

Motion for Broadclyst parish council meeting on 3rd June

“the parish council is to fund a day’s training in Carbon Literacy in the winter of 2024/25 for up to about 10 -15 people, open to staff, councillors, and residents (after advertising in the autumn edition of the Broadsheet). If demand exceeds that number of applicants, to consider arranging a second day’s worth.”

How would this be funded?

I think we have provision in the budget for the climate emergency.

What would be involved?

- A day’s worth of training
- Could be delivered in 2 half days or one whole day, or in about 3 evening sessions I believe
- Also includes a little bit of homework. I think it’s usually sort of: “describe an action that you plan to take or a change you plan to make in your work or personal life and calculate how much difference it would make”. Hopefully we could help each other with this.
- Participants end up with a certificate if they do their homework
- The parish also potentially ends up with a certificate depending on how many participants complete their homework
- In person training would be best I think; otherwise available online. I am half way through doing it online.
- <https://carbonliteracy.com/local-authorities/>
- <https://carbonliteracy.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Making-the-Case-for-Carbon-Literacy-in-Parish-Town-and-Community-Councils.pdf>

Would it be just preaching to the converted?

I admit that the volunteers are most likely to be people who are already motivated. That does not devalue the exercise: it’s better if the participants are motivated. Perhaps we may find that in future the interest grows. We have to start somewhere. With plenty of notice, workers would be able to decide whether they want to take time off work and investigate whether their employer would allow the day as “community work” or professional development. Self-employed people might decide that it would be good for their business to have the certificate. That’s why I think lots of advance notice will help us to get a better range of volunteers. Maybe the NT or the schools might send over some people (although more likely to do it inhouse?).

Surely most of us know most of this already?

My own view is that it is difficult to have an up-to-date, well-informed, and balanced view of the causes and remedies for global warming. The answers keep changing! (or do they?) And yet nearly all our decisions at parish council, and in our personal lives, ought (I would argue) to take into account GHGe. We have all picked up bits and pieces from the media and books but how many people have sat down at 10.00 o'clock in the morning and really focussed on making sure that they are as well informed as possible. The aim is to become more considered and confident in including climate considerations in our decisions. After completing the course participants will know the answer, or know where to find the answer, to all sorts of questions. One small example: "how much can we reduce emissions by recycling?"

Isn't it just another talking shop and we actually need to DO something?

As the world heads towards more than 2.5 degrees of warming and a risk of catastrophic damage, some people want more ACTION. I get that, but we need a plan, as individuals, and as a parish, and more widely...

We also have a crisis in nature. This is a Climate and Ecological Emergency. Why are you obsessed with just greenhouse gas emissions?

In this parish there is very strong support already for the idea of enhancing nature, which is great. We are very lucky to have the Killerton estate, and nearby other private landowners who are conservation minded, out beyond the forest. Lots of tree planting is taking place. We also have strong support for initiatives like wild flower planting, bird box installation, river water sampling, gardening for nature, no mow May. All these changes are good, and enhance nature, but in the context of the threat of global warming, they can and should be put in the context of the overall carbon account, and that's a sobering exercise.

Henry Gent