

Notes on Climate Change Forum Meeting January 30th 2023

14 participants. Robin Betts in the Chair

Wendy brought up a planning problem where somebody was discouraging putting PV panels on roofs because of a 1% stated fire risk.

The meeting agreed that there were many risks in life and mistakes made by incompetent builders and installers was one of them.

Discussion on communications. I was asked to kick off. I suggested a WhatsApp Group to quickly communicate things people had just come across. Officers said officers would have to decline because they don't have official mobile phones but others were more willing.

Robin Betts suggested a generating a ToDo list, which could be ticked off.

Mark Hood asked for there to be a work programme

Robin Betts brought up the subject of rented housing. He said there were currently carrots to encourage better insulation but no sticks.

Kim Tanner said that a full decarbonisation of an old property would cost about £30,000.

Anita Oakley said there was still some mileage in loft insulation on those properties that did not have it.

Carrie Spencer said she had a payback return on investment list. Insulation of hot water tanks should also come fairly high. She will put this on the website.

Guy Neville said there were only 7 years left before the 2030 goal.

Robin Betts mentioned Larkfield Leisure Centre. PV panels going on. To get away from gas they are considering either water source or air source heat pumps.

There will be public sector grants this year.

Asked KALC to communicate their findings

Fran Long. Put up a presentation: She has a Facebook Group, "Tonbridge Mums". Buses are just not good enough in this area. There was an electric bus trial in March 2018. What happened to the buses?

Tonbridge Bicycle Users Group. In England, most trips are short, 68% less than 5 miles.

Half of primary and a quarter of secondary school children are driven to school, largely because of poor bus services.

She complained that cycling is quite dangerous on the roads round our borough, e.g. along the A26 approach to the top of Quarry Hill.

Dept for Transport. "Gear Change" initiative document.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/904146/gear-change-a-bold-vision-for-cycling-and-walking.pdf

Bartholomew Wren. Responded that cycle ways were a responsibility of KCC and something they needed to get to grips with

Katie Traylen said she was at one time the KCC cycleways person and that people should report issues to KCC.

I raised that matter that since funds from BSIP grants can only be used for new routes, how about replacing the former 155 bus with a new route?

I also raised the problem that with buses mainly used by OAPs' the 60p per person was not sufficient to run a bus even if it was full.

I also raised the upgrading of the old Eccles pipe bridge to a footbridge which Trenport had told us was a site where it was impossible to build a bridge.

I also raised the MERLin cycle route and the problem of having to use the Hermitage Lane bridge over the railway

Anita said there should be a policy of encouraging people to use local schools.

Bartholomew Wren said Trenport were still not willing to fork up re any of the former 155 route.

He said KCC got some money for BSIP but not as much as they wanted.

KCC have been awarded £565,000 for active travel strategy.

The Aylesford towpath collapse will cost £1.2million to repair.

Carrie Spencer. Robin Betts to circulate the template developed by Jennie Bate. She will take up the to do list and put up the cost benefit chart. She was thinking of events to promote the CCF. Cyclists need to complain directly to KCC. Will look at having a face to face meeting. Robin thought one meeting a year should be face to face.

Meeting ran out of time so I will be raising three points by email to be considered for further meetings:

1. How to get developers to embrace climate change compatible technologies. One can contrast Redrow, which intends to put heat pump heating in all the new houses they build <https://www.redrow.co.uk/news-and-inspiration/news/national/redrow-becomes-first-large-housebuilder-to-introduce-heat-pumps> with Taylor Wimpey, according to their website about a development in Medway, intend to meet their 30% reductions by

almost hermetically sealing houses.

<https://www.taylorwimpey.co.uk/why-choose-us/energy-efficient-new-homes> . If occupants open windows in order to breathe, the developers will presumably not be responsible for not achieving the 30% reduction.

2 We need more trees. Trees are often easier and cheaper to plant than many people think. Perhaps we should have families collect chestnuts, horse chestnuts and old fashioned apples, which can then be put in fridges and planted directly in the ground. In experiments I have undertaken, I found chestnuts germinate almost 100% while a lot more oak acorns have to be planted than the number of trees wanted. I have also had success with planting an old variety cherry tree from a stone and am experimenting with planting apricots, old variety apple trees and almonds. (These have to be sourced directly from trees: the ones in shops are usually pasteurised. The almonds also have to be left in their shells but cracked. The apricots have to be refrigerated before planting and planted 6 inches or 150mm deep)

3 The importance of encouraging re-use as opposed to recycling since this greatly reduces overall carbon footprint. Some very re-usable items can be found fly tipped or put into black bin waste. How can we ensure more go to people who want and need them?

Next meeting end of April.

Tom Shelley. January 31st 2023