

Local Community Network Meeting Notes

Cheddar and Axbridge LCN Meeting

Thursday 12th September 2024

Draycott Memorial Hall

Attendance:

Name:

Jacky Farley
Chair Pauline Ham
Danielle Hardaway
Sarah Knight
Val Bullen
Kate Spooner
Fodo Higginson
Craig Dater
Stephan Dury
Dixie Darch
James Divall
Sue Unwin
Tony Unwin
Megan Harnedy
Micheal Hardwick-Ford

Representing

Chair
Vice Chair
Avon and Somerset Police
Avon and Somerset Police
Rodney Stoke and Draycott
Badgworth
SALC
Somerset Council
Somerset Council
Somerset Council
Somerset Council
We Are Axe Vale
We Are Axe Vale
LCN Link Officer
LCN Project Officer

Virtual Attendance:

Heather Shearer
Lina Curiale- Hopkinson
Steve Mewes
Emmaline Kay

Somerset Council
Village Agent
Somerset Climate Action Network
LCN Link Officer

Apologies:

Matt Martin, Ros Wyke, and Bob Filmer.

Annual Report

Changes made to the annual report were agreed and the report accepted as final.

Update from Highways Working Group

Val Bullen gave an update on the working group's progress. The meeting held on the 5th of September focused on Rights of Way. The group explored local issues and discussed the importance of accessibility for all on our rights of way. Peter Hobley, RoW service manager joined us to answer questions and establish the responsibilities around maintenance. Parishes are being encouraged to consider if RoW are important to their parishioners and begin taking on maintenance where possible.

If you would like a copy of the meeting notes, please contact Cheddarandaxbridgelcn@somerset.gov.uk

The next meeting will scrutinise the EHMS with highways colleagues and look at speeding.

Community Environment Toolkit: Cllr Dixie Darch

Dixie gave an overview of Somerset's approach to net zero and climate change, covering electric vehicles, housing stock, and educating staff. The main function is enabling and working with partners and Somerset communities to address climate change.

She delivered a workshop on how our communities can help to mitigate and adapt to climate change at a local level.

The room divided into groups, and each given one of 5 categories: Consumption, Transport Ecology and biodiversity, Built environment, and Water and resilience.

Tasked with answering two questions:

1. What are you doing already within your communities?
2. Have you got any ideas about what more could be done?

Water Resilience

Already doing	More could be done
Land reserves owned by Wildlife Trust. Well managed land can hold water in the landscape to slow the flow of water.	Find more land for tree planting, this is a challenge.

Tree planting	Encourage sustainable agriculture to retain peatlands as a carbon store.
Funds to support flood victims.	Work together to act on raising the water table.
Parish emergency plans	Link climate activities with health and well-being activities in the area.

Steve Mewes added that:

- This is an emergency and we need to act like it.
- The potential for a low carbon, nature rich Somerset are huge and exciting. Healthier, happier, great jobs, lower costs, stronger communities and more.
- Local Gov is chronically under-funded and they face massive challenges. Plus they are under no statutory authority to do anything.
- We have no time to wait for our centralised government to get real with this issue.
- Its down to us. So lets get started
- Let's ask all the parishes in our LCN to raise a separate extra precept to fund an LNC team to work with the community to look at retrofit, renewable energy, local food production, climate adaptation, nature's recovery and more.

Action: Somerset Prepared are holding their annual community resilience day on the 6th of November. Find details [here](#).

Consumption

Already doing	More could be done
Recycling	Communication between businesses and communities to share excess food and resources to reduce waste, something similar to 'too good to go' schemes
Community repair café initiatives	Choose to work with more 'ethical' companies.
Litter picking	Work with local businesses and community groups to reduce consumption and encourage a circular economy.

Transport

Already doing	More could be done
Combine journeys	Shift towards smaller more efficient forms of public transport that are more suited to our rural roads.
Working from home	Increase electric charging infrastructure, make use of community buildings and parking spaces.
Using local businesses and shops wherever possible	Community car-share schemes
	Increase active travel infrastructure and electric bike schemes to improve local mobility.

Built Environment

Already doing	More could be done
Wedmore community power	Link the built environment with active travel routes
Favour the use of renewables in planning applications	Protect green infrastructure and open spaces
Woodland areas and allotment projects to encourage people to grow food.	Share resources on how people can make their homes more resilient: flooding adaptations, retrofit.
Making use of retrofit grants for community buildings	

Action: Val Bullen to share details on how Draycott memorial Hall acquired solar panels

Biodiversity and Ecology

Already doing	More could be done
Allotments and community gardens	Use local walking groups to assess current condition of biodiversity
Tree planting	Participate in the LNRS

Action: a list of ideas for parishes on addressing climate change will be shared.

Tree planting: Craig Dater

Craig introduced his role as a woodland creation officer and gave an overview of how Somerset Council works in partnership with local Wildlife Trusts, the Forestry Commission, and other partners to deliver Somerset's Tree Strategy, launched last year. The strategy covers expanding woodland cover as well as enhancing existing woodlands and making the most of the value of trees in everyday life.

Read the strategy [here](#)

The strategy is based around five key themes:

- Create a wood culture: trees are valued socially, economically, and environmentally.
- Ensure trees and woodland are resilient and adaptable: recognising trees are an important part of responding to climate change. They are slow environments so our action now will impact several generations to come, their sustainability is important.
- Expand tree, woodland, and canopy cover: getting the right trees in the right places.
- Create wood services and products: capitalise on this valuable resource both financially and as a carbon store.
- Create sustainable and flexible governance: collaborative working.

Our communities should know:

Free trees: provide up to 420 small trees to small community groups. Craig's team are here to provide 1:1 support any groups with planning this.

Somerset Tree Planting register: The tangible measure of the state of our tree cover, to try and capture the good work being carried out by landowners and groups. Will allow us to map our tree stock and assess it in the future. Being able to celebrate good work can galvanise other groups. In its first month, they have had 100 responses and know 15 hectares of new woodland have been created.

Action: promote the [free tree planting](#)

Action: share the [tree planting register](#)

Local Nature Recovery Strategy- Steve Dury

Steve Dury introduced the upcoming Local Nature Recovery Strategy, detailing how protection of our local ecology can contribute to mitigating against climate change, most importantly against flooding. The strategy includes mapping the nature of habitats we

already have as well as seeing where could be recovered. The strategy will go to consultation for comment around January 2025.

Update on access to services

Following on from previous discussions, a group of interested parties met to establish what 'access to services' meant to the group. It was decided that we should begin by mapping what local and community services/groups exist in each parish within the LCN. This will be done using a template sent to each parish initially. The mapping exercise will highlight what we have as well as show any gaps.

Fodo Higginson, from SALC gave a very brief introduction to the community health and well-being programme. The programme exists to support Parish, Town, and City councils develop sustainable health and well-being projects. Find details [here](#).

The idea of inviting Fodo back to our next meeting was discussed to further expand on how parishes and the LCN can best make use of the funds and support available.

A community leaders' event is being organised to expand on and delve deeper into the priorities identified by the LCN. This will be in November and details will be shared.

Action: participate in the service mapping exercise if interested

Next meeting: December 12th, venue and invite will be shared.

December's meeting will focus on access to services from a health and well-being perspective.

Our new local policing inspector introduced herself and the topic of speeding was discussed, particularly that the perception of speeding is often different to reality. A member of the police will be invited to the next meeting of our Highways Working Group, being held in November. Details will be shared when this has been arranged.

