Slaley, Healey & Hexhamshire Community Environmental Group (S&HCEG)

Minutes of meeting on Wednesday February 17th 2021 at 6.30 p.m. by ZOOM.

Unfortunately, the electricity went off in Slaley parish as the meeting was beginning and closed all the computers down. Eventually it began at 6.38 with several people arriving late, some not at all – an event totally out of or control

**1. Present & Apologies**.

Pat Wilson – Farming - protection of wildlife flora & fauna (Ladycross NR) PCs Litter - reduce plastic use.

Stella Douglas – Colpits area/Slaley Councillor/ Show/ Shop/ web site and community orchard.

Debra Taylor – Slaley Hall area, Slaley Councillor/ Village hall – quick win

Rosaleen Doonan – Village hall/shop/ musician/ Minsteracres - Raise awareness especially with young people

Peter Gill – Slaley Hall – community involvement/ stimulate a community effort

Terry Douglas – Colpitts/ Slaley shop – native trees hawthorn/rowan/ash

Sheila Borthwick – community orchard at Parks Side, Slaley

Anne & Chris Porter – Hexhamshire (Chris - community orchard)

Slaley School **represented by** & Nikki English (outdoor education),

Andy & Gill Hayden (Slaley Community Shop)

Harriet Lamb – Climate Change /Slaley Community Shop

Joan & Jerry Cleal-Harding –

**Apologies**

Debbie Brett, Headteacher

Peter Topping – Healey parish – community orchard

Karen Melvin – Ladycross Nature & Art - native trees at School

Carol Ferguson - renewable energy / energy efficiency & recycling

Rebecca Short – Wooley – conservation, environment, permaculture & wildlife

**2. Minutes of meeting held January 6th 2021 – pages 14 - 17**

These were agreed by AH and seconded by RD and signed by PW

**3. Matter arising**

a) 3a 6/1/21; 3a 25/11/20; 3a 15/10/20; 8c 22/2/20: general litter/dog bags wheelie bin placed at the Trygill Waiting for a reply from NCC – staff working from home prioritise. DT said we may be able to reuse the small dog waste bin from the village. There must be an agreement for emptying with NCC.

b) 3b 6/1/21: 3b 25/11/20; 3c & 7a 15/10/20) 8h 22/2/20: climate change - a local initiative –land on which to provide a community ‘something’ SD to ask again in Notes and web site. SD to mention to owners of show ground. Update SD – SD thought that the new Agricultural Policy may provide an answer with land owners more likely to consider growing trees in a corner. Web site has recycling information.

c) 3c 6/1/21, 3c 25/11/20; 5 15/10/20: Karbon Homes agreed to fund fruit trees at Parks Side. Grant paid to Slaley Parish Council. 5 fruit trees ordered, received and paid for -currently at Hollybush Nursery waiting for the weather to improve before planting. Slaley schoolchildren can-not be involved in planting because of Pandemic social distancing restrictions.

d) 3d 6/1/21; 6 25/11/20 Discussion between HL and Slaley School re the Ashden scheme working with Eco Schools with the Let’s Go Zero 2030. H L & NE to discuss on Monday 22/2/21

**4. Update of actions since 6/1/21**

6g 6/1/21: Report from NCC seminar about the environment attended hy TP, DT or PG =. Debra Taylor has been made a Community Climate Champion by NCC. DT briefed the meeting that NCC was commented to Carbon Neutral by 2030. The NCC ZOOM discussion in March would be waste management. Bill Gates is currently (on radio) saying we need new technology to make concrete and steel. PG said people should make their own individual efforts to reduce carbon. We should make the most of FREE power – solar and wind. CP spoke of the problems with planning, cost of capital infrastructure and grid capability. Battery storage was mentioned. Hydrogen power – needs to be expanded – it is a future resource. This subject ran into agenda item 6 with HL saying the community buildings should have solar panels PW explained that Listed Buildings were not allowed solar panels in Slaley. HL said that English Heritage had come to an agreement to have them. RD said a difference between solar panels and solar tiles. Cost is a major issue. Government must give grants.

**It was agreed to form a sub- committee to look into this with HL, SD, PG and AH (see also 6e)**

b) 7 6/1/21 Recycling Discussion Update A&GH on Slaley Community Shop - more discussion with Terra Cycle – toothpaste tubes would only be Colgate which was felt too restrictive. The system Terrac Cycle has it that the items are returned to the manufacturer for recycling. Cheese wrappers are being considered (all cheese wrappers), PW voiced her concerns over any food left on the wrappers - would entice mice, insects, and smell. AH will look into an airtight bin type container. AH also asked if the school would like to be involved with this general type of recycling. The Rose and Crown car park was also questioned as a possible recycling site.

c) General update on recycling at Slaley Community Shop email 11/1/21 GNAA printer ink cartridges. A&G H remarked that GNAA are presently working from home and not out collecting – the printed ink cartridges are currently stored at their home.

d) Recycling in Hexham Excel spread sheet circulated by PT 17/1/21 DT asked what people had thought of the items and was there anything we can help with – No one appeared to have looked at the list. PW to resend for the March meeting

**5. Interesting Articles & Information**

a) Journal 29/1/21: Britishvolt a £2.6bn electric battery gigaplant in Blyth.

b) Journal 29/1/21: Offshore wind turbine farm to be expanded also in Blyth.

c) PT detailed information on an orchard group who secured land from its County Council. PT asked if any land locally was in the hands of NCC? DT forwarded a Slaley parish map and there is none other than the school grounds.

d) DT emailed 12/2/21, the 68-page NCC Climate Change Action Plan to take place over the next two years. There was also an article in the Hexham Courant (HC) 11/2/21 entitled ‘Climate change action plan given approval’.

e) HC 11/2/21: ‘Right tree in right place’ is welcomed approach adopted in reforestation by Northumberland National Park Authority.

f) HC 11/2/21: UK appreciates its farmers more than any other country – farmers provide us with world-class food reared and grown on our doorstep. British farmers have some of the highest environmental and animal welfare standards in the world.

g) HC letters page 11/2/21: ‘Inspirational youngsters care for our climate’ by Jane Brampton, Transition Tynedale – current projects centre on increasing biodiversity and reducing food miles.

PW said that people could start to grow their own vegetables that would reduce food miles, sea transport is particularly bad for climate change.

h) HC letters page 11/2/21: ‘Electricity lack’ by a Carrshield resident without mains electricity, ends his letter by saying “After all, running my diesel generator for longer periods in order to be able to charge my electric car would rather seem to defeat the object of the exercise”. PW suggested that we should make a list of properties and business who do not have mains electric because they will continue to use diesel generators if insufficient wind and sun. DT said it could become a problem because the emissions would still need to be offset.

Slaley – Ladycross Stone Quarry uses generators and heats the office with calor gas. Reaston Hill smallholding farm buildings only wind and solar powered lights.

Hexhamshire – Heathery Burn residential & Low Hope residential.

**6. Discussion.**

a) PW emailed the group 20/1/21 after the Commemoration Hall meeting when it was suggested that the Environment group look at environmentally friendly improvements for Phase Two annexe of the Commemoration Hall. It was suggested that HL could possibly help.

b) H L 20/1/21 emailed by return saying she was not an expert although involved in a community energy group in London. HL has made lots of enquiries and given several examples of information including:

* 29/1/21: SELCE Heat Pump Webinars information
* 2/2/21 Energy Efficiency in Community Buildings – including energy survey proforma.
* 11/2/21 A Doctor in Juniper with ground source heat pump and home insulation. PW suggested Darren Nicol of Wooley House.

HL was still trying to get someone to talk to the group. DT said it would be better for the Hall Management Committee to take this forward with HL’s help. The green homes grants were discussed with a deadline of March 2021. Lack of contractors during lockdown the scheme never got off the ground.

c) Free ZOOM talk by Transition Tynedale 20/1/21 – green grants for air source heat pumps SB took part grants of £13,000

d) PW attended ZOOM presentation 28/1/21 by ACRE on Zero-carbon future for village halls – CSE (Centre for Sustainable Energy) talked of lighting, water, insulation, modern heating, double glazing, time switches - all of which we have – no new ideas.

e) PT suggested Nick Johnson, senior project officer working on climate change at County.

**It was agreed to form a sub committee to look into this with HL, SD, PG and AH**

f) Question and Answer session with Rebecca about a Community Supported Agriculture Farm was NOT able to take place because Rebecca had been unable to join.

**7. AOB**

a) A recenly reconvened Steering Group meeting to update Slaley Parish Plan; Action Plan was attended by 4 members of this group and they were asked about how we engage with the wider community? It would appear that very few people retain local news outside of their ‘bubble’. Ideas of how to engage people in what we are trying to do? Suggestion of a symbol representing our name – easily recognised. (Green apple with a bite out = Slaley Community Shop. Stripped Marquee = Slaley Show). SD to circulated some Logo ideas she had. RD said we needed to include young people in the committee. HL said that unless the meetings were more dynamic young people would come and go.

b) A request for a new Hexhamshire Notes editor has been requested for the Hexham Courant. AP though someone from Whitley Chapel school was taking it on

c) SH&HECG Treasurer has been making enquiries about opening a bank account. TD reported that during lockdown no new community accounts are being opened because signatories have to appear in person at a bank to verify their address and signature. DT said we would continue to use the PC bank account in the short-term.

d) SB though people should keep their garden waste and make a compost for plants etc. NE said the school was recycling all its garden waste + adding tea bags and other compostable items.

e) SB also said it was very difficult during lockdown, or as people get older and do not have transport, to consider recycling. SB has some glass to recycle and PW offered to collect next week.

**8. Date of next meeting**: WednesdayMarch 31st 2021 when the discussion topic would be **Waste Management** – DT to forward the link for those who would like to join the NCC Waste Management discussion.

There being no0 further business the meeting ended at 7.29 p.m,.