



## HUNGERFORD ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION TEAM

### **MINUTES OF ZOOM MEETING – 30<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2020**

**PRESENT** Helen Cukier (Chair), Daniel Cukier, Henry Mills, John Downe, Tony Drewer-Trump, Emma-Louise Hayley, Jonathan Bacchus (minutes)

1) **Apologies** Frances Lofthouse, Mark Lofthouse, Trish Whitham, Susan Millington

2) **Minutes and Matters Arising:**

Frances has emailed all the people who were nurturing tree saplings.

GDPR statement: John confirmed that this had been put onto the registration form for the car event. Now awaiting change in coronavirus situation to enable the electric car show to go ahead, now on hold.

Insurance: Henry said that our insurance had been due to expire last month, but because of Covid the insurers had extended cover by three months free of charge: it now expires on the 23<sup>rd</sup> November. We've been looking for a more ethical insurance provider (Trish has supplied a list and suggested). TCV (Trust for Conservation Volunteers) could be worth considering. Henry to consider other providers. John confirmed that our current insurer had been very helpful re the car show and Tony confirmed that they have covered every HEAT event we've ever run over the years.

Last month's HEAT stall: Frances, Mark and Helen had recruited volunteers for care of saplings and tree planting (26 November and 5 December).

### 3) **Treasurer's Report (Henry)**

We're trying to find a replacement for NatWest, which ranks very poorly in ethical terms. Trish has supplied a list of possible candidates. There's a limited choice of banks and building societies in Hungerford. Nationwide don't cater for organisations or charities (their business accounts won't suit us). TSB (now split from Lloyds) is a possibility, but the Hungerford branch is to close in May next year. Tony confirmed that the Food Festival has a NatWest account and that Newbury building society isn't a clearing bank, which could present difficulties (it doesn't provide chequebooks, just custom-written cheques). Tony pointed out that we have a very small cashflow, which should be taken into consideration when deciding about moving our account. Daniel suggested that we could try Smile (co-operative bank) if we could do without a physical branch. John pointed out that CHAIN's account enabled paying in through the Post Office and cheques can be paid in for most banks in this way. This is similar for any Giro bank. Helen and Henry to make a final decision outside the meeting.

### 4) **Food Market – 4th October (Penny)**

In Penny's absence, Helen confirmed that the last Food and Artisan Market would take place on 4<sup>th</sup> October in the Croft field and is expected to be busier than usual, as it was due to be the annual food festival day which has had to be cancelled. There will probably be more stalls than the past few months (but no seating because of Coronavirus) and there will be a HEAT stall selling eggs and apple juice, but the most important thing will be signing people up for sapling planting, apple-picking and so on. Volunteer rota: Helen and Emma from 10 to 12.30, Trish and Henry from 12.30 to 2.30 and pack up.

### 5) **Orchard – Update**

Trish and Emma picked so many apples at Picket Mead Organic Orchard that they ran out of crates. Ellie Dickens (who's taking over from Jed as CEO of the Town & Manor) suggested 11<sup>th</sup> October for the next date – Helen to advertise it. Helen suggested having an "apple day" on the 10<sup>th</sup> October and has emailed people who have apples in their gardens that they can't pick themselves, and received positive responses. Emma volunteered to phone people whose email addresses we haven't got. Tony will supply his truck

for collecting the apples to take to the MyAppleJuice juicing service and elsewhere – some tree-owners might want to specify where their apples are sent to. Other volunteers welcome (meet at the Town Hall steps at 10am on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> October and 10am at Picket Mead on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> October).

#### **6) Trees. Report on recent 'Look/See' site visit and forward planning (Daniel)**

Daniel explained where the Lockdown Wood, originally suggested by Susan from Newbury FOE, is located (by the railway line). The land is owned by the Town & Manor of Hungerford. A lot of the trees used will be hedgerow trees. Small trees near the line and bigger ones (oak, maple, crab-apple) further away where they won't present a danger to the railway. There will be 840 trees to plant in total. Daniel and others will trim beforehand to prepare for the planting. There are plans for a gate, a path round the trees and a fence to keep the cows away. Daniel, Rob Starr and Jimmy (from the Town & Manor) to demonstrate how to do the planting - volunteers will be needed. Ellie Dickens and Jed to liaise with Rob Starr on land management issues. The Town & Manor are happy with the idea of HEAT/FOE signs and logos on a plaque for the wood as a whole but not for individual trees.

Dates for the work: Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> November (meet at the gate at the end of Marsh Lane at 9.00 am, to be led by Mike Saunders) and Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> December (meet at the gate at the end of Marsh Lane at 9.00am), with a 'lock down wood', opening ceremony at 11.30 on the Saturday. In addition to the trees from Woodland Trust, a further 100 trees will be coming from West Berkshire Climate Action Network for planting in and around the town, including in individual gardens. The plan is to complete planting any of the remaining 840 trees on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> December, as well as small parties planting the additional 100 trees in and around the town.

#### **7) Update on postponed EV Car Show (John)**

The planned 11<sup>th</sup> October EV car show was called off because of Covid-related logistical issues and has been postponed until the Spring (a Saturday in May, avoiding Bank Holiday and bowls match weekends), possibly in the Croft. It will provide a forum for commercial providers, existing and intending owners to discuss EV issues.

John said that the momentum behind the move to electric vehicles was now building up steeply. He suggested that a Zoom meeting for existing and intending users could be useful. Jonathan to ask Rachel if she is happy to let her Zoom licence be used for this (to overcome the 40-minute limit with free Zoom). **ACTION: John** to draft a newsletter gauging interest in a virtual event. **ACTION: Tony and Henry** to add an appropriate button or link(s) to the Mailchimp newsletter, for readers to respond easily to let us know they are interested and for demand to be gauged.

### **8) Cycling in Hungerford (Trish/Henry)**

Trish and Henry have been looking at what is being done by other groups to make places more cycle-friendly and introduce traffic calming measures. Henry suggested information-gathering from cyclists in Hungerford and the surrounding area, with the information perhaps being passed to West Berkshire SPOKES, which has links to West Berkshire council. With Covid making the organising of events more problematic, concentrating on collecting information might be a better idea. Henry to liaise with Trish on this. Daniel mentioned that Hungerford school pays for pupils in Year 5 and above to receive cycling proficiency training. **ACTION: Daniel** to liaise with the cycling proficiency officer to get any useful information. John mentioned that West Berks Council is looking for ideas for infrastructure projects to support cycling.

### **9) Solar Streets/Warmer Streets (Helen)**

We ran the Solar Streets campaign in the Spring to promote discounted solar panels for homes through IDDEA. We have joined forces with West Berkshire Climate Action Network again, who have set up an initiative to help residents reach their green energy goals and stretch the Government's Green Homes Grant further called Warmer Streets. The grant can be used to pay for loft and cavity wall insulation both for houses and community buildings. They have set up a virtual information evening on Zoom at 8pm on 14<sup>th</sup> October. **ACTION: Helen** to promote the event via our newsletter, website and social media.

We plan to relaunch the Solar Streets campaign after the Warmer Streets campaign, probably next Spring. IDDEA's dual-pricing structure means that if a minimum number of residents sign up for solar panels the installation

is done at a discounted price. Helen and Daniel's recently installed solar panels, car-charging point and water heating are now working well, with installation taking only two days. A virtual information evening on these topics generated a lot of interest in Hungerford. **ACTION: John** to write about the Green Homes Grant for the newsletter and website promotion.

### **10) Website (Henry), Facebook (Trish)**

Henry said that the website was now pretty well up-to-date, with several new pages added and a new list of local sustainable businesses. Feedback from HEAT members on specialised topics appreciated. Facebook: nobody present admitted to being a keen Facebook user; Helen and Henry to talk to Trish about it when they next meet.

### **11) HEAT Board under Town bridge**

Thanks to Frances and Mark for getting the board renovated, to Tony for donating it and Daniel for taking it down for renovation! It will be going back up in the next couple of weeks and Frances will keep it updated.

### **12) A. O. B.**

Henry has put in a bulk order to Essential Trading in Bristol (organic/sustainably sourced food, household items etc), which is expected to arrive in 4-5 weeks. The minimum order amount is £300.00 and HEAT puts in three or four orders a year.

Fundraising – it's been suggested that HEAT could organise a car boot sale, perhaps in the Spring, when we might be allowed to mingle again, at the Rugby Club or the Croft Field.

Frances would appreciate being given jars for her home-made jam.

Emma asked if anyone knew about home-grown vegetables for sale – there are two allotment spaces in Hungerford, the larger one in Marsh Lane. Contact Trish or Frances to enquire about vegetable plants, as they are both growers. The allotment holders apparently aren't allowed to sell their produce.

HEAT stand on Sunday – it would be good to have information on the bulk food ordering and on making Hungerford more bicycle-friendly. Penny's giving HEAT a free table and Helen and Tony are producing posters.

WhatsApp group is underused but can be a useful messaging service.

**ACTION: Helen** to add Emma to the HEAT group.

Helen Simpson, the Mayor of Hungerford, was due to talk about trees at Hungerford Town Council's Recreation & Amenities committee's September meeting, but Helen Cukier has had no feedback on this. John checked the minutes and reported that it was discussed and that Helen and the Town Clerk will attend a site meeting.

Daniel asked if HEAT could have its own QR code to link to our website.

**ACTION: Daniel** to set QR codes up for use for Sunday.

Henry reported that a hydrogen-powered train ran on UK tracks for the first time yesterday, reaching speeds of around 50mph. Hungerford-based company Fuel Cell Systems was involved with this and has also developed a refuelling solution for a hydrogen-powered plane, which is due to take its first test flight soon. Laura Farris MP has planned a visit to the Fuel Cell Systems premises. John thought that it might be possible to expand the EV Zoom meeting planned for next year to include hydrogen-powered as well as electric cars.

Next meeting: Wednesday October 28<sup>th</sup> at 7pm (Zoom)