



RHUBARB



THE KALEIDOSCOPE

The official magazine of The Papillon Project
for schools and their allotments

SPRING
2024





Digital artwork by Poppy Kirby



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A Chat With Matt

Did you know, according to the 'Children's People and Nature Survey', which was completed by Natural England and completed in the autumn of 2022, 83% of children and young people agreed that looking after the environment was important to them and that they wanted to do more to look after the environment? Further findings showed that 87% of children and young people agreed that being in nature made them very happy.



These official findings, without question, highlight why our charitable work is needed in schools. Last academic year, The Papillon Project impacted the lives of over 1000 young people by providing them with an opportunity to be outside and to learn how to connect and respect the environment. From learning to grow food for themselves, their school and their local community, to finding a place of temporary escapism and tranquillity, young people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds used their school allotments to gain something very positive. In some cases, school allotments help with attendance too.

For us, happy and more confident young people is why we do what we do and why we continue to work so incredibly hard, every year, to create that all-important positive outdoor experience for them. If we continue to get this one right for young people, we are helping to forge greater hope for their future in the long term, but we need to act quickly.



meet the team



From left: Poppy, Matt, Graeme, Harriet
The Papillon Project CORE Team

Alice: Kaleidoscope Creator
and Project Assitant

BIG NEWS

Matt Willer becomes BEM in New Year Honours List!

It is a very great pleasure to congratulate The Papillon Project's founder and leading light - Matt Willer - on being awarded the British Empire Medal in the 2024 New Year Honours list for services to young people. Matt has helped transform the lives of hundreds of Norfolk's young people: the honour is richly deserved and testifies to Matt's immense hard work and dedication over the five years since he established The Papillon Project. He will be presented with the honour by the Lord Lieutenant of Norfolk at a ceremony later in the year and will be invited to a Buckingham Palace garden party in the summer. -

Peter Waldron, Chair, Trustees



Award Winning Poppy!

Poppy, our amazing apprentice and Assistant Schools' Project Lead, has been awarded Best Horticultural Apprentice by New Suffolk College (which oversees Poppy's apprenticeship).

She has also been shortlisted as a finalist by Apprenticeship Norfolk in the category of Contribution to Green Apprenticeships in Norfolk. We are all incredibly proud of Poppy and all that she has achieved for herself and for The Papillon Project too! Very well done, Poppy!





Sarah's Top Tips for the Growing Season

Our very knowledgeable charity trustee Sarah Seery

Spring is springing!

Spring is an exciting time in our allotments, gardens, parks, and nature spaces with the leaves on trees opening and flowers blooming. Bees, butterflies, moths, and hoverflies are busy collecting pollen and nectar.

It can look a little quieter on the vegetable plot however do not worry, as the sun warms the soil the early sown seeds below the surface are starting to jiggle about and develop by sending out roots and shoots, before long, small seedlings start to appear above the soil and in turn grow and flourish.

Here are 10 things you can do now:

- 1. Dig in or mulch with plenty of organic matter; this will help to retain moisture in the soil and will help when we have dry periods without rain.**
- 2. Sow seeds now, don't forget to label so you remember what you have sown.**
- 3. Plastic fruit punnets from the supermarket make great seed trays for growing seedlings.**
- 4. Start planting potatoes and onions and you can sow broad beans, cabbages, and carrots directly into the vegetable beds.**
- 5. Radishes are very quick growing, sow seeds now and they will be ready to eat 30 to 35 days after sowing.**

Sarah's Top Tips for the Growing Season

6. The warmth of spring sun encourages weeds to grow faster than the seeds sown in the allotment, use a hoe to remove unwanted weeds, we don't want them taking away any of the nutrition from the soil that the seeds need.
7. Pest control: Use old tea bags and coffee granules amongst plants to help to discourage pests and vermin.
8. Start collecting 'pea sticks,' these are small branches or twigs at least 50 cm long that can be stuck into the soil to support peas when growing, you can also stick the 'pea sticks' into the ground next to other vegetables growing and they help to keep pigeons off the young growing crops.
9. Flat stones make great plant labels when written on with paint or a permanent marker and then placed next to a row of seeds/seedlings.
10. Use disused clothes and straw to make a traditional scarecrow which is a popular method of deterring birds.

Bonus Tip - Squash Pits!

Squash plants can be the greediest, thirstiest veg you can grow. Once they become strong small plants, they will be ready to plant out, they love space and ideally in a pre-mulched bed, but for an even better treat you can start a squash pit for them now as part of your Spring allotment jobs list:

Make a squash pit by digging a hole a few feet wide and deep and fill with the kind of scraps you would normally add to a compost bin – such as veg peelings, stalks, and leaves from tidying the garden and a few bits of cardboard, chop them up with a spade as you go along. After a few weeks, cover them with a couple of good shovels full of compost and wait until planting time. The scraps will not only start to decompose, adding to the nutrient mix of your compost-covered soil, but they will also retain water for our thirsty, cucurbit friends.

Allotment Transformers

SPOTLIGHTING YOUR RECENT ALLOTMENT PROGRESS



Cocoon Boxes



Norfolk secondary schools and colleges have recently received their annual 'Cocoon Boxes' to help inspire the 2024 growing season. This year's boxes also included a generous collection of kindly donated seeds, all beautifully packaged by Poppy. Also new to this year we included an informative flyer full of advice and positive energy for schools.



Butterfly Boost



This growing season a handful of very helpful schools are piloting the exciting Butterfly Boost project. Schools are bulk growing seedlings to then share them amongst neighbouring schools.

THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT

A support network for school & college allotments
Spreading the inspiration and making connections for a better future!

This project follows the charity's 'The Butterfly Effect' initiative, which highlights the value of community networks to young people.



Health and Safety

Health and safety is incredibly important on a school allotment. Although gardening is deemed a 'low risk activity' for young people, it's still super sensible to have a suitable risk assessment in place to help prevent accidents from occurring. It's so vital that all involved at a school allotment have a positive experience, especially the young people, and this certainly won't happen if people get injured.

We are also very mindful that creating a risk assessment for your school allotment is an 'addition of the addition' for very busy teachers, so please do get in touch with us if we can help get your risk assessment started!
We are here to help!



Allotment Champions!

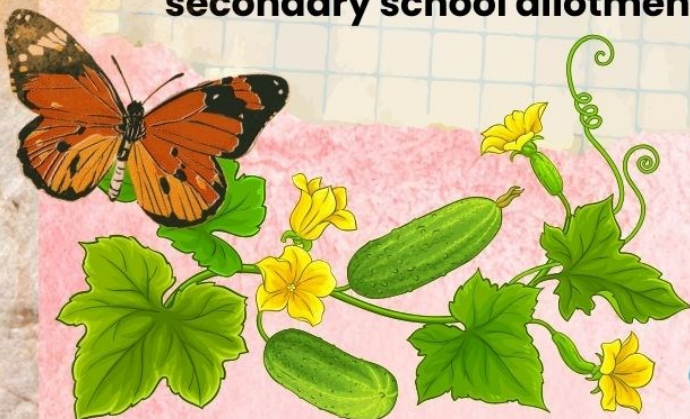


Massive thank you to King's Lynn Academy who raised £504.05 for The Papillon Project with a non-school uniform day to say thank you to the charity and to Poppy, our Assistant Schools' Project Lead, for helping create their school allotment.

A big shout out and thank you to The Sainsbury Laboratory at Norwich Research Park for kindly donating The Papillon Project surplus squash and cucumber seedlings for Norfolk secondary school allotments.

The Sainsbury Laboratory

TSL



 **norwich
research
park**



International Exchange



The last year has been a fruitful one for the International Exchange Programme; after a successful trial period, the IEP now proudly connects six of our Norfolk schools to schools we have partnered with across the world, from Europe to East Africa, Southern Asia and the Caribbean.



Each partnership is unique, and stems from connections and interactions we have made as a charity, from like-minded people and similar projects with a vision like ours. A huge part of learning about our food and how it's produced is understanding that different crops are grown in different places. We have formed these partnerships with school allotment projects across the globe, so that our students in Norfolk and their international counterparts can learn about how food is grown in different parts of the world, and have the opportunity to teach about what they have learnt.

Schools take it in turns to exchange material; over the last few months our Norfolk schools have been preparing photographs, presentations and questions to send to their partner schools. Last year Dereham Neatherd put together a phenomenal PowerPoint for their partner school in Uganda, and students at the CAN-alot in City Academy Norwich came up with some fantastic questions for their partner school in Antigua and Barbuda. By the summer, we are looking forward to having exchange material to share with our students in Norfolk.



We want to thank you all for all the effort you have put into your recent exchanges and the fantastic questions and pictures you have come up with. We can't wait to share with you what your partner schools have produced in return!

SALT Courses!

Our School Allotment Leadership Training (SALT) courses are completely free for adults who garden with young people. They are a brilliant opportunity to share and learn good practice, knowledge and useful experiences.



SALT

School Allotment Leadership Training

Upcoming SALT courses:
8th May at City Academy Norwich
15th May at Reepham High School
22nd May at Old Buckenham High School
28th May virtual online course
all 5-7pm GMT

visit <https://www.thepapillonproject.com/salt/> to book

The Tool Bank

Second-hand tools are perfect for a school on a budget. Using second-hand tools, as long as the metal cutting, digging, etc. parts are still good, you can allotment till the cows come home.

Do remember that if you have any second-hand tools that you no longer need, we are always looking for donations, so please get in touch!



**The
tool
BaNK**
Second-hand tools
for schools

Our Tool Repair Team held a great workshop in December and renovated many tools ready for the school allotments this year.

Would you like to come and join a repair workshop? Tools are provided - there's lots of repairing, fun and refreshments! Visit <https://www.thepapillonproject.com/what-we-offer/our-tool-bank/> for details.



UPCYCLING!



Upcycling, to me, is one of the most important tools you can use when teaching children about how to better care for our planet. Using normal everyday items that would normally be discarded to create a truly unique and deeply personal thing that fulfills a new purpose allows for creative thinking that might not be realized elsewhere. This presents all of us with a very powerful tool to help develop young people's minds to both think outside the box on waste and find new ideas on how to transform our waste into something other than to simply discard it.

William Dawber - Charity Upcycling Lead



Examples above show old toilet planters, pallet collar beds, and signs made from scrap wood.



Gardening and Young People - A Little History



Our trustee Tom has had his historian hat on! Stay tuned for Part 2 in the Autumn 2024 issue...

PART 1



One of the many joys of historical research is the discovery of connections between people and places, the past and the present. This article, the first in a regular column on the history of young people and gardening, was intended to be a brief exploration of the horticultural careers of Iris Tillett and Betty Jex-Blake, alumnae of Norwich High School for Girls. Quickly it was clear that their careers, even in the mere snippets available, could illuminate anew parts of the past we would do well to revisit and learn from.

Iris and Betty were pupils at Norwich High School for Girls (NHS) in the 1920s. Leaving NHS they attended Swanley Horticultural College in Kent. A horticultural college had been founded at Swanley Court in 1889. It soon proved so popular with female students that by 1903 it had become woman only, producing a remarkable group of pioneering female horticulturists. In June 1931 Iris and Betty, under the pseudonym 'TWO SWANLEYITES' wrote to NHS. Published in the school magazine, 'News of Old Girls' column, it outlined their lives at the college; both the tough, 'we rise with the lark at 6.30 a.m., and go to bed with 'buses at 10.30pm.', 'standing waist-deep in mud, attempting to clean out the rock-garden pond'; and the not so tough, 'tennis and swimming in Summer, and hockey and dancing in Winter...'



Volunteer Shoutout!!!!

The work of The Papillon Project and the success of the 2024 growing season is not possible without the incredible humans, that are our volunteers. A million thanks for choosing to invest your time, energy, kindness, and knowledge into helping young people to allotment.





BRAIN FOOD

This edition's recommendations for feeding your brain even more allotment ideas



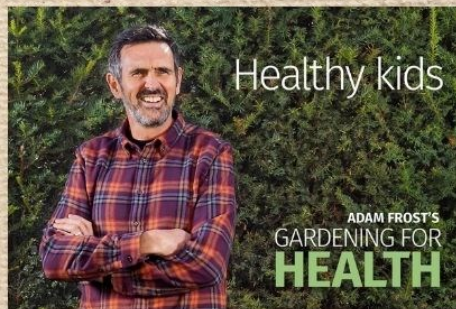
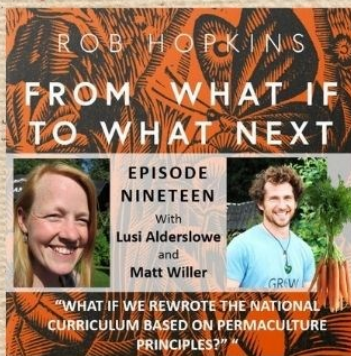
The Royal Horticultural Society has recently launched 2 free short online courses aimed at school teachers: 'Getting Started with School Gardening' and 'Basic Horticulture for School Gardening'.

Go to <https://rhscfsg.docebos.com/learn> to register.

The Papillon Project has a large selection of online resources for schools on our website <https://www.thepapillonproject.com/what-we-offer/online-resources/>, from composting guides to film making on your allotment - so many golden nuggets of information!



PODCASTS



Listen to Matt's most recent podcast features:

<https://www.robhopkins.net/podcast/>
<https://www.gardenersworld.com/podcast/adam-frosts-gardening-for-health-healthy-kids/>





THANKS FOR READING!



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