

**SOUTH EAST SHEFFIELD COUNTRYSIDE AND ECO ADVISORY GROUP MEETING  
ON WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 28th 2011, 1.30PM AT REIGNHEAD PRIMARY SCHOOL  
(MEETING HELD IN MOBILE CLASSROOM THAT CAN BE ACCESSED OFF GRANGE  
ROAD BEIGHTON, NEAR BLACK AND WHITE BOLLARDS IN ROAD, ENTER SCHOOL  
SITE VIA BACK GATE, ECO ADVISORY MEETING WILL BE LABELLED FROM THIS  
POINT )**

### **AGENDA**

- 1. Apologies for Absence.**
- 2. Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> May 2011.**
- 3. Matters arising.**
- 4. Presentation on recent Large Scale Environmental Projects in South East Sheffield involving Sheffield Landscape Trust and the Local Community.**
- 5. Climate Change and Eco Schools Scheme Update.**
- 6. Shire Brook Conservation Group Report.**
- 7. Friends of Shirtcliffe Report.**
- 8. Moss Valley Wildlife Group Report.**
- 9. Crystal Peaks Centre Eco Update.**
- 10. South East Area Assembly Update.**
- 11. Beighton Marsh Water Pollution Monitoring Update.**
- 12. Sheffield Development Framework Update.**
- 13. Any other Business.**
- 14. Date of next Meeting.**

***Please contact Sally Pereira (Landscape Planning Officer)***

***For any further details Tel: 2735030***

# MINUTES OF SOUTH-EAST SHEFFIELD COUNTRYSIDE AND ECO ADVISORY GROUP

## MEETING HELD ON 25th MAY 2011

### PRESENT:

Steve Byers:	Sustainable Development, Sheffield City Council (Chair)
Sally Pereira:	Environmental Planning, Sheffield City Council
Councillor Ian Saunders:	Elected Member Beighton Ward
Peter Wolstenholme:	Shire Brook Conservation Group/Woodhouse Washlands
Debbie Matthews:	Reignhead Primary School
Kevin Hill:	Sheffield Landscape Trust/ Shire Brook Conservation Group
Roger Marsh:	Owlthorpe Community Forum
Jenny Macphail:	Sustainable Development, Sheffield City Council
Mark Kirby:	Friends of Heathlands Park
Paul Garland:	Friends of Shirtcliffe
Richard Pearson:	Shire Brook Conservation Group/Friends of Shirtcliffe
Brian Armstrong:	Biodiversity Section, Sheffield City Council
Don Ellks:	Beighton Environment Group
Rev Stephen Pratt:	Emmanuel Church
Celia Jackson:	Moss Valley Wildlife Group
Terry Jackson:	Moss Valley Wildlife Group
Adrian Burke:	Sheffield Landscape Trust
Gary Dickson:	Forward and Area Planning, Sheffield City Council
Derek Bateson:	Sorby Natural History Society
Patricia Ibbotson:	Shire Brook Valley/Moss Valley
Ian Ibbotson:	Shire Brook Valley/Moss Valley
Alan Webber:	Halfway resident
Keith Barraclough:	South Yorkshire Badger Group/Moss Valley Wildlife Group

### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Bryan Lodge	Elected Member Birley Ward
Pat Howells:	Friends of Shirtcliffe
Mike Howells:	Friends of Shirtcliffe
Liz Barraclough:	Moss Valley Wildlife Group
Councillor Helen Mirfin-Bourkouris	Elected Member Beighton Ward
Councillor Karen Mc Gowan	Elected Member Birley Ward
Mike Peat:	Westfield resident
Councillor Chris Rosling Josephs	Elected member Beighton Ward
Nesar Miah:	Area Assembly
Lee Greenwood:	Crystal Peaks Centre
Nikki Smith:	Crystal Peaks Centre

### 2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY MAY 25<sup>th</sup> 2011

The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record.

### 3. MATTERS ARISING

#### 3.1 Application for Listing of historic Stone Stiles at Owlthorpe and Mosborough

Celia Jackson was pleased to report that following her submission of evidence, City Council officers and the South East Area Assembly all supported and had recently agreed the local

listing of the 3 way Stone Stile at Owlthorpe, and also 2 other historic stone stiles in the Moss Valley. Clarity was sought as to whether this information was now available to view on the City Council website.

**Action: Sally Pereira**

### **3.2 Recent Ecological Records**

Roger Marsh reported following on from flora and fauna surveys carried out last year, and also linked to the assessment of the impact of traditional grazing that was reintroduced at Owlthorpe in July 2010, further ecological survey work was currently being carried out in the Owlthorpe area, and new species were being found such as a colony of “tree bees” a first record for Sheffield.

**Action: Owlthorpe Community Forum/ Environmental Planning/Ecology Unit**

It was also reported that the recent “bio-biltz” at Shire Brook Valley had been very successful, with over 550 species records to date including 230 new records.

**Action: Ecology Unit/Sorby Natural History Society**

The imported North American Signal Crayfish had been found in both the Shire Brook Valley and River Rother. Wherever detected pond dipping equipment must be disinfected to avoid accidental spreading to other sites.

**Action: All to note**

### **3.3 Enhancement of Christmas tree site, Beighton**

Following a request for help from the Beighton Environment Group to achieve a wildflower meadow which required low level management, a low maintenance butterfly and bee attractive seed mix was sown in spring by Sheffield Landscape Trust and Beighton Environment Group agreed to take responsibility for managing the new meadow.

**Action: Beighton Environment Group**

### **3.4 Hedge unnecessary cut adjacent to Junction Road**

Following local concern that a hedge that had been previously laid had been unnecessarily mechanically cut , Sally Pereira investigated and determined that the hedge had been flailed by Streetforce, it was unclear why it had been put on a maintenance schedule but Maurice Suter had now taken it off the maintenance schedule.

## **4. PRESENTATION ON RECENT LARGE SCALE ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECTS IN SOUTH EAST SHEFFIELD COORDINATED BY ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING INVOLVING SHEFFIELD LANDSCAPE TRUST AND THE LOCAL COMMUNITY.**

Sally Pereira handed out the South East Sheffield Eco Action Plan April 2011-March 2012 and also a detailed list of forthcoming Sheffield Landscape Trust public Eco Events and Activities, all of this work is part funded via the “Promoting Eco Action and increasing Community Pride” Area Assembly initiative coordinated by Environmental Planning. Thanks to Peter Wolstenholmes’ outstanding photographic record of recent environmental events and activities, Sally gave a comprehensive update of the current large scale environmental improvements taking place at various sites including, Halfway, Woodhouse, Owlthorpe, Holbrook, Waterthorpe and Beighton, involving many local community volunteers, school children, businesses etc... and staff from Sheffield Landscape Trust.

Sally also updated that a site visit had taken place at Beighton Marsh with Chris Wilson from Sheffield City Councils Environmental Protection Service to investigate concerns over potential water pollution, the outcome of the water testing was awaited.

**Action: Chris Wilson**

## **5. CLIMATE CHANGE AND ECO SCHOOLS SCHEME UPDATE**

Jenny Macphail from the Affordable Warmth Team gave a presentation to the Advisory Group on the current and future free cavity wall and loft insulation scheme that was available. The Scheme currently covered Mosborough, and would shortly cover Beighton, and then Woodhouse and Birley Wards in the future subject to funding. Those aged over 70 or in a priority group were also currently eligible to benefit from the Scheme, irrespective of where they lived in Sheffield. The economic and health benefits of improved insulation were outlined by Jenny as well as the reduced carbon emissions also benefitting Sheffield and the planet. Further details could be found by visiting the website: [www.sheffield.gov.uk/freeinsulation](http://www.sheffield.gov.uk/freeinsulation) or tel 08009159096(Freephone). Several individuals at the meeting offered to assist Jenny in sharing the information about the scheme to maximise the chance of uptake.

**Action by: Jenny Mcphail to link with Debbie Matthews/Paul Garland/ Roger Marsh.**

Steve Byers reported that work was being undertaken to assess how climate change will impact on Sheffield. Linked to this a Sorby Natural History Society publication which captured how Sheffield's weather is changing had very recently been produced by Gaynor Boon and Adrian Middleton and launched during Sheffield's Environment Weeks programme. It was noted that Sheffield was very fortunate to have daily readings of weather that had been recorded at Weston Park Weather Station since 1882, and in consequence Sheffield had one of the longest weather records in the UK. Copies of "Sheffield's Weather" were made available to buy at the meeting and would also be available for secondary schools and libraries or could be brought from Sorby Natural History Society

**Action: Sorby Natural History Society/ Steve Byers**

The South East Sheffield Eco Schools Scheme update was summarised on the Action Plan previously handed out by Sally Pereira showing 8 schools had achieved the top Green Flag Eco School status, 8 the Silver level and 6 Bronze.

Future activities to raise awareness of climate change and encourage progression in the Eco Schools Scheme included a "Full of Energy" event for schools on June 15<sup>th</sup> where experts would be present and best practice shared.

**Action: All to note and contact Steve Byers for further details.**

It was also noted that Reignhead Primary School who had recently installed photovoltaic panels funded by the Area Assembly Climate Change fund, had been sharing their expertise on solar panels as part of the environment weeks programme, and Debbie Matthews also offered to show and explain how the system was installed and works to anyone interested immediately after the meeting. Eco kits purchased by the Eco Schools team to help people understand how solar panels worked using a mini-solar panel with a light, buzzer and fan were also demonstrated at the meeting

**Action: All to note.**

## **6. SHIRE BROOK CONSERVATION GROUP REPORT.**

Kevin Hill reported that the Shire Brook Conservation Group volunteers continued to carry out a wide variety of regular conservation work including tree and hedge planting at Beighton Road, tree and hedgerow management in the Shire Brook Valley and Woodhouse, litter clearance and bulb planting at Beighton Marsh, scrub clearance and path management at Sally Clark's and assisting the Waterthorpe Group with litter clearance and the Heathlands Group with hedge planting.

The Group were thanked for all their hard work and for sharing their time and expertise to assist other local conservation groups.

## **7. FRIENDS OF SHIRTCLIFFE REPORT.**

.Paul Garland reported 120 volunteer hours had been put in by the Shirtcliffe Group during January to May 2011 carrying out a variety of activities including planting 500 trees, litter clearance, running public walks and talks. Through joint working with Handsworth Grange School the Shirtcliffe Group were pleased to report that a record number of Adders Tongue Fern had been counted in May (over 600 plants). The Shirtcliffe Group were also trying to encourage the Secondary School to become more involved in Shirtcliff Wood.

Paul reported that a badger sett had been dug in the Shirtcliff Valley in February.

**Action: All to note and remain vigilant, any suspicious activity to immediately be reported to police.**

Following a site visit with John Gilpin in January the Shirtcliff Group were looking at how they would progress a 5 year management plan. Damage to Centenary wall and ongoing sewage discharges were reported as some of the current issues.

The Shirtcliffe Group have set up a new website visit: [www.friendsofshirtcliffe](http://www.friendsofshirtcliffe) for further details.

**Action: All to note**

The Group were thanked for their report and hard work.

The Ranger Service Update on the agenda was not covered as there was no representative from this section in attendance.

## **8. MOSS VALLEY WILDLIFE GROUP REPORT.**

Celia Jackson provided information on recent and future planned events and activities in 2011 in the Moss Valley. Following regular use of the new Moss Valley display boards funded by the Area Assembly 6 new members had joined the Group. Himalayan balsam bashing was about to start for the third year and it was intended that the group would continue with this task until 2012. Celia reported that areas that had been choked with balsam 7 foot high last year, looked very different this year with wildflowers such as bistort now showing, clearly demonstrating that the 2 years hard work previously carried out had already had a significant impact reducing the problem. Thanks were expressed to all who had helped with the balsam bashing. All to note Celia previously reported that she had produced a detailed case study of their experience and practical expertise on tackling balsam and was willing to share this report by email.

Concern was expressed about the number of fires near Moss Way.

The Group have a new website: [www.mossvalleywildlife.org.uk](http://www.mossvalleywildlife.org.uk)

**Action: All to note.**

## **9. THE ECO BENEFITS OF USING TRADITIONAL SCYTHES (Part 2)**

Roger Marsh outlined why the Owlthorpe Community Forum had become interested in using scythes to manage grass and wildflower areas that fell outside the grazing areas. The Owlthorpe Forum viewed scything as a green alternative to using power tools and also recognised this traditional skill had a long local history. Following a successful funding bid by the Owlthorpe group a training course was organised by Environmental Planning involving the regional expert. The course included learning about technique and safe use and sharpening, the range of scythes available for different tasks etc. Following the course many additional benefits were recognised compared to using power tools and the Owlthorpe Group purchased 3 Austrian scythe sets and 5 different blades.

Derek Bateson commented that he had been brought up on a farm where the use of a scythe was common place and that the Ken Hawley tool collection included Austrian scythes and over 200 scythe patterns.

Roger was thanked for his very informative presentation.

## **10. SOUTH EAST ASSEMBLY UPDATE**

Councillor Saunders updated that the performance officer for all Area Assemblies would be lost in August as part of the Council cut backs. The new Chair of the Area Assembly was Councillor Ray Satur.

## **11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **11.1 TREE PLANTING AND ECO SCHOOLS**

Roger Marsh updated that following funding from the Woodland Trust 640 additional trees had been planted on the hillside behind the Owlthorpe Medical Centre by local community volunteers and Sheffield Landscape Trust to provide future screening. In partnership with Environmental Planning and funded by the Area Assembly, 3 local schools had also been involved in hedgerow planting of 3,100 plants the children really enjoyed the events. It was noted all the schools involved were part of the Eco Schools Scheme and concern was expressed about support funding for Eco Schools in the future.

Steve Byers responded that a meeting was taking place shortly regarding funding of the Eco Schools Scheme.

**Action: Steve Byers**

### **11.2 ASDA PLANNING APPLICATION**

Concerns were raised by the local community over the Highways issues associated with this proposal.

### **11.3 BEIGHTON ACTIVITIES**

Don Elks reported year one Reignhead pupils had recently visited Beighton Orchard and Don was trying to encourage the two other Beighton Schools to also utilise the orchard again this year. The Beighton Environment Group had carried out a successful well attended litter pick of Beighton Village in April with 7 Beighton members and 16 other members of the public joining in.

### **11.4 PARTICIPATION IN THE BIG BUTTERFLY COUNT**

All were encouraged to take part in the national butterfly watch 16<sup>th</sup>-31st July 2011. For further details see butterfly conservation website.

**Action: All to note**

### **11.5 REIGNHEAD PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Thanks were expressed to Reignhead School for providing an alternative venue for the Advisory meeting at very short notice when Birley Spa Community Hall was unavailable due to lack of electricity.

## **12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING.**

**Wednesday, 28<sup>th</sup> September 2011 1.30pm- 3.30pm at Reignhead Primary School, Beighton, Sheffield. Access via Grange Road side entrance to school. Items for agenda welcomed to Chair 1 month in advance of meeting- Tel 2734641 or e-mail [steve.byers@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:steve.byers@sheffield.gov.uk)**