

HOLBETON PARISH COUNCIL CLIMATE CHANGE SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Held via Zoom on 2nd March 2021

Present

Members: Cllr Harry Baumer (Sub-committee Chair), Diana Baumer (Hon Secretary), Chris Flower (Councillor), Andrew Hollett (Councillor), Jan Sellick, Caroline Howarth, Anna West, Tracy Ebrell (Parishioners), Nirosha Gunatillake (Councillor), John Sherrell (Chair Parish Council)

Guests - Simon Martin (parishioner)

1. **Welcome.** Harry Baumer welcomed everyone to the meeting. There were no apologies for absence. It was agreed that DB will in future circulate parishioners interested in attending. **Action: AW, DB**
2. **Minutes** of the 2nd February were accepted as correct.
3. **Matters arising**
 - a) **Funding to support the Environmental Action Plan** HB stated that the PC has now received £3646.35 from YCE. This money will support the Environmental Action Plan. Some has been spent already on books and flower seed.
 - b) **Holbeton News “tips of the month”** SDCE featured in this month’s Holbeton News. Joe Clarke also wrote a piece about bird boxes and the proposed plan to site them in areas accessible to the public in the Parish. AW proposed we put a piece in the HN about the wildflower area by the Reading Rooms and we submit a “tip for the month” about creating a wildflower areas in parishioners’ gardens. AH will submit a piece about LED lights for the May HN. **DB** will write a wildflower area “tip for the month” for the April Holbeton News and **AW** will submit a piece about the proposed wildflower area in front of the reading rooms. **Actions: DB, AW**
 - c) **Yealm Community Energy Meeting 23rd March** HB reported that he has advertised the meeting in the Holbeton News, the Yealmpton Press and via the 5 Parish Alliance. TE reported that both Brixton PC and the Probus group in Newton and Noss were interested in advertising the talk. **AH** agreed to circulate the link to advertise the talk on the village Facebook page. **NG** will ask the school to post it on their Facebook page. HB proposed a short meeting with YCE before the 23rd to run through the proposed programme. **TE** will ask the YCE Board & arrange a pre-meeting to run through the presentations. All agreed to circulate details to friends. **Actions: AH, NG, TE, All**
 - d) **Proposed wildflower area by the Reading Rooms.** AW updated the meeting on progress. Tom Flint has cut the area and is going to scarify in the next week. It will be seeded at the end of March/beginning of April. The content of the notice board has been discussed and Chris and Gilly Bray will do a “mock up” to decide the final display. **Actions: CB, GB**
 - e) **HPC Climate Emergency webpage and new Facebook page.** TE has directed quite a lot of information onto the Facebook page. HB asked whether we could put a link on the PC website linking to the Facebook page. TE thought we could. **CH** to discuss this with Lance and report at the next meeting. **AH** to discuss with Lance what information should be held on the parish council climate emergency webpage and report back at the next meeting. **Actions: CH, AH**
 - f) **Birdboxes project.** A written update was provided to the meeting. Joe Clarke has also applied to YCE and DCC for funding. HB has offered to make 1 or more boxes. TE reported that Joe has about 20 volunteers lined up. AH and HB have offered to saw up the hardwood planks to the correct size. **Actions: AH and HB** to liaise with Joe Clarke.
 - g) **Energy performance certificates in Holbeton** CH reported that she had looked at the 334 households in the Parish. Of these 191 (57%) had an EPC. There were no A ratings. > 60% of households had E,F, or G band ratings. Households do not need an EPC unless they are selling or renting out their property. The EPC lasts for 10years and then expires. HB asked how accurate an EPC was. Simon Martin stated that EPCs were based on generic information so they were not always accurate. HB said Energy Performance measurement is an international standard not just British. There was no evidence of any improvement in the EPC ratings in the parish over the last decade. There needs to be better national incentives to make changes to improve this, as this costs amounts of money which many people don’t have. It was felt that the PC would need to question the developers on the energy efficiency ratings of the proposed new housing, and expect an A rating. AH asked whether commercial building needed an EPC. It was thought not. It was agreed to circulate the findings to all parish councillors. **Action: HB**

- h) Parish carbon footprint tool** HB said this was available on line to look at. He would run through it at the end of the meeting for any interested parties.
- i) Possible ways forward for the subcommittee to support local agriculture.** Agriculture is a major contributor to carbon emissions in the parish. HB has spoken to John MW about encouraging some of their farms to conduct a carbon audit. JS already does a carbon count on his farm. He inputs information about his crops and animals. JS is willing to help some of the local farmers with carbon audits. He thought this could be achieved through the use of a questionnaire and then use this to input the information into the carbon audit tool. JS is willing to approach one or two farmers to ask whether they might be interested. The subcommittee is happy in principle to supply support for farmers willing to undertake a carbon audit.

JS reported that since Brexit the Govt has introduced a new subsidy scheme – the Environmental Land Management Scheme – which farmers will be required to sign up to. Details are as yet unclear. It is expected that in due course the subsidy will be linked to the amount of carbon found in the soil on farms.

JS said farmers are aware of this but are not feeling in any hurry to embrace this. HB asked whether a ready questionnaire exists. JS thought there was a standard set of questions for the audit tool. JS stated that the AONB is to get additional funding to run carbon auditing workshops.

JS reported that under the Govt Stewardship Initiative he was undertaking some restoration work on some of the hedges at the top of Brent Hill. He has cut some ash trees and has laid some hedges in order to renovate neglected hedges.

JS will put together a briefing paper for the next meeting as a basis for a Q and A session. **Action: JS**

4. Other Matters

- a) Funding submission for solar panel and battery for the cricket pavilion by Giles Ebbutt for Holbeton Cricket Club** It was agreed that £600 would be given towards the pavilion project. The money awarded should be accompanied by a contribution from Holbeton Cricket Club. A further condition should be that the Calor gas equipment should be removed. HB said that by not burning 24 litres (their estimated annual use) of Calor gas this would achieve an estimated 36 kilo carbon offset per year. HB reported that Tom Kneen (whose company Ethical Power was involved in aspects of the solar farm at Creacombe) has some spare solar panels and would be willing to donate one or two to the cricket pavilion project. **Action: HB**
- b) Particulate matter from burning wood** An article in the Guardian (Dec 2020) was sent to the committee at the suggestion of a Parish Councillor asking what we thought we could do about it? AH stated that from May unseasoned wood for burning cannot be sold. CH asked how it compared to burning oil. HB said that it was about the small particles caused by burning wood. It was generally felt that it was difficult comparing built up urban areas with country areas particularly where it may be the main source of heating. Simon Martin felt that raising awareness about the issue was very important particularly the potential hazards associated with burning wood. **Action: HB**
- c) Identifying the location of early purple orchids in the parish.** There are a number of visible sites along hedges and verges where early purple orchids are growing. One of these has recently been destroyed. They are not a protected species. It was agreed that all will look out for them in April & May and notify HB of any early purple orchids and their locations so that HB can map them. **Action: All, HB.**
- d) Cross Park survey.** This hay meadow at Luson Cross was last surveyed in 1986. At that time it had an extensive number of wild flower species growing in the field and hedges surrounding the field. Botanist Andy Byfield is happy to look at the field with a view to surveying it again. JS who farms this Flete Estate land is happy for this to happen and to delay cutting the field until later in the summer DB to speak to Andy Byfield about how we might involve other keen botanists in this enterprise. **Action: DB**

5. Date of next meeting, Tuesday 6th April 2021, 7.30pm