



Fownhope Environment Group Impact Report, 2021-2022

“Climate change is the environmental challenge of this generation, and it is imperative that we act before it’s too late” - John Delaney, American Senator

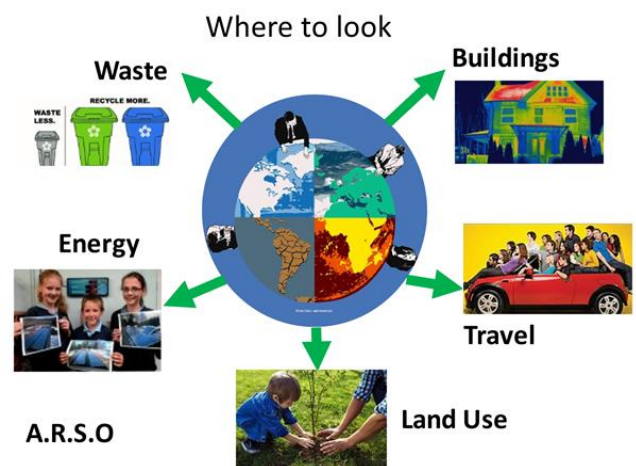
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Introduction:

Fownhope Parish Council declared a Climate Emergency in June 2019 and, since then, have been working on a plan to turn this into meaningful action. We have focused on five main areas: Transport, Energy, Waste, Land

Use and Buildings, and considered ways of providing support and facilities, and encouraging the change in habits which have a positive impact on our community carbon footprint.



A.R.S.O.: Avoid; Reduce; Substitute; Offset.

Meetings during this period were required to meet the current COVID restrictions and therefore began on Zoom for the first half of 2021, moved to a hybrid meeting in July and then resumed face-to-face until October 2021. We reverted to Zoom meetings over the winter months, and back to face-to-face meetings from March 2022 to the current time.

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at 90 households. At the end of 2022, we had achieved 53.

We held a Community Event on the 5th September 2021 to launch TGC and the [Fownhope Car Club](#), and were delighted to welcome representatives from 8 local organisations along with approximately 150 members of the public, resulting in 14 new registrations on TGC portal.



We undertook a review of the [Climate Declaration](#) and associated Action Plan and this was approved by full council on the 5th May 2021. An [Impact Report for 2019/2020](#) had also been written and was shared with other interested partners such as HGN, HALC and Herefordshire Council's Climate Team.

The Great Collaboration (TGC):

Fownhope was the pilot for the new [Great Collaboration portal](#) and members of the Environment Group worked collaboratively with Firestarter, a marketing agency who had donated time to support the project.

Firestarter created a launch plan and GANTT chart to launch [The Great Collaboration](#) within Fownhope and to share with other local parishes to help support their launch.

The group considered what the core message should be, how we would get it across and what success would look like. The accepted tipping point of 18% set our target for Year One

The Parish Council paid for an 8cu skip for community use, which proved extremely popular and filled within the first couple of hours. The skip was hired from the Wye Valley Group, who report a recycling rate of 99.9%. We continue to work on promoting the carbon reducing actions on TGC portal, periodically assessing the anonymised data generated by the portal which identifies those actions most important to parishioners.

Fownhope Car Club:

The [Fownhope Car Club](#) was launched as a satellite to [Malvern Hills Car Club](#) in September 2021. Grant funding from

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Herefordshire Council enabled the purchase of a 2016 Ford B-Max, and security for MHCC to underwrite the club for a period of 18-months.



At the end of 2022, the club had a total of 12 members but was not yet breaking even. This remains a project with the capacity to reduce carbon emissions and will be taken forward into 2023.

Voices from the Village blogs:

[Voices from the Village](#) was the idea of a young Fownhope resident who joined the Environment Group for a few months after completing university. It was a series for sharing how we take care for where we live, and how we live.

We asked for contributions from members of the public about how they connect, enjoy or care for the village, local area or planet and shared these in a creative way.

Overall, we published five blogs, averaging around 500 views per Facebook post. The blogs were entitled:

- [‘What About Clothing: Amy’s Boots’](#);
- [‘What About Renewable Energy’](#);
- [‘What About Food Waste’](#);
- [‘What About Hedgehogs’](#); and
- [‘What About Clothing: Nick’s Fleece’](#)

They are all still available to view on the website though the scheme sadly stopped when our young resident left the village to continue her life elsewhere. We were very grateful for her contribution and were sorry to lose her.

Reducing waste:

Community Composting Scheme: there was a lot of discussion on this topic during 2021 and investigation of other community composting schemes before it was regrettably concluded that we would need greater volunteer time than was available to make the project a success.

However, an article was written on how to aerate a compost heap that was published in the Fownhope Flag, and we promoted widely the availability of the [Green Waste Club](#), a green waste scheme that was already available to residents of Fownhope for a monthly cost of £4.

Herefordshire Council’s consultation on the Future of Rubbish and Recycling was widely distributed and led to an investigation into whether dedicated recycling bins could be provided on the Recreation Field to encourage recycling at source, to be emptied as part of HC’s fortnightly collections. Unfortunately, we were informed this would not be possible as the

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current long-standing contract only allows for the collection of domestic waste.



However, the conversation led to a presentation by Ben Boswell, Head of Environment, Climate Emergency and Waste at Herefordshire Council to the Parish Council meeting on 6th October 2021.

Mr. Boswell reported HC's response to the changes in national policy for the collection of waste from 2023; the response to the waste strategy survey; and HC's early adoption of national targets and ambitions to reduce waste and achieve zero landfill by 2035.

A number of pilot schemes will be implemented and assessed and we expressed our interest in being part of the pilot scheme.

Streetlighting:

Early in 2021, the Environment Group responded to local complaints about a

particular set of street lights. This led to a positive public consultation on part night lighting but eventually it was proven cost prohibitive to retrofit the required technology to the existing lampposts.

However, the requirement for no street lighting has been applied to the new developments in order to protect the dark skies wherever possible.

Hereford Community Larder: The Living Room:

This was first discussed at an Environment Group meeting in January 2021 and promoted on newsletters and on Facebook. The scheme is designed to reduce food waste, it is not means tested and therefore open to anyone who wishes to support the reduction of food waste.

COVID restrictions prevented further exploration at the time but we have recently renewed our contact with [The Living Room](#) and invited them to the Fownhope Community Saturday event on 28th January 2023.

Hedgehogs:

In March 2021, we invited local resident and hedgehog champion Jane Cawley to talk to the Environment Group about hedgehogs and the actions that can be taken locally to support their habitat, food supplies and freedom of movement.

Jane went on to present to the children and staff of St. Mary's Primary School whose

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response was to create two new wildlife ambassadors and hold a poster competition highlighting the plight of hedgehogs. There were four winners and their posters were put up around the village.



The first [Hedgehog Highway](#) was created on the Woolhope Road, past Fownhope Court to the southern side of Nover Wood allowing free movement over a large distance.

Jane continues to write articles for the Flag and lobby Herefordshire Council and others and we continue to share her thoughts, information and invaluable advice wherever possible.

EV Charging Points:

During 2022, we consulted with local organisations and businesses to assess the level of interest in installing EV charging points in the village should appropriate grant funding become available.

Communication and meetings were held with ShareEnergy to explore possible funding, and further funding is currently being researched.



To date, two local businesses and one community organisation have expressed an interest in installing charging points.

Bronze Eco Church Award:

The Environment Group were pleased to support St. Mary's Church who were awarded the Bronze Eco Church award in March 2022.

TravelFund for Business grant application:

On behalf of the Environment Group, in June 2022 the Clerk submitted a grant application to the TravelFund for Business for the supply and installation of cycle stands at the car park of the Recreation Field. Unfortunately, we did not meet sufficient criteria and the application was unsuccessful but we will continue to seek and apply for appropriate grant funding to progress environmental projects.

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Assessment of feedback from Jubilee event:

The Parish held a community event on 3rd June to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II.

Parishioner feedback was sought by the Parish Council and a number of positive responses about the environmental actions being carried out were received, and later assessed by the Environment Group.

The Jubilee event included the second Fownhope Market, an event that encourages the reuse of items.



Removal of Non-Native, Invasive Plants:

Members of the Environment Group have continued to remove areas of Himalayan Balsam and Japanese Knotweed from the River Wye and within Fownhope. Unfortunately, the Wye Usk Foundation have suggested that work to remove Himalayan Balsam in the Wye ceases as there is such a quantity up river.

An area of Giant Hogweed was identified in August 2022 and attended to in accordance with guidance by members of the Environment Group.

Five Flowers for Fownhope:

Launched in September 2022, the project encourages the discovery of the wild flowers that grow along the paths, lanes, riverside, and in woodlands, orchards and grasslands around Fownhope.



[Five Flowers](#) takes five flowers every month to offer a focus for anyone who would like to walk the village paths and recognise, identify and enjoy the flowers found here. Monthly factsheets are produced and uploaded onto the website, and an article was written for the Fownhope Flag in September 2022.

Repair Café:

We considered applying for funding to set up a Repair Café in the village, but with [Ledbury's Repair Café](#) so close and having learned of a new café being set up in Dinedor, it was agreed that we should simply support and promote

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those two facilities and encourage the repair rather than replacement of items.



The Clerk wrote an article in the March 2022 issue of the Fownhope Flag reporting on her experience at the Ledbury Repair Café.

Events are periodically reported in the emailed newsletters and social media pages.

Fracking Consultation – October 2022:

It came to our attention that our local MP, Sir Bill Wiggin, was seeking feedback on fracking in Herefordshire. This was promoted via our usual channels and noted at a PC meeting, and residents were invited to respond.

HGN newsletters and links to local events:

The Parish Council maintain an annual membership with HGN ([Herefordshire Green Network](#)) and, as a member, receive a weekly newsletter with information and links to local events.

Permission has been granted to share the newsletters with members of the Environment Group (circa 50) which is done via email by the Clerk.

Engaging with Local Farming Practice:

Annual Parish Meeting – 15th May 2022:

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The Parish Council invited a local farmer to the APM to talk about farming, how it affects the level of phosphates in the Wye, and what actions are being taken by the farming community to combat the problem. The talk was very well received by the community.



Regen Ben Trip – 31st August 2022:

A member of the Environment Group organised a trip to [Townsend Farm](#) to learn about regenerative agriculture - reducing pesticide use, improving soil health, reducing carbon footprint, looking after the environment and producing nutrient dense high welfare food. The trip filled quickly and was enjoyed by all who attended.

Finding the Joy in Climate Action:

A workshop event was held on 24th November 2022, to consider our own motivations for climate work in the village, and what we personally bring to it.

We looked at Fownhope - at what's already happening that can be celebrated, at what's missing, and what needs more attention.

From this, we took a list of actions forward into 2023.

Fownhope Community Saturdays:

Toward the end of 2022, we began to organise a series of [Community Events](#) designed to gently promote The Great Collaboration's environmental actions and provide information and support to residents that they can take away to implement at home. Each event will focus on a different theme, around Food and Waste, Gardens and Habitat, Buildings and Energy for example.

The events will be held bi-monthly on the fourth Saturday of January, March, May, July, September and November 2023.



At the time of writing, the first event all about FOOD had been a great success. With speakers from Herefordshire Council's Health and Wellbeing Team, The Living Room/Hereford Community Larder, Kids Kitchen rustling up their Cous Cous Volcano with our younger parishioners, and a local organic veg box donated from local business Seb and Abbi for our free prize draw, we were delighted to welcome 48 parishioners, consume lots of cake

and talk about food, healthy eating and how we can help to tackle food waste.

For more information, please check out the website: <https://fownhopeparishcouncil.gov.uk/fownhope-community-saturdays>

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