

Holbeton Parish Council Climate Change Action Plan

What a difference a month can make!

Last month I reported on the meeting held towards the end of February, all about your parish council's climate, environment and biodiversity emergency declaration.

I promised to report on what you said at that meeting and subsequently that you would like the Parish Council to do. Here goes:

Leadership. You encouraged the parish council to take a leadership role, encouraging people to feel that we can all make a difference, supporting new initiatives, promoting green policies and encouraging Holbeton primary School to educate the children on climate change.

Housing: promoting low energy houses in new builds; encouraging better home insulation and lobbying against listed building planning restrictions that prevent effective house insulation.

Transport: promoting car sharing; installing car charging points for public use and facilitate these for residents with on road parking; lobbying for a cycle friendly track into Plymouth alongside the A379; looking into the feasibility of parking facilities near Flete Western Lodge to link with the bus service that runs along the A379; avoiding travelling to meetings and making greater use of internet connections – a truly prescient suggestion given our current situation!

Environmentally friendly practices: planting more trees & nurturing them; maintaining hedgerows to improve biodiversity.

A parish-wide carbon audit. This received strong support. Of course, with everyone in lockdown and transport reduced to a trickle an audit now would tell us nothing about what is needed after the recovery from the pandemic. It now looks sensible to wait until recovery has happened – nobody knows how far ahead that will be, and with the likelihood of a global recession we should wait until the moment seems right. Meantime we will wait to see what changes in carbon emissions have happened as a result of the pandemic and global disruption to normal life.

As you may recall from last month's Holbeton News, the Parish Council has set up a climate change subcommittee, whose main purpose is to develop an environmental action plan and oversee its implementation, keeping parishioners involved as it progresses.

It has proved to be a difficult time to focus on climate change. The pandemic feels like the fulfilment of a wish that we could reduce carbon emissions and thereby stop climate change, but with terrible consequences that we could never have wished for. Another reminder that the world that we had maybe come to take for granted is fraught with hazards. The climate change agenda will not go away.

We will continue to develop our own local environmental action plan and will keep everyone informed of progress, but our timescale for this has to be unclear at this point. Keep safe!

Cllr Harry Baumer 830274