

Stoke Environment Group

Minutes of Meeting 11 on 15 June 2022

Attendees: Karen Housego, Jason Morgan, Fi McQueen, Ian Upshall, Nicolette Williams, Andrew Boyle, Helen Grant, Polly Burns-Cox, Emma Arthurs, Trevor Williams (10)

Apologies: Dave Evans, Sarah Evans, Dave Smith, Alison Katte (4)

1 Welcome and Apologies

2 Minutes of Meeting 10 held on 18 May 2022

Matters Arising

There were no matters arising

Review of Outstanding Actions

8/6	Ian U	Write User Guide (iNaturalist and Seek) in collaboration with SERC and SWT	In progress
2/8	Emma A	To bring forward suggestions on how we address food leftovers and menu management	To be closed and added to future projects list

3 Two-Minute Work Group Reports

Hedges & Trees

Ian reported that the Parish Council received a very low level of response to their invitation to parents of children associated with the village. The PC has suggested that it requests SEG to obtain just eight trees – one dedicated to each year group at the School. The Playing Field is currently the only viable space for planting. The PFMC has been approached and they have suggested planting trees and hedge whips on the raised bank at the bottom end (Willey Road) of the field. There followed some discussion of the best position for planting and long-term care (on the bank or on one side). Ian will speak to Kate Towers at Reimagining The Levels (RTL) for advice on planting and the species of trees that might become available.

Trevor noted that it had been previously discussed that the allotments might benefit from planting Rowan trees along the western (house side) boundary, and around the car park at the bottom of Broomfield. It was also suggested that the new surface water pond in the field adjacent to the allotments and Broomfield might benefit from some 'landscaping'. The ownership of this area and the precise curtilage is unknown. Jason agreed to speak to Rob Ferrett of the Allotments Committee regarding his understanding on the trees.

Mobility & Transport

A new planter has been put into position next to the Dark Lane/Woodhill Terrace bus stop. Thanks go to Polly and Nicolette for planting it.

Home Energy & Waste

Nothing to report

Information Hub

Nothing to report

Biodiversity

Nothing to report

4 Envirofair22

Confirmed attendees

Fi confirmed the attendees at the forthcoming Envirofair. Unfortunately, The Woodland Trust have cancelled due to staff shortages. Despite this it is expected to have about 30 'stands'.

Rota

Fi thanked everyone that had come forward to help with the various activities. There have been more offers of help than slots in the rota which is really positive.

Plan

It is hoped to have access to the Village Hall on Friday 24 evening after 6pm. The plan is to set up as much as possible to save time on Saturday morning. Exhibitors have been informed they will be able to access the hall on Saturday morning from 8am. Ian will ensure the hall is open from about 7.30am.

There was a discussion on refreshments. The quantity of burgers, sausages etc was discussed and agreed. Helen Grant confirmed the WI would be baking cakes and would run the refreshments from 10am. Some had volunteered to undertake a session in the afternoon too. Arrangements were left flexible. Emma and Nicolette will organise and run the barbecue and associated savoury food – much of which will be prepared in advance.

Advertising

A number of different A3 posters have been produced and are being rotated on the notice board outside the shop. A4 posters and leaflets have been distributed, with the help of Karen and Nicolette to local villages. Articles have been written for local newsletter and papers.

6 Great Big Green Week

Fiona noted that Dave Smith had submitted a grant application on behalf of SEG for funding projects on the Great Big Green Week. Dave is due to be informed of the outcome by mid-June.

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7 The Green Charter

Ian reported that the Charter is very much on the Parish Council's list of projects. Ian has put forward an argument to the PC that whilst the Green Charter is something that could be developed, it is just a list of aspirations. There is now an opportunity to plan out how the PC and the community at large might turn these aspirations into actions. This is being discussed now and might indeed result in a fairly big piece of work. It is possible the PC will invite members of the community to take part in discussions and working groups – should any members of SEG be interested.

8 Woodland Community Garden Project Outline

Ian reported that he is in contact with the office of the Bishop of Bath and Wells regarding some land that they own. Ian has requested that there be a discussion about the longer-term future of this land and to determine whether it could be used for the wider benefit of the community.

Ian and Fi have produced some ideas of potential projects that could benefit from this land under a title of a 'Woodland Community Garden'. Everything from pick your own vegetables, to a meadow, orchards, a sensory garden, and wild animal habitats could be included. This has been forwarded to the Bishop's office, but there has been no response yet. Ian will continue trying to engage.

Helen Grant noted that discussions had been held in the past regarding this land, but they had been unsuccessful.

9 AOB

Representatives of Middlezoy Environment Group and Kingsdon Environment Group have recently been in touch with Ian with an interest in sharing experience with SEG. Ian noted that in south Devon, there is a very successful network of community environment groups who all share knowledge, skills, and experiences – the Sustainable South Hams. This is a model that might be developed elsewhere, including here in Somerset.

Ian noted that there is an open day on a farm in Hedging (near North Newton) to celebrate the first year of a project to increase biodiversity and encourage wildlife. The invitation for anyone to attend was received from Carrie Skinner of Reimagining The Levels.

Ian subsequently forwarded the email to all SEG Steering Group.

The next SEG meeting will be held on 13 July 2022 in the Parish Church Room at 7.30-9.30pm. The primary objective of the meeting will be to review the Envirofair, followed by a celebration of a successful and busy first year of SEG. It was unanimously agreed to celebrate with refreshments!

It was agreed to not hold a meeting in August 2022 but to resume in September where we will need to discuss the Great Big Green Week, amongst other items.

Fiona McQueen

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