

# Sustainable Harwell

Summary of Meeting - Weds 2<sup>nd</sup> Oct 2019

Many thanks to those that attended the meeting on Wednesday. It was good to see the high level of enthusiasm for taking forward our ideas for community action. Approximately 30 people attended the meeting. My special thanks to those who volunteered to take notes and provided a useful summary of the discussions on their table. I'm looking forward to using the refill station at the Village Hall which we agreed was a good idea to start immediately.

Meeting Summary:

1. After a short introduction, Martin Ricketts from the Parish Council provided a useful summary of the Council plans to plant more trees in the village. He suggested that this project could be taken over by the Sustainable Harwell Group in line with the ideas discussed by Table 3 below. This was supported by Debbie Turner (Parish Council Chair)
2. We then spent 45 minutes in round table sessions discussing the five ideas for community action voted by the group to take forward.
  - Table 1 - Build new cycle routes and footpaths
  - Table 2 - Set up a refill station within Harwell:
  - Table 3 - Initiate more tree planting within public spaces:
  - Table 4 - Set up a recycling scheme within Harwell
  - Table 5 - Lobby for new-build houses to be more sustainable

If anyone would like to volunteer to lead an action area at future meetings please let Giles Barwell know as we need as much help as possible.

3. Each of the tables provided a summary which was then considered by the Group. One of these ideas will move forward quickly and it was agreed that a mobile refill station will be set up as soon as possible at the Village Hall on a Weds evening on a regular basis. See Appendix below for summary notes on each action and watch this space for further details!
4. Giles Barwell reminded everyone that a Repair Café is to be held in the village at St Mathews Church on Sat 19<sup>th</sup> Oct starting at 14:00. (See attached poster). Please go along and support with your items which need repairing. He also talked briefly about ideas for aggregating the roof spaces of public and private buildings to provide an opportunity to set up a community solar energy project and mentioned his attendance at the recent Climate Strike in Oxford.
5. Hayleigh Gascoine and Sarah Medley, Councillors for the Blewbury and Harwell Ward, provided a useful summary about the Climate Emergency Committee set up at the Vale of the White Horse. A meeting of the Committee is being held at 18:00 on Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> October at The Vale offices in Milton park. This meeting is open to public and it looks like you can register if you would like to speak.

For more detail and the agenda see:

<http://democratic.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CommitteId=608>

6. Our new Constitution (draft previously circulated and available on the Sustainable Harwell web-pages was proposed and accepted by the group. It will be signed off by the Group officers in due course. Proposed by Keith Beswick, seconded by David Marsh.
7. Three Officers required to set the Group up as a Community Action Group were elected by the meeting. They are:  
David Marsh – Treasurer. Proposed by Giles Barwell. Seconded Keith Beswick

Martin Gibson – Secretary. Proposed by Penny Kinloch, Seconded by Liz Beith  
Giles Barwell – Chairman Proposed by Chris Warwick, Seconded by Graham Beith

8. Giles Barwell proposed that the Group now register with the Community Action Group Project Oxfordshire See <https://cagoxfordshire.org.uk/>. This was accepted and will be carried out shortly.
9. It was agreed that the next meeting of the Group will be held on Weds 4<sup>th</sup> Dec in The Cherry Hall at 7:30. David Harris has kindly offered to provide a short talk on the social and economic aspects of sustainability which the Group may also wish to consider. We will also revisit progress on the five action projects.
10. It was suggested that that the Group needed to be more attractive to a wider audience, for example younger people and perhaps the meeting times should vary so that it could be more accessible.

## **Appendix**

Here are the points captured at each table. If anyone thinks I have missed anything please do let me know. I apologise for the length of this document, but I felt it was useful to capture all the points discussed for reference and further action at future meetings.

### **Table 1 - Build new cycle routes and footpaths:**

Project leader? If you would like to volunteer to lead this group at future meetings, please let Giles Barwell know.

#### Cycle Routes:

HARBUG Didcot Cycle Review June 2019. The report was reviewed by the group.

<http://www.harbug.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Didcot-Cycle-Review-June-2019-Published.pdf>

Cycling UK also provides useful reference information for developing cycle routes at:  
<https://www.cyclinguk.org/article/campaigns-guide/developing-new-paths-for-cycling-in-countryside>

#### Requirements:

- Linking places of work, schools etc
- - cycle paths to be cohesive – currently on & off-road, need safe crossing at fast roundabouts.

Discussed ease of upgrading existing cycle-paths – Winnaway & Cow Lane (currently rough tarmac/gravel). Cow Lane is a priority.

Discussed Milton Park cycle underpass – when will traffic lights be switched on and banners be removed? Actual crossing required! Already setup with dropped curbs in use.

Discussed that a dropped curb between Talbot Cl and Westfield would help children cycle to school – currently cyclists have to cycle over 2 curbs. It is currently a dirt track/footpath.

If new to the area – a map of cycle paths in the area would be really useful! Could Harbug help?

- It would highlight areas where paths are missing requiring cycling on-road.
- It would increase use of existing paths and encourage more use.

Discussed lack of cycle path between Chilton and East Isley. – currently need to cycle alongside A34 on road bikes!!

#### Didcot and Harwell link:

This would link Harwell with facilities at Great Western Park and Didcot. Asda, vets etc.

Longer-term aim to connect this to the Orchard Centre in Didcot.

Harwell Link road roundabout requires a significant detour by bicycle to get onto the cycle path when turning at the roundabout. This probably the No 1 priority to change.

Nice to have:

Discussed repair stations available at Harwell Campus – would be great to have one in the village at the nexus of all cycle paths. Would the Hart of Harwell or the village shop donate land for this? Would increase footfall to businesses.

Questions:

Councillor in Witney - Suzanne Barklington can help with planning and could be a good point of contact.

A point was raised about cycling safely and responsibly; not just about paths.

The local council have raised an available path through Chilton Garden Centre. This could be a good starting point for resolving the lack of path to East Isley.

#### **Table 2 – Set up a refill station within Harwell:**

Reduce Reuse Recycle!

Project leader? If you would like to volunteer to lead this group at future meetings, please let Giles Barwell know.

Sally Povolotsky from The Hive Ecostore and Refills has offered to attend the Village Hall carpark with her mobile refill station on a Weds evening. It was agreed this would be good to start as soon as possible.

The Van needs main power. This needs to be considered.

Preference for a mid-week slot to tie-in with events such as the WI, to underpin footfall and to build momentum.

It's possible that the Refill Station could alternate attendance with the Harwellian carpark if power issues can be resolved?

Advise dates via the village Facebook page, shops and other noticeboards.

Encourage the Village Hall, Pavilion, Harwellian, Pub, Church etc to use eco-friendly products and to use the Refill Station.

Related ideas:

Expand the project to bring excess fruit/veg for swapping, advertised on social media, Harwell News, bus stop noticeboards etc.

“Phone a friend” - if someone can't make it on Weds evenings. Put an order in with the scouts/guides etc to provide opportunity to deliver refills to your door. Collecting goods on behalf of older neighbours

Bring 2<sup>nd</sup>-hand cloths to leave for a mass take to Oxfam/other charity shops. Oxfam Superstore in Cowley have collection facility for picking up items?

Set up collection points for other hard to recycle stuff. (The Harwellian is currently collecting Pringles and Walkers packaging) **See Table 4 notes. “Set up a recycling scheme within Harwell.”**

Perhaps the village could hire/buy a press for juices. This was suggested as one of the 18 original ideas we should consider as a community.

Tips of the Month/Week

Horse-chestnuts to wash clothes.

White vinegar to clean washing machines and dishwashers.

Mend Café – start a community café where people could offer time to mend items. See Didcot Repair Café meeting at St Mathews church on Sat 19<sup>th</sup> Oct at 14:00.

### **Table 3 – Initiate more tree planting within public spaces:**

Project leader - If you would like to lead this group at future meetings please let Giles Barwell know.

See Parish council plan for tree-planting. Consider what Blewbury and Brightwell have done. Sustainable Harwell to take over this project from the Parish Council.

Reasons: - Carbon sequestration, climate-change mitigation, Encourage greater biodiversity. Help encourage species conservation. Get the buy-in of people. Encourage children to be involved.

Ideas:

Fundraising – Harwell Feast, Section 106, Woodland Trust – Free trees for schools and communities, other charities, Parish Council, family sponsorship - “buy a tree for the village”. Carbon off-setting opportunity for local businesses.

Advice – Advice for people with trees to prevent cutting down. Use expertise within the village. Advice on the correct trees to plant. Fast growing trees? Native seedlings? Trees suitable for the future. Leaving verges uncut to encourage wildlife and wildflowers and provide wildlife corridors. Talk to the parish council about this.

Contact national organisation that encourages hedgerows on farms – what is this? Aisling will look into this.

Encourage developers to plant more trees in new housing areas. Connect with and encourage farmers to plant more trees.

Actions:

- Survey of existing trees in the area
- Gain support for the Parish Councils tree-planting scheme on the rec. Parish Council will do this. Anyone else?
- Investigate possibilities for Section 106 funding.

- Agree reasons and priority for planting trees
- Explore ways of getting advice
- Undertake a survey of people in the village to gauge interest and identify potential sites.
- Explore other sources of funding
- SIL - Strategic Infrastructure Levey.
- Set up a local group to maintain the trees and provide funds for maintaining the trees into the future.
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**Table 4 – Set up a recycling scheme within Harwell**

Project leader? If you would like to volunteer to lead this group at future meetings, please Giles Barwell know.

Some re-cycling at the Rec carpark already. Clothes, glass and shoes.

Already recycling of crisp packets, pringles and tetra-packs in the Harwellian. Contact Karen Cruddis.

Education – to remind people of this scheme.

Mobilising schools e.g set up a project to encourage the next generation.

Publicity – Harwell news, Harwell community, Village Facebook page, Sustainable Harwell website. Bob’s.

Scouts/Guides – tie-in with the Duke of Edinburgh scheme.

VOWH. Currently no recycling for video-tape cassettes, DC/DVD cases, garden pots, flowerpots, plastic/metal hangers, plastic toys, plastic trims, mouldings etc et

See <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/recycling-rubbish-and-waste/recycling/what-can-i-recycle/what-cant-be-recyclede>

Lobby government to limit the number of different types of plastic that are used

Sort through rubbish before putting into bins. Identify a “recycling champion” in each household.

Work with garden centres to encourage recycling of flowerpots etc

Costa takes back cups.

Toothbrushes and toothpaste can be recycled at a dentist in Abingdon

Research Terracycle. They specialise in this area and offer free facilities for collecting. See <https://www.terracycle.com/en-GB/> Contact to discuss what they could do in Harwell.

Organise visits to re-cycling plants to see what they do. Visits for school children, Sustainable Harwell.

**Table 5 – Lobby for new-build houses to be more sustainable**

Project leader? If you would like to volunteer to lead this group at future meetings, please let Giles Barwell know.

Are new-housebuilders simply adhering to minimum standards?

Lobby for increased standards of insulation in new-builds.

Solar power – this should be a government requirement on new houses, future-proofing new houses.

Lobby VOWH climate emergency committee to push for this.

Lobby SOHA too.

Lobby local election candidates. Sustainable Harwell calls all candidates to a meeting to discuss... Set up a meeting to do this.

When new planning applications arise in the Vale, these should include solar panels etc.

Install home chargers for electric cars. It would be cheaper if done during construction. Consider providing public charging at carparks and on lamp posts, particularly where new houses have no off-road parking.

Lobby for ground-source and air-source heat pumps for hot-water production and heating rather than using fossil fuel gas in new builds. Use solar panels for hot water too.

Provide free thermal imaging to uncover opportunities for better insulation in new-build houses.

Insist on proper recycling of building waste.

Undertake a survey to ask residents whether they would have preferred to have purchased houses with increased insulation and with solar power, air-source heat pumps etc.

Encourage builders to differentiate their houses by advertising them with solar power etc.

Questions:

Lobby housebuilders to build-in heating zones within a house so up-stairs heating can be turned off separately.

Giles Barwell

02/10/19