

Meeting Minutes: Congleton Sustainability Group


Date: 14th November 2023 **Time:** 6:30 pm **Location:** Zoom

In attendance: Heather Seddon (Chair), Peter Aston, Cathy Dean, Jackie Kay, Ruth Benson, Margaret Gartside, Patti Pinto.

Apologies: Kay Wesley, Linda Aston, Peter Hall.

Next meeting: Tuesday 9th January 2024 Old Saw Mill, 6:30 pm

Spotlight topic: (TBC)

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| 1 | <p><u>Welcome</u></p> <p>Heather welcomed everyone to the meeting. Minutes 05.09.23 are accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.</p> <p>Actions from the last meeting:</p> <p>Write a letter to the Congleton Chronicle regarding the success with the eco-schools achieving green-flag status, and the e-Learning Course.</p> <p>Update – 4 Local schools have achieved eco-school status, which was mentioned in the Congleton In Bloom results. The certification used to be free but now costs £200, in 2013 all nine schools achieved the award but this extra monetary burden might discourage schools from submitting again. One idea is to provide a local award/certificate, Patti hopes to encourage more schools to engage with the programme. Town Council keen to support green initiatives, contact Suzy Firkin & Heather Pearce (Congleton Councillors)</p> <p>Jackie Kay – Climate action group is working with a keen group of Parents from Blackfirs school, an issue highlighted was children are coming home from school with information and parents don't know what to do with it. A roundtable/workshop is in the planning stages – Jackie to invite Patti.</p> |
| 2 | <p><u>Financial Update</u></p> <p>Thanks to Linda for sending in the accounts prior to the meeting; please see attached the accounts.</p> <p>  Copy of I E CSG nov 2023 (002).pdf </p> <p>Cost of Living Grant Update - £8853 remaining for cost of living grant. Due to not attracting enough interest to implement the garden-sharing idea I re-submitted to Cheshire East a new proposal for the grant which is to expand on the work that has already been started at Hilary Ave, we will use it as the focal point for the community to educate and encourage homegrown food, which is at the heart of the original application. The Hilary Ave site was part of the original grant application and the purchase of community tools/storage shed remains.</p> <p>The new proposal has been submitted to the Cheshire East Grants team, awaiting confirmation.</p> <p>Patti suggested planting edible hedges (fruits). Ruth / Patti to discuss plans with Susie Mead.</p> <p>£1000 WDT grant is for signs at the Trees for Congleton planting sites with QR codes which link back to the website.</p> |

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| 3 | <p><u>Food & Friendship Grant Application</u></p> <p>Cathy has submitted a grant application to the 23/24 round of the Cost of Living grant administered via Cheshire East.</p> <p>Food & Friendship runs at Bluey's at Congleton Town Hall it supports local residents with a hot meal on Mondays & Thursdays. The application is to continue providing two sessions serving hot food for free and a new Wednesday cooking session. Teaching people how to cook fresh food, if possible linking in with food grown at The Friendship Garden 'From plot to plate'. Tackling food waste and education around batch cooking/sharing ingredients with friends etc.</p> <p>Results are to be announced in early December.</p> |
| 4 | <p><u>Trees for Congleton</u></p> <p>Draft dates proposed, mainly maintenance and repairs/replacement planting of existing sites. Need more people will to lead. (Dates listed below)</p> <p>War Memorial Hospital – This is now looking promising, it's the hospital's centenary year. Hedgerow and orchard planned. Targeting February half term for planting.</p> <p>Lots of goodwill in the Town for the hospital could offer to sponsor a plant for £10.00?</p> <p>Bird Bellows is keen to plant on their site.</p> <p>Ran out of small spaces around the town, very keen to talk to local land owners/rural areas.</p> <p>Cheshire East Tree Conference – 17th January. 9 Towns within Cheshire East are coming together to tackle planting on Cheshire Highways land - An opportunity to hear about strategies to accelerate tree planting across Cheshire East and connect with volunteer groups and town councils. Ruth/Patti will be attending.</p> <p>https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/cheshire-east-tree-conference-tickets-757292992727</p> <p>Kay has spoken to local farmers and checked the planting they had done which we could add to the total. 62% has now been reached.</p> <p>Coronation Trees – need quite a lot of space. Look at Congleton Leisure Centre / Priesty Court suggested.</p> |
| 5 | <p><u>Volunteer Events</u></p> <p>Christmas Lights Switch On – Volunteers needed, event is 24th November 4 pm until 10 pm. Contact Rachel at Town Council if you can help.</p> <p>Trees -</p> |

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER PROGRAMME

All sessions will be from 10 am to 12 am unless otherwise notified. For details of location or other queries email treesforcongleton@gmail.com

Replacement planting material will be from tree nursery, CWT nursery or other source not requiring grant aid. Fruit tree replacement – heritage fruit trees from Patti? Numbers to be confirmed.

NOVEMBER

| DATE | TFC LEAD | LOCATION | TASK |
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| Sun 19th | Ruth | St John's Road/Havannah Lane (opposite Morrison's), Buglawton | Finish weeding & mulching hedge, replacement planting of standard & fruit tree, tidying. |
| Wed 22nd | Ruth | Windsor Place | Replacement planting – standard, whips, fruit tree/s |
| Sun 26th | Patti | St John's play area (northernmost entrance to playing fields off St John's Road, Buglawton) | Expand orchard behind play area, remove blackthorn suckers, translocate oak and hazel seedlings |
| Tues 28th | | National Tree Week planting | TBC |

6 Communications

A number of letters, articles and press releases have been out in the last few weeks. No further action is needed.

7 A.O.B

Congleton Community Share Offer – raised so far 329,950 (31st October) share offer extended to 31st December, please continue to share information. Smallest investment from £100 up to £50,000. Download the share offer: www.congletonsolar.co.uk

Vale Allotments has secured funds to purchase the site which is great news!

Local Consultation CE Green spaces: - Have your say!

[https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/council and democracy/council information/consultations/consultations.aspx](https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/council%20and%20democracy/council%20information/consultations/consultations.aspx)

This consultation outlines proposals for the introduction of a new policy relating to maintenance regimes of green spaces within Cheshire East. As part of the policy site schedules have been produced which set out the typology and overall zone rating for each site. The revised approach allows us to deliver savings which were highlighted in the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023-2027 whilst providing a framework to drive consistency of standards across all Council-maintained green spaces and delivering opportunities for rewilding of specific areas, promoting increases in biodiversity.

Closes Friday, 24 November 2023

Climate Action Group – holding an event at Astbury Mere 10th June 24 as part of the big green week. Looking for gazebos to borrow.

CSG Subgroups:

| CSG Members | | Subgroup | Facebook Page |
|------------------------|--|---|--|
| Peter Aston | peterjaston@gmail.com | The Old Saw Mill, Dane Valley Community Energy | Congleton Hydro |
| Heather Seddon | heather.seddon2@btinternet.com | Plastic Free Congleton | Plastic Free Congleton |
| Patti Pinto | Pattipinto1@gmail.com | Eco-schools, In Bloom, Trees For Congleton, Food4Free | In Bloom |
| Margaret Gartside | cllrmargaret.gartside@congleton-tc.gov.uk | In Bloom, Trees for Congleton | |
| Barry Fox | gbarryfox@gmail.com | Green Living Course | Green Living Course |
| Alec / Val Scaresbrook | cycling@cheshirecycleway.co.uk | Congleton Food4Free | Congleton Food4Free |
| Ruth Benson | benson1ruth@gmail.com | Trees For Congleton | Trees For Congleton |
| Peter Ranson | peterjranson@btinternet.com | Old Saw Mill | Old Saw Mill |

Useful Groups:

| CSG Members | | Group | Facebook Page |
|-------------|--|-----------------------------------|---|
| Jackie Kay | Jackiekay28@hotmail.co.uk | Climate Action Group | Climate Action |
| Adam Linnet | alinnnet@cheshirewt.org.uk | Cheshire Wildlife Trust | Cheshire Wildlife Trust |
| Matt Axford | ASTBURY@cheshireeast.gov.uk | Countryside Ranger (Astbury Mere) | Astbury Mere |

New members

There is a short membership form for new members, to be completed once. Members receive e-mails from the Group and having voting rights at the AGM. Please send your membership form to our secretary, Cathy Dean, Cathy.Dean@congleton-tc.gov.uk.



CSG Membership
Application Form App

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