

Yealmpton Environment Group
Notes of meeting Thursday 20th October 2022
Little Bowden, Bowden Hill PL8 2JX

Present:

Sheila Barton, Linda Durman, Tony Hawkins, Charles Weston-Baker

Apologies Jen Fox, James Roberts

1. Election of chairman

Charles Weston-Baker proposed Linda Durman as chairman, seconded by Tony Hawkins (no other nominations) and she was elected by unanimous vote of those present.

2. Minutes of 11th August meeting approved.

3. Trees.

Charles Weston-Baker reported joint working on the establishment of a local tree nursery at the field west of Ben's Farm Shop in Yealmpton (field name Lodge Gate). Partners include Veterans Outdoors (VO), a charity that offers experiences and short courses to aid recovery, or longer courses for those wanting to retrain. VO will arrange for office and training facilities on site and a polytunnel also for training purposes. The field is owned by Kitley Estate and the project has their agreement. The 400 whips will be planted there this autumn as part of forestry training that will enable participants to support to YEM, FWAG and South Devon Community Forest projects. Land and Heritage may also offer support. Up to 170 veterans are expected to use the training scheme initially.

Tree Warden advert has been placed in October Yealmpton Press and Yealmpton Facebook page but no response received. We will attempt to recruit again next year.

4. Composting.

Linda has visited Brixton Community Composting facility (report attached) and attended a Community Composting Gathering in South Brent, a report on this will follow when overheads have been circulated as they have key info, but actions required to set up a successful scheme will be attached. Newton and Noss, Holbeton and Ermington may wish to join in setting this up. When all ducks are in a row we will suggest a way forward to Yealmpton Parish Council. We have not yet identified a site.

5. Water

Tony circulated a summary of all activities relating to Yealm water quality and YEM since the last meeting.

Linda to include summary in YEG report to Parish Council for November. Action Linda

Tony to draft outline Riverfly project so that Linda can apply for funding. Action Tony

River Yealm Water Quality Group (RYWQG) has drafted a paper with environment guidelines for Parishes to use in response to planning applications for new builds or significant extensions. Linda to incorporate in a new planning policy document for Yealmpton in the hope that P Council will adopt it. Action Linda

6. Footpaths.

Sheila explained proposal for the Yealm built up bank along footpath 20 to be extended to reduce damage by flooding. This is somewhat controversial but we agreed necessary as this is one of the few level footpaths accessible by people with limited mobility.

Application for footpath through Shire Horse field has been submitted but progress now delayed by revision of Definitive Map at Devon County.

Bridleway

7. Domestic Heating.

Linda has been in contact with South Dartmoor Community Energy, who are preparing an article for Yealmpton Press to explain how to access their service for people experiencing fuel poverty. This includes £200 grant for people using their service.

In addition SDCE have offered an evening advising on changing to more environmentally sustainable domestic heating systems after Christmas. Five Parish Alliance (Brixton, Yealmpton, Wembury, Newton and Noss and Holbeton) will be invited to participate.

8. Active travel

Eastern extension to Silverbridge Way is being explored as the access along the narrow pavement east from Ben's Farm Shop is dangerous for both cyclists and pedestrians. Liz Hitchins (chair, Brixton PC) is taking a lead. Silverbridge Way project had significant involvement at county level but their support at present is limited. Liz and Linda have also met with two Plymouth Councillors to draw attention to the danger using Dawes Lane as the only pedestrian and cycle route linking Plymouth and South Hams. Resolution is said to have been estimated to cost £300,000 but no money tree has been located.

9. Living churchyard project

David Curry, Environmental Advisor for Exeter Diocese gave a talk on this subject on 4th October. Linda and Kate have agreed the resulting plan for churchyard management will remain a Bee Wild/St Bartholomews' project.

10. Next meeting.

We will review need for a meeting in December, either in person or on Zoom.

Community Composting

When planning a new facility, consider:

1. Management team to set up and manage (volunteers)
2. Site
 - accessibility if the public will be bringing material for composting
 - SHDC shredder will need access and turning circle – 30 square metres
 - stacking area for materials that will need to be shredded
 - bins for the shreds and other compostable materials to be layered (each to be turned into a neighbouring bin to speed composting up to 8 times a year)
 - security to prevent fly tips
 - hard standing if to be used throughout winter months
 - cover and toilet for volunteers

Note one existing site is 50 metres x 12 metres and only just enough.

3. Planning consent for change of use. Cost may reduce if application is by Parish Council. T23
4. Environment Agency permit – do not ask for a licence (needs holding number for the field)
5. Costed business plan to include
 - information on local demand (include info from Matt Crimp)
 - policy on whether to charge for accepting compostable material
 - whether to apply for recycling credit scheme (I think government funded but administered by County and value of credit constantly reducing)
 - disposal of finished compost (I don't think you can charge if you accept the part funding from SHDC for set up costs but you can ask for donations; number of bags collected is acceptable as proxy for output in Ashprington community compost site – small schemes don't seem to need to record weights of finished product)
 - whether part time job will be supported, as many schemes falter as volunteers age and withdraw.