

## **Minutes of the meeting of Coleford Climate Action (CCA) held on Tuesday 14 November 2023.**

Present: Andy Conn, Veryan Conn, Melanie Moulding (Chair), Wendy Parslow, Teresa Hopkins, Dan Hopkins (Comms), Yvonne Hawkins, Kirsty Dougall, Geri Carden, Allison Still (Treasurer) Elizabeth (Libby) Meyrick (Secretary).

Apologies: Kitty Herring, Amber Gray (Youth Liaison), Gary Gray, Alan Townsend.

1. **Welcome/apologies:** All present quickly introduced themselves and welcomed Kirsty and Geri who were new to the group.

Melanie opened the meeting by explaining that there will be a move away from monthly meetings of the wider group to quarterly meetings to allow time for actions rather than discussions – the wider group will of course be kept briefed on all activities and progress and will be welcomed to become involved in projects, events etc. The steering group will continue to meet monthly to deal with the administration as needed. In addition, in order to keep the group meetings to an hour, all matters of ‘Other Business’ are to be noted to Libby ([libby.meyrick@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:libby.meyrick@yahoo.co.uk)) a minimum of 24 hours prior to the meeting.

2. **Minutes of the last meeting:** Minutes of the meeting held on 3 October were approved.

3. **Actions from the last meeting:** Progress on actions as follows:

- 3.1. Bank account – to be discussed under AOB.
- 3.2. Logo – Dan is still working on refining this, but it’s on a list of other things to do which are currently more urgent.
- 3.3. Water testing – Gary is awaiting the latest data which has not yet been released.

4. **Green homes/retrofit project:** Dan circulated a paper outlining the steps needed to get the retrofit project off the ground. He explained that originally he had contacted the CSE (Centre for Sustainable Energy) to enquire about being part of their green open homes project, and was initially welcomed to the pilot – however, it later transpired that as Coleford isn’t in North Somerset we don’t qualify for the current scheme. Dan continued dialogue with the CSE with regards to sharing resources and learning from them to potentially run our own scheme, and they have now said that there may be some work that can be done with them – Dan is to meet with them on 15 November and will report back. **Action: Dan**

In the meantime, a plan of action has been drawn up, and the first stage of a call for residents who have experience of retrofit such as solar PV, air source heat pumps, insulation etc has gone out via social media and will go into the parish magazine. This will hopefully attract some people to get involved in sharing their experiences and expertise and, depending on support available from the CSE, could be scalable across the parish and surrounding villages.

There were some questions about how the scheme works, Libby and Teresa explained that they had been to see some homes in the Bath green homes scheme which had run at the start of the month. <https://greenopenhomesbanes.org/> They had visited two properties which were single skin stone homes which had been retrofitted with internal wall and floor insulation, triple glazed windows, underfloor heating etc. The homeowners were very keen to share what they had

done and the difference it had made to their properties. Some houses on the scheme were drop-in open access for the weekend, some houses were open by appointment only. Dan commented that the CSE provide guides for the properties if needed and also funds to help clean the houses afterwards. In addition to the big solutions such as retrofit of insulation, there were some simpler, less costly methods which were also showcased, such as DIY secondary glazing, which would be useful to share with those who either don't have the time, energy or will to take on the bigger projects, or for use in the meantime.

Dan added that the support from the CSE also includes surveys for a number of houses in the area, to highlight where improvements could be made - Andy commented that they had a survey carried out on their house and he would be happy to share the report with the group – it makes depressing reading! A question was asked about the newbuild property going up on the plot of land behind the Scout hut – it was noted that this is a sustainable development and might be a good case study for how to do a sustainable build. Yvonne mentioned that she could approach the homeowner to find out more. **Action: Yvonne.**

## 5. Any other business, as noted prior to the meeting:

- 5.1. *Bank account* – Alli reported that she has carried out some working looking at ethical bank accounts for the CCA, many of the top ranked bank accounts and building societies will only offer accounts to registered charities, or are not currently taking applications for new accounts. However, the Metro Bank, which has a branch in Bath, are relatively high up the ethics list and will offer an account to a group such as the CCA. It was agreed that the CCA open an account with the Metro Bank, with the signatories of Treasurer (Allison Still), Comms (Dan Hopkins) and Secretary (Elizabeth Meyrick) as agreed in the constitution approved at the last meeting. **Action: Alli, Dan and Libby.** Dan commented that he had applied for a grant from the Parish Council for a sum of money to host the website which he is going to build for the CCA and has received a cheque for the sum of £120, which will be deposited in the new account once it's been opened. The group thanked Dan for his efforts in securing the grant and also his upcoming work in building a website – which Dan confirmed will be hosted on an ethical 'green' platform.
- 5.2. *Warm spaces* – Teresa had asked for this to be on the agenda, as the steering group had talked about some funds available for local public buildings to enable them to become warm spaces under the 'Warm Welcome Somerset' scheme – and the Met Office are predicting that this winter is likely to be drier but also colder than normal, due to the El Nino effect. The grant information has been sent to the Parish Council to share with the owners of the buildings in Coleford (such as the Church Hall, RBL, Gospel Hall etc) as this is more their jurisdiction than the CCA, but members of the group are encouraged to raise this with any others that they feel ought to know about the scheme.
- 5.3. *Green baby scheme* – Veryan raised this as a project that she would like to get underway – the development of a network to encourage families within the village to live in a more sustainable way, not just those with babies, but with children of all ages including young adults. The proposal is for the network to encompass families from surrounding villages as well as Coleford, and will start small as a WhatsApp group for sharing advice, ideas, resources, etc. If it takes off then the network could have a page on the CCA website and maybe other social media presence such as a Facebook page as well as in-person gatherings. The group thought this to be an excellent idea, Alli offered a contact at the local nursery if Veryan needs one. There followed a discussion on the name of the group, with

the possibility of ‘Coleford Families for the Future’ but it was noted that the ‘Families for the Future’ network was a UK wide organisation that may require some kind of membership or official link. It was suggested that to start with the project should be known as something like ‘CCA Greener Families’ and that the name may evolve over time. Veryan is to start by looking at how to set up a moderated WhatsApp group and will take it from there. **Action: Veryan.**

- 5.4. *Coleford Conservation Volunteers* – Andy reported that the CCV have just had their AGM and produced a programme for the next 12 months to include installation of a willow dome at the playing field, planting of fruit trees at the allotment (28 January, as long as the ground isn’t frozen) plus refreshing of planters opposite the GP surgery, with wildflowers. There will be more wildflower and hedgerow walks in the Spring, plus the tree nursery project will take off in 2024.
- 5.5. *Share hub* – Kitty had suggested that the CCA might want to set up a project similar to the Share Shop in Frome <https://sharefrome.org/> which is a ‘library of things’ – where members of the community can hire a wide range of products from hand tools to camping equipment, cake tins to carpet cleaners. The suggestion was that something similar, but informal, could be set up in Coleford. There was some discussion regarding liability, costs of repairs, insurance, PA testing of equipment and so on – all the legal issues that go with such a scheme. It was agreed that this is a topic which will need more thought and that maybe could start with promotion of the idea of sharing tools etc more widely within friendship groups and friends of friends, to keep it very informal and light touch so as not to get bogged down with legal or health and safety concerns.
- 5.6. *Engagement of local businesses* – Geri asked if any local businesses had been contacted with regards to their support of CCA and their due diligence/legal obligations regarding the climate? It was commented that the group is still early days (this being just the third meeting) and that such contacts will be made further down the line.

6. The next group meeting will be held in late February/early March, date to be confirmed.

Actions as per table below.

Minute no	Action	Who responsible
4	Continue conversation with CSE regarding involvement in Green Open Homes scheme	Dan
4	Contact owner of new build house behind Scout Hut with regards to possible sustainability case study	Yvonne
5.1	Open bank account with Metro Bank	Dan/Alli/Libby
5.3	Set up CCA Greener Families WhatsApp group	Veryan