



ENVIRONMENT PLYMOUTH

FEEDBACK APRIL 2021

Does an Environmental Commitment Influence your vote ?

We asked five local party reps how they would tackle community engagement in action on climate change...we got some interesting responses

Something we've not done before.....a local election hustings. Our April meeting welcomed Maddi Bridgeman (Cons), Sue Dann (Lab), James Ellwood (Greens), Karen Pilkington (Ind) and Richard Worrall (Lib Dems) where they each had 5 mins to summarise what they'd do to engagement the community in action on climate change. It proved to be a very interesting discussion. Unfortunately zoom didn't capture the recording we made but we've summarised the key thoughts from the zoom chat for you. The overall commitment from all five candidates was to more communication, greater awareness and easier ways to get involved....although we also covered sustainable transport, trees, litter, food and food resources and the potential for a Citizen's Assembly...an idea that proved very popular.

Our next meeting is at 6.30pm 11th May : The environmental commitments made in the latest Economic Recovery Strategy (Resurgam)....Are they enough for us to sign up to the Charter ? Our guest speaker will be Anna Peachey from the Council's Economic Development team. We'll send the zoom link out to you a few days before the meeting.

Funding news.....from SWW, POP and Interreg

Climate change and community action, the PCEAP and EP – what you told us

Forthcoming events, dates for your diary and more.....

HOW WILL YOU VOTE ?



With the local elections coming up we wondered what the approach to engaging the community in tackling climate change would be in each case. So we invited five reps from the local parties to give us a summary of their policies and approach. It's not always an easy thing to do so my thanks go to Maddi Bridgeman (Cons), Sue Dann (Lab), James Ellwood (Greens), Karen Pilkington (Ind) and Richard Worrall (Lib Dems) for taking part.

Unfortunately we didn't manage to capture the meeting on zoom record (not sure why yet !) so each of the candidates has provided a summary of their thoughts and I have drawn some conclusions from the zoom chat...which extended to six pages of comments. If you'd like a copy of the Chat comments please let me know on info@environmentplymouth.org

You'll probably be surprised to hear that there was quite a bit of consensus in the proposals...even if the means of achieving them differed somewhat. One of the key suggestions was action on education, knowledge transfer and awareness with suggestions for school ambassadors, climate change ambassadors and new support for a mechanism to exchange concerns and boost engagement. There was considerable support for a Citizen's Assembly.....but no commitment to setting one up.

Both Environment Plymouth and Climate Action Plymouth already offer the opportunity to work collectively on this but, from some, there was no recognition of their value...only the proposal to set something else up.

As you might expect, this topic raised all sorts of questions...from public transport costs and availability, to the funds spent on cycling and walking, the role of the community in planning for the city centre and access to the shops, food resources and food waste, waste disposal and litter, the proposed Freeport and local decision making.

It was good to see that the scope of action on climate change was well understood....suggestions at this meeting didn't simply rely on reducing emissions and delivering the Emergency Climate Action Plan but there was a hint of frustration that not enough action has been taken and that the community has not been involved enough in actions to date. Hopefully we can change that in the coming months.

Maddi Bridgeman (Cons)

On Education – to actively recruit Environmental Ambassadors to go into schools and educate the children on recycling (what can and can't be recycled as it's a grey area), littering (rather than sitting in detention, get children out litter picking), sustainable fishing (also plastics in our oceans), their environment and what they can do to help. This is something I have already started in Moor View but I want it rolled out all over the city. It is proven that Children will educate their parents.

On Tree Planting, grow your own & foraging – Yes there is a tree planting programme but it's not edible fruit and nut trees. I want to ensure there is a variety of trees to encourage pollination, food for wildlife, foraging for people, home cooking and less waste. Allotments are under-utilised in Plymouth, this needs addressing.

On Energy – Due to the Energy from Waste plant (incinerator) Plymouth has completely eradicated land fill; a Conservative initiative. Also, many of us have smart meters in our homes but no one is actively investigating the results. We need to work

with housing associations to ensure their buildings become more energy efficient, make better use of solar power, become smarter and discourage the use of fossil fuels for heating, cooking, but also driving. Again education and awareness is key.

On take-away containers and plastic : At Full Council I introduced a Motion on Notice regarding take away containers and I have asked PCC to actively approach the drive 'thrus' to write registration plates on take away packaging to make people think twice about throwing it out of their vehicles windows. This has also been raised at the Plan for Plastics meetings?

On Wildflower meadows : I have many deer in my ward and last year the veterinary hospital alerted me regarding the increase in pets getting ticks due to the uncut grass. I love a wildflower meadow but they need to be sign posted so the public can actually see the reason the grass is left long. They also need to be sensible areas and not areas where deer graze or children play (lime disease is nasty), or areas where visibility is decreased for drivers and pedestrians.

Sue Dann (Labour)

From my notes I really want engagement to grow over the next 18 months as the Climate Emergency Action Plans develop and evolve and the lockdown restrictions reduce to allow engagement to take place

1. We need to build a narrative for different communities to become engaged and have an understanding of what they can do i.e. businesses/community groups/voluntary groups/stakeholder groups. So that it becomes a collective action or an individual action
2. To build a community of ambassadors and advocates of Climate Change to share the narrative and support peoples active engagement, this cannot be a `done to` activity and needs to be beyond the council, institutions and politics, collaboration of action and of ideas
3. To build a digital platform to share plans, get feedback, get ideas. Capture

what people know? What they feel about climate change? What we can we do? What you can do? What would people like to see happen?

Karen Pilkington (Ind)

1: To better engage and educate all residents about how they can do their bit (we managed the stay at home, safe lives campaign with ease, we can develop one meeting carbon neutral goals). Education around reducing waste (coffee cup campaigns etc), reusing (support for circular economy initiatives around items of regular use, introduction and council support of a modern rag and bone trade) and recycling. Most people still don't know what goes in their green bins resulting in the very poor quality of our recyclable waste.

2: To educate and engage both residents and council officers around best practice about green spaces, cease spraying, introduce community weeders (like community litter pickers), compost autumn leaf fall from streets, seek funding to bring more green education into schools, easier access to turning open green spaces into growing spaces. Bring more green expertise and training into the council.

3: To radically improve access to safe cycling through better junctions, better cycle paths and crossings and create an east west cycle through route with easy access to the hoe and barbican to encourage leisure cycling for all ages. Endorse and push forwards PCC's ambitious plans in the making for travel hubs to include bike, electric and cargo bike and car hire alongside certain bus stops city wide and ensure the plans get the priority they deserve to come to fruition.

Richard Worrall (Lib Dems)

My priorities for the environment and engaging with people locally:

- 1) Doing truly collaborative politics across parties to provide joined up leadership.

- 2) Listening to citizens on local changes to make the fight against climate change real and tangible.
- 3) Developing green transport infrastructure that makes non-car travel safe and enjoyable.

James Ellwood (Greens)

You can read a full write up of the Green's plans and policies at

<https://plymouth.greenparty.org.uk/local-elections-2021.html>

But their key policies are:

Investment in sustainable transport and Infrastructure

Independent businesses to be at the heart of a Green recovery

Protecting and enhancing our valued green spaces

Affordable housing for the future

Increase the city's youth service provision

Citizens Assembly for Climate Emergency

Abolishing the ineffective Council 'Cabinet' system

These are headline policies, of course there's much more that we would want to do!

PLASTIC FREE PLYMOUTH



To support all this we will be re-establishing the Plastic Free Working Group so if anyone would like to join in please get in touch on our new email address at plasticfreeplymouthsound@gmail.com

We also have two new pledge forms...one for updating existing commitments and one for new campaign members. Your involvement in both would be welcomed so if you have already made a commitment and would like to let us know what you've been doing recently please have a look at our webpage and the Plastic Free Plymouth feature. The new forms will be listed there very soon. If not then simply email me at info@environmentplymouth.org and we'll send the appropriate form to you. Under the new SAS Phase (Phase 2) it looks as though everyone signing up from now on will automatically gain a Bronze Award. More info to follow next month or get in touch.....



European Regional Development Fund





An Invitation

Join us as we help [Surfers Against Sewage](#) clean one million miles of coastline, rivers, streets and mountains to stop the devastating effects of plastic pollution and to restore our oceans.

You can join the [#MillionMileClean](#) by registering to lead a clean in your local community on www.beachcleans.org.uk

or come to our community clean events ... first one is in May 🍌

[#SurfersAgainstSewage](#) [#BeachClean](#) [#RiverClean](#) [#MountainClean](#) [#StreetClean](#)
[#OceanOptimism](#) [#PlasticPollution](#) [#MarineConservation](#) [#SaveOurSeas](#) [#PlasticFree](#)
[#ZeroWaste](#)

Plymouth Pots !

OK...we are just about to put in an order for the Plymouth Pots Bee bombs.

As explained, this very simple idea means planting up a pot with peat free compost and a bee bomb (that we'll supply) and then placing the pot where others will enjoy the colour when the flowers bloom. If placed on patios or balconies the pots will provide a vital resting place and pollen for Plymouth's bees; enhancing the city's bee corridors and boosting local populations.



If you'd like to pot up you own Plymouth Pot, drop me an email with your address asap at info@environmentplymouth.org and we'll get a bee bomb out to you as soon as we can. Using postcodes we'll be able to map where our pots are and where the bees will have somewhere to rest.



Clean Devon.....please !

<https://cleandevon.org/>

Please have a look at the newly launched Clean Devon website....it's a new initiative involving all the district authorities and organisations such as the NFU, Country Landowners Association, CPRE, the Police and the two National Parks. Focused on tackling litter and, eventually, flytipping, it promotes local action. It is a concerted effort to bring things together under one approach and has taken some time to pull together. Environment Plymouth has been involved via links with the Devon & Plymouth Chamber of Commerce but it is proving rather difficult to actually pin down the City Council's level of involvement. They are, at least, in the mix !

It's a good excuse for reminding you about the recently revamped Countryside Code (see https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/973254/countryside-code-leaflet.pdf)

And to thank Clean Our Patch and their amazing ambassadors who have been cleaning up the city recently.....loads of bags removed from some of our urban woodlands. Thanks Guys !

Devon's carbon emissions reduced by almost a quarter in the first lockdown

Over the last year real progress has been made to [create a roadmap to show the way to a net-zero Devon by 2050](#) at the latest.

The [Devon Climate Emergency Response Group \(DCERG\)](#) and its appointed group of experts, headed by Professor Devine Wright, have created an [interim draft carbon plan](#). That plan will become the blue-print to show what we must all do - residents, councils, businesses alike - to ensure that Devon reaches its net-zero ambitions.

Since the first lockdown we have been encouraging more walking, cycling, and advising people on how to get around safely while social distancing. Pavements have been widened, new paths created, and roads have narrowed to accommodate greener travel options.

Research last summer showed that Devon's carbon emissions reduced by almost a quarter during the first lockdown.

"We have an opportunity to introduce transformative change, and not just tinker around the edges," said Professor Devine Wright.

Chairman of the DCERG, Dr Phil Norrey said:

"The lockdowns have given a glimpse of how a more sustainable Devon might look, feel and sound.

"There is a huge opportunity to improve our public health, our resilience and our well being, as well as address the climate and ecological emergencies.

"We must be careful not to fall back into the same old routines. We all must think differently about the way we work and the way we travel."

With all this in mind.....are the proposals for the city's Resurgam strategy going to make a difference to Plymouth's carbon footprint.....?

Next Month.....Future Economic Sustainability ££££££

Plymouth City Council has recently published Resurgam – the city's latest economic strategy intended to see us through recovery from the Covid crisis. They have asked Environment Plymouth if we'd sign up to the Resurgam Charter which does contain commitments to the environment. But before we do so we'd like to make sure that you're happy with what we are signing up to.

6.30pm, Tuesday 11th May – zoom link to be sent out

For our meeting on the 11th May we have invited Anna Peachey, from the Council's Economic Development team, to present the key elements of the Charter so we thought it would be a good idea for you have the opportunity to see what the Charter contains. The Environmental commitments are reproduced here...the rest can be found on <https://www.resurgam.uk/>

The full text can be a little difficult to pin down but this page contains the key messages including a commitment to the central thread of 'sustainability and resilience'

"Covid-19 presents an immediate threat to lives and livelihoods. We must act decisively, but we must also act purposefully. Through this Economic Recovery Plan we will address the immediate threat but also address a global climate emergency and growing social inequality. We invite all the people of Plymouth to help shape this response and a vision of a better future."

Our question is " Is this a definition of sustainability that you'd recognize and fit in to.....is this commitment strong enough ?

The Environmental commitments are :

To "Have a positive impact on the environment, for present and future generations.

The quality of the environment and wider planetary health needs to be consistent and sustainable in order for business operations and people's health and wellbeing to be consistent and sustainable.

The challenges of operating a business are increasingly complex. Not least because of rapidly changing environmental conditions due to climate change. This poses a risk to business operations and to the future stability of society.

We can take action, both to reduce our impact on the environment, to adapt to the predicted changes and to prepare for emergencies. Employees, customers and investors are increasingly considering environmental credentials in their decisions.

65% of people want to work for an organisation with a powerful social conscience

61% businesses envisage new opportunities from a more sustainable economy

60% of employees want to work in environmentally responsible businesses

How we'll support businesses

[Plymouth Emergency Climate Action Plan](#) was launched in March 2019 with a pledge to make Plymouth Carbon Neutral by 2030.

Large employers across the City formed the [Plymouth Net Zero Partnership](#) to drive necessary action with the aim of achieving carbon neutrality by 2030.

What you can do

[Plymotion in your Workplace](#)

Measure your progress

Develop environmental action plans, identify priorities and incorporate action across the business. Savings in CO2 emissions on contract not from transport (specify how these are to be achieved).

Car miles saved on the project (e.g. cycle to work programmes, public transport or carpooling programmes, etc.)

Number of low or no emission staff vehicles included on project.

We'd like to know if you feel this 'commitment' is strong enough ? For example, there is no community representation in the Plymouth Net Zero Partnership, basing actions purely on Council led initiatives may not be sufficient and we are concerned that there simply isn't enough access to the details of environmental management practice for businesses to develop the action plans, strategies and policies they need. Very little is known, in practice, about creating a business carbon footprint without spending a fortune on consultants. So, what more is needed ? Are these statements sufficient to lead the city in to a green recovery or is it, sadly, a little too much 'greenwash'. Have a think and then let us know at the meeting on the 11th May...or before by email (info@environmentplymouth.org) if needed.

THE | 2021 STATE OF US

Powerful Communities
& Economic Democracy

And there's
more....

REAL
IDEAS

This comes from Ed at the Read Ideas Organisation Hi Folks, Please find the link to this event below :

The event link is here:
<https://realideas.org/about-us/our-work/state-of-us/> and there is a specific environmental session!

Fablab Events.....

We would like to highlight our **Sustainable Design Talk 'WASP: 3D printing eco-homes with local clay' on the 29 April**. Please find further information via the links below.

[Flyers & Booking Links \(Flyers also attached for your convenience\)](#)

[General April events flyer](#) – for all events book via [Fab Lab website](#)

[WASP: 3D printing eco-homes with local clay flyer](#) (29 April) - book [here](#)

Plymouth's History Festival

Alan Butler has been in touch about this year's History Festival. He says "It's 7th May to 31st May. Mostly online but, from 17th May things are opening up a bit more for walks etc. The theme is around wellbeing and how heritage connects us to our communities as we venture out of lockdown. It's crossed my mind that a bit of a conversation around history, heritage and the environment/sustainability could be really good and I wondered if you might have any thoughts or might consider being involved?"

If anyone has an idea for inclusion please get in touch with me or with Alan on alanbutler45@gmail.com

Recycle Devon's Tuesday Tables

A sort of mini table top exchange projectsee more at <https://www.recycledevon.org/reuse/tuesday-tables/>

KEEPING IN TOUCH

Meetings for 2021 Online via zoom unless otherwise stated (hopefully we'll get to meet up at some point !). Always a Tuesday evening 6.30pm to 8.00pm unless otherwise stated.

May 11th: The Environmental Commitments in the Resurgam Economic Strategy. Guest speaker will be Anna Peachey.

June 8th : Our 5th Birthday...we were formally launch on 5th June 2017. We have a very special guest speaker lined up and an exciting announcement to make.

And then July 13th, a field trip in August sometime (hopefully), Sept 7th, Oct 12th, Nov 9th and Dec 14th.

Getting in Touch

Don't forget you can always get in touch by email, text, twitter (via Stuart or Ruth – thanks for your continuing help by the way !!!) or phone.

Email : info@environmentplymouth.org or Twitter : @EnvironmentPlym

Text to 07970 909912 or phone Jackie on 01752 672537

If anyone wants to chat or email over the next few weeks please don't worry.....I will still be at home and happy to talk or email !

Our New Website at : <https://environmentplymouth.org/>

Please stay safe.....hope to see you soon !

With thanks to : Fi Smart, Karen Pilkington, Oly Skulsky, Susan and Peter Warm, Russell Floyd, Tony Staunton, Sheila Evans, Hugh Janes, Judy Harington, Maddi Bridgeman, Ricky Lowes, David Starley, Delphine Holman, George Wheeler, Penny Tarrant, Paul and Nicky Hatherell and Chloe, Rachel, Sophie Paterson, Sue Dann, James Ellwood, Richard Worrall, Gitty Ankers, Jenny Floyd and Colin Stevenson...apologies to anyone I've missed out