

COPY TAKEN FROM FOWNHOPE'S WEBSITE

Climate Emergency

In June 2019, Fownhope Parish Council followed the lead of Herefordshire Council and declared a Climate Emergency and since then have been working on a plan to turn this into meaningful action focused on: Transport, Energy, Waste, Land Use and Buildings. We have been working with Herefordshire Green Network and have attended a series of workshops called The Great Collaboration, designed to bring other local councils and community groups together to encourage a collaborative approach.

Coronavirus and the Climate:

“Covid-19 highlights that people are willing to change their lives in response to a large-scale threat – taking action together for a larger purpose. Individual change is part of systemic change – if we all make changes, collectively we can make a significant difference” (climateoutreach.org).

The climate has of course been one of the few winners in the coronavirus pandemic, with carbon dioxide emissions dramatically reduced worldwide ... but what we need to do now is to work out how we can maintain these improvements as life slowly returns to normal. It is said that ‘moments of disruption challenge established habits’, and therein lies the challenge. Here are some of the actions we have been working on:

Fownhope Car Club:

Before the lockdown, we had been in the process of bringing a car club to Fownhope and will continue with this as lockdown and the need for social distancing eases. Effectively a community car club open to all residents of Fownhope and neighbouring parishes, it provides access to the hire of a car through a membership of the club. It is similar to a car hire system, in that you need to book and pay per usage, but different in that the car belongs to all members of the club and is therefore cared for as though it is your own. **And we are looking for members!** The main advantages to becoming a member of the car club is cost saving, no maintenance, tax, servicing, insurance etc; and being part of a project that significantly benefits carbon reduction. It has been proven that one car club car can remove up to 15 cars from the roads, and that members are much more careful about planning journeys which in turn reduces the levels

of carbon emissions. Have you found that you haven't really missed using your car during lockdown? Or have two cars and one is regularly unused? If so, car clubs are definitely worth a try, please get in touch to find out more ...

Lift Sharing:

Lift sharing was something we were keen to promote before the advent of social distancing and guidance has been issued to help commuters back to work who wish to continue:

- 1) Try to share with the same person each time
- 2) Maximise the distance between you by sitting on opposite sides of the car (ie driver seat and rear passenger side seat) and avoid contact
- 3) Keep the windows open for good ventilation
- 4) Clean door handles and other areas that people may touch between journeys using gloves and standard cleaning products
- 5) Consider wearing a face covering. It is important to use face coverings properly and wash your hands before putting them on and after taking them off.

www.liftshare.com provides more useful information about lift sharing.

Energy usage and plastic reduction:

A quick and easy win is to consider your energy and plastic usage and there is a huge amount of information that can be found online to help you reduce both. In addition, to using less energy you could also consider switching suppliers to a 100% green energy provider such as Octopus or Bulb (other energy providers are available!). In January two of our team visited the EnviroSort recycling plant in Worcester and saw what happens to our recycling and learned what we can do to help. It was (unexpectedly) a really interesting visit and, working on the basis that knowledge empowers us, we shall be organising a trip for parishioners, once lockdown allows of course! If you are interested, please get in touch – we guarantee you'll never guess the most unusual thing found in a recycling bag!

Change your search engine:

Another quick and easy win is to change your search engine. There are several good options: Ocean Hero is a search engine like any other, except that for every 5 searches, they pay for a person to collect a bottle from the ocean. Advertisers pay them whenever anyone clicks on their ads and they use this money to pay people to collect ocean bound plastic. Ecosia servers run on 100% renewable energy and they similarly use all of their advertising revenue to plant trees.

64 Ways ...

We are also in the process of researching 64 ways we can reduce our carbon emissions to find out more and dispel any myths that might be putting us off making those changes. Topics range from reducing food waste and composting, to living local, rethinking travel or making your home more efficient. There are lots of ideas and if you would like to get involved, please do let us know.

Recycling unwanted textiles:

We are delighted to announce that a new textiles recycling bank has been positioned in the car park area of Faulkner House and is there to help residents recycle unwanted clothing and textiles. Clothes of course have a value, and the Firefighters Charity will benefit from the donations. The bank is in the car park of the main entrance to Faulkner House, in an area cordoned by fence panels. There is also a textiles recycling bank at St. Mary's School which is open to parishioners to use as and when the school is open. Please use either bank and help increase our community recycling.

Carbon Offsetting:

Carbon offsetting is "the act of doing something to negate the impact of the CO2 your actions or travel has produced." You do this by offsetting your "carbon footprint" by funding activities and projects that improve the environment. There is an interesting Radio 4 programme with Tom Heap exploring the very latest behind the pros and cons of carbon offsetting, which can be found here: www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000j80r

Trees:

Of course, planting trees is a great way to offset carbon. Last year Fownhope planted over 7000 trees, courtesy of The Woodland Trust and National Tree Planting Day, an amazing achievement and community commitment. This year, Herefordshire Council have announced funding for a tree planting project involving young people under the age of 21. Are you, or do you know of anyone who would be interested in getting involved? If so, please do get in touch as we'd love to see even more trees planted in Fownhope and get involved working collaboratively with our young people.

Finally, Herefordshire Wildlife Trust are seeking help to extend one of its oldest nature reserves at Common Hill, by purchasing and restoring the adjoining 2-3acre grassland that is currently on the market for sale. The land would be held in trust in perpetuity and would be open to members of the public. The Parish Council made a donation of £300 in May from the Community Projects budget. If you would like to make a donation, please get in touch and we will let you know how.

So, what can you do now?

National charity 'Demos' have started a conversation across the UK about how people would like their lives to be improved after Lockdown (see www.renewnormal.co.uk). Let's start that conversation locally too and re-imagine recovery as better than before. Remember, individual change is part of systemic change, and change is possible.

- Consider what changes you will keep following lockdown that reduce carbon
- Give feedback on your experiences of the school bus
- Register interest to become a car club member, or at least learn more about it
- Check out your energy supplier and change it if their green credentials aren't good enough
- Change your search engine to help the environment
- Volunteer to help us researching our 52 ways or join the Environment Working Group
- Recycle your clothes and unwanted textiles
- And encourage any young people under 21 you know interested in trees to get in touch.

Do get in touch if you would like to join the working group or would like any further information on any of the above.

Environment Group

This group meets every three months and has the responsibility to:

Flooding - Discuss future plans and make recommendations to the council (utilising specialist advice where necessary).

Review annual tree survey and make recommendations to the council on implications.

Consider environmental implications of council decisions.

Develop new initiatives/projects arising from the CLP.

Energy and energy efficiency projects

Consider environmental issues in the local area

Current members of the group are Cllrs Gareth Williams (Chair), Mike Cohn, Kevin Braybrook, Mike Simmons, Frank Hemming, Daniel Teague and Martin Hales (Tree Warden) but interested members of the public are always very welcome. There is a loose association, for example, between the Environment Group and [Fownhope CRAG](#), because a number of members belong to both groups and share common interests.

The group is currently focusing efforts on the Climate Emergency and implementing projects and facilities to reduce the community carbon footprint of Fownhope.