

GIVE BACK GREENER



OUR GOAL IS TO BENEFIT THE ENVIRONMENT, BENEFIT YOU AND BENEFIT CHARITIES BY SUPPORTING YOU TO USE YOUR PAID VOLUNTEERING DAYS

Welcome to our 2nd edition of the Give Back Greener Newsletter, where you will discover volunteering opportunities, hear from volunteers already doing great work and read about the little things we can all do to be greener everyday. To join in with the discussion please head over to our Give Back Greener Forum (see the QR code at the bottom)

GEMMA HARPER - INTERVIEW



Dr Gemma Harper became Chief Executive of the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) in September 2021. JNCC is the UK's scientific advisor on nature conservation and recovery. Prior to joining JNCC, Gemma was Deputy Director of Marine policy and Deputy Race Champion in Defra. She was awarded an OBE for services to the marine environment in the New Year Honours 2021. In March 2020, Gemma co-led Defra's Food Vulnerability directorate, as part of the COVID-19 response, and the directorate won the Civil Service Diversity and Inclusion 'Impact on the Citizen' award. Gemma has nearly 20 years' experience working in the UK Government. She is a social scientist by training and studied social psychology at the London School of Economics and Political Science. After eight years in criminal justice research at the Home Office and the Ministry of Justice, Gemma joined Defra in 2010 as their first Chief Social Scientist. She was awarded the Defra Leadership Award twice, graduated from the Civil Service Senior Leaders Scheme, and is a University of Cambridge Centre for Science and Policy Fellow. Last year, Gemma was elected a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences for her contribution to social science. She founded and co-chairs the Civil Service Network for Nature, whose mission is to connect civil and public servants to celebrate nature. You can follow Gemma @JNCC_UKCEO.

Interview with Gemma

Earlier this month Gemma kindly undertook an interview with us (Team Fry on the South West Future Leaders Programme), where we gained an insightful view into Gemma's passion and contribution to nature conservation and recovery. Some core questions that Gemma answered for us were as follows:

What do you think is the most valuable work that you and the JNCC do?

'To provide impartial scientific advice to the four governments of the UK and to the UK Government to support international negotiations. It's our duty to the citizens, to be really clear on what's happening and why in terms of nature, and what we can do to recover nature. And that's the focus of our work now and into the future.'

What is the most frustrating aspect of your job in relation to nature and the environment?

'We are all part of nature and if we take action in silos we are going to have potentially unexpected or undesirable consequences in another part of this system. So trying to see nature as a system in itself, a system that we are part of and that how we affect change in that system requires thinking across different sectors. This requires being quite bold about action and rapid change that we need to stop a set of scenarios which are already pretty bad. So I think that the opportunity is as much as the frustration is to see life as integrated.'

[To read the interview in full, please click here](#)



SPOTLIGHT OF THE MONTH



The 5th June marks World Earth Day. This year's theme is 'Living Sustainably in Harmony With Nature' with the campaign slogan 'Only One Earth'. So how can you help and live sustainably. We're going to focus on something that all of us do every day. Eating! Demand for food is rising rapidly in the world causing pressure on the world's resources. Here are our top tips.

1) Balance your diet – Eat less meat, meat uses more water than plants to produce and also produces a huge amount of CO2. Per 100 grams of protein beef produces 50kg CO2 whereas peas, a common source of protein are just 0.44kg per 100 grams.

2) Don't waste food – In the UK alone 8 million tonnes of food is wasted each year. This represents £10.2 billion. Imagine what that money could do to help our schools and hospitals. The food waste also then sits in landfill creating methane which then further impacts climate change.

3) Buy local products. – Eating locally sourced food is always more sustainable. It's travelled fewer miles to get to you than a packet of mango from Ghana. It should have better flavour as well than something which has travelled miles to get to you. Buying locally produced foods such as honey has also been shown to reduce allergies.

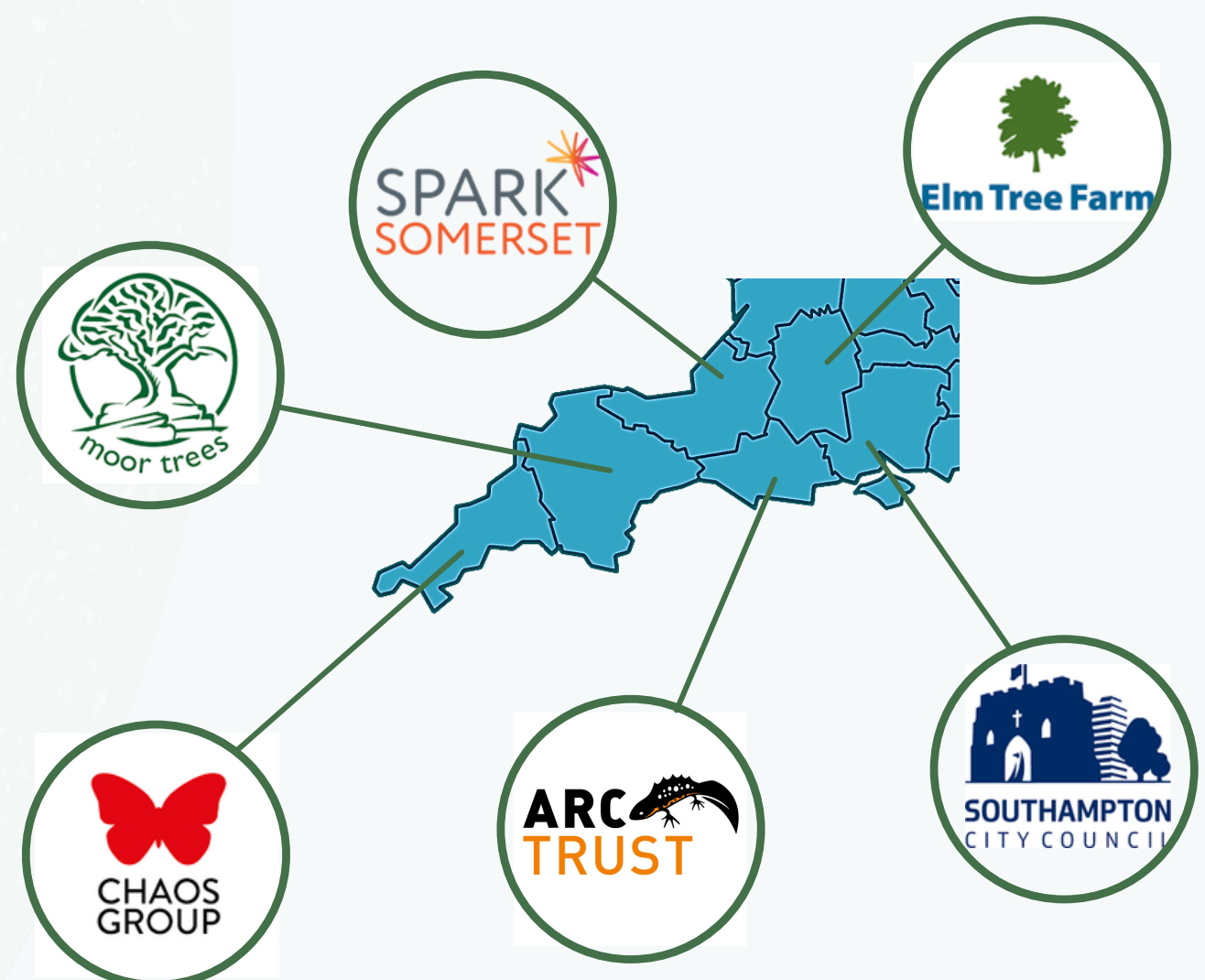
4) Buy food loose rather than in prepacked plastic. The world produces around 380 million tonnes of plastic each year. That is roughly the same as the weight of humanity. Plastic never fully breaks down. Tiny plastic particles end up in soil and waterways contaminating our food sources.

5) Buy food that is in season for the time of year. This reduces our carbon footprint and the food we eat should taste better and have a higher nutritional value. It should also be cheaper which is so important with the unprecedented squeeze on our wallets.

For much more on this fascinating topic please go to our forum and join the discussion.



VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES



DID YOU KNOW?

THE UK USES APPROXIMATELY 14 BILLION LITRES OF WATER DAILY. 3.17 BILLION LITRES OF WHICH IS LOST DUE TO LEAKS



HOW COULD YOU GET INVOLVED?