



**Minutes of the Feering Parish Council Environmental Working Group
held virtually on Tuesday 2nd November 2021 at 8.00 pm
via Zoom (meeting ID: 853 1200 8573)**

Present:

Cllr S Reed [SR] (Chairperson)

Cllr. C Dobson [CD] (Secretary)

Cllr. J Sandum [JS]

Cllr. K Evans [KE]

Sarah Marshall [SM]

Elise Clitheroe [EC]

Danielle Levart [DL]

Members of the Working Group: 7

036/2021

WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Sarah Openshaw [SO]

Suzie Falco [SF]

037/2021

Declarations of Interest

To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary, Pecuniary or non-Pecuniary Interest relating to items on the Agenda.

No declarations of interest

038/2021

Agree Minutes from the Previous Meeting

Minutes agreed and [JS] proposed, seconded by [SR].

040/2021

Tree Trial Update

Kathryn Hopkins, chair of the Feering & Kelvedon Wildlife Group is still working on a PDF map of the tree trial and a draft will hopefully be ready by the end of November. [SR] thanked Kathryn for her volunteering her time.

It was also discussed that at least one of the members would walk the google Tree Trail that [SR] started to check the accuracy.

Action: [CD] to look at funding options for the interpretation boards for the field on Monday 8th November.

Action: [SR] to send round google Tree Tail map again to members.

041/2021

Bridge Meadow Wildflower Meadow Update

Nothing to report as the autumn sowing deadline was missed but plans are afoot to arrange for a contractor to sow an annual flower meadow in Spring on the area to start with.

Feering Parish Council (FPC) are also looking at getting a 5 year management plan commissioned of all the open spaces they are responsible for.

Members wanted the area to be considered for a sensory area possibly a lavender/herb border and bench as part of the 5 year management plan. [CD] explained that the annual seed sowing is the first stage of re-designing the area and further changes can be made and discussed.

Action: [CD] to contact contractors with the help of the Parish Clerk for seed sowing need Spring.

042/2021

Woodland Trust Tree Sapling Planting Update

[EC] explained that the Woodland Trust has been in touch to say that there will be a delay in deliveries and that saplings aren't expected to be distributed until as late as the end of December.

[CD] confirmed that the one volunteer that has offered his services has been contacted to explain the situation and that Martin Kemp of MK Paving and Fencing had been contacted and is happy to provide his mini digger service for the hedge trench to save planting time.

It was discussed that the Eco Group branding should be added to the interpretation board and that it may be possible to substitute the tree saplings requested via BDC for the Woodland Trust ones if needed.

Action: Parish Clerk to Martin Kemp to explain the current situation.

Action: [CD] to revise the Risk Assessment and Method Statement and re-circulate taking into account the comments from Tony Kirkham's Tree Talk on 24th October.

043/2021

Plastic Free Community Update

[DL] is now in receipt of the Plastic Freeing plaques for the community centre and Freeing sign. She has also been able to sign up both The Bell and The Sun Inn to the initiative and is waiting for acceptance from SAS.org

The Brownies group are also keen to get involved in the Plastic Free initiative to aid the Brownies in the in getting their Environmental badge.

[DL] has also signed up for the Freeing Community Centre Christmas Fayre on 5th December. The REco Store team and Parish Councillors will also be having a stall and can assist [DL].

Action: Workshop to be arranged to discuss what the Plastic Free/Eco Group stall will consist of (Eco Christmas Crackers, left over and meat free recipes and templates for Eco friendly bunting etc.)

[DL] still waiting to hear from Kelvedon Parish Council as to how they wish to proceed.

044/2021

Update on Working Jointly with Kelvedon Parish Council

No update.

045/2021

Update from Freeing & Kelvedon Wildlife Group

- i The Parish Council received notification from the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group East that this area is a Great Crested Newt Hotspot and funding is now available in certain parts of Essex for the restoration and creation of ponds capable of supporting great crested newts. The funding is part of Natural England's District Level Licensing Scheme (DLL) for great crested newts, a new strategic approach to compensating the loss of newt habitats, which seeks to provide new ponds and bigger, better, more joined-up habitat for this orange-bellied amphibian at a landscape scale. There are specific criteria to meet the funding requirements for creation of new ponds and improving existing ones which the Parish Council have passed on to the Wildlife Group to spread the word.

The group is now aware that our local area supports endangered species including Great Crested Newts, Hedgehogs and Red Kite.

- ii The hedgehog campaign is underway with publications coming out in the local Parish Magazine's, on the Facebook group and page. Funding is being applied for to allow the group to send a newsletter and information pack to every household in the two villages explaining what residents can do to help the plight of hedgehogs after Maria's successful talk with the Rainbow's Maria is an active member of the group and volunteers at the local hedgehog rescue centre.

Action: Suggestion was made that Taylors could be used for the creation or pond improvement if the existing pond by the Forest school is a no go under the funding criteria. It was also suggested that we could the fact that the saltwater marsh/pond by Taylors is within 50m of the pond by the Community Centre. [KE] to send [CD] photos of the pond area by Taylors. [CD] to contact FWAG again.

046/2021

Carbon Footprint

- i Update on bike store at Community Centre

No update at present but it is on the Parish Council's 'To Do List'

Action: [CD] to help get quotes.

- ii It was discussed if as a group we approach the school and community centre and ask them to move to a green energy provider to cut emissions.

One suggestion was made that some of the larger energy providers do offer a 'Green Traiff' and that maybe it would make it easier for them to switch. [SR] had looked into this and some companies, including green ones, effectively green wash by purchasing certificates from renewable energy providers, making it look like the tariff they are providing comes from renewable sources when it isn't the case.

It is known that the FCC (Feering Community Centre) have the ability to control their energy provider. Due to energy prices going up and green energy companies going out of business it was felt that it wasn't appropriate at the moment to ask the FCC to switch, but we could write a letter to the FCC and ask them to consider changing their supplier at the renewal stage of their contract.

With the current issues it was felt that contacting the school via the PTA would be the preferred idea at this stage.

Action: [SR] to write letter to the FCC first and converse with a PTA member about the idea. [CD] to send logo letter.

- iii Octopus energy parent power for the school to promote parents to move to green energy provider

Octopus energy have a scheme where as a parent, if you sign up to their energy service, they will donate £50 to the local school. The school needs to be registered as part of the scheme. The issue here is that it is promoting a particular company but other companies such as Ecotricity may do a similar scheme or work with schools.

Action: [SR] and [EC] to mute the idea to PTA members first.

- iv Request that the Community Centre offer low-meat options for any fairs and events in line with the Climate Change Committee recommendation to reduce agriculture emissions

Action: Place this on the January agenda when the FCC will start to plan the 2022 May Fayre.

047/2021

Community Energy South Meeting/Green Homes Grant Scheme

No update. No information back from Energy Hub from the last meeting.

[CD] had received a telephone call from Robert Mitchell (former County Councillor) to talk about hydropower and other green ideas that have come out of ECC.

Action: [CD] to Invite Robert Mitchell to the next Energy South meeting.

048/2021

Autumn Litter Pick Update

The half term litter pick never happened. The Feering litter pickers are happy to carry on doing what they are doing because they can fit it round their available time.

Action: The Group to work on the next Keep Britain Tidy Campaign which will take place in 2022.

049/2021

St Mary's Church Christmas Tree

The Clerk has already registered in the Parish Council having a Tree. Discussions have been had around what we can do to be informative or inspirational such a flat 2D one that goes on the wall using recycled cardboard and baubles that visitors can write a pledge on or what their Eco wish would be.

Action: Workshop organised on 18th November.

050/2021

Publicity

- i What is going in the next Parish Magazine

Things to add in the next Parish Magazine to potentially include hedge planting (sapling photos), water fountain, plastic free plaques, FCC Christmas fayre, Christmas Tree Fair and pond funding. To be discussed further at the next workshop once the hedge planting maybe clearer.

Action: Workshop organised on 18th November.

- ii What are we posting on Facebook, harnessing the power of COP26

Discussions were had around posts that be bold statements such as how to deal with methane gases by switching to meat free alternatives, reduce your deforestation impact by cutting out palm oil, buy less in general.

Discussion was had around the fact that we need a driver or elected person to run the Facebook Group and its posts.

Action: [SR] to take responsibility this month for the COP26 related Facebook posts.

- iii Any further publicity locations, ideas?

Action: Use the Parish Council Noticeboards more to promote the group: [JS] to put something together.

051/2021

Items for next meeting

Updates and Social media

052/2021

To agree the date of the next meeting

Workshop: 18th November 2021 @ 8pm via zoom.

Minuted Meeting: 13th January 2022 @ 8pm via zoom.

Signed

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Cllr. S Reed

13th January 2022