

## **STOKE ST. GREGORY PARISH COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup>**

**May 2021 held in The Williams Hall at 7pm.**

**Present** – Janice Pearce (Chair), Anne Merritt (Vice-Chair), Peter House, Ann Finn, Jason Morgan, David Fothergill (County Councillor)

**In Attendance** – Kelly de Silva (Clerk) and thirteen members of the public

#### **1.Chair's Welcome**

JP welcomes all to the first face-to-face Annual Parish Meeting since 2019. JP expresses her thanks to the community groups that will make representations this evening and to those who have written reports for the Annual Parish Meeting. All of the reports will be available to view for the next 2 months on the Village website in the 2022 Minutes section - <https://www.stokestgregory.org/parish-council/documents/>

**2.Apologies for absence** – Heather Venn, Ian Upshall, John Hembrow, Cllr Sue Buller (District Councillor), Tony Wearmouth (PCSO), Steve Chapman (PCSO), Sara Sollis, Neil Sollis (PFMC), Pat Sollis (PCC).

**3.Minutes of the previous meeting** – The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> April 2021 via Zoom were agreed by all to be accurate and signed by the Chair.

#### **4. Outgoing Chairman's report compiled and presented by Graham Gleed**

GG welcomes all those in attendance this evening. GG informs he visited Weston in Gordano's APM the previous evening to present a report on the HOTV and states the agenda's items are all similar – so as a Parish – we are not alone in what we need to resolve. GG reads his report;

The year of 2021 marked a slow, and cautious return to normality from the several waves of Covid 19, which in some way probably impacted most people in the Village. A return to face-to-face meetings in June, when the dispensation for virtual meeting elapsed was an important step in this process, although specific local circumstances caused two subsequent meetings to be postponed. Other than these, the PC has continued to meet in a risk assessed and socially distanced environment. As part of the 'opening up safely' initiative sponsored by SSC through SALC, several village organisations benefited from grant support, as a result diligent applications submitted by Kelly de Silva.

The new housing development, Broomfield Park, was completed and all properties are now occupied. In the eventuality the allocation of social housing was oversubscribed and there remains a persistent background level of need for similar properties from people who in some cases are suffering significant hardship.

Traffic issues remain at the front of concerns expressed by the community. The 30mph limit for Meare Green suffered multiple postponements however, I am please report that just prior to the writing of this report the work has been completed and the limit is now in force. Also contentious is the issue of traffic and parking in the Village Square particularly at school times. Use of the Royal Oak and the Playing Field car parks has mitigated this somewhat as has the relocation of the agricultural contractor's site away from the village. However, there is a continuing need remind all road users to exercise appropriate care and caution at critical times.

During the year the PC took the initiative to challenge a newly constituted Forward Strategy Group with the task of providing guidance on how to respond to the challenge of reducing the carbon footprint of the Parish based on recently published research. This group quickly translated into an independent village group which, as reported elsewhere in this meeting is achieving considerable success in many relevant areas with pragmatic local projects.

The allocation of funds paid to the village arising from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) from the new development has probably received more attention than any other topic during the last year. With some £65K available to spend on village infrastructure it is important that the decisions taken benefit the widest interests across the Parish.

A survey to support this process provided very little guidance with only a fraction of the distribution returned. This debate will continue but there seems to be an emerging view that better facilities for young will engender considerable support.

At the suggestion of Anne Merritt, a very successful 'Give Back at Christmas' initiative was organised. Gifts of toys and provisions were distributed from donations given by the community. The response from the community was almost overwhelming, and very gratifying to see. Done at short notice and with no prior experience, all involved can be proud of the success achieved, but also noting that there are details that can be improved next time.

It is with sadness that the past year marked the passing of David House. David was a pillar of the Village a long-term Parish Councillor and former Chair of the Parish Council. His position on the Parish Council was filled by the co-option of Anne Merritt.

I would like to thank every member of the PC individually for their commitment and hard work over the past 12 months and for their attendance at PC meetings. While there is not always agreement there is certainly synergy with each councillor bringing an additive contribution as well as a keen focus on service to the community. But we are always ready to learn how to improve so do not hesitate to tell us if you feel there are issue that should be better addressed.

Finally, it is worthy of special mention to applaud the contribution made by our exceptional Clerk, Kelly de Silva. Kelly has been tireless in her efforts to ensure that the PC functions in an effective and expedient manner, bringing energy and good humour to the role. Thank you, Kelly!

#### **5. Incoming Chair's report compiled and presented by Janice Pearce**

On behalf of Stoke St Gregory Parish Council, I would like to offer sincere thanks and congratulations to Graham Gleed our former Chairman, for such a distinguished record during the 4 years he was a Councillor and subsequently 3 years as Chairman.

The Council has benefitted from his strong leadership and informed guidance, his unfaltering determination and not least his focused ability to work tirelessly on so many projects which have addressed the needs of this community.

In May 2017 he was part of the Housing group set up by the PC to look into issues such as affordable housing and the need for a new pavilion on the playing field. A FSG was later formed in November 2017.

We now have a new housing estate in Willey Road which has not only provided homes for several people in the community, but the development has provided us with a smart new pavilion on the playing field and attracted £65,000 of CIL funding which we can use for other valuable projects to benefit the community.

The village was destined to lose our only pub and shop. As a result of the FSG the HOTV project evolved.

We now have a thriving community pub, café, and shop.

At the beginning of 2021 the parish council formed a FSG to explore ways in which we as a community could reduce our carbon emissions and protect and preserve our village environment. As a result, the Stoke Environment Group was formed and now has over 80 supporters in the community and has plans to involve the younger people in the village in the future.

The afore mentioned projects have brought the village community together working as volunteers/sponsors/skilled craftsmen/skilled professionals/supporters.

The village shop and café is a wonderful meeting place for all. The pub is constantly improving as each stage of the project is completed.  
These are life changing improvements for all in the village.  
I have some very large shoes to fill.  
We now have a newly formed Council to which we welcome our new members Jason and Ian.  
There is much to be done.  
Each one of us has a valuable part to play in serving our community  
Our first priority will be focussing on the needs of the young people in our village.  
We will be forming a FSG for this purpose.  
We will endeavour to build on the solid foundations of the past and enhance our relationship with the community.  
Listening to the Community is our main priority and we will be consulting everyone in the future regarding future projects.  
On behalf of the Parish Council, I would like to thank Kelly our Parish Clerk for her consistent dedication and hard work. We are very fortunate.  
We also owe our thanks to Nick Sloan for his efficient work on the web site.  
Lastly., on behalf of the Parish Council I would like to convey our gratitude for the help and support we have had from Jean House in her capacity as Editor of Stoke News over the last year.

#### **6. Guest Speaker – Cllr David Fothergill – Unitary Authority in Somerset**

Cllr Fothergill informs to make the presentation more interesting there will be a quiz, with a bottle of wine for the winner.  
It will be a game of heads and tails – if the answer to the questions is County Council; hands up, if the answer is District Council; hands down.  
Who is responsible for rubbish until it is on the lorry? The answer – District.  
Who is responsible for rubbish once it is in the lorry? The answer – County.  
Who is responsible for Car Parks? The answer – District  
Who is responsible for water quality monitoring? The answer - District  
Who is responsible for water quality analysis? The answer – County  
who is responsible for road signs? The answer – County  
By this stage, all participants are out.  
DF explains that this is the point – no one understands who does what. The two-tier system is confusing and inefficient – a unitary council will simplify this; one single council – Somerset Council.  
DF explains this is not a radical move, and the benefits will be considerable with less confusion.  
DF informs that currently 25% of all calls to County call centres are for District Council matters. Currently there are 5 councils for Somerset – Mendip, Sedgemoor, Somerset West and Taunton, South Somerset District Council and Somerset County Council. This means there are 5 chief executives, 5 monitoring officers – there is confusion and waste in the two-tiered system.  
DF continues there are 58 unitary councils in the England. As of April 1<sup>st</sup> 2023, Somerset, North Yorkshire, and Cumbria will also become a single authority meaning only 23 counties will be left in a two-tiered system.  
DF explains a single authority will bring services together – for example, public health can link together with leisure to combat health and obesity issues, Environmental Health can link with trading standards, adult social care with housing – it will be a transformation of the current system.  
  
DF states that Stoke St Gregory is a beacon of brilliance, with a lot of the Parishes DF visits not coming close to the achievements of the village. Unitary is an opportunity for Parish Council's such as SSG to flourish, helping PCs to engage better and improve their work.  
  
DF finishes that the Unitary Authority has been a crusade for him over the past few years, but it is a critical project for Somerset to move forward.  
DF welcomes questions from the public.

A member of the public asks about the transition to a single authority in Wiltshire. DF responds that Cornwall and Wiltshire didn't get it quite right for the first 6 years, but lessons have been learned from this by Buckinghamshire and others following suit with lots of time being spent talking to these other authorities to implement it in the right way.

A member of the public commends DF for his work on Unitary expressing it could be a tremendous opportunity – but they have concerns over how the process has been done. As an example; at the One Somerset meeting held in SSG, culture was the first agenda item. Culture is a by-product. The implementation needs to be effective and reward success.

DF responds there will be a change in the administration. There will be 70 mechanisms that need to be in place from day 1 - this will be Tranche 1. Tranche 2 is what needs to be implemented in the first 6 months. Tranche 3 is for those mechanisms that need to be in place in the first 3 years.

DF explains that bringing 5 organisations together will be a challenge but is achievable.

A member of the public asks how much savings can be anticipated.

DF responds the forecast is £18.45 million in savings. It will inevitably mean job losses of 200-300 staff across the 5 councils. Currently there is 4500 staff with a 15% turnover. The most at risk jobs will be those in more senior positions as the single authority will need the workforce; but not require 5 chief executives and 5 finance executives. As an example, we do not require County Hall and Deane House office spaces next door to one another – so potentially there could be more savings.

A member of the public asks how will there still be councillor accountability.

DF responds wards change; it will be a challenge, but Local Community Networks will assist with bringing Parishes and Communities together. Unitary will provide more local opportunities.

AF asks if Taunton will have a Town Council under the new plans.

DF responds that currently Taunton does not have a Town Council but following the examples of Dorset and Salisbury – there will be a consultation and a council should come into effect from April 2023. DF explains there are 45-50,000 residents in Taunton. Vivary Park is expensive to maintain, a Mayor would need to be elected – this all comes at a significant cost. AF asks if a Taunton Town Council would work on a voluntary basis such as Parish Councils like our own.

DF responds he cannot answer this question at the current time.

A member of the public asks about planning and how current issues with the system will be resolved.

DF responds planning will be as efficient as it is now. SSDC has a much better model with smaller areas. SWTC is too big an area. There is a current shortage of planners, but there will be investment in enforcement.

DF reminds the meeting he is no longer Head of the Council, but he would like to see planning broken down at a local level, but not Parish level as this would not work.

The member of the public asks about the Somerset Phosphate implications with planning.

DF responds this is an issue that needs to be resolved as soon as possible.

DF thanks the PC for the invitation and the community for attending. Due to another engagement DF leaves.

JP thanks DF for the presentation.

## **7. Young Peoples project – compiled and presented by Anne Merritt**

As a relatively new Parish Councillor, my focus is on the youth of the village to improve and support where we can.

The PC started the process by a public Youth meeting; 32 young people attended this from our village. What was our aim, to find out what they thought was needed to improve and make Stoke St Gregory a better place for them and others.

The outcome was really not a surprise.

Expressing an interest in a Youth Club and a Youth Café. Boredom was a big one, also lack of facilities.

What they would like to see, new footy goals, basketball nets, a hardcore surface for outdoor games and exercise equipment for all.

As I see it, all do-able over time. But this will also need money, volunteers, and the young people to take this forward.

A positive outcome was that all felt safe in our village.

So, what's next; a small subcommittee of adults is being set up as I speak to you all. The aim is to get young people involved in taking this forward and hopefully delivering a positive outcome for all concerned in the future. This will also open their eyes into how to be proactive in the future of our village.

To the young people that wanted a McDonalds in the village, I'm sorry this probably won't happen!!!

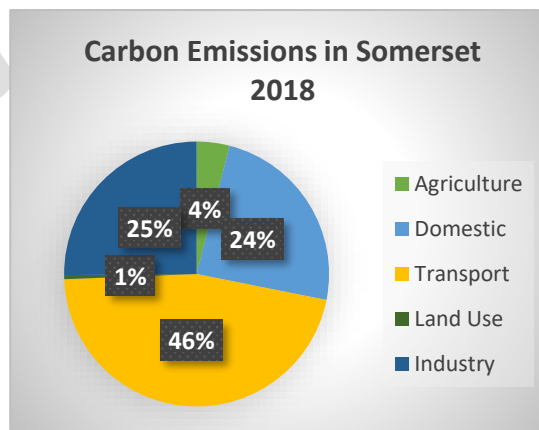
AM wishes to express her gratitude to Graham Gleed who has supported her personally in the role of becoming a Parish Councillor stating GG has given 110% support to the give back at Christmas initiative and to the youth project as it moves forward.

#### **8. Stoke Environment Group representative. Report presented by David Smith and compiled by Ian Upshall.**

David Smith thanks the PC for the invitation and thanks Ian Upshall for the nomination to speak this evening. David informs this is his first APM after moving to the village 11 months ago.

Somerset County Council has declared a climate emergency in line with many other county councils in the UK. Following this declaration, a document called the Somerset Climate Emergency Strategy (see [www.somerset.gov.uk/climate-emergency](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/climate-emergency)) was developed jointly by the five Somerset local authorities, sector experts and external partners following a public consultation that took place in January 2020. It was formally adopted by all five Councils in November 2020.

The Strategy seeks to identify the outcomes we all want to achieve and what this means in terms of commitment for each organisation, individual community, and household if we are to work towards a carbon neutral Somerset by 2030 and build resilience against the impacts of Climate Change both now and in the future. Being climate smart with decisions taken now and into the future will help ensure that the right actions are taken at the right time for the best value. Importantly, the Strategy sets out the potential benefits to society, the economy and health should these outcomes be realised.



In early 2021, members of the Stoke St Gregory Parish Council agreed to consider how best our community could contribute towards the aims of the Strategy and to mitigate as far as possible the negative impacts on our environment. From this starting point, and with the support of the Parish Council, members of our community developed ideas, priorities, and a vision for the future. One of the outcomes of a series of community meetings was an agreement that a sharper focus could be brought to topic by creating a new community group; hence, the formation of Stoke Environment Group. The Group has committed itself to identifying projects that benefit the people and the environment in and around the Parish, whilst contributing towards the wider goals of the Somerset Climate Emergency Strategy. Stoke Environment Group (SEG) was 'founded' in June 2021 and so, is about to celebrate its first birthday. And what a busy year it has been!

#### **Stoke Environment Group Vision and objectives**

To set the context of the Group, it is helpful to remind ourselves of the vision and objectives:

## SEG Vision

The vision statement sets out, in straightforward language, how SEG sees the future of our community:

*A rural community that is friendly, inclusive, and resilient where people share skills, ideas, knowledge, experience, and time. A connected and healthy community, where everyone can get around with minimal carbon emissions. A green community that is rich in wildlife, that encourages biodiversity and cares for all species. An empowered community, where every individual can make a positive difference for the benefit of all. A socially responsible and sustainable community where we actively care for our environment and the wellbeing of current and future generations.*

## SEG Objectives

The objectives, again set out in straightforward language, helps us to retain a focus on what will really make a difference on the journey being made by our community towards a more resilient and sustainable future and which better equips us with the tools and mindset to make a real contribution to tackling the negative impacts of climate change:

- *To make a positive contribution towards finding practical and affordable ways of reducing carbon emissions in our community;*
- *To champion environmental awareness by working with all ages and experience and sharing reliable information that will lead towards a greater understanding of our impact on the natural world;*
- *To support our natural world, and where possible, increase the diverse range of birds, plants, insects, and mammals in our community;*
- *To promote practises that have a positive and lasting benefit on our environment;*
- *To encourage participation and inclusivity in the group's work leading to an improvement in personal wellbeing and sense of belonging.*

SEG believes that the changes we will all need to make to tackle the climate crisis also has the potential to lead to positive improvements in both our personal and community wellbeing: the so-called 'co-benefits'. Hence, we believe that if we make small improvements and changes, we can actually start to make a positive difference. These small changes will also help us learn more about our community, the fragility of our climate and our environment, leading towards greater connectivity between different parts of our community, greater resilience to changes in the climate and a more sustainable and bountiful environment. So, it is entirely appropriate that the projects SEG facilitate are broad in nature and outcome, addressing everything from personal wellbeing, reduction in carbon and other harmful materials, to the creation and care of an environment that is rich in biodiversity.

## **SEG Structure, Organisation and Funding**

SEG currently has between 85 and 90 'members'. A consensus reached at its early meetings was to keep the definition of membership fairly 'loose'. Therefore, there is nothing more formal than an invitation to be kept informed of projects and meetings. The Group does have a small Steering Group – members of which routinely attend monthly meetings and endorse decisions and actions.

The Group has formally adopted a constitution - a necessary step to open a bank account and to apply for funding. As a result, the Group has a small number of named 'officers':

- Lead Coordinator – Ian Upshall
- Secretary/Administrator – Fi McQueen
- Finance Coordinator – Polly Burns-Cox

- Funding Coordinator – Dave Smith

In addition, Dave Evans manages external communications, the website (Envirostoke.org) and social media (Facebook – Envirostoke).

The Group has relatively low levels of expenditure – the majority of which is related to the hire of venues for meetings, events and workshops, some materials for events and projects, and some consumables (such as event refreshments). The Group has, so far, largely relied upon external funding (some funds were generated at Envirofair 21) and we are particularly grateful to the Parish Council for supporting the Group in its early stages. Becoming financially sustainable, at least for overheads, is something of which the Steering Group is very aware. Funding for larger projects can often be found from other external and independent sources.

SEG is in an increasingly better position to access funding for specific projects, as long as specific criteria can be met. The Group has the necessary governance structure in place, and it will soon have twelve months-worth of financial records and project progress. Some of the external funding the Group aims to secure will be available only on condition of meeting specified outcomes. In many cases, these funding sources are not available for running/overhead costs – hence the importance of the historic funding provided by both the PC and the local authority (Somerset West & Taunton).

### **What Can be Done?**

The figure at the beginning of this report shows, in rounded terms, the proportion of carbon created in six areas which, in 2018, totalled 3,269ktCO<sub>2</sub>. Meanwhile, there has been a decline in many of the pollinators and other wild species on which our lives are reliant. In 2019, the Royal Society published a paper linking climate change effects and the biosphere. In summary: “climate change that is being experienced in the early twenty-first century is intimately entwined with the health and functioning of the biosphere .... ecosystems can also assist in the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change.”

So, what can a small community group like SEG possibly do to reduce its carbon (and other harmful materials) emissions and support a fragile environment? Small projects, whether it is at a personal or community level can make a difference if they are focussed and sustained. Over time and by making informed choices there will be a positive cumulative effect – the whole will become greater than the sum of its parts.

SEG believes we all need to be better engaged with the environment and to feel good about our efforts to help sustain it. We do not advocate a return to the pre-industrial age – indeed, we want to use the increasing body of knowledge and the ‘hi-tech’ tools at our disposal to help us combat the serious impacts of climate change. You won’t find SEG members wearing hairshirts, but you will find a group of ordinary people who feel strongly enough, committed enough, to make a change – not for our benefit but for those who come after us in our valued community.

Our projects may appear small and, in some cases, rather quaint but in time we know we can ALL make a difference.

### **Progress to Date**

The Group has identified five work areas that are used to group together its projects. When a project is identified, a short project plan is created, discussed, and approved. It is then assigned a reference number under one of the work areas, as follows:

- Biodiversity
- Hedges & Trees
- Home Energy & Waste Management
- Mobility & Transport

- Information Hub

In the first year, the Group has identified projects in all areas but not all have been completed. The Group believes it is important to ensure there is a degree of formality managing projects as it demonstrates good governance – particularly important when applying for funding from external bodies.

Tasks Completed to date (or underway), include:

- Nature Surveys of The Spinney – undertaken by a representative of Plantlife. This survey informed the strategy for revitalising the Spinney and increasing the range of life its supports.
- Tree and Hedge planting – in cooperation with the Trustees of the Village Hall and the Parish Council, and supported by Reimagining The Levels, Somerset Rivers Authority and The Woodland Trust, 120m of native species hedge and trees were planted around two sides of the village hall boundary. This will reduce water run-off from the adjoining field, increase biodiversity and provide a wildlife corridor between two established hedge rows.
- Bus Stop sprucing – this project is partially complete. Planters have been constructed for the bus stops in Polkesfield and Dark Lane/Woodhill Terrace. The Polkesfield planter is in place and has been planted up. Further work needs to be completed clearing overgrown hedge and grass around the Dark Lane bus stop. It is hoped that this work will encourage people to think about using the bus instead of private transport.
- Litter Picking – a continuous project! Some areas of the village have been adopted and are being regularly picked. In cooperation with the Parish Council, litter picking equipment was purchased for use by residents. The equipment is stored at The Royal Oak.
- Maintain Community Orchard – in cooperation with the Allotments Group, some fruit tree pruning was undertaken
- Footpaths – much work has been undertaken clearing footpaths, checking signage, and producing walking guides for locals and visitors. This is a long-term project
- Renewable and sustainable home energy – an open house was arranged in 2021 for visitors to go to some selected addresses to see home electricity and heating systems in action
- Envirofair – the first Envirofair was run in October 2021 which was a great success. The second, is currently being organised and will take place on Saturday 25 June 2022. Around 30 organisations are taking part.
- Bike Racks – SEG purchased some bike racks and donated them to HOTV. These are now in place outside the HOTV Shop
- Hedgehog Survey – an ongoing project to plot and record hedgehog sightings in the Parish
- Carbon Ambassador – one of our members is undertaking a ‘Carbon Ambassador’ course that will equip her with the skills to better analyse the community’s carbon footprint and to recommend solutions for reducing household footprints.
- Composting Workshop – SEG hosted a home composting workshop in cooperation with the Allotments Group

Members of the Group have also liaised and worked with other Groups in the area to share ideas and experiences. We have also given presentations to local groups, such as The Levellers and Women’s Institute.

### **Future Projects**

SEG has a dynamic task list of projects to which future potential projects are being added. In the next twelve months, it is expected that the following projects will be undertaken.

- Envirofair 22 – is scheduled for 25 June 2022. This event will build on the success of the 2021 Envirofair and use the feedback received to make improvements. These



improvements will include more interactivity and more displays attracting young people of all ages.

- The Big Green Week – is a national event taking place 26 September to 1 October 2022. SEG will be organising events during the week, including planting wildflowers around the village and particularly in The Spinney, a cloths and toy swap and an offer to survey homes for energy loss. SEG is currently applying for funding for these events.
- The Spinney Maintenance – more clearing of dead materials and placing habitats to encourage biodiversity. Wild flowers will be planted, and bird feeders added.
- Continued footpath maintenance to encourage exercise and reduce the reliance on motorised transport.
- Acquisition of a Community Wild space – this is an ambitious project to identify an area of ground that could be used to create a community wild space, containing trees, hedges, water, habitat areas, meadowland etc.
- Improving Signage – create information signs and boards around the village identifying environmental and natural features. This will help residents engage with the natural world on their doorsteps.
- The Green Charter – in cooperation with the Parish Council and other groups, it is intended to influence and contribute to the production of a Green Charter to highlight the Parish's priorities supporting the Somerset County Strategy and to act as a signposting document to future projects.

### **Community and Wider Support**

The Stoke Environment Group is acutely aware of the important role played by individuals and groups within our community, and indeed groups out with our immediate environs. SEG firmly believes that a cooperative approach tackling the impact of climate change and the threat to our environment is more likely to yield positive outcomes.

SEG has benefitted from expert advice from organisations such as 'Sustainable South Hams' (a community environment network in south Devon), Friends of Long Run Meadow (Taunton), Plantlife, Somerset Wildlife Trust, Carbon Savvy, and many others. The environment has benefitted from the support of the Parish Council, Somerset County Council, Reimaging the Levels, Somerset Rivers Authority who have providing funding, free materials, and trees.

Finally, a great deal of the success we are celebrating on our first anniversary is down to numerous individuals who have put in hours of work, not for the benefit of themselves, but for the community at large. We would like to thank them and, in particular, all those people who have supported the various events, such as the tree and hedge planting, Envirofair 21, work on the Spinney, litter picking, footpath maintenance, etc. The SEG is a truly cross-community group like no other. We hope that as the Group matures, more people will sign up as supporters and helpers because this is a pre-requisite to making small changes for big outcomes.

### **In Conclusion**

SEG is about to celebrate its first year! No one active in the Group is pretending that this is anything but the start of a long journey to encourage people within our community to think more about their impact on the environment and what they can do to lessen any harmful actions. We recognise many people are sceptical about our community's ability or wherewithal to make positive change, but the facts cannot be ignored – we must do something.

Many small, focussed, projects will make a difference and we cannot wait for someone else to take action on our behalf.

We still have time to control what happens to our environment and climate – but leave it much longer, and the environment and climate will control what we are able to do. We need to take control now!

SEG welcomes input from anyone and is always up for a project, so we encourage everyone to get involved with our work.

DS welcomes any questions from the public.

JP enquires about the SEG's fundraising projects

DS responds the SEG is awaiting a decision regarding grant funding for the Green week initiatives but currently, there is no revenue of funding.

JP asks if charitable status should be considered by the group

DS responds the group has only been in existence for 11 months and it is early days for this consideration - it is something that has not been discussed by the group. DS explains it is a chicken and the egg scenario; the group needs to be established with clear objectives to be able to apply for grants and funding assistance.

A member of the public asks if the SEG is a constituted group (consisting of a Chair and appointed Officers) as this could be an option to consider that will open doors to further funding and may be easier than setting the group up as a registered charity.

JP inform the PC are working towards setting up a working group to adapt and adopt The Green Charter as a working document for Stoke St Gregory.

JP continues one of the first objectives of the newly appointed PC will be the Young Peoples initiative. This applied in conjunction with the Green Charter could work well together and achieve a lot - as the young people are the future of SSG.

JP asks the community to engage with the PC. JP welcomes any input on current projects and discussions stating the PC are here to help you.

With no further business the meeting was closed at 8.10pm.

People were welcomed to have a glass of wine or beer and meet with members of the PC and read the reports submitted by local groups.

Many thanks to all who attended and to the following groups who submitted reports for the event;

The Williams Hall, Graham Glead, HOTV, The History Group, The Reeves Feast, Stoke Environment Group, The Baptist Church, The Playing Fields Management Committee, Stoke St Gregory Primary School, Stoke St Gregory Tennis Club and The Youth Initiative.

**All the reports within the minutes were compiled and presented by the organisations they were representing. The reports will be available on the village website for the next 2 months at <https://www.stokestgregory.org/parish-council/documents-2/>**

**If you do not have internet access and would like a copy of any of the submitted reports, please request these from the Parish Clerk Kelly de Silva on 07701 053903 or [ssgparishclerk@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:ssgparishclerk@hotmail.co.uk)**

**If you have any comments or questions about the reports that have been presented and submitted, please email these to either the Chair Janice Pearce [pearcejanice@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:pearcejanice@hotmail.co.uk) or the Parish Clerk Kelly de Silva [ssgparishclerk@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:ssgparishclerk@hotmail.co.uk)**