

Top stories in this newsletter



A Supreme Court Win!
Image: Pixabay Forrester



Date set for DorsetCOP
2nd November 2024



Feeding Dorset
Partnership



Great Big Dorset
Hedge Project Update

Supreme Court Ruling



Many congratulations to a DCAN member, Vicki on her involvement in the Supreme Court case which concluded yesterday that Surrey Council acted illegally in not taking into account the emissions from burning hydrocarbons in their environmental impact assessment.

This all sounds rather technical but it is a significant step which will make it harder for the oil industry to raise the finance needed and to get permission for new oil and gas projects. This will have national and international implications.

[Here is an article from the oil industry commentator "Energy Voice":](#)

The Next Dorset COP



The date and venue are now set for the next Dorset COP. Last year more than 100 organisations and 250 individuals came together for the UK's first community-led COP (see below). In a sweltering Dorchester Corn Exchange delegates heard from expert speakers, activists and local groups, participated in a Citizens Assembly and Workshops, shared learning and made personal pledges to act on the climate and associated crises.

Since the event we have seen more climate records tumble, witnessed more global instability and, despite some encouraging initiatives, little of the required urgency from our local leaders. Nationally many areas are going backwards.

As the crises deepen it's even clearer that communities will need to build local resilience and take action themselves. That's our aim for this year's COP: **to help build the plans that community groups need to take throughout the coming year.**

Save the date: Dorset COP 2024 takes place on Saturday 2nd November at Bournemouth University, for more details keep looking at the [official website](#).

DorsetCAN's Monthly Carbon Literacy Training - For Environmental Groups and Town and Parish Councils



Carbon Literacy Training
For Town & Parish Councils, Community Groups & Organisations

Monthly Carbon Literacy Training - For Environmental Groups and Town and Parish Councils

Dorset Climate Action Network (DCAN) has been awarded funding from the Carbon Literacy Community Pot and is pleased to offer monthly training and accreditation workshops for town and parish councils and community groups in the Dorset area. Workshops will be run on Zoom, with each Course lasting 2 mornings, if you represent a group and wish to learn more go to [Carbon Literacy Training October 24 - January 25 | DCAN \(dorsetcan.org\)](#)

Dates of Workshops just released:

- **October** Weds 16th Oct & Weds 23rd Oct
- **November** Weds 6th Nov & Weds 13th Nov
- **January** Weds 8th Jan & Weds 15th Jan

The Carbon Literacy Project offers everyone a day's worth of Carbon Literacy® learning, covering climate change, carbon footprints, how you can do your bit and why it's relevant to you and your community.

“An awareness of the carbon costs and impacts of everyday activities and the ability and motivation to reduce emissions, on an individual, community and organisational basis.”

if you represent a group and wish to learn more and book the course go to [Carbon Literacy Training October 24 - January 25 | DCAN \(dorsetcan.org\)](#)

Green Martinstown

Green Martinstown Presents: 'Our Soil: Vital To All Life'
A Presentation by Professor Mark Kibblewhite

**Saturday October 12th 2024 Martinstown Village Hall 7.00pm —
Amazing Supper and Music, too!**

Green Martinstown's Annual Supper Evening may seem a way off but we are excited to let you know that we will have an eminent guest speaker in Professor Mark Kibblewhite. Mark is one of Europe's leading soil scientists and an Emeritus Professor at Cranfield University.

He specialises in the assessment and management of soil resources. At Cranfield he was Director of the National Soil Resources Institute.

Mark will talk about how vital soil is to our very existence and how new methods of working with the soil are able to regenerate soil back to health. Some scientists say that our soils in their current degraded state may only be good for another 10 years - so finding a way to care for them and regenerate them back to health is urgent.

To Book: greenmartinstown@gmail.com

DCAN Webinar (The Truth About Greenwashing) - 5th June

Examining the truth of the greenwashing accusation made against private and public sector initiatives and what can be done about it, covering:

- - ***An overview of the greenwashing issue and its dangers***
- - ***How the next generation (Gen Z) is dealing with it***
- - ***How the BCorp system works and is it a way forward***
- - ***Greenwashing in local government and could BCorp help***

NOT all the almost 50 people registered for DCAN's 'Truth about Greenwashing' online event on 5 June managed to tune in on the night but those who did benefitted from some significant and occasionally revealing facts and figures.

The calculated and deliberate deceit of a plethora of big name global corporations, particularly in the fossil fuel industry, were expected. But there were some unexpected revelations too.

An expert panel of speakers unfamiliar with many, including Martin Brown of [Fairsnape](#), Joanna Watchman of [Content Coms](#) and Amber Harrison of [Folde](#), between them not only managed to outline the salient facts about the pernicious and widespread practice of 'green lying' - aka greenwashing - but also how dangerous it is and how hard to counteract.

Dorset author and journalist Richard Thomas, who chaired the event, quoted a recent commentator as describing greenwashing as 'the lie that will doom the world'. And while the event did not do too much actual naming and shaming it was made very obvious who the main culprits are and of the greed motivation that drove the worst of them (although it was questioned if even the 'innocent' perpetrators are really that innocent in the final analysis).

Regeneration - not sustainability

Renowned climate consultant and activist Martin Brown questioned the authenticity of the word 'sustainability' commonly found in greenwashing and said he preferred the terms 'regenerative' and 'regeneration'. This made it clear that the task in front of humanity is not so much to preserve the human status quo - that might be inferred from the word 'sustainable' - as, and more crucially and accurately, to restore what has been lost from the natural world on which we depend. 'It is about remembering we are a part of nature and not apart from it,' he reminded participants.

Two recent recipients of the acclaimed B-Corp certification process, Jo and Amber, both explained how it was a convincing and effective antidote to green lying. But it was conceded that its focus on for-profit business organisations made it an inappropriate mechanism for preventing greenwashing in local government and other so-called 'public service' bodies.

Giles Watts succinctly outlined the disconnect between central and local government that made it hard to evaluate local authorities' record on meeting climate targets and assessing greenwashing failings.

In the subsequent Q&A session Jo Watchman challenged DCAN on why there were no young 'Gen Z' people taking part and asked whether the network was doing enough to attract young people. Giles countered that this was one of the main reasons why the next Dorset COP in November was being held at Bournemouth University.

The whole event can be viewed on Youtube here: <https://youtu.be/s1WCKEpHH2g>

Individual Powerpoint presentations can be seen on the DCAN website,

Shaftesbury Town Council ups its Climate Action Commitment

Shaftesbury Town Council took a firmer step towards meeting the climate and nature crisis challenge in May by upping the status of its ad hoc Sustainable Shaftesbury working group to being a formal sub-committee of the council.

The role of the Sustainable Shaftesbury Advisory Committee (SuSAC) is to advise the council on its climate and ecology policies and to draw up a plan of recommended actions for it to follow and to support local voluntary groups wanting to do the same..

The committee includes an elected representative from the town council and the council provides admin support - but all members of the 15-strong committee are non-councillor experts living locally and giving their time voluntarily.

The new group held its first meeting in June and immediately initiated a review of the existing Sustainable Shaftesbury Action Plan agreed and adopted by the council in February.

The meeting also elected Richard Thomas as its first chair with Jenny Morisetti as vice-chair and added extra members representing Blackmore Vale Medical Partnership and Shaftesbury Youth Council as well as sustainability consultant Amber Harrison, co-owner of the award-winning Folde bookshop in Shaftesbury. .

The June meeting asked the council to make sure that the action plan is an integral part of both its latest five-year strategic plan and its neighbourhood plan review currently under way. Its next step, to be decided at its July meeting, is to set up sub-groups to work on specific areas such as transport, energy, food, land mapping, waste and so on.

"We cannot make the council do what we ask but there is certainly an expectation under our 'Think Global, Act Local' slogan that they'll follow our recommendations and so far they haven't let us down," said Richard, who is also a member of the DCAN action team.

'Getting town and parish councils as well as Dorset Council to respond positively to what local activists would like them to do is a crucial step in dealing with this crisis because they are the key decision-makers locally.'



DCAN Energy Team Update: Dorset Open Greener Homes to Run Throughout the Year

This is the tenth year we have run open homes in West Dorset, and the third year DCAN has organised the event over the whole of Dorset. Some 44 homes opened this year.

Although the total number of visitors, about 250, was down, the feedback from the hosts was that they were mostly homeowners doing serious research to inform their own projects. Some of the visitors stayed over two hours, and then emailed further questions.

This year we had a new website, funded by Dorset Community Energy. This allows for searching for features such as heat pumps or low cost improvements. We also commissioned films of several of the homes, to draw people in and to be able to share their knowledge to a wider audience, sponsored by the Dorset Community Foundation of Wessex Water.

DCAN Energy Team Update: Dorset Open Greener Homes to Run Throughout the Year *cont'd*

Some of the feedback we got from visitors:

- The visits helped to highlight the technology that can be used in two very different homes. This will help us enormously when looking at potential houses to buy when we move.
- Jo was on a limited budget, as I am, and her house contained 2 types of construction as does my 1860 home. She was enthusiastic even though she has had to manage her installations piecemeal, as I will, and has invited a return visit when she has gone through a full winter with her new ASHPs
- The host was very knowledgeable, giving practical advice for each area and reasoned arguments for different options that he had installed. Also had advice on what improvements might be available since his various systems had been installed. The session was perfectly timed. I was able to see all the 'gubbins' in cupboards and outside and discuss how things had been installed and the impact on the house in disruption and redecoration. I learned a lot!
- The owner was extremely technically knowledgeable and communicated well. The fact he was managing 2 very different types of build in a rural area meant he had wide problem solving experience. Whilst his property is of a completely different scale and purpose to mine, he had lots of information to impart. Purchase an EV and home charger, install solar PV and air source heat pump. These were already planned but the visit confirmed many of the benefits and was reassuring about some of our concerns giving a greater sense of certainty.
- I already have solar panels, batteries, solar thermal and an electric car but was at a loss how to approach getting a heat pump. Colin gave me a stack of information which I am now acting on and hope to have a heat pump installed soon

A further innovation is that most of the hosts have agreed to show people round, by appointment, throughout the year. Householders often approach us for advice on improving their home, and asking them to wait until next September is not helpful. The website www.dorsetcan.org/greener_homes identifies which homes are open and how to contact them.

Feeding Dorset Partnership Latest to Join the UK's Biggest Growing Movement for Food Systems Change



Help and Kindness and Dorset Climate Action Network are equally delighted to announce that the Feeding Dorset Partnership has been welcomed into the network of Sustainable Food Places across the UK

Feeding Dorset Partnership Latest to Join the UKs Biggest Growing Movement for Food Systems Change *cont'd*



Discussions about food resilience and food networks in Dorset at the Feeding Dorset Two event in 2023

A huge number of people, groups, and organisations work tirelessly to feed everyone who lives in Dorset. These include people growing food, making food and selling food. It includes those who offer training in skills to grow and cook food or run projects offering affordable and emergency food when its needed. There are also those who advocate and work for more sustainable growing practices and urgent responses to the climate emergency. Others promote a better understanding of nutrition and health through diet. There are those who run networks to support the people in these different areas of work.

It is from lengthy consultation with this network of stakeholders that the desire to become a Sustainable Food Place arose, resulting in the new Feeding Dorset Partnership which applied to join the network in May this year.

“For DorsetCAN, 'Climate Action' means engaging people, campaigning for fairness, putting health and wellbeing first, building resilient communities and restoring nature, in a structured effort to face climate change.

“The fabulous 'Feeding Dorset Partnership' does all of those things and is an exemplar of what we can achieve if we work together. We are thrilled that it has joined the UK-wide Sustainable Food Places network. We will support the Feeding

Dorset Partnership as it evolves and takes us forward as a county into a fair, sustainable and affordable food future.”

Dorset Climate Action Network, July 2024

Through the Feeding Dorset Partnership, we aim to be able to build a better understanding of the scale and scope of this web of food projects, businesses, and networks that exist across Dorset and to identify any gaps in the webs as we move towards a more resilient, sustainable and affordable food future.

We will be using the six areas of focus for a Sustainable Food Place to structure conversations and build connections between people and organisations.

Feeding Dorset Partnership Latest to Join the UKs Biggest Growing Movement for Food Systems Change *cont'd*

They are:

1. Food Governance and Strategy: Taking a strategic and collaborative approach to good food governance and action.
2. Good Food Movement: Building public awareness, active food citizenship and a local good food movement.
3. Healthy Food for all: Tackling food poverty, diet related ill-health and access to affordable healthy food.
4. Sustainable Food Economy: Creating a vibrant, prosperous, and diverse sustainable food economy.
5. Catering and Procurement: Transforming catering and procurement and revitalizing local supply chains.
6. Food for the Planet: Tackling the climate and nature emergency through sustainable food and farming and an end to food waste.

The Partnership is there to support and serve those who are already doing amazing work across Dorset in all these areas and to facilitate and empower them in their activities and ambitions through nurturing greater connections and building awareness.

local supply chains.

The Partnership's role is to adapt to support the stakeholders and enable people to work together, rather than create new demands. It welcomes involvement as and when people are able to participate, and it respects and champions the great work that is already happening across Dorset.

Help and Kindness will be sharing additional information and resources to support this new Partnership on their website. There you can follow the Partnership's progress and find out how to get involved and add your ideas and input to the discussions and activities that are happening all over the county. You can find the Feeding Dorset Partnership page on the #HelpAndKindness website www.helpandkindness.co.uk/feeding-dorset-partnership.

The Feeding Dorset Partnership is joining the Sustainable Food Places network alongside [Bridport Food Partnership](#) who are now a Sustainable Food Town. We are looking forward to continuing to work closely with them in this joint endeavour.

Collectively, we aim to continue to make healthy and sustainable food a defining characteristic of Dorset and nurture a culture that promotes safe, affordable, accessible, and sustainable local food that supports the environment.

"Food is a fundamental part of our health and wellbeing. It provides essential nourishment, enjoyment, and important opportunities to connect with others. Since the pandemic, we have collaborated with a wide range of partners, and this is a fantastic opportunity to further explore what we can do together for most impact.

"The news that the Feeding Dorset Partnership has joined the Sustainable Food Places Network is truly fantastic. It is a great example of what can be achieved when partners from the public, private, and voluntary and community sectors work together"

Cllr. Ryan Hope, Dorset Council Cabinet
Member for Customer, Culture & Community

DCAN Team Questioned new Dorset Council and Cabinet in July

Public Questions for Cabinet 9 July 2024

DCAN's Questions [to Dorset Council] team on 3 July submitted the following two questions for the council's new LibDem-controlled cabinet meeting on Tuesday 9 July to confirm its commitment to meeting the challenges of the climate and nature crisis.

From Richard Thomas:

Given your public statement following election that you want Dorset Council to work much more closely with town and parish councils, how do you intend to do this and when, and in particular, given that your climate and ecological policy team are now in possession of the Sustainable Shaftesbury Strategy & Action Plan adopted by Shaftesbury Town Council in February 2024, how far are you prepared to take account of ideas and actions suggested by town and parish councils to meet the climate and nature emergency in Dorset and to help them with local project advice, support and funding?

Response from the Leader of the Council and Cabinet member for Governance, Performance, Communications, Environment, Climate Change and Safeguarding

The role of town and parish councils in supporting and showing the requisite leadership required to deliver on the net zero and nature recovery aspirations of Dorset is crucial. Town and parish councils can not only look to reduce their own operational emissions, but they can and do show local leadership through the development of sustainability plans and also through the way that they engage and work within their communities. The issues of climate change and the continual degradation of our natural systems are challenges that require leadership across sectors, and only through working together can we hope to deliver against the aspirations we have for Dorset to be a leader in sustainability that works symbiotically with the wider social and economic changes that are required. Since declaring a climate emergency in 2019, the council has worked closely with the Dorset Association of Parish and Town Councils to provide advice and guidance to town and parish councils through webinars, guidance, technical and grant support from our Low Carbon Dorset programme and Charging Ahead programmes – and we are keen to encourage their participation in newer opportunities such as the Community Tree Fund.

We have very recently appointed a new officer in our sustainability team with a specific role of engaging with different sectors in Dorset to facilitate an acceleration in activity across the county, and this will include working with town and parish councils as a priority sector and work has already begun to identify how we can best support and also learn from the activity that is clearly evidenced by work such as the Shaftesbury Strategy & Action Plan. We are working closely with the Dorset Association of Parish and Town Councils and other community organisations such as Dorset Climate Action Network to develop a programme of activity over the coming months. This will draw on the excellent work already underway by town and parish councils such as Shaftesbury Town Council in order to share best practice, stimulate action

DCAN Team Questioned new Dorset Council and Cabinet in July cont'd

From Giles Watts, Dorset Deserves Better Campaign (Mike Allen to read out on Giles' behalf)

It is now three years since the previous council published their draft Local Plan for Dorset. The Plan was deeply disappointing and came in for much criticism. Indeed, the former Leader of the council stated that “many residents share my view that the draft Local Plan chases housing numbers rather than prioritises local needs.”

The Dorset Deserves Better campaign was set up to persuade Dorset Council to rethink the Local Plan. For three years, Dorset Council has given no indication how it will respond to public concerns and modify the plan. Instead, we have had 3 years of delay and uncertainty.

Three priorities have emerged:

1. First, the excessive housing numbers proposed would have a damaging impact on Dorset's exceptional natural environment and cultural heritage, green spaces and Green Belt. Excessive numbers are driven by the Standard Method with its 40% “affordability uplift”. In fact, Dorset already has enough planning permissions for 13,000 new houses (10 years' supply at current rates).
2. Secondly, Dorset's real housing crisis is a lack of truly affordable homes for local people, especially for social rent. The existing approach to providing affordable housing, through percentages of commercial (usually greenfield) developments, has failed to address the problem. A new approach and plan are needed.
3. Thirdly, there is little connection between planning policy and the climate and ecological emergencies declared by Dorset Council. Developments are planned on the edge of towns with little or no public transport and insufficient infrastructure. Houses are built to lower levels of insulation than will be required in future; solar panels are not installed; houses are still built with gas central heating. All this will need expensive retrofitting in a few years' time.

So, my question is: are you willing and minded to withdraw the existing, inadequate draft Local Plan which is a source of anguish and concern to so many residents? Instead, will you commit to produce a fresh, new Dorset Local Plan and to involve local people throughout this process?

Response from the Cabinet Member for Planning and Emergency Planning

Dorset Council has clearly stated its commitment to prepare a new-style local plan under the proposed national reforms to the plan-making system, and the key stages and likely timescales are set out in the Local Development Scheme for Dorset Council which was adopted in March 2024. The emerging draft local plan that was previously the subject of consultation had not reached an advanced stage and

Dorset Council had neither formally published, nor submitted, its plan prior to committing to the new-style local plan. Nevertheless, any evidence that was gathered which remains relevant, together with the representations that we received from the extensive consultation and engagement on the previous draft plan consultation, will be available for Dorset Council to assess and consider as it progresses with its preparation of a new-style local plan.

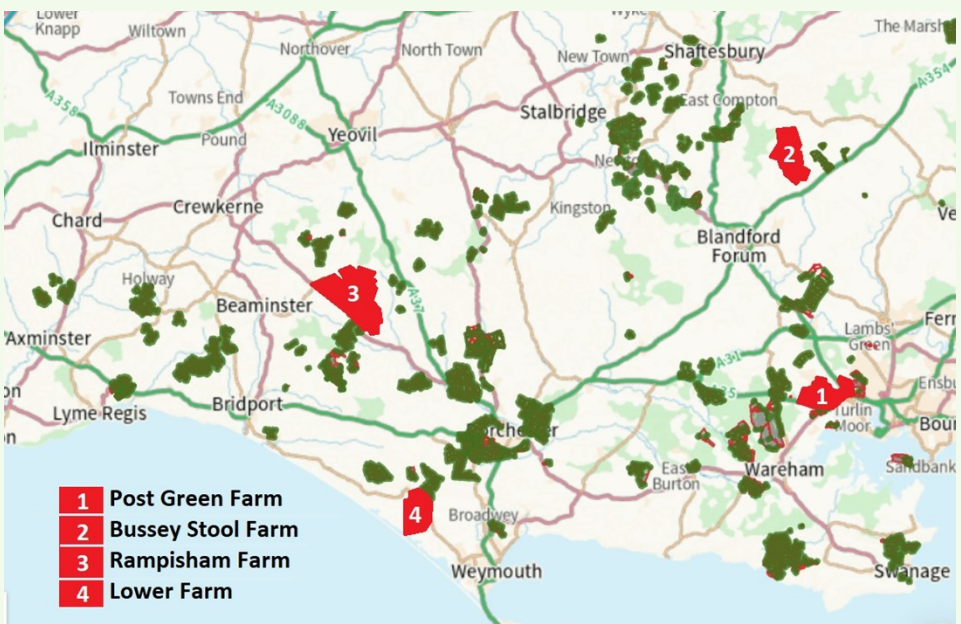
The Great Big Dorset Hedge / Project Update

Energised Volunteers

We have almost reached the point where 100 volunteers have done three or more surveys, and over half of the ones that have done three have done ten or more! There is so much enthusiasm and commitment out there, it is so very encouraging. Among our volunteers, we also have 15 superbly reliable data entry specialists who can upload the survey data and/or the maps and several of them are happy to upload surveys for others which is just excellent and enables us to continue our growth trajectory.

Energised Farmers

More participating farms are emerging all the time. We have 75 farmers participating in the project currently (including three from Devon!). Many are relatively small, and you may remember the story of Gorwell Farm where we planted 500 hedge plants in the space of a morning a few months ago for farmer Simon Pengelly. That was a gap-filling exercise in a hedge that had been laid last winter following the surveys we had undertaken in the previous year. The improvement in that hedgerow is assured. I want to restate just how certain I am that we have found the most effective way to improve the condition and to increase the extent of hedgerows all over Dorset. I have four examples of quite large farms who are at different stages of their GBDH journey to help convey the message. The green patches on the map show the 75 farms involved currently but the red patches are my four big farm examples.



First, and deepest into her GBDH journey is Clare Lees of Post Green Farm, Lytchett Minster. Clare was introduced to me by George Hosford (former NFU Chairman for Dorset) nearly a year ago when I asked him to find me a progressive farmer in the Southeast of the county. A mammoth effort from the local volunteers subsequently surveyed over **40 km** of hedgerows at Post Green Farm and now Clare has confirmed that 1.1 km of new hedgerows will be planted in the coming season PLUS 0.7 km of gap filling on top of that.

The Great Big Dorset Hedge / Project Update *cont'd*

All of it is being driven by our survey report and all of it is funded by the Sustainable Farming Incentive. Clare is now looking forward to the prospect of many of our volunteers coming back onto the farm during the planting season to get those hedge plants in the ground.

Another introduction via George Hosford was Jim Farquarson of Bussey Stool Farm, Tarrant Gunville. We met at a free-tree-collection event organised by the Woodland Trust in March this year at George's farm in Durweston. Without hesitation, Jim invited us to get started and we covered 5 km in the first morning deploying three survey crews concurrently on May 1st. We found that Jim has **30 km** of hedgerows and surveying was concluded in August.

Attending a Dorset Council farmer engagement event, we were able to network with the farmers and secure the involvement of several of them. Among them was estate manager, Gareth Beynon of Rampisham Farm. Gareth has **50 km** of hedges, and we also completed his farm in August.

Finally, Jane Elwood-Mayo of Lower Farm, Langton Herring had hosted a farm cluster event, organised by Dorset Wildlife Trust in April 2023, where I was able to present GBDH alongside the one and only Nigel Adams and in due course Jane invited us to survey her hedges. We are done and we have surveyed **20 km** at Lower Farm.

All four of these farmers are contributing financially to the Dorset CAN coffers to see their hedgerows surveyed and to sustain an ongoing relationship with us. All of them aspire to see their hedgerows improved. These examples are just the beginning of something really positive arising from the efforts of so many GBDH volunteers all over the county and even beyond Dorset.

To see the volunteers' perspective watch our short video:

https://youtu.be/P-qGoGxL_Qs?feature=shared

If you feel inspired to join the project in any capacity, please do sign up here:

<https://tinyurl.com/VolunteerGBDH>

*John Calder,
GBDH Project Manager*

Dates for Your Diary:

Purbeck Festival 20th –22nd September
Sustainable Fashion Week 20th—29th September
Lyme Low Carbon Exhibition 23rd—29th September
Dorset Greener Homes 21st & 22nd September
DCAN Barn Dance and Strategy Day 25th October
Six Inches of Soil Film at Bournemouth University 27th October
Dorset COP 2nd November
Food Open Event Zoom Late November/Early December—watch for details