

Hanley Carbon Neutral

Newsletter, Spring 2021

Amid increasing levels of concern among residents about the threats facing our environment from climate change, Hanley Castle Parish Council has committed to work towards becoming carbon neutral. This is an update on the various projects set up to help achieve this, but there is a lot more information available at:

www.hanleycarbon.org.

All the projects are run by volunteers. If you would like to take part, please email us : carbonhanley@gmail.com.

Good News for Recycling

In addition to **crisp packets**, we now collect **cheese pouches**, which you can take to the Pump House (end of Gilberts End) Lane and **The Launderette** in Upton, where you can also recycle **medicine blister packs**. The empty packs are converted into reusable raw



materials and the money earned from this scheme goes to Marie Curie Cancer Care. None of these can be recycled by the council scheme.

The Launderette also collects red, blue and green plastic milk bottle tops for Guide Dogs for the Blind.

Do you have land for sale?

We are keen to create a Community Woodland, so would love to hear from you.

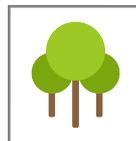


Energy



After securing funding from the Rural Community Energy Fund, the HEAT team appointed energy consultants Sharenergy to research green energy options in the parish. A survey was sent out to residents, asking questions about energy usage. The results were analysed together with data from the 'Environmental Performance Certificates' (EPCs) of every house in the Parish. Based on these figures, Sharenergy estimated the average carbon output per household at **5.85 tonnes a year** or **2.54 tonnes per person**. This is almost **70% higher** than the UK local authority average of **1.5 tonnes per person per year**. Leaflets summarising all the findings and what we can do to improve will be distributed soon.

Trees



Over 1,300 trees have been planted at various sites. This is a great start, as trees help offset carbon emissions. Planting trees alone isn't enough to tackle climate change - we all need to be reducing our carbon output too (see sidebar on p2 for more info) - but it certainly helps and improves our environment too. **Do you have space for a tree or two or fifty....?** There are several **FREE** oak, alder and beech saplings leftover from the planting, so if you would like one or more please get in touch. Similarly, if you have any young trees to donate, please contact us.

St Mary's Church

St Marys church, through the championing of churchwarden Helen Owens, has achieved the Eco Church bronze award. The Church of England is committed to achieving Carbon Zero in all its buildings by 2030 and St Gabriel's is also working towards bronze status.

Help to reduce your own carbon footprint

In the face of the global climate challenge, isn't it pointless for individuals to try and make a difference themselves? It's all the fault of China and India/that we're facing the climate crisis, right? Wrong!

It's taken the combined actions of all of us, mostly in the affluent West and mostly over the past thirty years, to help create the climate crisis, and it will take the combined actions of all of us to address it.

The United Nations has produced guidance on things we can all do - from simply turning off lights and turning down the heating to ensuring the car is well maintained, using it less and cycling more. For more information go to: www.un.org



Converting to Green electricity is another really easy way to help the planet and will save you money too. For help in switching,

We also need to protect existing trees and woodlands, as mature trees are even better at storing carbon than young trees, so as well as planting new trees, please look after older ones too.

Habitats



It might seem as though we have plenty of wildflowers around our parish, and some species are indeed doing well. However, what we can't see are the varieties that used to grow abundantly, but whose numbers are now reduced due to over-mowing and loss of habitat. This loss has a big impact on all sorts of wildlife, not least the insects upon which we rely to pollinate our crops.

So, the Habitats team was created to try and enhance biodiversity in our verges and other sites. Trial areas on 9 sites were roped off, which were then surveyed regularly over the summer to assess what species were there and would grow just by reducing the frequency and timing of mowing. Based on this data, we identified several sites where species were in low numbers and in October 2020 twenty volunteers helped to plant 1,900 plug plants. We'll continue to monitor the sites through 2021 and are currently looking at a couple of new sites to include this year. If you would like to convert your verge to wildflowers, and save yourself a lot of mowing in the meantime, please get in touch.

Transport



Look out for new bike racks around the Parish, making it easier for cyclists to stop and shop or have a break by the village pond.



The possibility of installing Electric Vehicle Charge Points is also being investigated.