

Hazelbury Bryan Bytes

Parish Council Newsletter – Issue 39 - January 2021

Introduction by Steve Murcer, Chairman, HBPC

2020 - a year none of us will forget

2020 is a year none of us will forget. For some it has been a time of sadness and hardship but for many a time of selfless support for family and friends, for those shielding and for those in need of help in our village.

In the early summer we all came together to applaud our care and essential workers and I know you will join me to thank again those in the NHS frontline, care workers and all those carrying out essential jobs in our community for the selfless way they have carried on working during this most difficult time. Let's not forget, though, that we all played our part by staying at home, indeed working from home, social distancing, I could go on, with the aim of protecting the vulnerable and those most at risk.

As a parish council the main piece of work we are about to start this year is making sure that as a community we look at ways we can reduce our impact on the planet and our local environment, led ably by Ken Huggins. Please take the time to read Ken's important piece on the Climate and Ecological Emergency. If you can think of other projects the parish council might become involved in please don't hesitate to get in touch as we always welcome new ideas, whilst recognising the art of the possible and what is within our resources to achieve.

We are also saying goodbye to one of our councillors David Maughan. He and his wife Alison are leaving the village and they both will be greatly missed for their tireless work for our village. It does mean that we have a parish councillor vacancy, so if you would like to get involved please drop me or our clerk, Malcolm Wilson, an email.

The New Year is a time of resolutions and new beginnings and the vaccine roll out is providing just the glimmer of light we all need and the hope that life will once more return to some normality.

Climate and Ecological Emergency - What's the Urgency ?

Scientists have warned for many decades that our steadily increasing emissions of greenhouse gases ... principally CO₂ from the burning of fossil fuels ... is causing global warming. They have repeatedly warned us that this warming is the cause of increasingly extreme weather events, as well as the melting of the polar ice caps and the warming of the oceans, resulting in rising sea levels. Every year since 1995 there have been international conferences to debate climate change, and governments have agreed to take action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in order to keep the global temperature rise to less than 2°C above pre-industrial levels (the scientifically advised limit of safety) and with an aspiration to keep it below 1.5°C. However, the emission of greenhouse gases has continued to rise relentlessly every year, and the global temperature rise is already above 1.1°C.

At the same time, we have been radically changing the surface of the planet with our expanding agriculture. Much of this is at the expense of essential wildlife habitats such as rainforests. This has driven a sharp increase in the extinction rate of many species, and also brought us into closer contact with species that harbour infectious diseases that we have not had to deal with before. We are consuming the planet's resources at an unsustainable rate. It is estimated that worldwide we are currently using up the renewable resources of 1.7 earths, and unless things change that would rise to 3 earths by 2050. Clearly this cannot continue.

It is now increasingly evident that we are rapidly running out of time to deal with these twin problems of global warming and environmental destruction.

In May 2019 the UK Parliament approved a motion to declare a Climate and Ecological Emergency. The UK Government has so far declined to do the same but has introduced some measures, including a legally binding target for all greenhouse gas emissions to be reduced to net-zero by 2050. Since the Climate Change Act was passed in 2008 there have been some successes, most notably in the reduction of coal burning for power. However, the Government's Committee on Climate Change report in June this year highlighted insufficient progress in other sectors, and incomplete emission reduction policies with significant gaps.

In November 2018 Bristol City Council became the first council body in the UK to declare a climate emergency, since when nearly three quarters of Local Councils in the UK have declared Climate and Ecological Emergencies. This represents cross-party action at the local level, which is what we need to deal with the challenges we face. In 2019 Dorset Council also declared Climate & Ecological Emergencies, and formed an Executive Advisory Panel to make recommendations to the Council's Cabinet on how the Council can reduce its own environmental impact as well as support Dorset communities to do the same. The Council is now consulting with the public on a proposed Action Plan, and you can have your say by going to the relevant section of the Council's website at www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk. The deadline for submissions is 20th January 2021. In their Strategy Plan Dorset Council accept that *"... we have only 8 to 10 years at the current rate, within which serious action is required to avert this crisis and avoid the worst impacts."*

Dorset Council has only limited powers and responsibilities in many of the areas where action is required. They have therefore called on all Dorset organisations and individuals to act collectively, in order for us to achieve the ambition of making Dorset carbon neutral.

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Dorset Council also intend to work with Town and Parish Councils, which is where we in Hazelbury Bryan come in.

On 6th October 2020 Hazelbury Bryan's Parish Council voted to declare a Climate & Ecological Emergency (CEE) to formally recognise that urgent action is required, and also as a means of focussing our collective attention on taking action to address the biggest challenge humanity has ever faced. As with the Neighbourhood Plan that was finalised in November 2018, the CEE will also strengthen the Parish Council's ability to support and promote any proposed developments that take account of the urgent need to address the CEE, as well as resist those that don't.

To be blunt, the longer we leave it to take action the more difficult and costly it will be for all of us, in one way or another. But taking action does not mean a metaphorical return to the stone age way of life, as some have claimed. On the contrary, we can collectively make choices that lead to a better quality of life for all of us, ensuring that the most vulnerable are not left behind. There are positive health, well-being, social and community co-benefits of taking climate action.

So what can we do in Hazelbury Bryan ?

First of all we can recognise that we are stronger as a community, working together in spite of all the things that might seem to divide us ... such as age, political leanings, religious beliefs, income levels, workers with little time to spare, retirees with more time to spare etc.

The **first step** is going to be an evening presentation at which the present known facts about the climate and ecological situation will be shared, so that everyone is fully aware of the true depth of the problem and the urgency of the situation. This is more detailed than any documentary so far shown on TV. It will be held online on Mon 11th January 2021 at 7.30pm, and will last for 40 minutes. It will be followed by a Q&A session, so that any questions can be answered. Please be aware that the presentation includes information that children in particular may find distressing. It is therefore recommended for adult viewing only.

Please join the meeting using this web address. The meeting room will be open from 7.20pm for a prompt start at 7.30pm.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85399694343>

If you do not have access to the internet, or would just like to listen to the talk, please phone in on 0203 901 7895 and enter ID 853 9969 4343 when asked for the ID number.

If you would like any assistance with joining the session, whether online or by phone, please contact: Caz Dennett, email: de-net@hotmail.co.uk or phone: 07540 997717

The **second step** will be for volunteers to form a CEE Working Group to investigate the options available to us, and to formulate a proposed Action Plan for the PC to consider. Membership of the Working Group will include Parish Councillors and residents who wish to be involved, and will initially meet online. The meetings will be public, so anyone who wishes to follow the proceedings and offer suggestions can do so. All contributions will be welcomed!

Parish Councillor Ken Huggins

PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS: These are now being held on the second Tuesday of each month with a 7.15 pm start. These are held remotely using Zoom. The agenda shows the meeting code and password so you can attend – all welcome!

PARISH COUNCILLOR VACANCY: There is a vacancy and it is most likely the parish council will “co-opt” a new councillor in the next month or so. If you are interested please contact the Chairman or parish clerk for details of what is involved.

CEMETERY: Sadly, this was damaged by a car on 1st December. At the time of writing, we are liaising with the Police and our insurers but the site will be repaired and restored

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