

## Conservation and biodiversity in Dursley

Dursley lies in a "bowl" like depression surrounded by woodlands and hills with beautiful views. The river Severn, Forest of Dean can be seen to the North West, and to the North is Cam Peak and Longbarrow. Near to which are neolithic and even Roman remains. Leaving town to the East is Woodmancoate. A potential orchard.

The hills are predominantly oolithic limestone and a large part is from the Jurassic period.

in town we have the river Ewelme and wildlife corridors, details below.

### **The Woodlands**

Woods to the North and West of the town are managed by The Joint Woodland Management Committee. This leads up to Stinchcombe and woodland starts to arise on ascending Hill Road, known locally where the Old Spot is located, and is part of the Cotswold Way. Details later.

Woods behind the houses of Hunger Hill are privately owned and appear in the relevant title deeds of the house. This woodland is known as Hermitage wood and extends up South to Twinberrow Wood. The latter is managed and maintained as natural woodland to maintain its bio diversity, by the Twinberrow Trust. (Photos on separate file)

### **Trees**

Beech, Sycamore, Spruce, Oak. Dictated by the soil. Plants of wild garlic and blue bells.

### **Sculpture Trail**

There is this feature to encourage people to visit the woods, wheelchair friendly. The pieces of art change yearly and are from local groups.

### **Wildlife in the woods**

Roe and Muntjac deer, badgers, foxes, adders, grass snakes, stoats, grey squirrels, hedgehogs.

Tawny Owl, Buzzards, Pipistrel bats, coal tits, and woodpeckers (at least one family recorded).

These are both self observation and RSPB backed.

### **Wildlife corridors and habitation in Dursley**

A joint survey combing Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust and Dursley Town Council, was held in 2012 regarding slow worm populations.

GWT had felt there had been a dramatic decline in these creatures over the county. Mats were laid in sunny areas of St Mark's cemetery and the ground staff would periodically raise a mat. Finally at the end of May 2012, we found a total of 17 adult slow worms along with many babies.

We have a large holding pond at Caswell Mews which provides a wetland area with duck houses well away from predators. Wildlife such as dragon flies breed there too, along with newts. There have not as yet been reports of toads or frogs. The latter have definitely

been witnessed in peoples own garden ponds but this is only subjective evidence.(Photos separate file)

Some local residents, maximum 6, were approached, and they all felt the pond gave them a sense of tranquility, and also it was somewhere they felt they could walk their dogs aware of not dog fouling.

It has been reported by residents that the "village green" awaiting that designation did have many trees for birds, bats to roost in, before developers removed the trees.(Photos separate file)

BBC Wildlife Watch in 2011 held a week long study at Five Acres to aim at promoting the public to watching wildlife in their gardens.

### **River Eweleme and flood risk in Dursley**

The river arises on the Cotswold escarpment above the village of Uley. It then travels on the western edge of the Uley road into Dursley. It is first clearly visible at Eweleme Estate. (See separate photograph documentation of this whole article)

It then continues into historic Broadwell where it winds around the buildings and is very attractive and kept clear of weeds by Dursley Town Council. The river before Dursley is managed by the environment agency.

From Dursley it continues as a stream to Cam, from where it travels to the Sharpness Canal eventually the waterway enters the River Severn.

The map provided by Stroud shows likely flood areas. Essentially it is mainly on the border of Uley where the road dips down and a tiny bridge is there. A local has told me he has reputedly seen mink there and heard them?

There does not appear to be a risk in Dursley provided up stream is kept clear.(Photos separate file)

### **Kingshill Cemetery**

According to the local GWT and local RSPB reports in 2011, this area is excellent for watching birds good place to see woodpeckers, foxes, squirrels. This is again because we have this magnificent woodland that wraps round us.(Photos separate file)

### **Dursley In Bloom**

This group was first conceived in 2011. Through the years not only has it produced lovely flower displays, but it has been actively encouraging the planting of bee friendly plants. Using wildflowers. It also plants defensive planting in certain areas, eg by Kingshill House and rec. Brambles and nettles are allowed to grow in controlled areas and the team also involves the local junior school to participate.(Photos separate file)

### **The Cotswold Way**

We are very aware of having the Cotswold Way passing right through Dursley up through the pedestrianised Parsonage Street and continuing past The Old Spot up Hill road. Regular walkers of the Cotswold Way not just our local people have said that the walk around Dursley gives the most spectacular views of the whole way. Photos separate file)

### **Town entrances**

Uley Road, Whiteway Hill, Kingshill Road. All have a large welcome planter donated by The Lions Club. The green verges have also had many daffodils to provide colour coming into town. Residents of Highfields transformed an overgrown verge at the entrance to their playing field into a permanent flower bed. Residents in Acacia Drive planted up one of the verges in their street.

In 2008 Lower Kingshill Management Co-operative established an organic community garden next to their office on St Georges Road. It is run by children, providing fruit and vegetables for tenants. It has 2ce won 1st place in childrens' category of the Stroud District Council Tenants Garden Competition.

### **War Memorial Recreation Ground**

Well maintained ground accommodates football club, Dursley Festival, and Fireworks evening.