

Local Environment Working Group Report to the Parish Council Meeting – January 2021

The Local Environment Working Group met remotely on 18th November 2020.

1. We confirmed that the name would be as above and that the members of the Working Group are: Andrew Carey, Tara Hansford, Jo Jones, Clare Mahaddie, Sylvia Creed-Castle.
2. Andrew occupies the Chair until relieved.
3. Our decision-making quorum is 3 people.
4. We agreed that our remit should be as follows:
 - a. To develop a CVPC policy and guidelines (in conjunction with Dorset Wildlife Trust and others) on tree planting, wildflower sowing and other schemes that arise periodically – get it agreed by the full council and announce it widely (website, noticeboards, etc.). *Here the intention is that we have an agreed policy when we are offered trees, asked about water meadows, etc.*
 - b. To develop a CVPC statement on cutting of verges, hedges and trees – get it agreed by the full council and announce it widely (website, noticeboards, etc.). *Here the intention is that residents asking/complaining about these things can find clear information on our views, Dorset Council's procedures and where to direct their comments and complaints.*
 - c. To identify, brief and support three footpath officers – one for each parish with both Whitchurches counting as one – and announce their role widely. This would include addressing the issue of footpaths not on the definitive map. *Here the intention is that everyone understand their role and that residents asking/complaining about footpaths can find clear information on our views, DC's procedures and where to direct their comments/complaints.*
 - d. To identify and initiate or support local schemes and improvements that are in line with CVPC's climate change policy. This could include food/fruit growing/sharing schemes, car and tool sharing ideas, small scale carbon reduction initiatives. Larger schemes (River Char, Lifelines, Public Transport) already handled by other Working Groups should stay with those WGs. *Here the intention is that residents know who to contact if they have ideas and that we build contacts with interested residents.*
 - e. To consider information and facilities needed for people visiting the shrine of St Candida in Whitchurch. *Here the intention is to co-ordinate ideas, not build public lavatories ourselves.*

- f. To gather links to up-to-date information on septic tanks (including the new regulations relating to them) and publicise them for the benefit of local residents. *Here the intention is that residents asking/complaining about septic tanks, mains drainage, flooding and related issues can find clear information on our views and responsibilities, Dorset Council's procedures, national regulations and where to direct their comments and complaints.*
- g. To canvass residents, as and when necessary but not just for the sake of it, for ideas and suggestions about what would make local life better for them (with a view to CVPC supporting or acting on those ideas where agreed and possible). *Here the intention is to support the Communications WP to engage and work with residents and make the work of the Parish Council better known.*

Communication with residents is an important part of all these tasks. In many cases, once we have got the guidelines agreed and on our website, it should make less work for the Chair and Clerk as residents can be referred to the relevant information. For matters like verges that are not our responsibility, everyone should benefit from knowing who to contact at Dorset Council.

21/12/2020