

Meeting of Greening Tetbury (GT)

Minutes 27/09/2023 at St Michaels Church Hall, Tetbury

Minutes written by Mary Dignan

Present: Susan Brown, David Brown, Mary Holken, Jan Healy, David Charles, Helen King, Pat Hodges, Adrian Hill, Robert Muir-Wood, (Daughter: Mia Visitor) Liz, Liz Farnham, Mayor, Judi Marshall, Fergus Dignan, Chair and Trustee, Mary Dignan, Ben Jackson, Trustee, Rosemary Bailey, Trustee, Dan Fletcher, Trustee.

1. Apologies: Joan Holden, Nikki Ind, Jess Willows, Annabel Daldry, Gracie Fickling, Anne Cox, Trustee, Jo Brown

Fergus gave a brief introduction to Greening Tetbury for the benefit of the new comers to the meeting.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting were approved. Proposed: Mary Dignan, Seconded: Liz Farnham
3. Robert – there is a proposal for a defined area around Tetbury to look at Nature. Linking up landowners, the council, individual gardens and Benefice links. The exact defined area has not been decided and Robert proposes that 3 people walk from the centre of Tetbury, (the corner of Long Street and Church Street) in different directions and make a decision as to the best distance to be selected as the radius.
Volunteers: Rosemary/Michael Bailey; Robert Muir-Wood and Kevin Farnham;
4. Fergus explained that 'Give as you live' online is a free way to raise money for charity when you shop on line. There are many outlets which are now involved. He explained that he has managed to raise about £50 in the last three years for GT and encouraged others to sign up to do the same.
5. Dan Fletcher told the group about a family friendly, peaceful day of action in Bath on the 28th of October. Theme: To remind people that the environment is worth fighting for. **If anyone wishes to attend there will be the option to bus/car share to the event.** There are many groups involved including Extinction Rebellion, Christian Climate Action etc.
6. Proposal for Worwell Farm development.
The Trustees met a week ago and put together a comment on behalf of GT. This has been submitted to CDC but has not yet appeared on the planning website. Anne Cox will follow up. If anyone would like a copy of the comments they can apply for it through the GT site.
7. 7a. News of proposed development sites: Ben gave some background to a proposal by Julian Benton, a local landowner, who has land above and beyond the old railway site, near the Goods Shed (GS). He is going to plant some trees in an area behind the GS. There is a much bigger area, 13 acres long, on the plateau and running parallel to the old railway line. Some of the trustees, and an ecologist, met up with Julian recently at the GS to discuss planting. A further visit is necessary to survey the whole area and decide what /if can be planted.
7b A new 'accessibility' path has been laid across the top of Preston Park at the end of Hyde Lane. Mary D. said this is a very positive development for inclusion of all in enjoying the countryside.
7c. Question from Robert: he asked about the management of biodiversity around Preston Park?

Fergus explained that through the 'Wilder Towns' project, administered by Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust, cutting back of some of the vegetation and applying new planting, had allowed an increase in biodiversity in the area.

8. Anne and Fergus visited a site of interest in Bisley. There was an industrial-size composting area that required the use of a forklift truck and a large, bountiful allotment next to it. They also visited a great example of a wild garden in the village.
9. Fergus and Anne have also been around other sites in Tetbury with Colin from the TTC, namely: St Saviours church yard, Courtfield/Magdelene Road, Millenium Green. The plan is to start small areas of wilding. There is a need to go slowly to bring the public along with the gradual change to more wilder spaces.

There is going to be some hedge planting at the Royal Oak.

- 9a. Adrian suggested approaching the garden centres for some contributions towards plants and seeds.

Rosemary added some positive comments about the developments in St Mary's church yard. The annual count for nature, birdboxes added etc. There has been positive feedback.

10. Ben suggested it would be a good idea to do a species count in the areas to be 'wilded' to see if /when they have a positive result in nature.
 - 10a. Mary Holker commented that the paving around the library looks very unkempt with weeds growing up through the paving. Rosemary explained since the council has stopped spraying pesticide on paving and by the edges of walls and houses there is a lot more weed development. Mary offered to clear some near the library. She will go and discuss with Sophie in the library.
11. Rosemary mentioned the Tip of the Month. It is regarding the damage caused by rubber tyres on cars and how checking ones tyre pressures can reduce the pollution caused. The biggest polluter in our oceans at present is rubber particles from tyres.
12. Ben gave feedback from the TTC business plan. He said there has been a positive development as it includes an environmental section. It is a four year plan and there will be money attached to any development.
13. Mary D. fed back about the very successful and interesting foraging walk conducted by Emmanuelle Paulson last Sunday. Emmanuelle is prepared to do another one in the spring. It will be advertised.

AOB. David Charles a new attendee at the meeting spoke about the debates that he and his partner Helen King are conducting in Malmesbury and invited people to come along. David went on to question whether we really had the correct information regarding Climate Change and quoted some figures. A short exchange of views ensued with Robert who is a member of the IPCC.

14. The next meeting is on Tuesday 5th of December 2023 at 7.30pm in the Church Hall, St. Michael's Catholic Church.