

1. RETROFIT PROJECT

This component is designed to kick-start the much-needed retrofit revolution in our area. Our goal is to motivate and support homeowners to upgrade their properties to modern EPC standards utilising the latest insulation and heating techniques.

Main achievements:

- We produced a compelling short film “How Green is My Street?” showing which streets in town have the best and worst EPC energy ratings, using drone footage to tell the story and underline how many homes are rated D or worse.
- We created two short videos explaining the benefits of heat pumps and how, using a heat pump alongside other measures, you can create a zero carbon home.
- We expanded the Homes and Energy section of the website, with new material on home insulation, heat pumps, where to go for grants and professional advice, and info on the Solar Together scheme.
- We used a vintage dolls house, “Green Gables”, as a tool to get people talking about home retrofit at the Farmers Market and Repair Café. Over a period of months, we are adding retrofit measures to upgrade it from a leaky shell to a modern home.



Challenges faced/lessons learned:

Our plans to reach out and engage with people face-to-face were curtailed by lockdown. We have made the most of the opportunities we’ve had, but have had to be creative and focus on online communication channels more than anticipated. We’ve learned how difficult it is to get people to focus on the mundane, and sometimes quite technical, topic of how to make home energy improvements, especially during a pandemic.

The demise of the Green Homes Grant and ending of the Warmer Sussex project were both blows, and have slowed the uptake of retrofit measures. But with rapidly rising energy prices, greater awareness of climate issues after COP26, and a new government grant scheme on the horizon, the prospects for retrofit uptake are more promising in the years ahead.

2. CREATING A LOCAL NATURE MAP

Our long-term aim is to bring people together to create a more biodiverse, species rich environment which will help our wildlife thrive and survive into the future and enrich the lives of those who live here. As a first step, we worked with the community to map what species and habitats we have in our area. There were two elements to this: a Garden Nature Survey, and a wider Habitat Survey.

Main achievements:

- Our [Garden Wildlife Survey](#) got over 300 responses. Families were asked what wild birds, insects and animals they see in their garden, and how wildlife friendly their garden is. The results provide a fascinating snapshot of the back gardens or the area – including where hedgehogs are seen and who's got a pond. Since then over 270 people have signed up for our monthly newsletter giving practical wildlife gardening tips.
- After training sessions led by Tony Whitbread, President of Sussex Wildlife Trust, a team of volunteers has completed a '[Phase 1 Habitat Survey](#)' of the area around Steyning, Bramber and Beeding. We now have a much better picture of our local landscape and where the biodiversity hot spots are. The field data has been transferred to a GIS mapping system, and we are at the stage of figuring out how best to publicise and use the data.



Challenges faced/lessons learned:

Though lockdown delayed the start of the Habitat Survey, both these projects have created valuable data and a series of maps that can be used for educational and research purposes. Perhaps more importantly, they have provided a way of starting a conversation with local residents and landowners on what we could be doing differently in future. We now have a constituency of interested and motivated wildlife watchers, as well as much better links with local farmers.

In the process we have established good relationships with key partners including the South Downs National Park, the Sussex Wildlife Trust, the Wilder Horsham Project, and the Knepp Estate. These will be important in future as we map out the next steps.

3. REPAIR CAFÉ

We wanted to emulate the success of other nearby towns in setting up a regular Repair Café where people can bring household items to be repaired by volunteers, rather than throwing them away.

Main achievements:

- The new [BN44 Repair Café](#) was launched in August 2021 at Beeding & Bramber Village Hall. It has been a huge success and has attracted scores of local people many of whom have never attended green events before. An enthusiastic and skilled team of 25 volunteer repairers have been recruited, and we've fixed well over 100 items already, and sharpened nearly 300 pairs of secateurs, shears and other items. It has its own [Facebook Group](#) with over 230 members already.



Challenges faced/lessons learned:

The Repair Café launch was delayed by lockdown, so ran 'virtually' for the first half of the year with items being dropped off and returned once fixed. This allowed the repairer team to hone their skills before the first face-to-face event in August. As we'd hoped, the Repair Café has proved to be a popular new community focal point, playing a valuable social function in providing a friendly place to meet up over a cup of tea and a cake, as well as saving many items from the junk heap. The HDC grant covered the significant up-front costs of setting up the Repair Café. Now it is up and running, donations received should more than cover routine running costs. So the event looks like being financially sustainable in the longer term, as well as being a very useful shop window for other Greening Steyning projects.

4. ACTIVE TRAVEL SURVEY

The goal of this component in the project was to shift transport patterns away from a reliance on cars towards more sustainable options, and in particular more active travel – by bike, e-bike and foot. The original plan was to conduct an Active Travel Survey to get people talking about how they get about and start nudging them towards changing their own behaviour.

Plans stepped up a whole gear in late 2020 when Greening Steyning was asked to join a multi-stakeholder Working Group set up by Steyning Parish Council to look into the idea of creating a 20mph zone in Steyning. This includes representatives from Parish, District and County Councils as well as local business and community groups.

Main achievements:

- Greening Steyning played a leading part in the 20mph Working Party. We helped design and run a detailed survey which as well as asking for views on the 20mph zone, asked questions on a range of sustainable transport options including EVs, public transport, and walking & cycling. We ran a [20's Plenty campaign](#) to back the idea. The survey received over 1500 responses and showed 2 to 1 support in favour the idea of a 20mph zone. On the basis of this a



Community Highways Fund application has been made to WSCC, which we understand has been approved to go forward to the design stage in 2022.

- In August we organised an e-bike demo offering people the chance to try out a range of e-bikes on a quiet lane nearby. The group of enthusiastic owners who lent their bikes proved to be eloquent advocates for this new mode of transport.



Challenges faced/lessons learned:

The creation of the 20mph Working Party was lucky timing for Greening Steyning. But it allowed us to greatly multiply our impact. Being able to join a multi-stakeholder action group gave us much more influence and allowed us to engage directly with key players at the County Council level, something that would have been much more difficult as a stand-alone green group. There is now a good prospect that the whole of Steyning and Bramber will become a 20mph zone within the next year or two, something that would have been very hard to achieve on our own.

The connections made will be valuable in future too, given that most transport measures require support and backing from the council and others. Greening Steyning has been invited to join a new multi-stakeholder Sustainable Transport Group set up by Steyning & District Community Partnership. This is looking into a range of transport improvements, including upgraded footpaths and cycle ways, and installing better bike racks across the town. We feel the foundations have been laid for some productive collaborations in future.

5. SCHOOLS ENGAGEMENT FUND

Engaging with local schools is a key tactic for the 2030 Project. To help unlock the creativity and potential of local schools in championing green agendas, we included an allowance of £1000 in the budget for a Schools Engagement Fund. This allowed us to offer small grants to local schools to help them get their initiatives off the ground.

This offer was well received by each of the three local schools. Progress was held up, however, by the very difficult Covid situation schools have had to deal with over the past year, which has meant that attention, particularly among key staff members, has been elsewhere. Despite this, all three schools were able to put together mini-proposals for school projects before the end of they year, and the grants have now been paid, with work expected to be completed by the end of March 2022.

Main achievements:

- **Steyning Grammar School:** a grant of £500 has been provided to the school's Eco Council group for a package of activities covering all five of their Topic Areas: biodiversity, energy, litter, waste, and marine. We have also taken on four SGS volunteers as part of their Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme community assignment. They are providing hands-on assistance



at the Farmers Market and Repair Café, and are helping with publicity amongst their peers for events like the November 2021 Climate March.

- **Steyning Primary School:** a grant of £250 has been provided to support free after-school sessions for children to teach them about gardening and share the mental health benefits of planting and looking after fruit, vegetables and plants, and in turn show how this can all help with climate change and increase biodiversity.
- **Upper Beeding Primary School:** a £250 grant has been provided to create an outdoor place for wildlife & nature created by the children – with bug hotels, seating and wildflowers - where children can take part in outdoor nature activities such as bug hunts, and art and literacy activities.



Challenges faced/lessons learned:

We have taken the lead from our school contacts in setting the pace and direction of this part of the project, but it was encouraging to see all three schools being able to prepare proposals by the end of the year. Our flexible approach has been appreciated, and the small amounts of funding we've been able to offer will be invaluable given the pressure on resources as schools. We hope to build on these partnerships in the years ahead.

6. FINANCIAL REPORT

A breakdown of actual income and expenditure on the project is presented below, alongside figures from the original budget. The overall expenditure was close to the original budget, though the split between project elements varied slightly. This was chiefly a result of having to adapt to lockdown, which meant that more activities were carried out online than expected. This meant there was additional expenditure on Zoom and other licences, as well as on design and editorial input. However, we were able to cut some other costs by relying on volunteers input for some tasks (e.g. video editing).

We were successful in raising donations and exceeded the target of 20% match funding.

GREENING STEYNING 2030 PROJECT BUDGET

Expenditure	Details	Budget	Actual
Public engagement	<i>Zoom licence, Farmers Market stall, venue hire, banner, posters & display materials, design and comms input</i>	1,050	2,423
Retrofit project	<i>Leaflets & posters (dolls house costs minimal as work done by volunteers)</i>	1,320	66
Repair Café	<i>Venue hire, allowance for toolkit and set up costs, signs & banners, consumables</i>	1,300	1,560
Nature Survey	<i>Maps, materials for bird boxes etc., flyers, posters & banners.</i>	770	669
Transport Survey	<i>Flyers, posters & banners, Survey Monkey licence</i>	570	863
Schools Engagement	<i>Funds for eco projects put forward by local schools and youth groups</i>	1,000	1,000
Safeguarding training	<i>Not needed yet as face-to-face events limited</i>	240	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		6,250	6,581
Income			
HDC Community Climate Grant		5,000	5,000
Match funding	<i>Repair café donations, ticket sales at events, other donations</i>	1,250 20%	1,581 24%
TOTAL INCOME		6,250	6,581

January 2022