

Test Valley Environment Action Group Meeting
at Test Valley Borough Council Offices, Duttons Road, Romsey on
Thursday 15th September 2011 at 5.30pm

MINUTES

Present:

Anton Page (TTR), Carol Bartholomew (TTA / FOE), Robert Page (RDS – NEC), Karen Eastley (TVBC)

1. Welcome and Apologies

Apologies received from: Steve Lees (TVBC), Councillor Boulton, Councillor Hawke, Councillor Brooks, Kevin Harrington (TVBC), Sebastian Blake (TTA), Rachel Moroney (BTCV). The Environment Agency also sent their apologies setting out that they are unlikely to be able to come to future meetings.

2. Feedback on the ‘Proposed Way Forward’ Document

Based on the responses received, there was general support for the proposed way forward set out in the circulated document. It was agreed to reduce the number of meetings of the group down to two a year (approximately April and October, outside school holidays), with sub-groups being formed to deliver specific projects as appropriate. It was agreed to continue to alternate between Andover and Romsey for meetings. It was suggested that a late afternoon slot is trialled (i.e. around 3pm).

It was suggested that the organisations / individuals on the mailing list for the group to be contacted to find out their key areas of interest within the group’s remit to support the consideration of ways to increase participation.

As set out at the previous meeting, four Joint Areas of Focus (JAF) have been developed for the Test Valley Partnership. A document outlining these JAFs has been produced and will be circulated with the minutes.

Action: KE to organise dates for future meeting, with next meeting booked for a 3 pm start.

Action: KE to circulate JAFs Document with Minutes.

3. Insulate Hampshire and Green Deal

Insulate Hampshire was launched at the end of July 2011. The scheme enables residents in Test Valley (and the other districts in Hampshire) to access loft insulation (including top ups) and cavity wall insulation at a reduced price. The advisors can also provide advice on solar photovoltaics. More information is available at www.insulatehampshire.co.uk or residents can call 0800 952 0037. Letters will be sent out to all residents in Hampshire about the scheme, these are being phased.

The Green Deal is a central government initiative; the legislation to introduce this is still going through. The current expectation is the scheme will commence in autumn 2012. The aim is to enable households (and businesses) to improve the energy efficiency with no upfront costs – works on the basis of covering the cost of work undertaken based on the savings made to energy bills. There remain a number of

uncertainties about this scheme; more details are likely to become available over time. The latest information is available from DECC (http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/tackling/green_deal/green_deal.aspx).

Action: KE to try and find out when letters will be distributed in Test Valley in relation to this initiative. Also pass on contact details for events staff at Insulate Hampshire to Anton Page and Carol Bartholomew.

4. Updates from Partners

Test Valley Borough Council has a new Corporate Plan, this establishes four aims including enhancing and preserving our natural and built environment – it is available at: <http://www.testvalley.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=5626>.

The timescales and documents to be included in the Council's Local Development Framework (which will provide the planning policy framework for the Borough) have been updated. For more information, view the Local Development Scheme at: <http://www.testvalley.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=9482>.

The revision of the Test Valley Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) is almost complete, with a draft being prepared for sign off by organisations. Noted that there are a range of reports coming from central government (including the White Paper and Biodiversity Strategy) which will impact on the delivery of the document; it is intended to still roll out the BAP but treat it as a live document.

The Andover Ring Road Enhancement Strategy is being developed, at present primarily as a partnership between Test Valley Borough Council and Hampshire County Council. Through the strategy it is intended to protect and enhance the landscape setting of the ring road through working in partnership, whilst also seeking other opportunities for enhancement (e.g. for biodiversity).

The Romsey Waterways project involves a range of partners with interests / responsibilities in the waterways. An issues document is being produced for public consultation, which will set out the general issues and solutions for public comment. This will be considered as an enhancement strategy for the longer term coordination of work.

Transition Town Romsey (TTR) are looking to bring the Station Masters House in Romsey back into use in as sustainable way as possible, ideally as an exemplar scheme. TTR is working with the Environment Centre to develop a feasibility study, they are also working with the Building Preservation Trust.

TTR are keen to create a community woodland in Romsey, following on from the orchard and planting at Whitenap Park. The woodland is to be created from nothing, so can undertake carbon sequestration, whilst being close to Romsey so as to allow access.

Transition Town Andover (TTA) plans to plant a Jubilee woodland in Andover; a site for this is still to be identified. 13 out of 15 schools have signed up to operate nursery beds for the trees that can be planted in the Jubilee woodland.

TTA has a Green Day coming up on the 8th October at the Methodist Church on Bridge Street. This forms part of the One World Week (1st to 8th October) which involves a series of events and a range of organisations. More information is available in the leaflets circulated with the minutes.

Friends of the Earth is involved in the 'plug us in' campaign (see: http://www.foe.co.uk/community/campaigns/climate/plug_us_in_31080.html). Undertaking research into local renewables schemes (focusing on non-domestic at present) and are looking for case studies.

Action: Can members get in contact with Anton Page (via KE) if know of any areas of land that may be available to be used to create a community woodland in Romsey.

Action: Can members get in contact with Carol Bartholomew (via KE) if aware of any non-domestic renewables schemes in the area that could be used as case studies / examples.

5. Notes of Last Meeting (7th March 2011)

No specific discussion, noted that actions point under item 6 had been completed (action was for *KE to get back to WD about who to speak to about problems identified for school travel but that are not included within School Travel Plans*).

6. AOB

The Department of Energy and Climate Change has published estimates of carbon dioxide emissions at local authority level for 2009 – they can be accessed at http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/statistics/climate_stats/gg_emissions/uk_emissions/2009_laco2/2009_laco2.aspx along with guidance documents. It is understood that this data will continue to be published until further notice. The figures show a total and per capita reduction in carbon dioxide emissions for Test Valley.

7. Date of Future Meetings

At the meeting it was set out that the future meeting dates would be arranged in light of the comments for item 1 on the agenda – revised meeting dates to be organised.

Post meeting note: Next meeting date is 26th April 2012 – 3pm start - TVBC Offices, Weyhill Road, Andover.