

Holbeton News Climate Change & Environmental section

November 2023

Tip of the Month: peat free compost



‘For decades environmentalists have warned that digging up peatlands for use in gardens is devastating for wildlife and a huge source of carbon emissions. Monty Don, presenter of the BBC show Gardeners’ World, has described using peat as “an act of eco-vandalism” and said there is no justification for gardeners to use it”.

Gardeners often complain that peat-free compost is just not good enough, and that for certain plant types only peat will do. So is it just too hard? Professor Alistair Griffiths, director of science at the RHS, said nurseries specialising in every single plant group have now shifted entirely away from peat, showing it is possible. He compared the shift from peat to the switch from petrol and diesel to electric cars. “There are changes that you have to make, and that is what is happening, but the industry needs support to do it,” he said. The RHS has published a list of nurseries that have gone peat free (<https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/peat/peat-free-nurseries>). “Gardeners want to be responsible in what they are doing.” ben.spencer@sundaytimes.co.uk

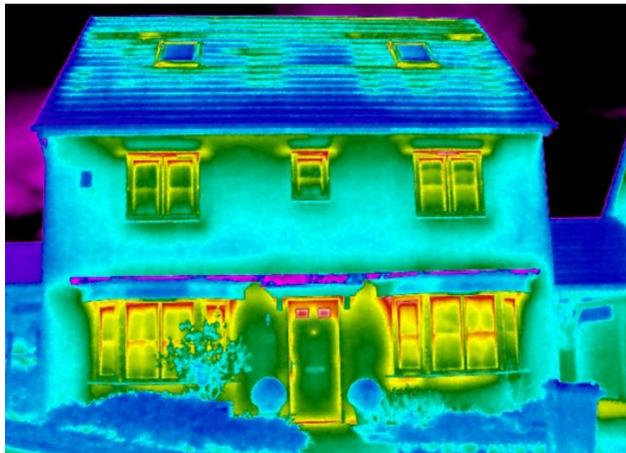
The RHS website offers extensive advice on how to choose and use peat free compost and even how to make your own using leaf mould and other organic material (<https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/peat>).

Gardeners World online also offers comprehensive advice on choosing peat free compost (<https://www.gardenersworld.com/product-guides/growing/best-peat-free-composts/>).

There are such a lot of keen gardeners in the community that many of you may be able to share further tips and advice on this important subject. If so we would love to print them in this section of the Holbeton News.

Anna West

Thermographic imaging for households in Holbeton



Anything that could lead to a reduction in heating costs and in the use of fossil fuels would be welcome.

The parish council is purchasing an infrared camera to help anyone living in the parish to get free advice on how their home can reduce its heating bills.

The camera will be used to do heat loss surveys. The aim is to offer thermographic imaging of the homes of those in the community who request a survey. Two parishioners will be trained in the use of the camera and the interpretation of its images.

Offering this service should help parishioners to identify the most effective ways in which they might improve their home's heating bills by minimising heat loss. Not only will it help those thinking of investing in more insulation. It could also help those who do not plan to spend money on their home.

Watch this space for information on when the service will start.

The Coastguards beach official bathing status application

This is now ready to submit to DEFRA. Preparations have included the documenting of 100 or more bathers in the water during 2 days over the summer and a public consultation. Over 1,000 responses to the consultation including Holbeton Parish Council were backed up by letters of support from South Hams District Council, The Flete Estate and our MP, Sir Gary Streeter.



Thank you to all those who have helped so far.

DEFRA are not expected to announce whether the application has been successful for another 6 months.

Read more about WATER using the following Sustainable South Hams link:

<https://www.sussh.org/post/introducing-water-wild-about-the-erme-river>

Government review of Dartmoor



There is currently an Independent Evidence Review on Dartmoor. It is a crucial inquiry into the state of nature on Dartmoor. An expert panel has been commissioned by DEFRA. It will be chaired by David Fursdon, a local landowner and also the current Lord Lieutenant for Devon.

It will work with local farmers and stakeholders to provide an independent perspective on the management of the protected sites. The review will make recommendations on the most effective grazing and management regimes that would deliver improvements on the SSSI sites across Dartmoor so they can maintain or achieve favourable condition.

This could have major implications for whether this amazing place finally starts to recover its lost biodiversity and carbon sinks - or continues to decline.

Holbeton Parish Council's submission to the consultation by the review body includes the following:

“Our Council represents the parishioners of Holbeton. We declared a climate emergency in December 2019. For us, not necessarily in order of importance, the following are particularly relevant:

- the current efforts of Dartmoor National Park to re-wild parts of the moor alongside the creation of partial dams to help to reduce the amount of flood water entering the River Erme. The associated benefit from this of reducing discharges into the river of pollutants from water treatment plants with the increasing frequency of exceptional rainfall due to climate change.
- the health of our river, its estuary and the reversal of habitat loss with consequent improvements in biodiversity not only on the moor but also as far away as our estuary, especially if there are also effective wildlife corridors on the land between them.
- the rescue of the peat bogs will also enhance carbon sequestration as hopefully will the planting of trees on Dartmoor.
- the international importance of Dartmoor and its accessibility as an amenity for parishioners and their guests in ways that do not interfere with the natural habitat.”

Feedback on this monthly environmental contribution to Holbeton News

For the last 12 months Holbeton Parish Council has sponsored this 4 page section in Holbeton News on climate change and environmental issues.

We would really welcome your thoughts, comments and criticisms of these pages. Do you read them? If so, do you find the contents helpful? How can we improve?

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Last chance to invest in Yealm Community Energy's share offer – it is closing soon!

Yealm Community Energy's share offer launched this summer and is due to close at the end of November 2023.

We invite you to invest in 3 local solar farms and to help us support more inspiring projects locally.

Without your support YCE will not be able to continue to offer grants to our local communities.

Minimum investment is £250 and Maximum £100,000. YCE is offering people their last chance to become shareholders. All our investor members will be offered a target 6% per annum on their investment, an equal say in how YCE is run and the opportunity to make any investment do good. The project over its lifetime (27years) has the potential to give back over £7M (after running costs) into our local communities. This is significant. YCE have already donated £100,000 to local projects via its Community Benefit Fund. You can read YCE's share offer document and its business plan on our website www.yealmenergy.co.uk and we are using positive investment platform Ethex for the share offer www.ethex.org.uk Capital at Risk.

If you would like to know anything further or chat directly to one of YCE's directors with specific questions we would be very happy to hear from you by emailing info@yealmenergy.co.uk

Help us to unlock this lasting legacy for our local parishes!

sponsored by Holbeton Parish Council