Communication note from the Joint Parishes Climate Action Group first meeting on 21 Feb 2024

Present: Cllrs Johnson (chair) and Bell, Steyning

Cllrs Bull and Cannon, Upper Beeding

Cllr Tilley, Bramber

Agreed terms of reference

1. Membership: open to all Councillors from Ashurst, Bramber, Steyning and Upper Beeding but a maximum of 2 nominated Councillors from each Parish will attend each meeting. A chair and action note taker will be agreed at the start of each meeting.
2. Any recommendations will be reported to each full Council and voted on as per motion procedure.
3. The chair of Greening Steyning (Greening Steyning, Bramber and Upper Beeding) and a Horsham District Councillor representative will be invited to each meeting
4. Members can ask other key stakeholders/representatives from organisations to future meetings by mutual agreement.
5. Meetings will be held quarterly on the second Monday of the month at 19:30 in the Steyning Centre. The next meeting will be on 13th May 2024

**Role of the group**

1. To discuss key issues within our Parishes where climate action is needed.
2. To involve Greening Steyning to help our Parish Councils deliver any climate improvements.
3. To raise awareness within each Council of climate change, priorities and actions
4. To develop a shared set of Climate action priorities
5. To feed progress and issues to the HDC Parish and Neighbourhood Climate Change action network

**Developing shared Climate action priorities**

The group discussed individual Councils progress against the ‘quick wins’ document produced by HDC Parish and Neighbourhood Climate Change action network.

Bramber and Steyning Councils have declared a climate emergency. Upper Beeding will discuss doing so at their next Council meeting.

With regard to the climate actions identified by Horsham, the group divided these on whether the role of Parish Councils is to lead, facilitate, communicate or celebrate.

**Draft Joint Climate Action Plan**

**Lead** (actions for each Council to discuss and agree)

1. Ensure Climate actions are a standing item on each Full Council meeting
2. Include a Climate action page on Parish website
3. Use green energy suppliers for Parish premises and maximise the use of local renewable energy eg solar panels and heat pumps
4. Ensure that Parish buildings are well insulated to reduce use of energy and have LED lighting and adjustable heating controls.
5. Minimise waste from parish premises, reducing use of unnecessary printing and consumables.
6. Ensure that the Council uses an ethical bank.
7. Scrutinise local plans for their carbon impact by adopting local green planning guidance checklists.
8. Sign up Parish Council green spaces to the Weald to Waves project.

**Celebrate.**

1. Greening Steyning have put a number of initiatives in place across all parishes. These include: a survey asking residents what’s important to them, and what needs to change; a monthly (BN44) Repair café; pop-up recycling for plastics that WSCC don’t currently recycle; a twice weekly community fridge; Home energy sessions, including to vintage years, and the hub in Upper Beeding; articles in the local magazine encouraging people to make climate improvements; hosting the Green Day as part of the Steyning festival; organising climate demonstrations ; hosting nature film viewings and providing a monthly forum for residents to learn about climate improvements
2. Steyning for trees and our community orchards have been promoting the biodiversity and health benefits of trees and hedgerows.
3. Nature within the parishes is to be celebrated. In Bramber, we have Bramber Castle; In Steyning, we have the Steyning Downland Scheme, Abbey Road, the community orchards and Bramber Brooks; In Upper Beeding we have Saltings field and a small community orchard. All these spaces sequester carbon, provide opportunities for volunteers and have a positive impact on the health and recreation of our community. We are also surrounded by the South Downs National Park, closer to some Parishes than others.

**Facilitate and communicate.**

1. The group discussed whether we could task Greening Steyning with increasing reach into the community of climate action steps Councils are taking and what support is available to help residents effect change. Perhaps starting by celebrating what is already happening across the parishes (see above)
2. Support, the Steyning and District Community Partnership local cycling and walking improvement plan by appointing a lead councillor from each parish to work with the working group.
3. Continue to lobby for the white bridge
4. Share progress and documents from this group with other Horsham parishes via the Knowledge Hub
5. Promote awareness of grants available to increase insulation for residential properties. (? Greening Steyning)
6. Promote awareness of local opportunities to refill, household cleaning and beauty products (? Greening Steyning)

**Suggested documents for sharing**

1. Bramber Council Climate Action Plan
2. SPC Green building guidelines - draft yet to be approved by Steyning
3. Steyning grant awarding policy, including sustainability criteria.
4. Request for parish councils to show their support for the climate and ecology bill <https://www.zerohour.uk/>
5. Greening Steyning vision survey and climate action tracker.