



Sustainable Blewbury

Blewbury Village Society Environment Group

A review of current activities February 2011





SUSTAINABLE BLEWBURY

OUTLINE

- Introduction – (Mike E)
- BEI – energy conservation - taking carbon out of the equation (Hugh)
- Travel and Transportation (Mike M); Dark Skies (Mike M)
- Food and Farming (Eric and Sarah). Local food. Permaculture. Village produce.
- Waste and Recycling
- Natural Environment and Heritage (Millbrook Project (Mike, James); Downland Project (Peter); Orchards and Biodiversity (Mike); Village skills (architectural heritage) (Anita).
- Looking ahead (Mike E)

LUNCH

- Community Conservation in Oxfordshire (Cynth Napper ONCF)

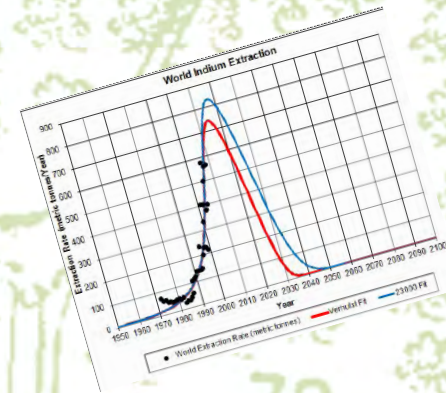
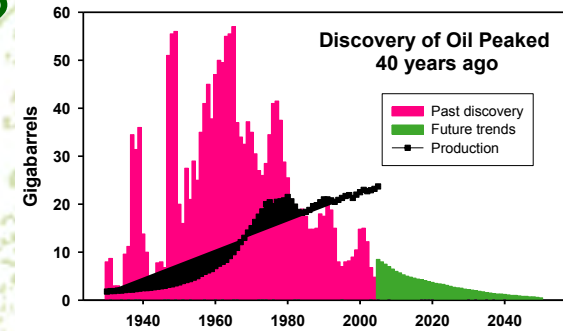


Why are we doing this?

“Think globally – act locally”



In the face of climate change and global warming we need to lower our dependency on fossil fuels and to explore ways in which we as a village can adapt to a lower carbon standard of living, whilst maintaining a good quality of life

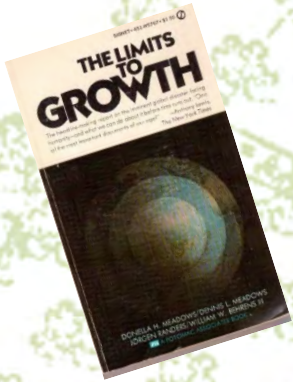


A Farm for the Future BBC2



SUSTAINABLE BLEWBURY

Life after growth





Blewbury Energy Initiative Update

Renewable Energy Installations

Blewbury now has:

5 heat pumps for central heating

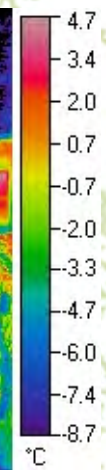
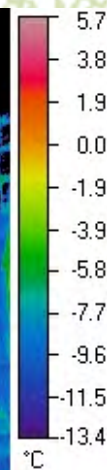
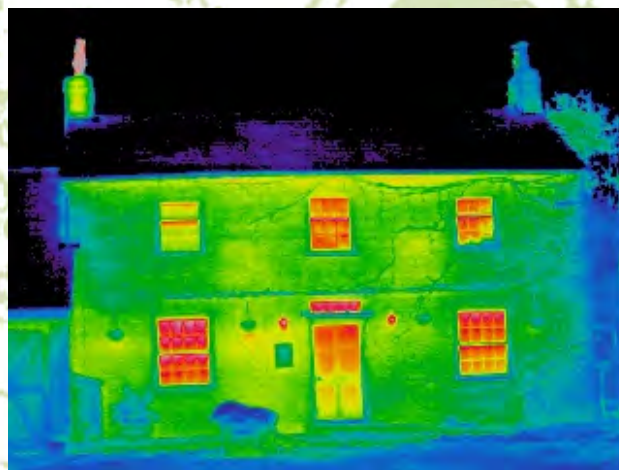
12 solar thermal for hot water

17 photo voltaic electric generators



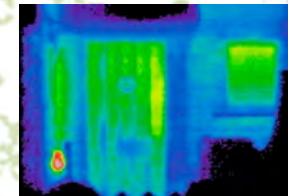
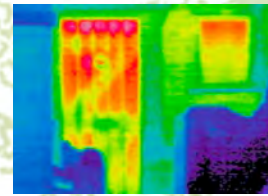
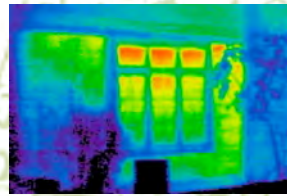
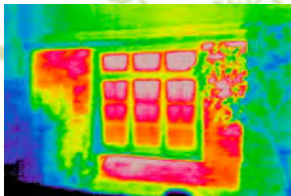
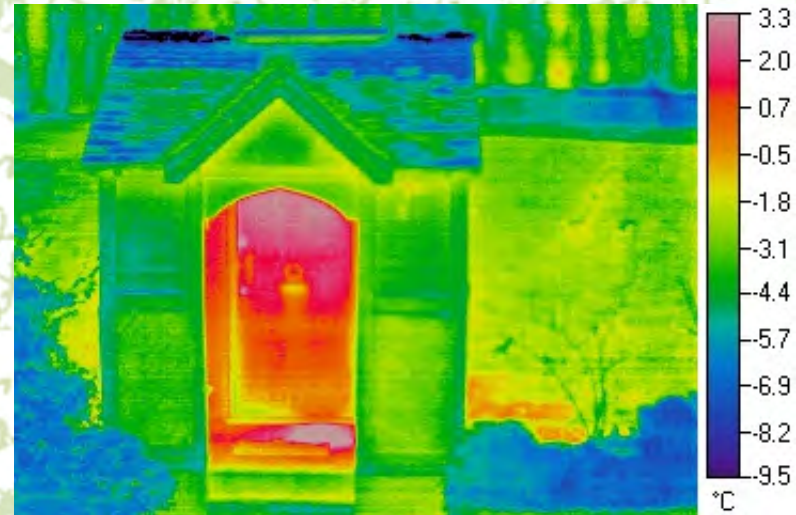
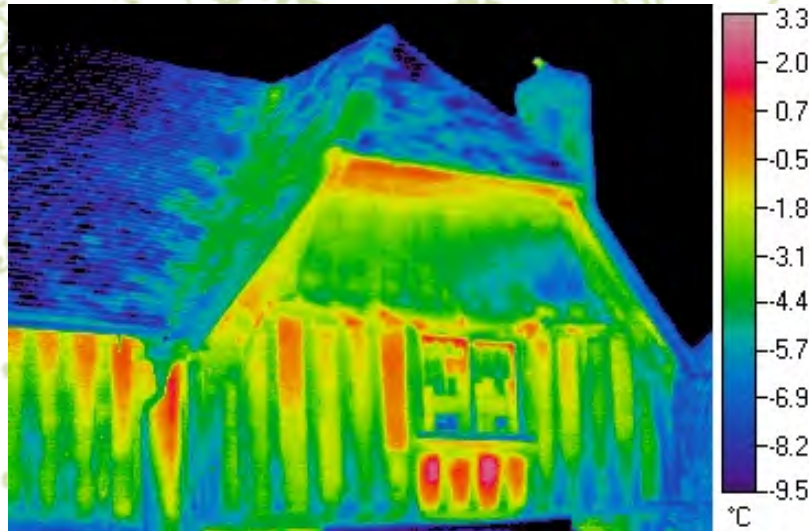


Blewbury Energy Initiative Update





Blewbury Energy Initiative Update



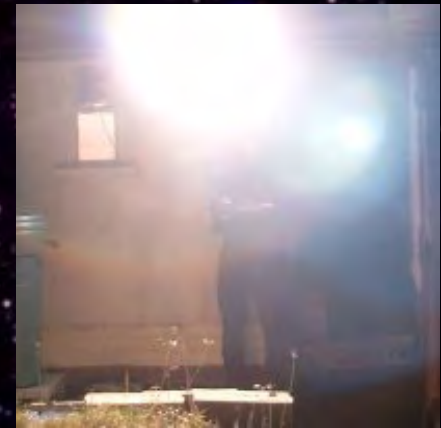
Thermal Imaging

Travel and Transportation



Dark skies – reducing light pollution

Light pollution is increasing, leaving less and less countryside where we can enjoy seeing the stars.



Outside lights can contribute to sky glow and can also create glare and light trespass affecting others



Food and farming

The best way to reduce dependence on oil and do our bit to reduce carbon emissions is to shop locally, produce food here in Blewbury and promote growing methods that aren't dependent on oil based chemicals and fertilizers. And...whenever we shop, shop ethically!

A photograph showing a variety of locally sourced goods arranged on a light-colored wooden shelf against a plain white background. From left to right, the items include: a stack of folded colorful fabrics; several jars and bottles of condiments like ketchup and mustard; a round flatbread or pizza box; a small jar of jam; a bottle of olive oil; a bag of Pericol brand coffee; a bag of nuts or seeds; a box of tea; a whole pineapple; a dark glass bottle of wine; a small can of tomatoes; and a bunch of green grapes.

Food and farming

The best way to reduce dependence on oil and do our bit to reduce carbon emissions is to shop locally, produce food here in Blewbury and promote growing methods that aren't dependent on oil based chemicals and fertilizers. And...whenever we shop, shop ethically!

A photograph showing a variety of locally sourced goods arranged on a light-colored wooden shelf against a plain white background. From left to right, the items include: a stack of folded colorful fabrics; several jars and bottles of condiments like ketchup, mustard, and honey; a round flatbread or pizza box; a small jar of jam; a box of instant noodle cups; a bag of Pericol brand pasta; a large pineapple; a bottle of red wine; a can of tomatoes; and a bunch of green grapes.

Village Produce Stall



- A place for Blewbury and area residents to buy local produce ...
- ... and for small local producers to sell what they grow or make
 - Including surplus from peoples' gardens
- Started in May 2010 – ran every Saturday morning until end of Sept.
- Run by a rota of volunteer helpers
- Supplied by a gradually increasing group of producers
- Produce sold included:
 - Plants
 - Vegetables, fruit and herbs
 - Flowers
 - Free-range eggs
 - Cakes and biscuits
 - Preserves
- Producers get 90% of the takings
 - Sustainable Blewbury keeps 10%, to cover costs and improvements



Village Produce Stall (2)

- Almost all the produce was sold each week
- Response to the stall was very favourable
- Starts again on 7 May – every Saturday through summer and early autumn
- As it becomes a regular feature, we hope more producers and customers will use it consistently
- Good to see food being produced and consumed locally
 - Cuts down on food miles
 - Promotes sustainable practices in food production



Permaculture Project



- Permaculture principles

- Work with nature to create a self-sustaining eco-system that pretty much looks after itself
- In the process enrich the soil, producing a good yield every year and greatly improving biodiversity.
- Encourage beneficial relationships
 - Wide range of species so that all become more resilient and less susceptible to pests and diseases
 - Plants with different functions can enhance each other's growth, for example some may deter pests while others fix nitrogen
 - Create habitats for wildlife (which also enhances diversity)
- Work with nature, not against
 - Water, sun and shade, wind direction, soil variation
- Create no waste
 - Produce nothing that has to be removed from the site and thrown away
 - Avoid having to bring anything in, once the initial planting stage is over



Permaculture Project Aims



- Create a small forest and orchard garden
 - Produce fruit, perennial vegetables, herbs and wood
 - Provide a good wildlife habitat to increase biodiversity
 - Make a beautiful and pleasant place to be
- Educate by demonstrating long-term sustainable permaculture methods of growing
- Try out ideas such as companion planting to see how well they work



Woodway Permaculture Project



- Plot is 0.4 acres, not cultivated but was used for occasional grazing
 - Quite exposed and windy, with chalky, alkaline soil
- Start by planting a mixed native-plant hedge on south and west sides
 - Will act as a shelter belt from the wind, helping other plants
 - Some of the 400 plants will produce edible fruits and berries
 - Will provide nourishment and shelter to wildlife.
 - Leaf fall will begin to add organic matter to the soil, improving its structure and making it less alkaline
- Wonderful day on 12 February – planted much of the hedge
 - It was sunny (!) and we had a good crowd of helpers
 - Got a huge load of compost, made from your brown-bin contents
 - Planted hawthorn, crab apple, wild plum, blackthorn (sloe), dog rose, purging buckthorn, elder, and guelder rose
- *Still a lot of work to do! Volunteers welcome!*

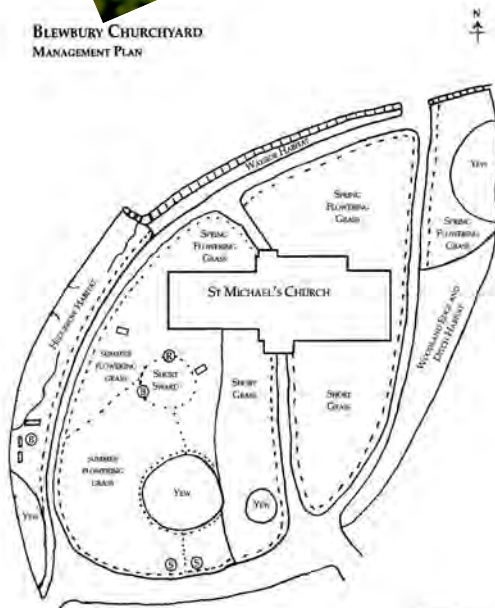
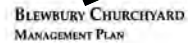


Permaculture Project Plans

- Plant a small hazel grove – coppiced to produce wood (*now done!*)
- Plant a variety of fruit trees, including cherries, medlars and quince
- Underplant them with gooseberries, redcurrants and other soft fruit
- Permaculture aims to use all available space, so plants in multiple layers
- Grow perennial herbs, vegetables and climbers – use trees for support

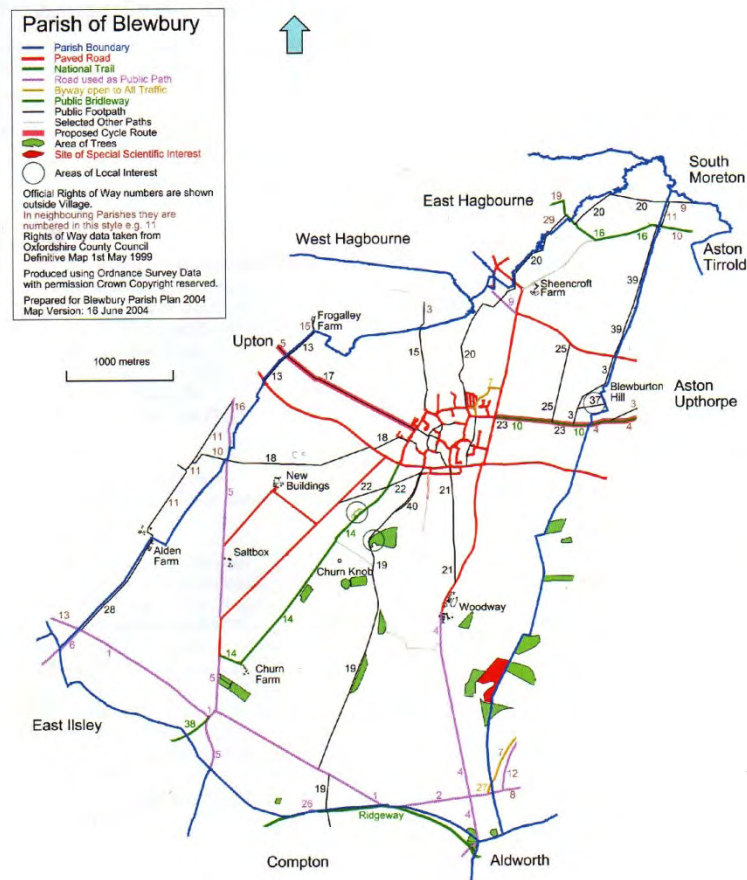


Natural Environment and Heritage

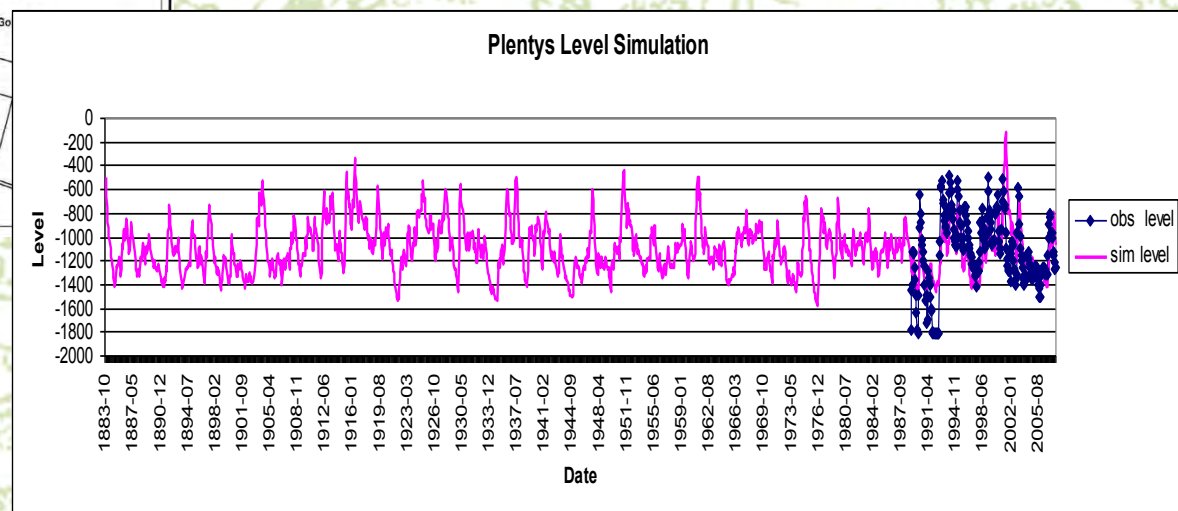
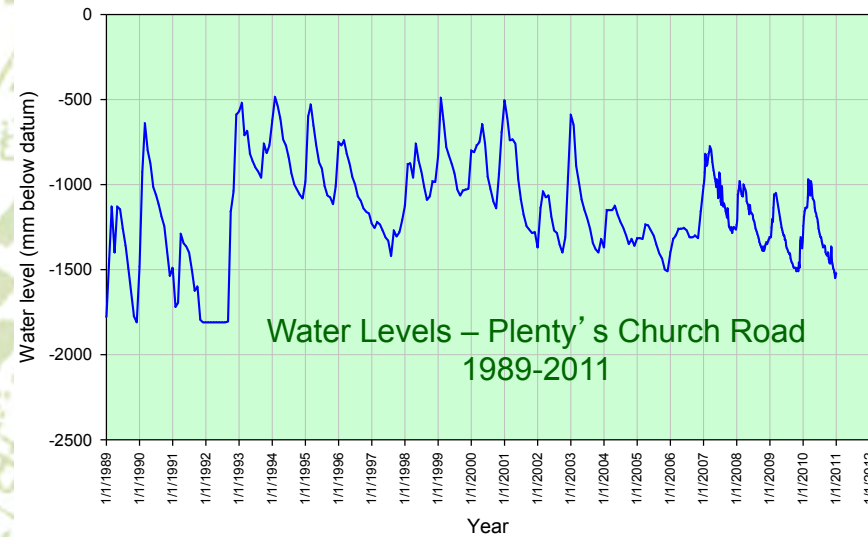
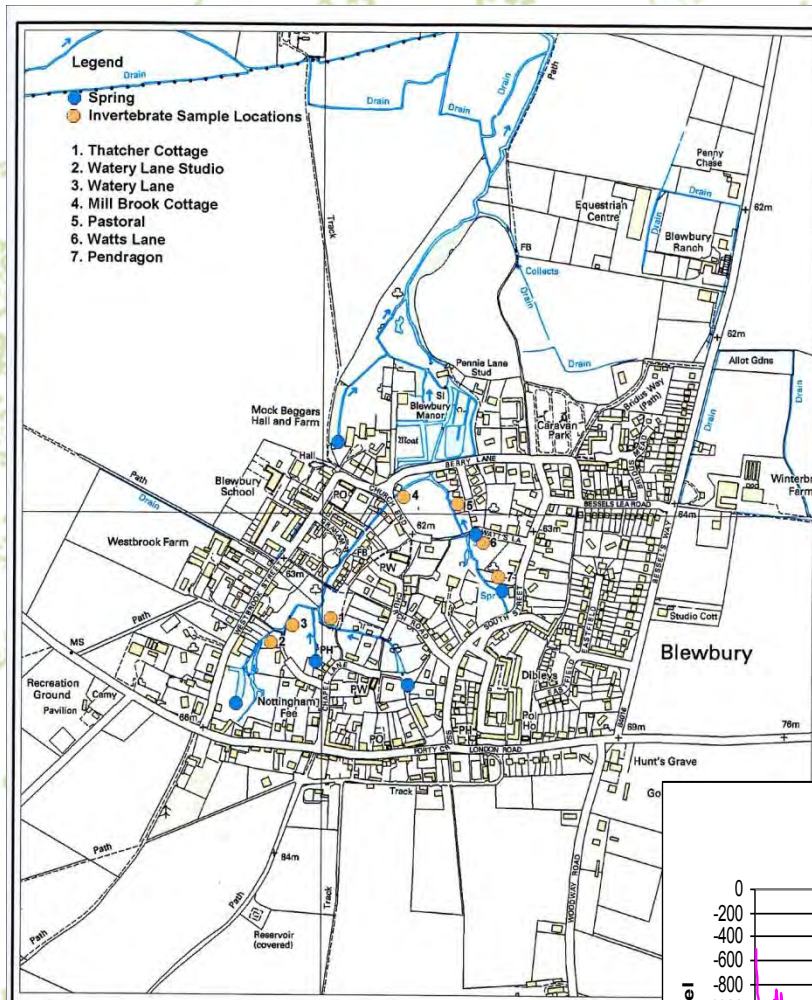




Blewbury - A Downland *and* a Wetland Village



Millbrook Project



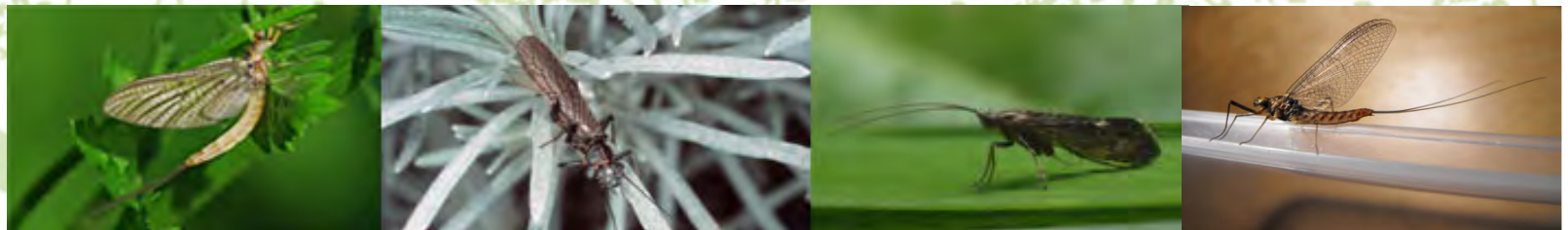
The Riverfly Partnership

The Riverfly Partnership is a network of more than sixty partner organisations, representing anglers, conservationists, entomologists, scientists, water course managers and relevant authorities, working together to:

- Protect the water quality of our rivers
- Further the understanding of riverfly populations
- Actively conserve riverfly habitats

Why?

- The health of a river is dependent on many factors, three primary ones being water quality, habitat and flow
- Riverfly populations reflect the health of our rivers and still waters
- They are sensitive indicators of water quality and commonly referred to as the rivers 'canary'.



River Invertebrate Monitoring

- We are working with the Riverfly Partnership, the Environment Agency and BBOWT to co-ordinate the monitoring and to choose sites.
- This will include Blewbury village and the water course as far downstream as South Moreton
- 4-5 sampling sites will be identified and monthly “Kick” sampling undertaken
- Sampling will start in March
- Findings are recorded in the Riverfly data tool for interpretation
- Volunteers and Training – The next course is on the 14th to 15th in Leckford
- March – presentation to the Eco-Council at Blewbury school

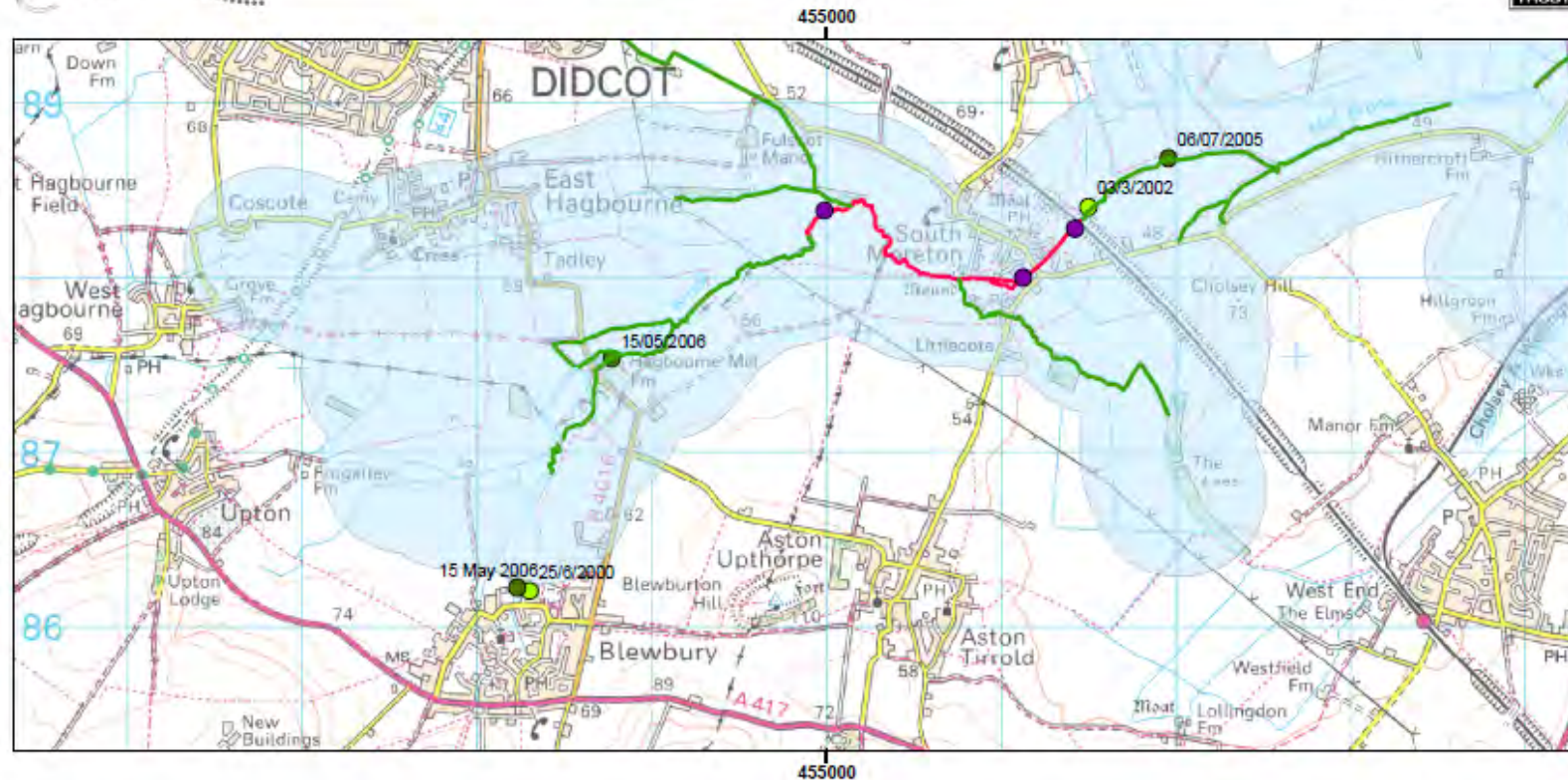


Water Voles

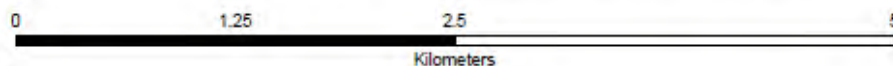


Water Voles on the Mill Brook

Berkshire
Buckinghamshire
Oxfordshire

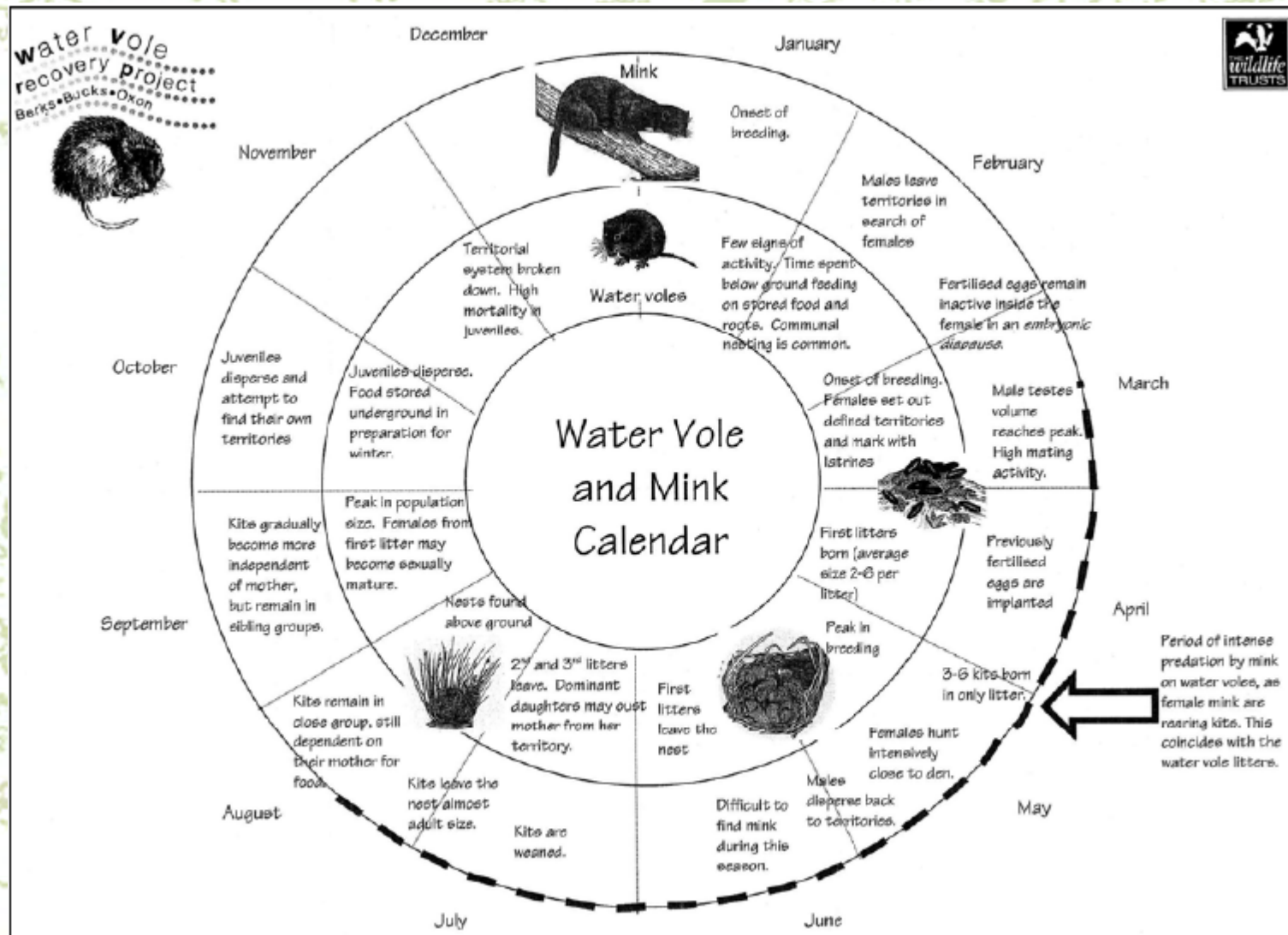


'This map is reproduced from the Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office, © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Environment Agency Licence Number : 100026380, (2004).'

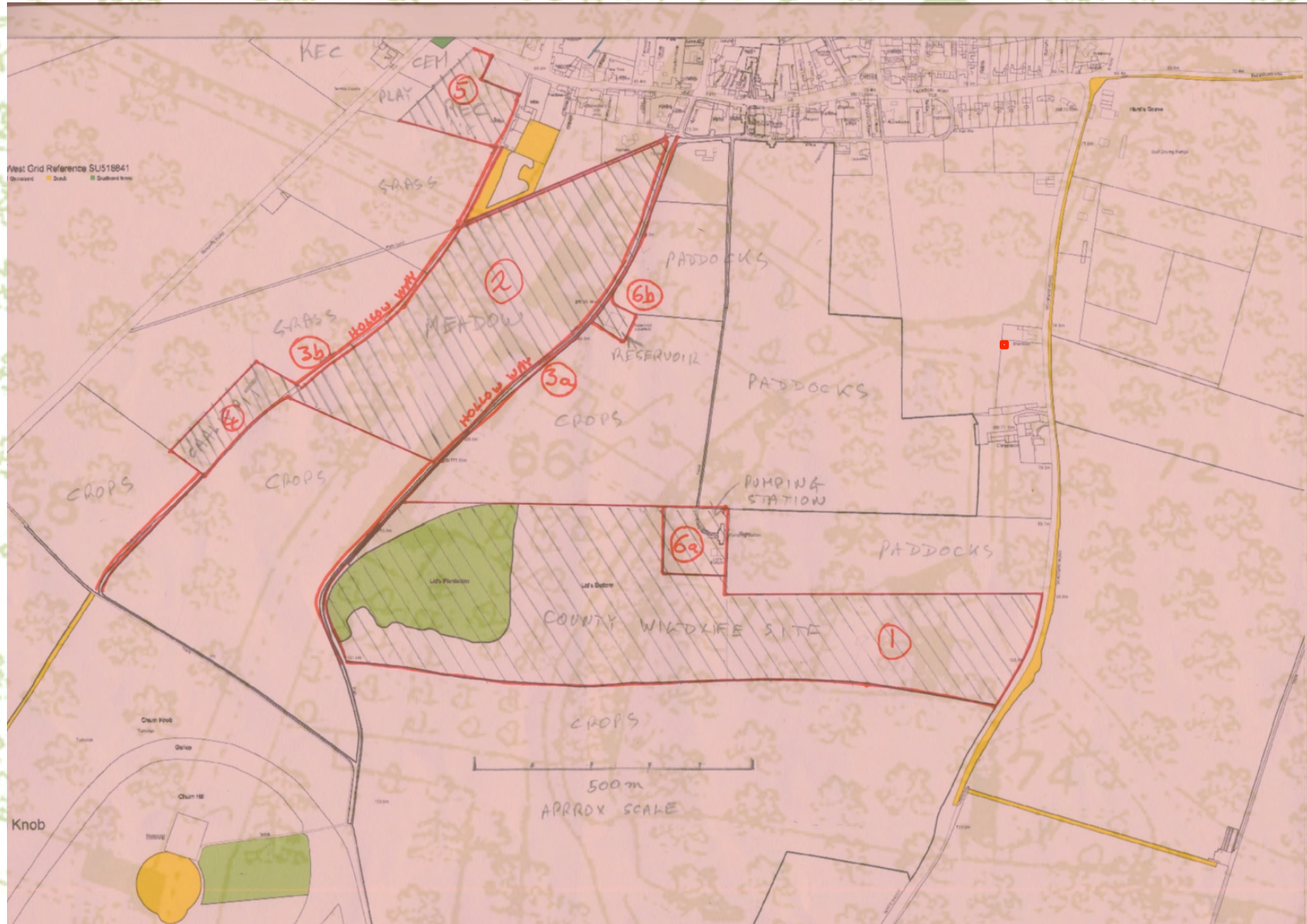


- Negative water vole survey 2006
- Positive water vole survey 2006
- Unsurveyed
- 2005-2009 Water Vole Records
- 2000-2004 Water Vole Records
- Mink raft
- Mill Brook Local Key Area

Mink Control



Downland Project



Biodiversity of Chalk Downland



Chalkhill Blue Butterflies
by Richard Lewington.

Corn Bunting
by Ian Lewington.



Harebells
by Anne Lawton

Village skills

Village fabric and architecture



A faded, sepia-toned map of a village, likely Blewbury, serves as the background. It shows a network of roads, a winding river, and numerous small buildings. Some buildings are highlighted in a darker shade. Numbers like 67, 72, 73, and 74 are visible on the map, possibly indicating specific locations or landmarks.

Future Plans

- We are not alone! – many other similar groups in Oxfordshire and around the world
- Working Groups – seeking volunteers for Downland and Millbrook
- Forthcoming events
 - Climate week Film evening “Beyond the Brink” – March 25th
 - Architectural Heritage (April 4th and 5th)
 - Blewbury Festival 2011
- **Watch the web site!**

Community Conservation in Oxfordshire

