

# Greening Meonstoke, Exton & Corhampton

The Greening Campaign is a Community Interest Company which started to work with communities in 2007 and has gathered learning throughout that time. 5 years ago communities in Hampshire were asked what would really help them tackle different aspects of climate change to make a difference and their request was for 'funded support from expert organisations' so they could make good decisions based on professional knowledge – thus, the Greening Campaign 'handrail' was born.

2 years ago the Lottery supported the Greening Campaign to pay for the funded advice for 20 communities across Hampshire and Meonstoke, Exton & Corhampton was named as one of those chosen to receive support. Locally other communities chosen were Droxford, Bishops Waltham, and Shedfield.

The handrail is essentially blueprints for activities backed by expert advice and it covers 5 areas for action:

- Space for Nature
- Cycle of the Seed
- Waste Prevention
- Energy Efficient Warmer Homes
- Health Impacts of Climate Change

Greening Meonstoke, Exton and Corehampton have now become an unincorporated association with the members being those on the mailing list.

## **An update on where we are in October 2025**

### **Nature Networks** (Space for Nature) –

We decided that we had 3 valuable assets for nature already in the area – the Nature Reserves and so the areas connecting them should be our focal point. To do this properly we needed to map the area to learn what we had to support nature, and highlight what was missing. We decided to focus on hedgerows as a starting point. Over the summer a group of residents hit the footpaths and bridleways armed with mini maps on which to record their findings, and a clever coding system. The level of detail that returned was wonderfully intricate and exact and is a credit to all those that took time to take part. This is now being transferred onto an electronic master map.

The autumn and winter activities will now focus on 3 areas where there are significant opportunities to make a difference to nature and permissions are being sought by landowners. Once we have the areas formally agreed, we will ask the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust to visit the villages and provide advice for best action. This means it is not long before we need to grab our boots, shovels and gloves, along with some native young trees and get out repairing the hedgerows. All hands on deck please once the whistle sounds for support.

To take part, please either join the mailing list, or the Nature Whatsapp group (to receive more immediate information) by contacting [TerenaPlowright@gmail.com](mailto:TerenaPlowright@gmail.com) (state your phone number if you want to join the Whatsapp group please).

### **Cycle of the Seed**

Our villages were extremely fortunate to have been given the opportunity to trial a new initiative with the national charity Garden Organic. Garden Organic have the national Heritage Seed Bank and every 5 years the seeds need replacing because they get old. We were given the responsibility to hold two such sets of seeds the Brighstone Bean and the Tutankhamun Pea – both have wonderful backstories.

Brighstone Bean was discovered on a shipwreck just off the Isle of Wight. The story goes that the bean came from a wreck before 1900 and local gardeners grew it on their allotments for generations. Vigorous plants produce lilac flowers followed by long green pods, mottled with dark purple. A true slice of treasure.

Tutankhamun Pea was gifted to the Heritage Seed Bank by Highclere Castle which is owned by Lord Carnarvon, who in 1922 (with Howard Carter) discovered the tomb of Tutankhamun. Peas were allegedly found in the tomb from which ours are descendants, grown in the gardens of Highclere since by their dedicated team.

Residents from our villages were given some of these precious seeds and took on the challenge of growing a new batch for future generations. We had to record soil type, height above sea level, and a host of observations to be returned with our precious cargo 'recorded delivery'. We lost a few peas to enthusiastic young folk who simply ate them off the plant without being aware of their importance! And we did have a few in the name of science – absolutely wonderful in taste! In total our community saved 1,500 quality Tutankhamun Pea seeds and 70 Brighstone Beans seeds which have been put into special storage in Coventry.

We are preparing to take part again next spring so all those interested should get in touch with Terena and she will pass your details to Annabel who is coordinating the group.

*Talk on Heritage Seeds* and food security at the Garden Club event on 12<sup>th</sup> March will also have some seeds available

### **Energy Efficient Warmer Homes**

The season has just started for this activity. We have been loaned two thermal imaging cameras which look much like a mobile phone. However, when these cameras are used, instead of showing reflected light in the image, they show thermal heat. Thus, when an image is taken of a home in cold weather, it shows places where your heating is leaking out and how much of it. Basically all heat leaving the house shows as bright red. Once the temperature early evening drops below 8 degrees (we need a difference of 10 degrees outside to inside the house) we will start imaging properties. Exton will be imaged before Christmas and everyone else after Christmas.

- 1) If you would like to help with this activity and be trained in thermal camera use please get in touch – maybe just do your road!
- 2) If you would like your property thermal imaged, please get in touch – it is free!

We are also organising two events

- Energy Efficient Warmer Homes – how to get free support to understand what you can do to insulate your home. How to get grants. What is happening in the energy sector. Different renewable energy and how it works.
- Future Landscapes – discussion about opportunities to generate and own our own energy.

Dates to be confirmed.

### **Waste Prevention**

Two people are listed to be trained as waste prevention advisors.

Discussions are taking place with Greening Titchfield and Lee on Solent Repair Café. If we become part of their network we can share tools and insurance costs.

Food Waste – we also want to focus on food waste which will support the introduction of the new food caddy system being introduced by the County Council.

### **Health Impacts of Climate Change**

Supported by the Public Health team at Hampshire County Council we have been making sure people understand how to protect vulnerable people in heat, how to recognise tick bites are dangerous, and how air pollution increases when the air temperature increases.