

South West Biodynamic Group

Summer Newsletter



Your greenness grows out of clay,
Stubborn as sunlight is sure.
You are a golden wound the sky forgets to heal.

By Ted Hughes

**Saturday 10th October 2026: AUTUMN GATHERING and PREPARATION
MAKING DAY. Details to follow**

From the editor.

Below are the minutes of The South West Biodynamic Group EGM held on Saturday May 9th 2026 at On the Hill, Oxen Park Farm, Exeter EX6 7QW

10.30am Meeting opened by Diana White, SWBD Treasurer & Newsletter Editor and Chaired by Kit Buckley

Apologies received from: Denise & Alasdair Gordon, Frank van der Stok, Ros Maynard, Tristan Bertie, Jeremy Weiss.

Members present: Diana White, Kit Buckley, Selby McCreary, Carole Clifton, Christine Walton, Adam Stanyer, Willie Swindell, Marianna Clark We were later joined by Tobias Kaye and non-member Rosemary Channon.

1i. Chairperson - Carole Clifton was nominated by Selby McCreary and seconded by Diana White. There being no other nominations, Carole Clifton was duly elected.

1ii. Secretary - Ros Bourne who had been acting Secretary indicated her willingness to stand for re-election. She was nominated by Diana White and seconded by Selby McCreary and was duly elected there being no other nominations.

1iii. Treasurer - Diana White indicated her willingness to stand for re-election. She was nominated by Selby McCreary and seconded by Marianna Clark, and there being no other nominations was duly elected.

2i. Prep Co-ordinator - Selby McCreary indicated her willingness to take on this role and was endorsed in the role by those present. 2 ii. Newsletter Editor - Diana White has been single handedly issuing newsletters for many years. She indicated her willingness to carry on until someone else comes forward when she can begin to hand over the position. 2iii. Website Administrator – at present Selby McCreary is holding this at present with Ros Bourne and herself to be trained by Kathryn Hughes who has created the new website. Kathryn has indicated her willingness to oversee the website for a while until a permanent person comes forward to take it on.

The gratitude of those present was expressed to all those members who have come forward to be the Core Group of SWBD.

3i. As Prep Co-ordinator Selby said there is a good core group of people who are on a separate mailing list for meetings and study sessions. She can be contacted if a person would like to be part of this group.

3iii. Mention was made by Carole that it might be possible to hold Core Group meetings via Zoom and Marianna said she has a Zoom account and could host meetings.

Helen Dolby Legacy and new Website:

For those of you who are new to the group, we were fortunate to have been bequeathed some money which we use to make grants to help people and projects connected with Biodynamics.

We are also using a small part to renew our website which is now up and running – southwestbiodynamicgroup.org . It is still under developmemt and we hope to be able to do a lot of the basic administration with it like keeping membership lists up to date and sending reminders for subscriptions as well as informing you all about events etc.

As you can see from the minutes of the EGM, if any members have skills for managing the website, once it is fully up and running, we would like to hear from you!

If you are a member of the group and need some financial help to attend a course or a Biodynamic conference, please look at the website under 'About Us' section on Small Grants to find out how to apply.

Diana White

Our day at On the Hill

After the EGM which began our day's visit to On the Hill, we were invited to sit in on the volunteer meeting that the CSA Teign Greens was holding and to introduce ourselves. Teign Greens operates out of land at On the Hill. Diana told their members what the SWBD group consisted of and we learned that previously Teign Greens had been BD certified but that had lapsed, although there was a hope to revive it in the future.



Then we gathered in the circle where On the Hill hold their outdoor meetings and welcome visiting groups. A barrel was in the centre ready for the 500 stirring we would be doing in the afternoon. We were surrounded by curved, scented beds of flowers – an abundance of beauty. Jo Clark spoke of how he and Tina came to be the custodians of this special piece of land on the hill above the Teign Valley. He spoke of the special individual who had held it previously. Then we were led on a tour of the land. First the poly tunnel that was imaginatively laid out and had a special feel to it. Healthy plants and a lushness that could be breathed in. We saw the various places that Jo uses for teaching the young people that come for a week or so to experience outdoor education eg a charcoal kiln that is able to heat a hot tub!

We continued up the hill, past the chickens to the well and the main spring. We then crossed onto Teign Greens land and were addressed by their head grower, Leonie who told us about their enterprise of growing for the local community within a 10 mile radius of the land. They do weekly bags, not boxes, that are delivered to collection points.

The energetic amongst us, continued further up the hill, alongside the belt of many newly planted trees, to the brow overlooking the rest of the land. On the way back down we came to the sheep with lambs and across a meadow, past the pigs alongside a field of Lucerne and arrived back at the communal barn where the shared lunch was laid out to be enjoyed by all. Someone said it was worth becoming a member of the SWBD group just for the food!

In the afternoon, we had a look at one of the 6 ponds that have been created. It was teeming with diversity and life - another place of beauty. We returned to the circle to stir the BD 500 for an energetic hour – it takes a good degree of will power and energy to move that amount of water in a barrel. We spread out afterwards to spray the land, the trees, the flowers and the rows of vegetables.

It is hard to put into words what a place like this does for the soul. When someone says poly tunnel you have no idea what is possible until you have been in theirs at On the Hill – it is a virtual paradise and even has a hammock in it.

It was a day to be remembered, and we much appreciated Jo and Tina hosting the event.

On the Hill's latest newsletter is here:

<https://mailchi.mp/ec09717be21c/on-the-hill-news-21508485?e=ce6d5d055e>

Teign Greens also have a website where you can find out more about volunteering and becoming a member <https://www.teingreens.co.uk>

Kit Buckley and Selby McCreery

NB Selby returned to On the Hill and helped with a 501 (Silica) stirring and spraying one very early morning .

The Planetary Influences in Biodynamic Agriculture with Ian Bailey



- A workshop at Whites Farm, in June. Here are the reactions of two of the participants:

Ian Bailey's workshop at Whites Farm was one of the highlights of the biodynamic course I joined this year. I'm someone with a very basic understanding of astronomy, so I appreciated the space and time for questions and the fact that I was at no point made to feel that I was slowing the group down.

There was a very wide range of abilities, and I place myself at the lower end, which meant a lot of the content did go over my head. However, I felt that just being there, without straining to understand, allowed me to absorb the wisdom of what was being shared.

I thoroughly enjoyed myself, even if I was completely saturated by the end and even had to leave slightly early. Ian was teaching from the inside out, from his lived experience, which is why it was such a pleasure to receive what he had to say, even if I didn't follow all of it.

I am very happy I was there and will be joining again next year. I believe his part of the course is open to the public. A big thank you to whomever had the bright idea to bring Ian Bailey into the biodynamics course and making it happen. By Gina

Holly who has completed a horticultural course says "the way Ian explained how the forces from cosmic heavenly bodies impact the earth was exceptional" & she now has an understanding of the mechanics of the dynamics involved.

Nettle Preparation Day at Half Moon Field, Tigley.

Nettle Preparation (504) is the simplest preparation to make as it does not require any part of an animal. In Spring/Early summer nettles are picked and put in a clay pot and buried for a year. You can see the results in the first picture. This preparation is added to the compost heap and when this compost is incorporated in the soil it enhances soil health and improving soil structure. It is especially useful for mineral depleted soil or heavy clay.

On the 2nd of June, 6 of us gathered at Half Moon Field to prepare and bury the Nettle Preparation for this year. We discussed what we had understood in our recent study of the Nettle with Selby, so interesting. The whole event was very much a joint effort with the youngest just 1 year joining in. It was good to gather on the land. Carol Asuray



Last Year's Nettles transformed



Next generation Farmer



This year's nettles

South West Biodynamic Group

The South Devon Biodynamic Group's purpose is to inform those interested in BD methods of gardening and farming of what is happening in the area.

As a member you receive a quarterly newsletter and we hold seasonal gatherings where we make Biodynamic preparations. These are then made available to members free of charge.

We charge an annual subscription of £15 per person and £20 for a couple. We offer a concession of £10 a year if needed. Sort Code 20-60-88 Acc. No. 13509680 South West Biodynamic Group

Preparations are available from Whites Farm, Lower Dean, Buckfastleigh. TQ11 0LS.

Contact Denise deniselaurenj@icloud.com

If you wish to join, please contact Diana White (Treasurer) at

dianawhite35@hotmail.com or write to 12 Apple Wharf, The Plains, Totnes, TQ9 5QL

Seasonal Recipe: From The Biodynamic Cookbook by Wendy Cook, published by Clairview.

Easy Raspberry or Tayberry Jelly. – Serves 6 Best served in sundae glasses!

Ingredients:

1lb /450g raspberries or Tayberries.
1 ½ pt / 800ml water
2 packets of vegetarian raspberry jelly crystals (seaweed base available in health food stores)
Juice of ½ lemon
1 tsp honey

Method:

- 1) Boil water, add honey and raspberries. Leave them for a few minutes to release some of their juices.
- 2) Strain the fruit and make the liquid up to 2 pints/1.2 litres including the lemon juice. Heat up and dissolve the jelly crystals in it. Allow to cool somewhat but not to setting point.
- 3) Divide raspberries between 6 sundae glasses or other suitable serving dishes and pour in the jelly mixture. Refrigerate till set and serve cold.

BIODYNAMIC PRODUCE FOR SALE

BIODYNAMIC BEEF from our freezer from our biodynamic South Devons, various cuts and joints

Please contact Tristan Bertie 07836 591 847 Lordswood Churchstow Kingsbridge
Or e-mail me at lordswood.biodynamics@btinternet.co

HEMP AND OTHER TINCTURES available (all home made)

The CBD tincture was made by Nick Read from the hemp grown at Dartington and is the only UK organically grown CBD.

Please see his web site for costs and purchasing information. <http://www.englishhemp.co>.

GREENLIFE SHOP, High Street, TOTNES. 01803 866738. Some Demeter products, Biodynamically grown vegetables in season and Seed Cooperative organic open pollinated seeds.

TEIGN GREENS, OXEN PARK FARM, Lower Ashton, EXETER, EX6 7QW – in conversion to BD. Contact Tim Dickens for availability of produce. www.teingreens.co.uk

VEGETABLES FROM HUXHAMS CROSS FARM: We deliver weekly vegetable boxes. The boxes contain Huxhams Cross Farm own produce. Produce from other BD and organic producers available as well. You can order online at www.apricotcentre.co.uk.

FRUIT JUICE CORDIALS for SALE - Contact Derek Lapworth on 07747 120 669
All with organic apple juice.

TEIGN GREENS

Join our Veg Box Revolution!

Looking for Fresh,
Healthy, Local, and
Organic veggies? Look
no further!

We're a Community Supported Agriculture scheme powered by volunteers. Our customers *'pledge to eat our veg'*, committing to a full year's supply of weekly organic vegetables from the farm.

Sign up for a 4-week trial today and fill your plate with delicious, nutritious vegetables here in the Teign Valley!

Available to collect in Newton Abbot, Bovey Tracey, Heavitree, Marsh Barton, Chudleigh, Christow, Dunsford and Ashton.

For more information and to sign up, visit our website teingreens.co.uk or email us at teingreens@gmail.com

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