

Climate and Environment Network Meeting

Thursday 27th October 2022

Chair Maggie Shelton, Watercress & Winterbournes Community Catchment Officer, Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust

The meeting was attended by 10 participants representing a diverse selection of organisations from across the borough and staff from Basingstoke & Deane borough Council. It was chaired by Maggie Shelton, Watercress & Winterbournes Community Catchment Officer, Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust.

After introductions, Maggie explained the purpose of the network; to provide an opportunity for groups and organisations within the area to network and participate in an environmental and community-focused discussion. The network is a chance to help further climate emergency and environmental space. The intention is that the meetings will enable participants to keep up to date with all the latest climate & environmental news, give a chance to network and meet with groups with a similar passion. Topics/themes discussed were

Engagement

How to get residents involved in your group. There can be an issue in reaching 'new blood' to support core activities of the groups. There was a discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of social media, hand delivered newsletters and other approaches. The group agreed it was often helpful to break the work down into little jobs that people might be more inclined to sign up for. The chair suggested that her organisation had found that in their chalk stream projects, it is key to reach people's emotions, the limbic brain, rather than just present them with raw facts. They are more likely to give you some more listening time. Telling stories is also a good way to get people's attention.

Heat Hubs and Energy efficiency

There was an extensive discussion of the impact of the current cost of living crisis, Heat Hubs and advice to residents on how to reduce energy consumption. Some groups already have Energy Champions, and it was felt important that this was joined up with other initiatives to ensure best use of resource and avoid duplication of effort. There was a conversation about leading by example, for example putting solar on Basingstoke Council building and ensuring that buildings being used as heat hubs were energy efficient themselves. Basingstoke Council have a toolkit which could be developed to also include resource from other community-based partners.

Brownie Badges

Sustainable Silchester are offering a Brownie Badge that is also available to other uniformed groups and schools. It is proving very popular in the local area and they are keen to spread the offer more wisely. See <https://www.sustainable-silchester.org/badge/>. The Chair also shared her organisation's badge [Chalk Stream Challenge | Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust \(hiwwt.org.uk\)](https://www.hiwwt.org.uk)