

Fownhope Parish Council

Serving the community



REPORT FOR COUNCIL MEETING: 1st May 2024

REPORT BY: Helen Tinson, Clerk/RFO

AGENDA ITEM: 16a: Environment Group Report

Eleven members of the Environment Group and myself met on Monday 29th April. Matters discussed included:

Report on Dark Skies Monitoring:

- Three members of the group undertook SQM (Sky Quality Meter) training and a monitoring session earlier in April. Results have been mapped showing light pollution as red/amber/green spots. Individual readings can be found by clicking on each spot. It was proposed that we add a Dark Skies page to the website and upload the map.
- Next steps for dark skies proposed:
 - Responding to HC's Local Plan to call for a robust protection of dark skies across the county; and ask HC to adopt a UK Dark Skies Standard, use the Dark Skies Toolkit; adopt a Dark Skies Technical Advice Note for developers;
 - Ask the PC to review the Fownhope NDP and add a Dark Skies Policy;
 - Consider becoming certified as an International Dark Sky Community;
 - Explore collaboration with Dormington and Mordiford PC and Woolhope PC;
 - Continue the lighting audit to identify external lighting that can be changed to motion sensor and dark sky compliant;
 - Consider running a 'Big Switch Off' event – perhaps around August/September (see the Milky Way on a new moon night);
 - Consider a Dark Skies Bench – to site on the Recreation Field for stargazing;
 - And an Information Board detailing the impact of dark skies on Flora/Fauna;
- The International Dark Skies website is a very good site and explains why dark skies matter
- Jon Parr has agreed to give a short 5/10 minute talk following Yolande Watson about how the EG are responding to CPRE's Dark Skies Herefordshire project (soon to be on BBC Countryfile)

Dawn Chorus Walk with Singing:

- Sunday 5th May – 5am at 'Fiveways', Common Hill;
- Parking at the Medical Centre (allow 10 mins to walk up);
- Coffee and Croissants at the Pavilion afterwards;
- RSVP via the Calendar;
- Forecast is looking good!
- Need to promote on FB and as widely as possible.

Fownhope Car Club:

- Have had a busy couple of months which has helped finances;

- Insurance renewal quote anticipated in the next couple of weeks;
- A survey has been drafted for both members and members of the public, distribution slightly delayed due to pressures of work but it's coming;

Trees:

- Black Poplar cuttings available (male and female);
- Connexus are open to having more fruit trees planted near Faulkner House.

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 18th June