

Woking Environment Action

Annual General Meeting

Held virtually, 6.30pm, 12 November 2020



A **warm welcome** by Woking Environment

Action (WE Act) Steering Group Member Rupert Devereux was followed by an **‘Introduction to Planet Woking’**, a presentation by our guest speaker Councillor Kevin Davis, Woking Borough Council’s Portfolio Holder for Climate Change/Strategy and Environment/Sustainability.

Cllr Davis explained the context for the Planet Woking initiative, launched 24 September 2020 (Planet Woking Day), and how this is seeking to engage local residents to help the Council and we all collectively tackle the climate and ecological emergency.

You can find out more on the Planet Woking website, <https://planetwoking.co.uk/>, and its Facebook and Instagram pages. Watch the introductory video, and the first event to learn how you can get involved at home. You can also sign up to receive Planet Woking e-newsletters and event notifications.

Following the presentation, Cllr Davis answered audience questions. Topics raised include:

- Planet Woking’s objectives, communications and more.
- What is a green wall?
- Scope for Planet Woking to utilise NextDoor as an interactive communications tool?
- Scope to link into local communications networks, such as those in Horsell?
- Cllr Davis advised the Woking News & Mail would be used ahead of the second event.
- How often the climate emergency is discussed at the Council and are councillors/officers receiving regular training in how services need to adapt to achieve net zero?
- How is the Borough Council is working with Surrey County Council to address the climate breakdown (with particular reference to fossil fuel extraction at Horse Hill, Horley)?

If you have a question about Planet Woking, please email hello@planetwoking.co.uk

Members of the WE Act Steering Group then gave **an overview of the work of the group’s wide-ranging projects and achievements this year**, despite the restrictions imposed due to Covid19. A number of **exciting new initiatives were also unveiled**. The following notes give a flavour of these. You’ll find more details in the AGM slides, also available on the WE Act website, <https://wokingla21.wordpress.com/>

- Climate Action Sub-Group - newly formed this year. Ideas in development include:
 - WE Act Carbon Tool for small businesses
 - Future Thinking Walks: What could Woking be like in 2030? ‘What is’ to ‘what if’?
 - Engagement with Councillors/MPs.
- Woking Biodiversity Group – conservation volunteering on sites such as St Johns Lye, Millmoor Common, Mayford Meadows and White Rose Lane, developing wildflower areas including with Thames Water at Carters Lane. To get involved - when volunteering resumes in December 2020 - email woking.biodiversity@outlook.com
- Operation Owl.
- Planning Campaign.

- Incredible Edible – community food growing in Rydens Way, Woking, and near Knaphill Post Office.
- Plastic Free Woking.
- Woking Sustainable Directory – we are creating a directory of local sustainable shops, projects and recycling points. Help us start collating ideas by adding post it's to our notice board at <http://note.ly/wokingenvironmentactionyahoocom>

Get involved - you are welcome to join one of our project teams. You can give as much or as little time as you can spare, and it is free to take part.

We are particularly keen to find volunteers to help support Plastic Free Woking, to help shape our Future Thinking Walks and contribute to the Woking Sustainable Directory.

We are always open to new ideas too! Join our news (blog) notification list via [the website](#) for updates on everything we are doing including the proposed Woking 2021 Innovation Competition (watch out for details in the New Year).

For more information about WE Act and any of the above, get in touch:

- Main website: <https://wokingla21.wordpress.com> (soon to be updated)
- Blog updates: Click 'Follow' on top right of the website or email us at our new email address wokingenvironmentaction@yahoo.com
- You can also find us on social media - follow us through our new Twitter account or Facebook.

The **formal annual general meeting business** was conducted.

The WE Act Steering Group oversees and develops WE Act projects and activities. Anyone involved in a WE Act project, or looking to become involved, is welcome to attend a WE Act Steering Group meeting, but only WE Act members are able to vote. The Steering Group for 2021 were elected as follows:

- Norman Johns (Chairman)
- Andrew Halstead
- Beate Shaw
- Ian Gammans (Communications)
- David Askew
- Stephen Cardis (Treasurer)
- Trixie Schoenfeld (Communications)
- Kate Kett
- Rupert Devereux
- Rachel Basham (Secretary)
- Mary Tobin (Communications)
- Toby Heppenstall

Amendments to the group's Constitution, following consideration of suggestions made at the 2019 AGM, had been circulated to the wider WE Act membership ahead of this year's AGM. These updates emphasise our focus on promoting awareness of the climate emergency and supporting Woking Borough Council to achieve net zero. The [updated Constitution](#) was agreed.

The event closed with an informal opportunity to network with WE Act's Steering Group members, during which audience comments and questions (raised in the chat) were answered live or noted for a follow-up response:

- Ashden resource: 31 Climate Actions for Councils. See <https://ashden.org/climate-action-co-benefits-toolkit/>
- Re. walks - there is a small group that walk in Horsell every Wednesday morning. Contact Horsell Residents Association to see if they are continuing into the winter.
- The group's activities all seem to be on the Guildford side of Woking. Is anything planned for the Byfleet area? - The group noted Operation Owl has boxes in Byfleet. Many more of WE Act's initiatives are borough wide.
- We have a family of tawny owls living in our street (in Horsell).
- Are there any owl boxes in Goldsworth Park? - A box had been offered but had not yet been taken up.
- Barn owls need 14-47 hectares of rough grassland within 2km of suitable nesting and roosting sites. Boxes are fine but habitat is critical. Loss of open spaces affects this. Habitat loss and fragmentation drives extinction.
- Do you have contact details for Rydens Way Incredible Edible organisers that can be included on WE Act's Facebook page? (action - WE Act steering group to advise the enquirer).
- How does the group go about finding plots for Incredible Edible?
- Concern raised by individual not named within the 2021 steering group (action - WE Act steering group to contact to discuss).

The meeting closed at 7.45pm. Thank you to everyone who attended and contributed. We look forward to an exciting year ahead. Stay safe everyone.