

Great Big Green Week (GBGW), June 6th -14th

GBGW, the biggest celebration of community action in the UK to tackle climate change and protect nature. More than 1.6 million people came together to take action including nature walks, clean ups, seed swaps, litter picks and repair cafes.

How were St Mary's involved?

Sylvia Taylor represented Horsley's CAN (Climate Action Network) to plan and organise events for GBGW. CAN is dedicated to raising awareness about reducing carbon emissions, boosting local biodiversity, and driving practical sustainability projects in the Horsleys.

The events included: a GBGW themed repair café (St Mary's have volunteers there), a green themed service at St. Martin's, local businesses posting window display posters of how they were supporting GBGW and visits to Grace and Flavour. The week culminated in an East and West Horsley litter pick where local people, including families, were able to start from one of four starting points and collect litter enroute to the barn area at West Horsley Place.

The barn offered refreshments including a selection of green-themed cakes (I loved the spinach ones!) for all who participated. CAN, local churches and the Raleigh School had display stands.

St Mary's stand had Eco Tips printed out and a display of how long it takes different items to biodegrade including: nappies, leather shoes, plastic bottles and sweet wrappers. This generated interesting conversations on the topic. *Did you know that a nappy takes up to 500 years to decompose!* It was interesting to engage the public on the subject of sustainability and getting them thinking.

Church members were in good attendance! We felt that the week was very successful and are grateful for all the time and effort given by those organising the events.

WHAT'S NEXT

As for next year, the Eco team aim to do the Churches Count on Nature in the churchyard (A Rocha UK project). Ahead of this, the Eco team spent an hour or so in the church yard, using the iNaturalist App, to identify plants and insects and the Merlin App for birdsong. We found much biodiversity which has been encouraged by good care of the churchyard.

Photo: **marbled white butterfly** seen in the churchyard.

