

Holbeton News Climate Change & Environmental section

Our meeting with representatives from South West Water

We now have a set of minutes from our meeting on the 21st March. These were delayed as we (John Sherrell, John Mildmay-White and myself) considered that some aspects had been omitted from the first draft sent by SWW. What we received on the 18th May was a set of minutes with subsequent amendments following internal discussions within SWW.

The most important statements in those minutes were:

1. An estimate by SWW of the cost of the installation of a new surface water drain between the school (where an existing drain stops) and somewhere up Vicarage Hill would be between £400,000 and £500,000.
2. SWW would expect the developers to bear this cost. They would contribute something towards the additional costs of linking important sources of surface water into the new drain including existing gulleys.
3. Together this could reduce the amount of water entering the sewage system during heavy rain, and SWW would as part of its initial survey produce a figure estimating by how much this would help.
4. When the Church Hill development gets the go ahead SWW will begin a survey including looking at the possible properties whose surface water could be separated. The parish council would assist in explaining to residents why this is being done, and that there would be no compulsion to comply with a request to have their property's surface water reconnected.
5. The earliest date when the new drain would be installed is summer 2024, ideally in the school holidays.
6. SWW would within a week undertake an initial survey of existing services to ensure that these are functioning fully.
7. SWW would liaise with Devon Highways and ask for blocked gullies within the village to be emptied.
8. The £1.2 million to improve the water quality at Mothecombe beach will include works at Ivybridge and Modbury. They have not at this point allocated money to Holbeton.

I have written to SWW on behalf of the parish council and Flete estate to ask for their findings from their initial survey above (6), and to report that the blocked gullies have not been emptied (7).

One of the additions to their revised minutes was *“The conversation around opportunities for surface water separation schemes was made under the assumption that the development would go ahead. The new development is a crucial element of the delivery of this scheme.”*

At the meeting the 3 representatives from Holbeton had recalled being advised

that if the Church Hill development did not go ahead then SWW would undertake the works to install a new surface water drain.

Holbeton Parish Council expressed concern that it appears that SWW expects the Church Hill developers to pay a very large sum of money for works that will also help alleviate the flooding risk for a number of existing properties. I included our concern in the email that I have written to SWW.

If anyone wishes to see a copy of SWW's minutes please feel free to contact me (details below).

Erme Estuary update: the WATER group (Wild About The Erme River). On 22nd May a general meeting was held at the Watermark in Ivybridge. The intention of the meeting was to pull together the many groups and individuals along the Erme catchment who are concerned about the state of the river Erme and are keen to effect change. The meeting was chaired by Sustainable South Hams and was attended by almost 100 individuals.

Out of this meeting, the basis of a WATER Steering Group has been formed, Chaired by Charlotte Grezo of Ermington parish and supported by John Mildmay-White (Holbeton) and Tim Poate (Ivybridge).

Feeding into the steering group are a number of existing working groups such as Citizen Science, Data Analysis and Nature Based Solution, all looking to map the issues along the Erme and identify solutions.

Over the coming months, the Steering Group will be working on a strategy document to set out how we will effect change on the river.

A website is planned which will act as a landing page and directory but in the meantime please contact me, John Mildmay-White at jmw@flete.co.uk if you have any queries or would like to be involved.

The relevant councils are meeting to agree the terms of reference and composition of a separate councils water quality group.

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

This starts on Friday the 17th July and continues until Sunday the 6th August. In preparation for that [download their free app](#) (or chart) to help you identify the butterflies you may see. You choose a spot and 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.

If you enjoyed doing this, then let me know if you'd like to learn how to do a butterfly transect in April next year. We hope to put on a training event and will send round details nearer the time.

The Yealmpton Show. This year local parish councils around the Yealm and Erme Rivers (5 Parish Alliance for the Environment) will together have a stand at the show. Do drop in as well as visiting the YCE stand!

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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.

Harry Baumer 01752 830274, harryluson@gmail.com



Yealm Community Energy looks forward to meeting you at the Yealmlton Show

YCE was delighted to give its latest reports to its members recently at its AGM. Thank you to all those local residents that joined up to becoming a member of YCE, we value your support. As a member (it costs just £1) it allows voting rights and the ability to invest in our forthcoming share offer.

We would love to meet more of you and answer any of your questions at the forthcoming Yealmlton show, on Wednesday 26th July. We have recruited some of our current directors at the show previously, and we would love to strengthen our team, so do come and talk to us if you are interested in being part of the next chapter of YCE.

Community owned solar is an important part of the energy mix.

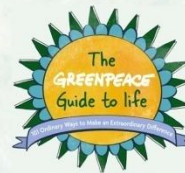
www.yealmenergy.co.uk



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Garden

If you're fortunate enough to have a garden, it's one of the best places to nurture your local environment and please the planet. Be a best friend to the butterflies and bees by following these simple tips.



★ Propagate plants from seed or cuttings and swap with friends and neighbours. **It's free and more eco-friendly** than buying imported plants grown in energy-hungry greenhouses. Check out the 'Grow' section of this guide for tips on how to propagate plants.

★ Create a pond. Simply sink a bucket into the ground and throw in some rocks to create a much needed home for amphibians and insects. This will **improve the biodiversity in your garden**.

★ Plant herbs like coriander, dill and fennel to attract ladybirds. They control pests without the need for harmful pesticides.

★ Let part of your garden grow wild by either not cutting the grass or growing a patch of wildflowers.

★ Long grass provides a **safe haven for insects and wildflowers** are a great food source for bees.

★ Make sure you always buy peat-free compost. There's **no excuse to be digging up valuable peatlands!** Find out more about the importance of peatlands here.

★ Use water butts to collect rainwater instead of using the hose.

★ **Make a hedgehog house.** These spiny creatures were voted the UK's favourite mammal, yet they are increasingly vulnerable to extinction. Make your garden hedgehog-friendly by creating a cosy spot for them to rest and hibernate.

★ Buy **biodegradable plant pots** or better yet, use toilet rolls which can be planted directly into the ground.

★ Compost your own garden waste and food scraps to add nutrients to your plants, improve soil structure and help minimise food waste. **Don't add cooked food.** It's too wet and can cause bad smells that attract pests!

★ Create your own plant feed out of stinging nettles or comfrey. Stick a bunch in a bucket of water for a week, stirring occasionally, then **feed your plants for free!** Just make sure to wear gloves when picking nettles.

