



## GREENER BERWICK MINUTES 27.03.23, 7PM, YHA

**Present:** Linda Pepper, Elaine Paterson, Liz Wilcox, Tansy Clift, Ruth Robertson, Sue Richardson, Judith Warren, Jo Hart, Joel Arnstein and Laura Hawken

**Apologies:** Phil Harris, Judith Ward, Nigel Forster, Kathy Tiernan, Tania Willis, Martin Laidler

**Minutes** of previous meeting: agreed

### **Matters arising:**

Pepper reported that Berwick Rising invoice (for October 2022 meeting) for food that was long expected is now not being submitted

GB Twitter account is not active and no GB member is looking after it. We need to consider whether to close this account as no one has come forward to lead on it, and as it has same # as BCAN it causes confusion and unsolicited emails for Greener Berwick. (ACTION: For June meeting agenda).

### **1. ACTION GROUP reports**

- a) **Estuary Pollution:** Elaine reported there is an on site meeting 28<sup>th</sup> March with Environment Agency (EA) and new EA citizen science employee. EA will provide new equipment to assist us with the algae monitoring. Elaine commented on a few national developments on Sewage spills and is chasing response to letter sent in January to EA following FOI requests (action: Elaine chasing)
- b) **Single use plastics (SUP):** Sue reported good progress made with getting businesses signed up to the SUP award scheme, but setback in that businesses **now** have to do sign up paperwork themselves which is off putting and some probably won't bother. Sue suggested the group might create their own certificates, perhaps with Friends of the Earth (FoE) endorsement (Action: Sue R to look into own certificates, including FoE)
- c) **Transport:** Sue reported a useful zoom session with Neil Easton (NCC transport) to relay results of the transport group survey. Several possible follow up actions will be discussed at next transport meeting early April,

including reporting bus timetables not updated, asking for real time running at Golden Square, and looking at specific improvements to cycling between railway station and leisure centre

- d) **Zero Waste:** Liz and Pepper reported that Tania is making good progress with repair café and is pursuing grant to make it a joint zero waste/creative hub. In meantime there might be a pop up repair café based on sewing repairs in a vacant shop in Marygate.

Pepper reported she has done a useful summary of the recycling position with NCC to assist and encourage folk to recycle more. The position is not straightforward. This will be posted on the website. (**Action: Pepper** to send the recycling notes to Elaine to forward with minutes to MM. **Tania** to continue progress with grant and pop up repair café)

- e) **Community Growing:** Jo reported she has now got a licence from NCC to use a piece of land at Chapel St for community growing, following useful zoom with NCC estates. Jo and Liz have also submitted a grant application to "Grow Wild" for £2000 to help with the planting. To help get more folk involved Jo and Liz will organise a once a month social with meal sharing to discuss tasks for community garden and how it will operate (**Action: Jo and Liz**) Joel indicated he would like to join the community garden group

- f) **Warmer Homes:** Ruth reported (and Martin by email to Elaine) that the group has many good ideas and intends to hold a meeting with Matt Baker at NCC climate team about producing a leaflet promoting NCC energy efficiency grants. Also that a thermal imager to help residents assess where they lose most heat would be a useful purchase. Another idea would be to employ consultants to input EPC data from the Greenses area in Berwick (and maybe beyond?) into a 3D model of Berwick to help identify which properties need most assistance with energy saving. Joel indicated he would like to join warm homes group. Elaine will forward FoE funding link for Martins attention (**Action: Martin leading on meeting with NCC, and possibly making new grant application to FoE**)

## 2. RECENT EVENTS

- a) XR film shown by GB at YHA on 22 Feb – about 15 attended and good discussion followed. Pepper reported that 3 people indicated they might be interested in starting a Berwick branch of XR – this would be separate to Greener Berwick (**Action: Pepper to pursue**)

Pepper also reported that she and Tania will be going to London 21 April for mass XR demo at House of Commons to mark XR change of strategy away from disruption tactics to government lobbying. 70 environmental

organisations (including FoE) are supporting this event. See Extinction Rebellion website for more info on The Big One 21-24 April.

- b) NCC Net zero event – Sue reported that she and several others attended from Greener Berwick. Much emphasis on electric cars and disappointingly not much on public transport. Some useful info though. It was organised by Advance Northumberland.
- c) National Divestment Day of Action 24 March: Elaine reported she attended the County Hall demo lobbying NCC to divest from fossil fuels in TWPF. About 18 people there, including the 2 NCC Green Party councillors. Leader of NCC, Glen Sanderson attended and suggested follow up meeting. **(Action: Elaine to write to Olwyn at Divest Tyne and Wear to offer Greener Berwick support in any follow up)**

### 3. UPCOMING EVENTS

- a) Elaine reported an event on 25<sup>th</sup> April 10.30am at William Elder Building – Going Green Together (a North of England umbrella body facilitating networking and funding) presentation, organised jointly with GB and (Berwick Education Association)BEA.
- b) Pepper reported that GB will not participate in Big Green Week this year in June but WILL participate in Food Festival in August 18-20<sup>th</sup>. GB will have 2 gazebos and a demo/speaker inside. **(Action: Pepper to lead and start an organising group – with Liz and Jo)**
- c) Liz spoke about organising a networking event and suggested Jo and she meet within the next month to discuss a food sharing or camp fire event, perhaps alongside an AGM **(Action: Jo and Liz)**

### 4. FUNDING

Liz reported that there is £1600 remaining from existing funding. The funding body now seem more relaxed about spend and do not require invoices or estimated. Nonetheless we should aim to get on with spending this summer and simultaneously get on with other grant apps including the £1000 we can access from FoE annually as affiliates. **(Action: Martin for warmer homes to liaise with Liz to apply to FoE. Warmer Homes is a specific FoE focus so likely to be supportive for grant apps on this subject. ALL to look out for funding opps, especially for own action groups, and report at next meeting)**

We agreed the following spend from the £1600 – first come first served in terms of access as this totals a bit more than £1600 – invoices to be sent to Liz for payment:

£300 to MM (Elaine said MM, who updates our website, has now spent £216 of the £300 she was forwarded in January, at £25 per hour)

£300 to zero waste group for leaflets/space hire

£300 to Warmer Homes for leaflets

£150 to Food Festival for stalls/space

£30 for printing/publicity for films already held

£500 for 2 people to get PAT test training so they can help test safety of used electric goods at future repair café

£150 for SUP to produce own certificates for businesses who sign up to award scheme

£90 ongoing room hire for 3 GB committee meetings over the summer.

## 5. PRACTICAL ISSUES

- a) Ask again in newsletter for replacement coordinators, with job description (**Action: Elaine to include in newsletter**)
- b) Google drive: (**Action: Pepper to look into practicalities of retaining this facility now we have website**). Might be useful for internal working docs such as the Greener Berwickshire map contribution that Tania has initiated. Slack is an alternative that Berwick Green Party used.
- c) Northern Soul Kitchen: Pepper reported the offer of use of their space for meetings Sunday to Tues. Can take 20 people roughly, in 2 separate spaces. Concern re public liability insurance (**Action: Elaine to check with FoE re insurance and forward to Pepper**)

## 6. AOB

Elaine reported that Berwick Town council had declared Berwick “pesticide free” but councillor Robert Bruce who moved this, confirmed Berwick Town Council (BTC) had no powers to enforce. It does however signal good intention and BTC have written to NCC to ask when they might cease using glyphosphate on the streets and parks. Phil Harris of Greener Berwick has also investigated this with NCC a couple of years ago and Paul Jones at NCC was to report back on trialling alternatives. Phil has written again recently for an update. Reply now received from NCC confirming that their trials of alternatives to glyphosphate appear to show these are too expensive, but glyphosphate use is still legal.

Liz raised the possibility of a visit to the Nurture Project at Haydon Bridge (creation of a nature trail). **Action: Liz and Jo to discuss what visits might be useful for the Community Growing group.**

7. **DATE of NEXT MEETING:** Mon 5<sup>th</sup> June 7pm

Elaine Paterson (GB joint coordinator) 28/3/23