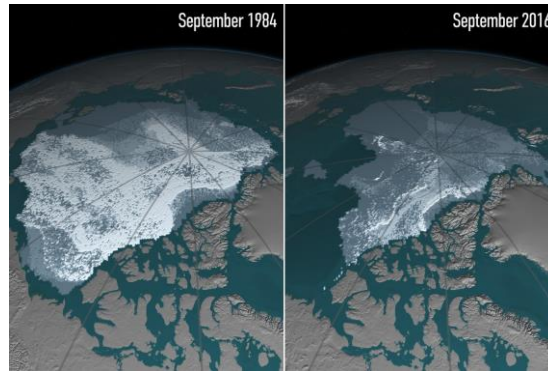


IOW Councillor Report September 2019 for Chillerton and Gatcombe Parish Council



Climate Emergency Declared

I was pleased to be in a position to work with Cllr Michael Lilley in forming a cross party Motion to bring to Full Council in July.

The motion passed and we have now declared a climate emergency and have an action plan to address the situation, which will centre on a task and finish group to get some facts and details together and report back on its findings.

This will then go to the Environmental and Sustainability Forum, which is the main mechanism by which we will draw experts, officers, members and residents together to progress actions to reduce our carbon footprint on the Island to keep it a wonderful place to live, work and enjoy now and for generations to come.

There are some 170 other local authorities that have declared a climate emergency so, through the Local Government Association (LGA); we can lobby for more help from government, as we will all be facing the same sort of issues with attempting to become carbon neutral by 2030.

The council is already playing its part in helping to reduce carbon emissions by:

- increasing waste recycling;
- building a new, environmentally efficient plant to convert waste into energy at Forest Road;
- using the most energy efficient heating and lighting systems whenever council buildings are refurbished;
- supporting free insulation of homes on the Island with the Warm Front initiative;
- looking to purchase electric vehicles; and
- supporting FYTBus in the West Wight in its endeavours to go completely electric with their fleet.

Road Verges as Wildlife Corridors

With the help of the Councils AONB Officers and the Parish Council we set up a workshop to examine how we can cut verges less and create wildlife corridors with greater biodiversity across the Island.

I was pleased to have an invite accepted by Plantlife to come and present to the workshop and the Environmental Forum at County Hall afterwards.

This was very useful and encouraging considering we have made a start but have further to go in getting our cutting regime and timings right to enhance our road verges.

By cutting less and more sensitively we will produce more attractive verges which will be better for biodiversity with more wildflowers for our pollinators to thrive upon so that our wild verges can become wildlife corridors.

I see this at present as a work in progress so it was good to gather a lot of interested parties together to listen to the Plantlife presentation and give their input to help move this project forward.

We also had representatives from Island Roads at both the forum and the workshop, which helped with the understanding of their work on a day-to-day basis and for them to hear what Islanders would like to see.

There is a new report due out very soon by Plantlife, which we eagerly await and from our workshop a report will be produced by the AONB on our findings, which will aim at creating a broad strategy for road verges with guidance from the Isle of Wight Council feeding into Parish Councils and Island Roads in liaison with their sub contractors so that we are all on the same page.

There will be a review of road verges to see how useful a cut and collect machine would be given the variety of road verges we have on the Island.

We will progress an awareness campaign also to inform what we are trying to achieve so that residents and visitors understand what is going on, once the new Plantlife guidelines have been published.

Brook Lane

Residents of Brook Lane will be especially pleased this autumn, as finally their road surface has been upgraded by Island Roads.

The Island Roads crew, two of who posed for a photo when I went to visit on day one carried this work out a day early and with courtesy.

This was a request made to me during my election campaign, to get this long promised job done so I am really pleased to report it is now finished and looking good.

It was good to work together with the Parish Council to get this one over the line. I have found that if you keep up the dialogue with Island Roads they do see reason in the end and act on it.



Environment and Sustainability Forum

The Forum meets regularly on the third Thursday of each month at County Hall and welcomes County Councillors, Parish Councillors, Environmental Groups and Island Residents.

Terms of Reference

Background

The Environment and Sustainability forum (ESF) has evolved from the previous Plastics Forum to include a wider narrative that will support the councils work towards sustainability, decarbonisation, and promoting the circular economy.

Following a motion to Full Council regarding setting a Climate Emergency, this forum will support and feed into the task and finish group for the Scrutiny Committee for Environment and Regeneration that has been set up to develop an action plan for the IWC to be net zero carbon by 2030.

Overall Principles

The ESF forum will debate and discuss ways in which the Isle of Wight Council and the Isle of Wight can develop a sustainable plan and act to promote a sustainable carbon future.

The ESF shall be:

1. Non-political in its discussion and debate;
2. Only deal with issues/matters the Isle of Wight council can affect or facilitate or influence other on island organisations/businesses;
3. An open platform for discussion and debate on matters of sustainability and net carbon zero;
4. Agree that if a matter has been noted, discussed and actions agreed it cannot be brought back to the forum without prior consent of the Chair;
5. A consultee on papers produced by the task & finish group;

Roles and Responsibilities:

Chair:

The ESF shall be chaired by a senior manager of the IWC as delegated by the Director of Neighbourhoods

The Chair will ensure that relevant officers of the council are invited to inform and discuss relevant topics on the agenda.

Administration:

The ESF shall be administered by the Isle of Wight Council staff as delegated by the Director of Neighbourhoods or the Chair

The administrator shall:

1. Take accurate minutes of the forum
2. Circulate invitations to meetings at least seven days in advance of each forum
3. Circulate and agenda, minutes of the previous ESF and any additional supporting information to the ESF forum members at the same time as the meeting invitations.

4. Ensure public attendance is open
5. Publish the meeting dates, minutes and agenda's in the Isle of Wight Council's website
6. Send copies of the minutes and agendas to the Task and Finish group for climate Change

ESF Members shall:

1. Arrive promptly in advance of the start time of each meeting
2. Always conduct themselves in a respectful manner to one another during debate and discussion
3. Indicate to the chair if they wish to speak and wait for the Chair to indicate it is their turn to speak

Topics for Discussion (To be scheduled)

Topic indicated for discussion between September 2019 and February 2020:

- Sea level rise (scheduled for September 2019)
- Bio-Sphere and ecology
- Housing, Planning, and Transport
- Utilities and Sustainable energy production for the island
- Waste and recycling management & Water sustainability
- Agricultural sustainability
- Sustainable tourism & the role of business and commerce

With best wishes,

Steve