



NOTES FROM ENVIRONMENTAL SUB-GROUP HELD ON TUESDAY 21ST NOVEMBER 2023 AT 6.00PM IN THE MARDEN PARISH OFFICE

1. **PRESENT:**
Cllrs Besant, Boswell, Newton, Rabot, Summersgill and Turner
2. **APOLOGIES:**
Apologies received from the resident who was going to speak on Earth Charter.
3. **NOTES FROM ENVIRONMENTAL SUB-GROUP MEETING HELD ON 29TH AUGUST 2023**
Agreed.
4. **ACTION POINTS FROM MEETING HELD ON 29TH AUGUST 2023**
Neighbouring Parishes
Make contact with neighbouring parishes to discover what action they are taking. It was suggested we put feelers out to Staplehurst, Paddock Wood and Goudhurst/

Marden Environmental Sub-Group

It was agreed at Full Council to open the Sub-Group to representatives from the local community to be involved and assess the practicalities of a local action plan and what's achievable. Focus is needed on one thing at a time and to look at seeking the necessary funding. Cllr Boswell had placed an item in Autumn newsletter but no resident had come forward as yet.

Retrofitting Your Home

Cllr Besant had spoken to a resident to write a piece for the Spring newsletter.

MBC Carbon Literacy Training, Parish Council Net Zero Goals and MBC Climate Change Environment Website

MBC will be organising a road show and Borough Councillors have been assessed on Carbon Literacy. Cllr Summersgill would speak to the MBC Sustainability Officers and give an update for next meeting. Cllr Boswell is attending a Carbon Literacy Action Day on 4th December.

Maidstone Eco Hub

MPC supports this initiative and MBC Sustainability Officer is in discussion to roll out elsewhere in the borough such as Coxheath. Cllr Summersgill assists with the Eco Hub and they have numerous websites to check out such as solar panels and ground source pumps: <https://climatechange.maidstone.gov.uk/home/community/menu/maidstones-eco-hub>. Cllr Summersgill advised MBC currently have a toy hub in the Chequer Centre in Maidstone. Cllr Boswell would include pertinent articles in the parish newsletter.

Community Charge Points

Cllrs discussed electrical charging points in the village at the Amenities Committee meeting on 26th September and requested the Clerk contact Maidstone Borough Council about their corporate strategy and what their policy is on charging points not only in Maidstone town but in the rural areas.

PROWs in Marden

Cllrs discussed the option of getting community groups involved in reporting PROWs that need tidying and fixing at the Amenities Committee meeting on 26th September. Cllrs agreed that the majority of residents know how they should report any issues with footpaths and public rights of way in the village and Cllr Boswell would place article in Spring newsletter.

Solar Panels on Public Conveniences

MPC would need MBC agreement for this and would mean applying for a Building Alteration Licence which costs approx. £750. However, this could possibly be combined with any other alterations there (e.g. if MPC reconsiders installing a water fountain). Cllrs agreed to research and look at the generation income stream to offset MPC's carbon footprint, look at a ballpark theoretical figure of what the kilo wattage is monthly and what grants are available.

Marden Parish Council Biodiversity Policy

The 2021 Environmental Act has now come into play for Parish Councils and MPC is required to draft a Biodiversity Policy by the end of 2023. Cllrs ran through the NALC draft Biodiversity policy and made various amendments. Cllr Boswell would draft one for MPC and would take to the Amenities Committee on 28th November prior to Full Council on 12th December.

5. LOCAL COUNCIL AWARDS SCHEME – QUALITY GOLD LEVE STATUS

One of the criteria for this status is to submit a statement on engaging with the community of issues relating to the environment and climate change. Cllrs discussed the evidence MPC could put forward on its actions that have been undertaken to make a positive environmental impact in the Parish. Cllr Boswell will draft an evidence statement and discuss at Amenities Committee meeting on 28th November.

6. NALC CLIMATE EMERGENCY NETWORK SESSION ON 19TH OCTOBER 2023

Cllr Boswell attended and had circulated notes to Cllrs. Cllrs discussed the 'Great Collaboration' project and agreed to discuss at the next meeting. Next NALC Climate Emergency Network session Thursday 25th January.

7. MBC CLIMATE CHANGE SURVEY 2023 (closing date 1st January 2024)

This is on the Amenities Committee agenda for 28th November to complete.

8. OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST

Recycling at Marden at Christmas Event

Whilst compostable cups are used at the event at The Allens, it is difficult to separate waste at the event. However, it was proposed that a separate recycling box for these cups be put out.

Ponds

Cllrs discussed the next project after the tree planting in February at the Cemetery area. Cllr Summersgill has been involved with the creation of 4 ponds with the assistance of the Medway Valley Countryside Partnership (who are assisting MPC with the tree planting). Cllrs discussed ponds in the parish which could be restored such as the ponds at the back of Marden Playing Field (owned by Millwood and Redrow).

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Environmental Sub-Group is planned for Tuesday 20th February at 6pm in the Parish Office. The resident would be invited to attend to speak on Earth Charter.