



NOTES OF ENVIRONMENTAL SUB-GROUP MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 17TH FEBRUARY 2026 COMMENCING AT 6.00PM IN THE PARISH OFFICE, GOUDHURST ROAD, MARDEN

1. Present:

Cllrs Anne Boswell, Paul Dobinson, Adrian Rabot, Mike Summersgill and a member of the public (SF) were in attendance.

2. Apologies:

Apologies were received from Cllr Andy Turner.

3. Notes from Environmental Sub-Group held on Tuesday 4th November Agreed.

4. Action List from Environmental Sub-Group

It was thought this document was somewhat lengthy/complicated.

Action: PD to see if the document could be presented in a different format.

5. Parish Councils Environment Network (PCEN) meetings

Meeting was held 2nd February but no one from Marden was able to attend.
MS would attend the next meeting on 19th February.

MS gave an update on the Greensand Farming Cluster who are meeting with the Marden Farming Cluster and he has requested some funding from the MBC budget towards this important project.

Action: MS to give feedback post meeting.

6. MBC Carbon Literacy Training

PD attended this training on 5th February. He found it very useful and learned his carbon emissions are 50% more than average. PD's personal action is to cycle to get his shopping rather than drive. PD mentioned initiatives such as:

Downswood Nature Park

Who have a 5-year nature plan and how could Marden do something similar.

Action: PD to source a copy of this plan;

Singleton Charity Acres

MBC are promoting 'No Mow May' in various areas to encourage perennial wildflowers to grow.

E-Bike Scheme trial

Tiny Forests – trialling in Allington – overplanting in an area to enable more carbon to be captured.

Action: PD to provide an article on Carbon Literacy for the Summer Newsletter.

7. Green Homes/Retrofit Session with KCC

To be held on Sunday 17th May 10am-12pm in Marden Village Club. AB ran through the proposed agenda/timetable that KCC have suggested.

Actions: (1) AB to respond to KCC regarding the event; (2) MS to try to borrow MBC's Thermal Camera for the event and let the MBC Environmental Officer/Maidstone CAN know; (3) AR to contact local companies such as Little Green Energy.

8. Marden Parish Council Environmental Policies

Cllrs viewed the policies relevant to this Committee which included the Biodiversity Policy, Environmental Policy, Hedgerow Policy and Tree Management Policy. No changes were required.

AR had put together monitoring summaries for both the Biodiversity and Hedgerow Policies and whilst it was recognised that tabled documents could not be used on our current website, it is more useful to have certain policies in this format e.g. a Biodiversity Action Plan.

Action: PD to look at the policies further prior to the Amenities meeting on 24th March.

It was proposed that at each Environmental Group meeting those in attendance would look at policies to come up with a meaningful short-term review and once a year go out to look at MPC open spaces on where improvement could possibly be made.

9. Nature Recovery Fund

The deadline for Phase 2 of funding of £195k is 31st March. MS applying for some funding to restore a piece of land at Chainhurst bridge.

Action: AR to monitor applications that have been successful.

10. Hedge/Tree Planting at back of Marden Cemetery

It was proposed that a Maintenance Plan for this area was required to include strimming/mowing along with a programme of removing the tree guards.

Action: Deputy Clerk to arrange a Cemetery Sub-Committee meeting.

11. MBC Climate Change & Biodiversity February Newsletter

Action: The Deputy Clerk to post the newsletter on social media and in the weekly e-Newsletter.

12. Maidstone Repair Café

Next date for the repair café is 4th April.

13. Swift Mapping

MBC have a few dedicated 'Swift Streets' and are liaising with the High Weald Swifts society. It was proposed that we could try to have dedicated swift streets in Marden and will liaise with Marden Wildlife. Two nests at Little Mill Farm and two nests in Thorn Road have been mapped on the Swift Mapper.

Action: MS to find out more about Swift Bricks which need to be positioned at certain heights, orientation and near eaves and whether we could source any funding for these.

14. Recycling Food Waste

Action: AB to include an article in Summer newsletter and 'Shake it Out' (reduce recycling contamination campaign).

15. Anti-Idling Signs for Schools

The school has been provided with anti-idling banners but has not put them up. MS has got no further with this.

16. The Big Green Week/Maidstone Day Out

This was due to be held on 13th June. Consider advertising to encourage residents to enjoy local open space.

17. Grants and Funding

Action: Environmental Group to look at available funding.

18. Rainwater Harvesting

MBC are currently offering free water butts to residents living in areas which are prone to surface water flooding.

Actions: (1) Deputy Clerk to draw residents' attention to MBC providing Water Butts; (2) Discuss rainwater harvesting systems further at next meeting.

19. Hedgehog Havens

Details had been received regarding hedgehog havens.

Action: To consider this further along with bat and bird boxes in MPC open spaces.

20. Pond Warden/Pond Restoration

MS to update on whether the Heritage of Kent Ponds could be brought to Low Weald but there was no update.

21. Earth Charter Principles

MPC have endorsed in principle they conform with the 16 Earth Charter Principles.

Action: SF to review the document prepared by AR and discuss at next meeting. AR to provide photos.

22. MPC Climate Change Action Plan

MS advised that MBC has still not progressed with creating a template yet.

23. Marden Plastic Free Campaign

The group leader has stepped down and nobody else has come forward yet to take over the project.

24. NALC National Network: Climate Emergency session

Next session Friday 8th May – AB unable to attend.

25. MBC Thermal Imaging Cameras

MS reported that MBC have been using their Thermal Imaging Cameras on housing association properties in the borough.

Action: MS to speak to MBC about borrowing a camera for the Green Homes session on 17th May.

26. DEFRA Consultation on Solid Fuel Burning

Closing date for consultation is 19th March. It was felt that we do not need to respond to this consultation.

27. Electric Vehicle Charging Points

It was previously mentioned to MBC about considering installing one in the village car park. MS is currently looking at two being installed for Hunton and costing it out.

Action: AB to raise at the car park meeting and MS to update on progress at the next meeting.

28. Other Issues

MS advised that MBC have won the Kent Wildlife Award – biodiversity is the best in the South East.

29. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 16th June at 6pm in Marden Parish Office.