

Notes for May 2010

I have just been somewhere I have never been before, but I bet many of you have.

Where is this ? Well, it's the Butterfly Garden, Bamfurlong Lane, Nr Cheltenham, which is a haven for people and wildlife.

Why, you ask, am I telling you about this. Well, the Butterfly garden is open to all, regardless of ability and has the fortune to be helped out by volunteers, some with learning difficulties. It is an educational garden and land skills project.

Hard work and determination by Chris Evans (no, not the disc jockey) with his family and volunteers have transformed two acres of virtual wilderness. The land now boasts a classroom, a wildlife garden, ornamental gardens, a polythene tunnel, a greenhouse, fruit trees, a vegetable plot, raised beds, chickens and ducks (to say nothing of the parrot who welcomes everyone). The Butterfly Garden has grown into a truly inspirational and special place, offering a safe, social environment, teaching responsibility and building confidence.

If you have ever had a bad day and possibly suffer with depression and just want to escape the pressures of modern life, visit the Butterfly garden (no you don't have to be a gardener) you can paint, play music on the number of instruments that have been given, undertake wood working, visit the café, use the facilities to have a small meeting. A knitting group meet there, creative writing and bee keepers meet there. All this is free.

Chris has purchased a large plot of land by the side of the Butterfly Garden which he wants to make into a wildlife garden for everyone. He wants to plant native trees, create a wild flower garden to attract wildlife and insects and anyone is welcome to help create this. Chris has also got a licence to recycle. We are talking proper recycling where he looks forward to receiving used plant pots, compost bags, plant trays etc., which are recycled and will be used to make the paving for the wildlife garden. Locally people have been informed of what development is going on, in and around the Butterfly Garden and have offered to donate trees, and possibly plant them, in memory of a loved one.

This is all on our doorsteps. People can benefit from the wonderful facilities that Chris and his trusty team have built up – all for free – it would be of great benefit if you wish to offer help, in any form, to give something back. There is a small shop on site that accepts bric-a-brac and sells it to raise money for ongoing and future development.

Why not visit this wonderful place, have a coffee in the Witches Brew coffee shop and if you wish to be part of this, just ask a member of the helpful staff who will point you in the right direction. It has changed my life for the better knowing that Chris provides this wonderful caring community, I hope it changes yours.

All the best
Lesley
Village Agent