

Yealmpton Environment Group

Notes of meeting Tuesday 5th September 2023

Parish Room, Bakery Square

Present: Linda Durman, Jane Pennington, Charles Weston-Baker

- 1. Apologies: Sheila Barton, Tony Hawkins, Sheila Melot**
- 2. Notes of meeting July 23rd approved.**

3. Trees

Proposals are in hand for Tree Seed Sunday on 8th October. The trees planted at Lodge Gate Field have survived well. The few that failed will be replaced at no cost to us. During the planting season this coming winter, several planting projects in the parish will see more than 5,000 additional trees planted. The trees are being supplied at no cost to the Parish Council and work will be done (hopefully) by volunteers. National Grid has funded £1998 for fencing and training at one planting location in the parish.

Yealmpton parish falls within the area for which The Woodland Trust has secured funding for the identification and preservation of ancient and veteran trees:

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/search/?q=ancient+and+veteran+trees&Submit=search=&p=1>

A local volunteer will train soon as a 'verifier'.

Despite Dutch Elm Disease, 600 elms have been identified in the parish. One large elm came down recently at Gorlofen and cuttings were taken for research at Kew.

Arrangements are under way for a village event 'Tree Seed Sunday' on 8th October.

YESS application failed

4. Biodiversity

Parklife have started their initial survey of Ruby's Wood for baseline information on flora and fauna there. They have been asked to submit timesheets for the work and a quarterly report on progress (Charles to negotiate subject headings). ACTION Charles

Connection has been made with South Brent 'birders' in the hope that a local group can be set up in Yealmpton to monitor the variety and quantity of local species.

5. River Yealm

Riverfly Project goes live in October when WildFish undertakes the baseline/benchmarking survey as part of the Smart Rivers programme. The second such survey will take place in April alongside training to ensure that our volunteers who will carry out sampling twice a year at five chosen sites on the river, are doing so at the standard required for us to contribute data to the Smart Rivers Programme.

WildFish <https://wildfish.org/about/>

The Citizen Science Initiative (CSI) continues with volunteers taking regular readings measuring Yealm water quality. A full report on collated information from CSI will be prepared for presentation at a meeting in December. The continuous water monitor regularly records pollution day and night during dry weather. The continuous water monitor continues to generate alarms during dry weather, day and night, suggesting that illegal discharges still happen. The EA assures us that they are definitely taking action re pollution event of 5th Dec 2022.

The University of Plymouth in partnership with the YEM group are developing accessible and user-friendly maps and data sets for all environmental information covering the river Yealm, its catchment and estuary as part of the Data Accessibility for River Catchment Environmental Enhancement (DARCEE) Project. Zoe Connolly (academic MRes student) will give a talk 4th October (not public) on the impact of river pollution.

Local leaders participated in the first workshops brainstorming the potential sources, interpretation and uses of the various data sets on water quality. The second follow up workshop will take place on 13 September at the University of Plymouth.

A Himalayan Balsam pulling party took place at Puslinch recently.

YEG is preparing an article to encourage people not to put bleach into the waste water/ sewage system.

6. Footpaths and Active travel

Our claim for a circular path in the former Shire Horse Centre fields will not be reviewed by the Definitive Map team for another 12 months.

7. Soil

EKOGEA <https://www.ekogea.co.uk/anaerobic-digestion/> slurry management system that turns animal excrement into safe soil nutrients that are an alternative to expensive fertilisers. There is an installation in Collumpton.

8. Yealmpton Show

There was significant success recruiting additional non-farming land owners to YEM schemes to improve river quality.

9. Water Butts

It has come to our notice that several people have water butts but are unsure how to connect them to their downpipe. We have a free water butt (given by SWW) and aim to get this connected in Bakery Square for use by the volunteers who look after the planted flowers there. Mens' Shed will be asked to help with an event **provisionally booked for Saturday 28th October 10am in Bakery Square.**

10. Next meeting

1st November at 7pm, Parish Room.

Parish Clerk contact details for information:

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