

BRENTWOOD CLIMATE ACTION

Members Meeting 23 November 2021

The meeting opened with a presentation via zoom, from Otilie West, the newly appointed Climate and Sustainability Officer at BBC.

All 7 working groups were encouraged to see how they can link with the priorities listed.

- **Reporting back from the individual working groups:**

1. Lobbying

a. Jane and Sue attended Brentwood Business Showcase, where Brentwood Environmental Business Alliance (BEBA) was launched by Greg Campbell and Otilie West. <https://www.brentwood-beba.co.uk> has resources for local businesses which aim to become carbon neutral by 2050.

Brentwood Council has a target of net zero by 2040.

b. Global Day of Action on 6 November, saw stalls on Brentwood and Ingatestone High Streets.

c. Maria Pearson, Chair of Environment, Enforcement & Housing Committee and Chris Hossack, Leader of Council, expressed an interest in meeting with BCA soon.

d. Interventions being planned. Email sent to Alex Burghart MP about voting against putting a legal duty on water companies to improve sewage systems and reduce discharges of untreated sewage- also published in Gazette. Public Questionnaires to next full Council on 8 December will cover environmental issues.

e. Request for the group to consider approaching the supermarkets to collect Tetrapaks for recycling.

2. Environment Nature & Recycling

a. Lower Thames Crossing. Amendments to the Design Refinement include routes for walkers, cyclists and horse riders, electricity and the need for additional land for utility works. To be discussed with Maria Pearson.

b. Traffic Cone upcycling to be used to nurture young trees. Project to be launched soon.

c. Roadside Verge Management – clarification from ECC and BBC as regards individual responsibilities.

- EWT interested in discussing with BCA its Action for Insects project and promoting Plant Life's guidance document with Brentwood Council.

- ECC confirmed the Special Roadside project still exists, led by Place Services in partnership with Essex Highways. It 'believes' herbicides and pesticides are not used in the trial areas.

- Place Services not responded to requests for information

- Essex Highways' sub-contractor dealing with (non-special) verges does not, ECC says, spray verges with Glyphosate, restricting application to kerbs/channels and footways, and not verges.
- ECC is currently reviewing the use of Glyphosate.
- BBC, in a FoI response, says urban verges are cut on a 4-weekly cycle from March to November. It identifies some large verges where grass is not cut until late summer to encourage biodiversity. Rural verges are cut once or twice a year only to encourage biodiversity. BBC said it does not use pesticides but does use 'approved' herbicides on hard surface areas (not on roadside verges) twice during the summer season to eradicate weed growth on paved areas and kerb lines.
- d. Planning approval had been given by BBC for a solar farm on the Lower Dunton Road.
- e. Suggestion that the 'Essex Men's Shed' organisation be approached to help make frames for upturned traffic cones and other campaigning structures.
- f. Request to organise a street-by-street tree survey to chart current position. This could be used to apply for TPO status for some trees as well as establishing a tree record. The Woodland Trust being a good source of information.
- g. Request to engage with the Conservators of Shenfield Common to take action to increase biodiversity.

3. Well Being

No report.

Discussion in the meeting included creation of more cycling paths in the Borough. Existing plans were acknowledged e.g. paths from Shenfield to schools in Brentwood town, but BCA aware the Government has said it will cut funding to councils not doing enough to promote cycling and walking when it announced a further £338m to support active travel.

Request to consider alternative ways of school children reaching their schools - park and ride etc.

4. Funds

- a. Bank account still being set up.
- b. Grant from Friends of the Earth being investigated. Details of what could constitute a bid were given.
- c. Other working groups were encouraged to frame their initiatives to meet the Essex County Council Climate Action Challenge Fund.
- d. Request for this group to consider a membership fee.

5. Education Working with Schools and monitoring climate change

- a. Feedback on the Schools Conference given. Preparation for the next in the series, possibly next April/May at St. Martin's School will begin.

b. The projects chosen by the students will be recorded and support offered from BCA members.

c. The meeting requested some literature to be written for use during campaigns, on how to determine your household's carbon status, for example.

d. A list of tools for calculating carbon footprint at the community and individual level were mentioned: (those quoted in the NALC Climate Change Report listed below)

Centre for Sustainable Energy www.impact-tool.org.uk

WWF How big is your environmental footprint? www.footprint.wwf.org.uk

Giki Zero www.zero.giki.earth

Fownhope tool – The Great Collaboration www.greatcollaboration.uk

6. Engagement/Engaging

No report given. This group was encouraged to work with the Education group on the production of materials.

Request for planning a presence at the Vegan Market in Crown Street on 5th December. The stall should have the petition available to sign, and the December newsletter including joining information, if one could be drawn up in time.

7. Power/Developing community energy and providing for electric vehicles

No report given. BBC did say that 30 EVCs are being rolled out to BBC car parks this year. Conversations are also being had with other sites to increase the installations.

Next meeting:

No monthly Members' meeting will take place in December.

In 2022 we will meet once a month at the Chicken & Frog Bookshop and by zoom.

A poll for meeting dates and times will be distributed to the membership.

Jane Winter

Secretary

