

**CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCY WORKING GROUP (CEEWG) meeting
Tuesday 2nd September 2025 at 7.30pm held in the Community Hall.**

In attendance: Cllrs Hood (Chair) and Jones, Charles Couzens (CC) (arrived at 7.35pm), Jane Durney (JD), Dee Mullis (DM), Nick Truman (NT).

Cllr James Buckland.

Clerk: Lisa Ulf-Hansen, Town Clerk.

Meeting started: 7.30pm.

MEETING NOTES

25/16: Apologies for Absence (LGA 1972 s85(1)).

Apologies received from Richard Clothier (RC).

25/17: Notes of the previous meeting.

To receive and approve the [notes from the last meeting](#) held on 9th July 2025.

The incorrect link to view the meeting notes from the meeting on 9th July had been circulated. The meeting notes will be agreed at the next meeting.

25/18: To discuss recommendations on review of the Grounds Maintenance Contract Schedule (2026-2029) for Bruton.

- a. To receive feedback from walk around the town with town committee, which was scheduled for Monday 1st September.

Cllr Buckland gave a short oral report about the walk around that took place on 1st September. Cllr Buckland met with CC and DM. He overviewed the history of the grounds maintenance contract. The purpose of the walk around was to try to build in wilder areas, which could mean less cutting required.

Cemetery:

- Leave the area currently not being used for interments, then mow and collect the cuttings. Collect seeds from the bund at Abbey Ponds to populate with wild flowers. Cut around June/July.

Cuckoo hill allotment

- change the shape of the hedge cutting in more of a pyramid shape which will encourage wildlife and growth. Perhaps only two cuts rather than three.

Land at Eastfield.

- The current ideas that the town council have for this area have stalled. Perhaps One Planet Bruton could make some suggestions about how best to use the space.

Burrowfield Close:

- Any planting in this area would require engagement with the residents to discuss ideas.

Station Road Car Park:

- There are wild flowers on the grass bund in the centre of the car park.
- Concerns were discussed about the vegetation becoming unwieldy and tatty, the contractor to use discretion about when to cut the area back.

Dovecote Field:

- It was suggested to have the area grazed by sheep rather than cows and graze only in winter rather than in summer (leave until July/August).
- To do this under license initially, until guidelines are clear to consider a tenancy agreement.
- Stock proof fencing and better signage would be required. The route is not a public right of way, but is frequently used by walkers.

Jubilee Park Play Area:

- Consider planting some young hedge plants (hazel and maple) in the nettle bank, as this area is difficult to manage.

Wider Jubilee Park area:

- There is potential for a patch near the trees (by the bank between the two pitches) that could be a pollinator area.
- Two wild flower verges, cut 1m from the pathway, along the wall (happy to chat bench) and also the railway fence.

Folly (Lower Backway):

- Cut back as and when required, as a safety precaution. Essentially to stay the same as the regime is currently.

Bishton Green:

- Leave Man On a Bench area unmown until about June, to let grass grow and see what happens.

St Mary's Church:

- To allocate an area along the bank to leave unmown; keep the area as a wild seeded area. Obtain a commitment from contractors not to mow the bank. The vicar is aware of this suggestion.

Durslade:

- The Orchard. Apple picking to be offered to One Planet Bruton (OPB), and other local organisations. The apple trees need pruning. It was suggested that the town council could pay for a tutor (or a local expert) to provide a tutorial about pruning apple trees. This would also encourage community engagement, and have cut back the trees.
- Concern was raised that fruit is going to waste.
- The area of the field at the top end of Durslade. Consider asking if the farmer would increase cutting to 3 times a year. The objective would be to cut intensively for 4 or 5 years, and then go to haymaking in August. Cllr Hood to speak with Hauser & Wirth .

Cllr Buckland will work with the town clerk to consider the feedback, and collate the grounds maintenance schedule. This will be circulated to CEEWG and Town Committee for consideration and feedback, finalised with Cllrs Buckland, Coulter and Hood, and the town clerk, then to go to Town Committee or Finance and Resources, or Full Council to finalise.

25/19: Taking the One Planet Action Plan forward.

1) Habitats inventory;

a) To discuss the information shared by Richard Clothier (RC).

RC had provided some information about biodiversity monitoring, initially monitoring bird species. Other methods of wildlife recording discussed were Merlin and Plantnet apps. DM spoke about an alternative method of mapping a whole area of wilding, similar to wilder gardens with Somerset Wildlife Trust. The key would be to encourage the community engagement.

b) To discuss next steps.

As RC was not present, it was suggested to spend the next CEEWG meeting discussing how best to introduce monitoring wildlife and habitat in the community.

2) Seeking local ownership of property;

a) Update from chair about potential Good Company Bruton initiative, and to discuss possible inputs from this group.

Coombe Hill House is being sold, and a separate field close by is also being sold. Cllr Hood is working with Good Company to put together a Community Bid for the field. Various elements were discussed, including obtaining a 'red book' valuation for the area.

3) Slowing the flow;

a) To receive any relevant information from BrueCREW.

Cllr Jones provided a short oral report. There are now three wild trout trust survey reports, which advise about habitat restoration. The weir beneath the footbridge in Riverside Walk is now grouped together with the stretch of river alongside Station Road Car Park. The proposal with the weir is to 'notch' it, by 50 or 60 cm. The Wild Trout Trust is waiting for Environment Agency funding to engage an engineer to progress this.

A Wild Trust Trout walk over was conducted over Gants Mill, where there is a large weir. There are plans to remove the hydro which will increase the flow over the weir. There is a distinct DNA separation in the trout present, in different tributaries of the Brue, due to separation of areas by the weirs. It is hoped to introduce fish passes in both of these areas.

Comments were made about managing the Himalayan Balsam next year, perhaps dealing with it earlier in the year (March or April). It is recognised that this is a huge job.

Plans for Coombe Brooke and Lusty Brook are still ongoing.

4) Building performance and resilience;

a) To consider setting up a programme of regular workshops covering heat pumps, insulation, solar and adaptation against extreme heat and rainfall.

Cllr Hood introduced an idea of holding a regular workshop, to provide information, particularly for listed properties (as there are many in the centre of Bruton), and led by an expert in that field. An example would be 'How do you manage heat in your home?' For further discussion at a future meeting.

25/20: Other information sharing.

JD confirmed that Hoedown was resuming from 6th September (first weekend of the month). Stitch it Don't Ditch it is ongoing, as is Wilder Gardens.

25/21: Date of the next meeting of the working group:

To discuss the date and venue of the next meeting. Tuesday 4th November at the Community Hall. 7.30pm.

Meeting closed at 8.43pm.

END OF MEETING NOTES