

July 2021 District Councillor report - Lindsay MacDougall

I am pleased to report that with lockdown easing, **Bretenoux Road enforcement** is now proceeding, working with the homelessness team to help individuals who require it. Mendip District Green Councillors are holding meetings with officers involved in initiatives to increase social housing provision. **Provision of social housing** is an important focus with Cabinet at Mendip District Council (MDC), as is the possible location of a traveller site. I have attended an update by the Multi Agency Group (MAG) where our MP James Heapey and David Fothergill, leader of Somerset County Council, emphasised the need to proceed with enforcement at pace.

I attended a joint Avalon Community Energy and Bath & West Community Energy webinar, "**Living with Renewables**" including discussion around how to reduce energy demand in our homes and how to increase the supply of domestic renewable energy for the increased demand including for electric vehicle charging. BWCE are part of a project called Flex Community to pilot the practicalities of using smart meters and other AI to help to solve this; they are looking for pioneer participants who have already have a heat pump, electric vehicle charge point or main source immersion heater, or who are planning to install one of these in the next 3 months: anyone interested please contact: <https://avaloncommunityenergy.org.uk/flex/>

Reducing carbon emissions due to transport and heating our homes are important next steps in addressing the climate emergency. The good news is that the National Grid is aiming for a zero carbon electricity grid by 2025; this cannot be done with off-shore wind turbines alone, so more solar panel electricity generation will be part of the mix. Important limiting factors are grid capacity and the intermittency of the supply to match peak demand and suppliers are making progress with resolving these issues. Central government funding is an important part of this; MDC have stated that they are only able to meet a 30% reduction in CO2 emission to meet our Climate Emergency aims, due to the limitations of our existing powers at district level together with funding constraints.

I have been working with the Glastonbury **Low Traffic Neighbourhoods** group which has been surveying traffic on the A361 and looking at ways to keep this issue on the agenda by building a website for evidence including videos from residents and visitors to show the extent of the problem, re noise, safety, pollution, etc. I have attended a presentation from the **Active Travel group** at MDC, who have recruited a cycling planning consultant to survey the Mendip area for improvements to be made, which can be linked into the planning system and standards specified for new developments. There has been some criticism that the proposals are not addressing rural areas or the need to provide safe routes between towns and villages.

I attended a MDC webinar with the Town & Country Planning Association who updated councillors on the implications of the new permitted development rules and **planning changes** expected in the government white paper slated for Autumn 2021.

In response to complaints about daytime drinking outside St John's Church and consequent disruption in the High Street, I am consulting on a reduction in the Coop's **licensing hours** during the day to reduce drinking on the benches.

As a representative of the **Glastonbury Community Development Trust (and Oppshop)** on the town council, I can announce that Terry and Sarah Clay, who have been such an asset to our community in founding and making the Glastonbury Oppshop such a success, are making plans to move house, and the Oppshop is now facing an uncertain future. There has been some talk of incorporating the service into the provision of IT and so on in the library, or perhaps some provision in the new St Dunstan's House hub; however, much of the current provision is made now through an automated website which may be part of the mix.

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