

Holbeton News Climate Change & Environmental section

Featuring: The Big Butterfly Count, Yealm Community Energy & The Parish Council Environmental and Climate Emergency Alliance



On Wednesday the 26th July we have a stand at the Yealmpton Show as part of the 5 parishes alliance. By the time many of you read this the show will have happened, and you will know whether the weather was kind to the show or not!

In case you did not make it to our stand (sandwiched between the Yealm Estuary to Moor project and

the Yealm Community Energy stands) here is a rundown of the alliance and our parish's achievements to date.

The Yealm River and its tributaries reach all 5 parishes (Holbeton only just!). We are all beneficiaries of the Yealm Community Energy solar farms, which provides a regular contribution to Holbeton News.

The Alliance was dreamt up by Matt Chown, who was at that time a District Councillor. He set up the alliance in 2019 with regular face to face meetings until this became impossible. We now meet regularly via zoom.

Our vision is to achieve carbon neutrality and have an abundance of natural environments that support biodiversity and maintain ecological balance. As Matt says "we believe that the alliance makes us stronger together."

All 5 parish councils have declared a climate change emergency, and this forms the basis of all our decision making and actions – especially in planning advice to South Hams District Council's planning department.

Together we:

- Become agents for change
- Collaborate to achieve our goals
- Provide mutual encouragement & support

What tangible achievements have we to show?

The Alliance has acted as a facilitator for some of the things taking place in the 5 parishes:

- events and talks
- groups (such as the water quality groups)
- projects (such as net zero visions)
- funding (alliance cited as part of funding bids)

We have also

- shared policies and action plans.
- Supported the Local Electricity Bill.
- Shared environmental and carbon reduction tips among local magazines.
- Re-wilded our verges.

Each parish council created their own poster for the Yealmpton Show. These highlight many common themes, but as parishes with very different characteristics we have approached the climate change challenge in different ways. Hence the benefit from working together.



Holbeton Parish Council's poster celebrates our achievements

We declared a climate change emergency in December 2019.

2023 is the 3rd year that Holbeton Parish Council has ring fenced its Creacombe solar farm dividend (part of a section 106 agreement between the owners of the land and South Hams District Council) for supporting environmental and climate change projects in the community.

To date over £6,000 has been spent on supporting projects including:

A bird box project led by Joe Clarke to increase the number of small songbirds able to nest and rear their young.

Solar panels and a storage battery for the Holbeton Cricket Club's pavilion at Flete, led by Giles Ebbutt. They have replaced their petrol mowers with electric ones charged with the solar panels.

Replacement of lighting with LED lights in All Saints Church.

Thicker PIR insulation board in the replacement kitchen roof of the village hall.

Water testing equipment for Flete Field Labs to support research by Plymouth University.

A winter wild bird seed initiative led by Joe Clarke to tide over the wild birds following the cessation of the Flete Estate pheasant shoot, until seed producing crops can take over.

We welcome further applications for funding!

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The parish council has also initiated its own projects:

A wildflower area in the village complete with a noticeboard to advertise the importance of the right habitat to encourage wildlife.

A small environmental library, which is now housed in All Saints Church – the one public building that is open every day.

A parish wide survey of LED usage led by Andrew Hollett, encouraging residents to swap to LED's for their lighting.

The development and maintenance of a climate change section on the parish council website. This includes a section of relevant environmental links, a record of the work of the climate change subcommittee and the grant application procedure.

A repeat botanical survey of a traditionally managed field first surveyed 35 years earlier. The number of species had remained large, but with some gains and losses.

A spring survey of Early Purple orchids on our road verges and notification of the Devon Biodiversity Records Centre.

Purchasing this 4 page environmental section in the parish magazine, Holbeton News, including a section “tip of the month”.

Progressively restricting the use of pesticides and herbicides in the village allotments.

An active approach to the problems of sewage pollution in the river Erme. This has helped to galvanise John Mildmay-White's WATER (Wild About The Erme River) initiative and the setting up of an inter-council committee including all the relevant councils along the Erme.



Join Butterfly Conservation's [The Big Butterfly Count](#)

It is not too late to join in! It started on the 14th July and continues until Sunday the 6th August. Firstly you need to [download their free app](#) (alternatively download or contact me for a printable chart – some images are reproduced here) to help you identify the butterflies you may see. You choose a spot on a

sunny day without too much wind where you'd expect to see butterflies. Spend just 15 minutes during that time spotting butterflies and moths then report them to the Big Butterfly's interactive map – and let me know to give us an overall view of our local species.



Lastly... we would be delighted to hear from anyone who feels that they have a worthwhile environmental &/or carbon reduction idea for 'tip of the month'. Just let me know and we will be happy to help if you wish.

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Yealm Community Energy is launching its locally owned renewable share offer!

We hope as you read this latest editorial (written in early July) that YCE will have launched its share offer. There is currently so much activity to try and get over the final hurdles to make this a reality. We have all waited a long time, and we have been delivering an incredible series of work streams to allow us to launch. The due diligence, legal, risk, and level of detail had to be scrutinised before we could present the offer.

YCE aim to offer a 6% return, a minimum level of investment of £250, and a maximum of £100,000, the offer will run until the Autumn. We do hope you will join us in making community ownership a reality. YCE need to raise a minimum of £860,000, but ideally, more than £2million in community equity to give our communities real added benefit.

This will allow YCE to own three solar farms. Newton Downs, Creacombe and Marlands. Full details of the offer are available on our website via the Ethex investment platform.

Be part of this incredible journey. www.yealmenergy.co.uk

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