

Yealmpton Environment Group
Notes of meeting Tuesday 3rd January 2023
Parish Room, Bakery Square

Present:

Linda Durman, Tony Hawkins, Charles Weston-Baker, Jane Pennington, Sheila Melot, James Roberts
Apologies Jen Fox, Sheila Barton

1. Notes of meeting 20th October 2022 approved.

Jane welcomed to her first meeting.

2. River Yealm

Pollution incident of 5th December 2022; CSI readings recorded details of the pollution with photographs. Dead fish (smothered by porcelain clay) have been found. Tony prepared full report for WRT, RYWQG and Parish Councils so that informed letters can be sent to EA in the hope that we get some feedback from EA with information on investigation of the source and prevention of further pollution incidents. Summary report also given two page spread in Yealmpton Press. Linda to raise issue at Parish Council on 9th Jan and ask whether District and County Councils would also tackle EA for feedback as they may have more weight than Parish.

River Fly project still awaiting decision from District Council Sustainability fund.

Continuous monitor – training for volunteers will be next week. Linda to pursue new Parish Clerk (Mike Plant clerk@yealmpton-pc.gov.uk) re quote for adding insurance for same to P Council inventory.

3. Trees

Planting days for Lodge Gate Field (west of Ben's Farm Shop) 11-16 January. 25 varieties of 3000 trees with professional supervision of volunteers.

Additional sites and funding planned to achieve a total of 15,000 trees (mixture of broadleaved varieties) in the parish over the next two years. Stakes and shelters (donation from save Devon's Treescapes) secured for next 400 whips when Lodge Gate has been planted.

Discussion under way for planting a community orchard (requested in response to village survey).

Hedge workshop planned by FWAG to take place at Ashcombe Farm on 7th February.

Five local primary schools taking part in establishing local micro nursery (enthusiastic acorn planting etc).

Veterans Outdoors in discussions to design and fund wood lodges on Lodge Gate Field for development of a local environment centre.

4. Wildlife survey

Access to a field within the parish that has not been farmed or much walked over for 25 years has been secured with a view to surveying natural (animal) wildlife there. This unique opportunity (also information requested in response to village survey) cannot be costed at this stage but Parish Council part funding may be requested during this financial year, depending on success in securing alternative sources of funding.

5. EV point in the village

We discussed this and suggest taking (commercial) advice to advise Parish Council at February meeting.

6. Composting.

Newton and Noss in discussions to secure site for community composting. Since Yealmpton parish probably does not have sufficient demand alone to establish a facility we await outcome of discussion.

7. Active travel routes

Silverbridge Way extension; Ros Davies, Liz Hitchins and Linda Durman met on site 19th December. Agreed following actions:

- establish whether a road safety audit is needed for access route west of Ben's Farm Shop

- check whether any trees along the proposed path has a TPO
- route will need to be wide enough for tractor mounted flail for maintenance
- check whether planning consent required (fencing required by PYO probably does require consent)
- ask Parish Councils to consider applying for speed restriction A379 between Yealmpton and Brixton as there are now 15,000 to 18,000 vehicles using this road **per day**
- establish what stage South Hams and Devon Active Travel Plans have reached.
- route for proposed extension now agreed with Ros Davies, Charles Weston-Baker and Michael Bastard.

The western end of the active travel route into from South Hams Plymouth is also dangerous just inside the Plymouth boundary due to steep slopes, a spring and slippery bedrock. A visit there with Plymouth councillors provoked the following response to request for improvement:

‘Following your recent site visit to Dawes Lane with Cllr Dreaan he raised with officers your and Brixton Parish Council’s understandable and longstanding concerns about this part of NCN Route 28 with officers and was subsequently briefed. Cllr Dreaan asked me to share current information with you, which I have summarised as follows:

- PCC and Sustrans both recognise that Dawes Lane represents a very poor standard of provision for part of a designated NCN route and that finding a solution would deliver benefits to residents in Plymouth, Sherford, Brixton and Yealmpton.
- Responding to this, PCC commissioned a Sustrans feasibility study in early 2022 to evaluate four options (including upgrading Dawes Lane) to improve cycle connections into Plymouth along NCN Route 28.
- The study recommended creating a new high quality ‘West Route’ connecting NCN 28 to Elburton Road that would deliver comfortable gradients and adequate width for segregated provision (see image below).
- Creating a new link via Portway Close was assessed as possible but less feasible due to very steep gradient and several landowners.
- Upgrading Dawes Lane was rejected on the basis of very steep gradient, possible drainage issues and lack of available width.
- Neither a new link via Portway Close nor upgrading Dawes Lane would be likely to attract external funding as they would not provide the ‘Level of Service’ to users stipulated in latest government guidance on cycling infrastructure (LTN1/20) and that Active Travel England are telling local authorities they want to see delivered.
- The initial capital cost of the West Route has been estimated at c.£2.6m and unfortunately we do not currently have a viable source of funding to deliver a cycling scheme at this scale of cost (the £55k of Sherford S106 secured for Dawes Lane improvements is unlikely to be released for another 4/5 years based on actual housing completion rates to date). The West Route would also require agreement with the owner of the field through which it would pass and such an agreement is not in place.
- PCC are currently seeking engagement with the West Route landowner and will continue to keep all potential funding sources for cycling infrastructure improvements under regular review.

Daniel Forster MTPS

Transport Strategy Co-ordinator
Strategic Planning and Infrastructure
Plymouth City Council’

Ros Davies (DCC) explained that Peter Guy (public rights of way officer) has resigned and is not likely to be replaced. Parish Council therefore needs to take up maintenance work on local Public Footpaths.

7. Domestic Heating.

SDCE advice for householders on changing to more environmentally sustainable domestic heating systems arranged for Saturday 18th February 10-12 at the Community Centre. Five Parish Alliance (Brixton, Yealmpton, Wembury, Newton and Noss and Holbeton) are invited to participate.

SDCE also provides individuals experiencing fuel poverty with advice and support. The Parish Council has purchased wall thermometers via SDCE that indicate safe level of heat for elderly and people with mobility problems. These are being distributed by the befriending project, Dementia Friendly Parishes project and the social prescriber at the medical centre. More are available if anyone knows someone (including carers) who might use them.

8. Light pollution

Linda and Sheila M will attempt to understand the light pollution map

<https://www.lightpollutionmap.info/#zoom=4.00&lat=45.8720&lon=14.5470&layers=B0FFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFFF> and investigate how others have used them. Source <https://www.wildeast.co.uk/> and a wildwest group has a presence on WhatsApp and trying to set itself up.

9. Next meeting

Tuesday 21st February 7pm Linda to book Parish Room again.

*WRT West Country Rivers Trust and RYWQG River Yealm Water Quality Group