

Climate and the Environment

You have probably seen and heard a lot about climate change. Whether or not you believe there is an emergency, we know that the climate is changing. Some of the predictions may sound far-fetched or you may feel that nothing we can do will help, but even small actions by individuals can make a difference.

“Cheselbourne Parish Council recognises that climate change is happening and is keen to support the Dorset Council Climate and Ecological Emergency team at a local level.”

We can take action as a Parish Council to influence policy and decisions (often at Dorset Council level) in relation to carbon emissions, sustainability and the environment. We can also encourage and support initiatives that involve as many people as possible in our parishes - families and farmers.

We set up the Cheselbourne Climate Action Group so that our Parish Council can try to use its influence at Dorset Council level to comment on every planning application in our Parish to encourage plans and materials that will reduce carbon emissions, risk of flooding and other adverse environmental impacts and lobby for new buildings to be more energy efficient

We also hope to encourage community action.

Looking for an uncontroversial first project, the Cheselbourne Climate Action Group identified that the rural nature of our village environment would be an ideal location to address Countryside Management here and to start our work with our own Pollinator Action Plan.

Insect pollinators play an essential role in providing pollination for many commercial crops and wild plant species. In a village surrounded by agricultural land and extensive natural and semi-natural habitats within which pollinators are important, we thought it likely that Cheselbourne villagers can make a difference here. Pollinators such as bees, hoverflies, butterflies and moths are in decline. Pressures such as habitat loss and degradation, pests and diseases, pesticide use and climate change are having negative impacts on populations.

On the bright side, you might have noticed that this year our farmers have cut the farmland hedges higher and left a strip of wild flowers along the perimeter of all our fields. For this we thank them, as these small measures in themselves have resulted in an increase in butterflies and birds here.

With this in mind, the Parish Council is backing the Climate Action Group's recommendation that we generate a couple of areas within the village for the cultivation of wild flowers. To call them meadows might be a bit of an exaggeration, but the areas under consideration are

- The grass triangle at the corner of the main road and Drakes Lane
- The strip of verge between the bus stop and the roadway to the new housing development

There may be other areas that you would like to suggest could benefit from management as wildflower areas. If so, please do let us know. We would also seek to encourage those of you who have been considering establishing a wild flow meadow or wilding an area of your garden to do so. Advice on how to do this can be found at <https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/give-nature-a-home-in-your-garden/garden-activities/startawildflowermeadow/>.

If you think that this little bit of 'wilding' in the village is not a good idea or if you have any suggestions as to what other measures you would like the Parish Council to address to mitigate climate change, we would be very pleased to hear from you. And, if you would like to become a member of the Cheselbourne Climate Action Group, please contact me.

Cllr Carol Byrom

07855 147700

Carolbyrom1@gmail.com