

Climate and Ecological Emergency Questionnaire - ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

The numerical results of the questionnaire distributed to all households in the Parish in January 2020 were published in the April issue of 'The Parish Post'.

Some of the questions were followed by boxes inviting comments, and in some cases additional comments were made. All are reproduced below. Changes from normal type to italic and back again indicate that the contributors have changed.

Question 2. Please tell us about what you are currently doing to combat the emergency

Recycling

Britain lacks sufficient facilities to process the volume of plastic which is collected. *Making full use of doorstep collection and centre at Craven Arms. Envelopes go into waste paper whilst confidential content of unnecessary paperwork is pulped and put into compost bins. Use of clear plastic bottles as cloches to protect young plants. Sending used printer cartridges to 'The Recycling Factory'. One can download and print a Freepost label for up to one kilo and choose whether to receive a payment or donate to a charity. Regarding the disposing of plastics, despite the now habitual doorstep collection in our County of what is assumed to be recyclable, one cannot feel content with having 'done one's bit' because, sadly, a large proportion still gets shipped out of Britain for processing/dumping elsewhere! There are still Local Authorities out there with no plastic recycling at all and those that do have differing colours of bin! So, campaigning must be directed to central government to: (1) Help fund/construct processing facilities, (2) Force all councils to comply and (for goodness sake) standardise the colours of bins! We have successfully used 'recycled plastic lumber' for some garden projects, sourcing it from both Kedel Ltd. and British Recycled Plastic Ltd.*

Repairing and re-using

Have always endeavoured to repair and re-use when practical. We use re-chargeable batteries where possible and wind-up torches.

Reducing road mileage

We endeavour to avoid single-purpose car journeys. Sourcing domestic/household needs as close as possible. Avoiding Amazon and minimising long-distance delivery as much as possible

Reducing air mileage

Not while my son lives in Canada. *Have never flown.* Don't fly anymore. *Holidaying in UK.* From the personal holiday perspective, a 3-hour flight at the most (no internal) and then probably one-way only, going by train on the outward journey. We spend time checking the origin of food items which are likely to be transported by air, choosing the closest only if necessary.

Changing to a new energy provider

We use Octopus Energy. If one changes to OE directly (not through Uswitch and the like) and quotes this referral link: <https://share.octopus.energy/rich-gecko-521> we and the new customer will share £100. We pledge to donate at least £25 towards a tree planting scheme for every successful 'link', provided the new customer matches this. [Email Tom Wall walltom@hotmail.co.uk and he will put you in touch with the person who made this comment.]

Switching to an ethical bank

The choice is very limited, either not recognised by the Financial Conduct Authority or not high up in customer service (e.g. few if any High Street branches). We will stick with our High Street (Mutual) Building Society which has served all our banking needs for over 30 years, deliberately avoiding 'the big four' and other quite well-known banks. A 'mutual' is much less likely to promote 'unethical' lending and investment.

Changing diet

We take great care in ensuring a balanced, healthy diet of a variety of foods in sensible portions with no particular bias for or against meat consumption. However, our meat choice favours a low-cholesterol type. Diet is a personal choice, avoiding excesses and extremes for the well-being of the body and following advice from the medical standpoint. No individual or group should be dictating that *their* diet is the one that everyone else should follow! Just losing excess weight, avoid over-buying food and food waste would in itself save enormous amounts of energy consumption and greenhouse gases production.

Buying local produce

Always when available, using local food markets.

Other

Using less plastics. *Compost*. Leave areas of wildlife in gardens. *Air source heating and solar*. Planting trees. *Buying second hand clothes*. Shop local, not supermarkets other than Tuffins. *Buy clothes in charity shops*. As ever: living a bit like we did decades ago. *Take fewer holidays at home and abroad*. Collect water in butts. *Reduce house building*. Double cost of fossil fuels to reduce consumption. *Have a milkman, save on plastic*. Have a wildlife meadow. *Buy pasture-fed meat and eat less of it*. Turn down heating a few degrees and use for fewer hours. *Cleaning rivers out starting at the sea to reduce local flooding*. No make-up, perfumes or scented soaps. *I never use kitchen rolls, wipes or fresh air sprays*. Stop cutting down 8 million trees at Christmas. *Only grow and eat locally-sourced seasonal veg and fruit*. Stop throwing rubbish on roadsides. *Mania for tidiness also to blame*. Some day to day 'thrifty' practices, followed for decades, never considered to be combating any emergency, just common sense. *Not leaving lights on unnecessarily, filling the kettle with just the right amount of water for the intended purpose, using the plain side of otherwise waste correspondence to make jotting pads, using a pencil in preference to a biro for non-permanent notes*. *Using 'loose' fruit and veg wherever possible*. *We are able to grow our own in-season vegetables, soft fruit and salad needs*.

Question 3. Do you see ways in which we can reduce the loss of wildlife within the Parish?

Wildlife gardening

There is a host of information out there to help the uninitiated and even small subtle changes or additions to a modest garden can promote insects, bees, birds etc. The 'all-grass' garden has immense scope for appropriate low-maintenance planting and reducing the use of the powered mower! Gardens bordering bare-fenced fields could incorporate a new hedgerow.

Changes in roadside verge management

Annual cutting seems to be done just out of sheer habit. Admittedly some single-track lanes do need cutting when visibility at certain points is an issue. We are not experts but do question the need to cut every single roadside verge. The curious installation of kerb stones where they have never existed can be positively dangerous, especially on a bend in a narrow lane, but then we suppose the idea is to keep vehicles on the tarmac! Rainwater is then often prevented from percolating into the verge. More hedges must be pleached.

Changes to agricultural management

Those in farming and agriculture will have access to plenty of advice from NFU, Natural England and DEFRA about promoting wildlife and probably already do something to qualify under the Basic Payment Scheme. However, it must go hand-in-glove with sensible good management for the farm as a whole – not over-stocking, not over-grazing and not allowing soil erosion, leading to mud and slurry filtering into water courses and on to lanes, blocking culverts and drains in the process; it happens and does affect wildlife.

Re-wilding

Yes, provided not on species-rich permanent grassland or wetland habitat. *Not sure what re-wilding is*. Yes, whether it's the corner of a garden, a field or screening of buildings, the potential must be enormous in a rural area.

Other

We need to increase soil biodiversity, regenerative agriculture. *Use less insecticides*. Feeding and housing wildlife. *Ban mechanical hedge-cutting*. Protect hedgerows. Bird boxes. Feed birds, allow hedgehog passage between gardens. *Encourage gardeners to let go idea of tidiness*. Read Isabella Tree's 'Wilding'. *Intensive farming does immense damage to wildlife*. The promotion of new wildlife, perhaps, with a wetland scheme.

Question 4. Would you like to see more trees planted in the Parish?

General

In right places. *Would love to see conifer plantations changed to broadleaves*. Thicken all hedges, cut less. *Buy community woodland*. Land that is of marginal use for agriculture. *The Parish is well wooded – look out of your windows*. There is an urgent need because there are scores of quite old trees which will inevitably be lost in the not too distant future.

Any thoughts as to where?

Replacement for existing mature trees in hedgerows and fields. *Not near rivers or roads*. Hedges, field corners, Clunbury Hill, Parish land on Black Hill? *One native shrub in each garden would be a good start*. Everywhere, to join up woods. *Hedgerows, private land*. How practical? Trees can cause problems in small gardens. *Encourage landowners to plant where possible*. Are tree planting grants only for public land?

Question 6. Should the Parish Council be pro-active in standing up for nature and beauty in relation to ...

Planning applications

All new builds/conversions, be they domestic, commercial or agricultural, should have solar panels/unobtrusive wind generators plus ground or air source heat pumps. Also, discouraging expansion of rural communities which lack basic amenities and/or local employment so as not to increase vehicle numbers and traffic serving those expansions. Use of building materials with lowest 'carbon footprint',

Felling licences

Yes, with the mandatory requirement that for every tree felled at least two replacements are planted.

Pollution of watercourses

Yes, with particular regard to compliance with the General Building Rules for sewage discharge, plus monitoring of seepage of chemicals and slurry from agricultural and other business operations

Other

Renewables. *Bad farming practices in the Parish.* Whatever within its limits. *Need to be mindful of encouraging younger generations to stay in the area – what are their needs?* Persuade motorists not to drive on verges but use passing places. *Irrelevant question to global warning.* Has Parish Council much influence? *Tree planting needs to be managed where houses close together.* Please no *leylandii*. I have a piece of land at Clunton. *Increase tree management on road verges and elsewhere.* Raise Parish precept for climate emergency plans. *Agricultural land management.* Clunton is famous for potholes. *Doubtless several issues will require or lead to County intervention! Linking up with like-minded Parish and Town Councils.*

Question 9. Would you be interested in joining a community group seeking to source renewable electricity at a discount

Already using Good Energy. *As long as it's not nuclear.*

Question 10. Might you be interested in attending talks or events held in the Parish

This smacks of XR whose activities we don't condone.

Other

Greta Thunberg has been elevated on to a 'green' pedestal but her much publicised outward and return trip to New York in September 2019 required two independent crews making special transatlantic flights to achieve the stunt! A hint of hypocrisy?

The following new headline appeared in June last year: 'The UK today became the first major economy in the world to pass laws to end its contribution to global warming by 2050'. Really? To achieve that the UK would have to rid itself of its entire population! Homo Sapiens (not so wise?) exhales more carbon dioxide than it inhales and, regardless of what we eat, will continue to exude 'greenhouse effect' gases.

For any future questionnaires do on-line surveys – not paper ones – or offer choice. *Be prepared to take a change of lifestyle.* Control human population.