choirs, raising money for the Town Mayor's charities. Strongly recommended! Allendale Centre.

https://www.wimborne.gov.uk/council_events/an-evening-of-song-in-aid-of-the-town-mayors-charities/

17th January Saturday, 12:00-14:00. Wimborne Repair Cafe, Methodist Church Hall, Kings Street

21st January Red squirrel appreciation day!

8th February Saturday, 10:30 - 12:00. Wimborne Win on Waste. Save your waste and help good causes! Take items to Wimborne Methodist Church Hall, Kings Street

15th February Saturday, 12:00-14:00. Wimborne Repair Cafe, Methodist Church Hall, Kings Street

18th February Wednesday, launch of Wimborne Town of Culture in the Minster Green and Walford Mill (provisionally)

1st March Sunday 11.30 Wimborne War on Waste hosting a litter pick starting at Fair Ground shop in Corn Market. All ages welcome and kit available to be borrowed.

5th March Thursday Wimborne Win On Waste offer Fancy Dress outfits for free for World Book Day. Available at the Fair Ground Shop in the Corn Market

We hope you've found some things of interest in this newsletter. If you have comments or suggestions for future topics, drop us an email at planetwimborne@gmail.com
