

Climate and Ecological Emergency Working Group (CEE_WG) Report to the Parish Council Meeting – February 2021

1. **Dorset Council's Climate and Ecological Emergency strategy.** Thank you to all councillors who responded to or commented on our draft response to DC's strategy. The Working Group co-opted Cllr. Noon to revise and finalise CVPC's final response, which was submitted on 19th January. The full response and those of other local councils and local organisations can be seen on our website at: www.charvalley.org/environment
2. **Dorset Cultural Strategy.** Cllr Carey attended the DAPTC's Consultation session on the new Dorset Cultural Strategy (2021-2026) on 28th January. The county's Cultural Strategy is being prepared by the Arts Development Company (ADC) on behalf of Dorset Council.

The draft Cultural Strategy does identify the Environment as one of its 'Overarching Priorities', but the Climate and Ecological Emergency is not mentioned anywhere in the Strategy's nine Ambition Statements. Cllr Carey urged the ADC to include the Climate and Ecological Emergency explicitly and to prioritise cultural activities that help to build resilient and self-sufficient local communities. **ACTION for CVPC Meeting 8th Feb:** The CEE_WG now asks CVPC to consider supporting the following statement to be sent to the ADC:

"Char Valley Parish Council notes that the Climate and Ecological Emergency is not mentioned anywhere in the nine Ambition Statements of the Draft Dorset Cultural Strategy. We urge the Arts Development Company and Dorset Council to include the Climate and Ecological Emergency explicitly in its Ambition Statements and to prioritise cultural activities that help to build resilient and self-sufficient local communities."

3. **River Char project.** Ian Rees, for the Project Management Team, reports that they have:
 - Created a video and questionnaire for residents.
 - Identified stakeholders to be interviewed in depth and already spoken to:
 - Wessex Water ~ Environment Agency ~ Catchment Based Approach ~ Forestry Commission ~ Dorset Council – flood risk team and natural environment team ~ Jurassic Coast Trust ~ Dorset Coast Forum ~ Wild Trout Trust.
 - Others they will speak to include: Westcountry Rivers Trust ~ National Trust ~ Natural England ~ NFU ~ CLA
 - They anticipate speaking to 10-15 landowners in the vale, but this depends on Covid restrictions. So far they have undertaken three interviews.
 - They will review initial findings with the Environment Agency and Catchment Based Approach, to ensure that the Project can align with any initiatives that they may be planning and/or funding that they may be holding.
 - They need help to share the video and questionnaire widely, to ensure they get a good response from our community. They ask for our suggestions and ask us to consider:

- An article in *Char Chat* and the Parish Magazine
- Hosting the video on the CVPC website and/or on the AONB YouTube channel.
- Including details in the minutes of this meeting.
- Putting details on the village WhatsApp and on village noticeboards

They also want to raise awareness of their work with surrounding parishes, and want to send out an email and link to other parish councils and local groups. They ask our opinion on whether this should come from CVPC or AONB.

ACTION for CVPC Meeting 8th Feb:: The CEE_WG now asks CVPC:

a) to consider the above actions and, where appropriate, ask the Communications Working Group to undertake them.

b) to decide on who should contact neighbouring parishes.

c) to suggest any other ways the project can be publicised.

Next steps for the River Char project:

- Publish and publicise the questionnaire and video
- Pull together findings, review existing studies on the Char and summarise in a 'State of the Char' report
- This strand of work is linked to some wider work they are doing on the whole of the West Dorset Rivers & Coastal Streams Catchment. They hope to complete this and the River Char work by the end of March.

Links:

Questionnaire link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/F275Z9G> - for information at this stage; a few tweaks are still required.

Video download (it's 80mb): <https://we.tl/t-sWwlpmf19p>

4. **The CEE_WG's main tasks in February** will be to work with AONB and DWT on the River Char Project and to develop a response to Dorset Council's Draft Local Plan.

3rd February 2021