



## Chairperson's Report 2023

**This report covers the period from 1<sup>st</sup> December 2021 to 18<sup>th</sup> May 2023**

First of all apologies because we are a few months behind with our AGM date, which should be held within 15 months of the last one according to the Constitution.

We currently have 30 members on our mailing list and 47 people who wish to be informed of our activities. However, our Sustainable Dawlish events are planned and organised by a small core group of mainly 5/6 people, with other members supporting according to their interest. We really do appreciate everyone's time and input and would like to encourage more members to become actively involved.

Our meetings are held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month, upstairs at the Teignmouth Inn, Dawlish and all members are welcome to attend. We also hold zoom meetings from time to time when meeting up is impractical.

We really do appreciate your time and input and would like to encourage more members to become actively involved.

We would like to thank everyone who has volunteered at our events within the last year or so, and are very grateful for the continued support of Dawlish Town Council, Projects Officer: Angie Weatherhead, and Teignbridge Councillors: Alison Foden, Linda Petherick, John Petherick, Gary Taylor, and Martin Wrigley (also our Devon County Councillor), who have all helped us with funding and practical help.

Special thanks also go to Pete Brader for his sterling help with the preparation for the Walking Festival and to Lynne Nicholls who has alerted us to Planning applications, which would be detrimental to the future of our Dawlish environment.

In 2019, Friends of the Earth set some environmental challenges (bold) for improvement across the UK and in Teignbridge they identified the following actions were needed in order to avert the climate crisis:

**To increase the number of well insulated Teignbridge homes from 30% to all homes by 2030 and achieve much improved renewable energy generation- from 43 megawatts at present.**

With the rise in energy prices looming, I organised a **Home Energy Saving Forum, at The Strand Centre on March 12<sup>th</sup>**. This free event provided specialist information about insulation, green energy generation, retrofit, boiler upgrades, EPCs and Community Energy Support.

We estimated that we had over 60 people drop in for free Energy advice. Among them were some people who were really struggling already - even before April when the energy price cap was due to rise by 50%. Devon Communities Together who help people in fuel poverty were pleased to have 7 contacts to follow up. As a result, Exeter Community Energy have been holding regular free drop in Energy Advice sessions at The Strand Centre.

**Increase the amount of household waste that is reused, recycled or composted to 70% by 2025. The rate in 2020 was 56%. Teignbridge set itself a target of 61% from 2021.**

At the Dawlish Lawn **'Turn the Tide Event 2022'** we focused on how everyone can Recycle, Reuse and Reduce. Our stand highlighted the extent of the recycling facilities available at the kerbside and where other items can be recycled around Dawlish or deposited with local organisations for Terracycle recycling. We also displayed a range of non plastic green products available from Poppadums, and distributed Alison Foden's Recycling information list.

**Double the tree cover within Teignbridge by 2030 and sooner if possible.** In 2019, Teignbridge had only 20% tree coverage compared with other local Government districts since much has been lost to house building since 2000.

We have been surveying neighbourhood areas to identify suitable sites for tree planting in liaison with Teignbridge District Council Environmental Planners and ACT Wildlife Warden, Dave Hutton.

In March 2023, we helped Dawlish Water Rotary Club, who were planting 150 trees to provide a wildlife corridor at the Dawlish Cemetery. Planting trees is important to make Dawlish more resilient in the face of Climate Change so we are also pleased to hear that three new specimen trees have been planted on Dawlish Lawn.

**Increase the number of journeys using public transport from 19% to 40% by 2030 with much more walking and cycling needed.**

I contributed to the Dawlish Urban Renewal Strategy facilitated by Devon County Council and ensured that the contribution of each project to net zero was identified.

One of the project's aims is: To Improve accessibility, transport, and parking, with a variety of eco travel options including electric vehicles (EVs) and bikes:

Identified solutions for possible future implementation in Dawlish are to find an accessible route into the Town Centre for the Exe Estuary Trail; provide a revitalised map of cycling and walking routes, and publicise these, along with improved signage; provision of more EV charging infrastructure in public car parks; electric bike hire and Co Cars (Hireable EV's) in the Town Centre and NE Dawlish; a Ferry taxi between Teignmouth, Dawlish and Exmouth; a park and ride area for Dawlish and Teignmouth, implementation of the Teign Estuary Trail plans and extending the cycle route from Dawlish Town Centre through to Teignmouth to link both Trails.

(We are also aware of the importance of the Lawn area to Dawlish and to provide an improved Bandstand for Community Events, and so contributed to a working party to further this locally significant project).

Once more, in 2022, Sue Brader worked hard on the successful organisation of the Dawlish Walking Festival, which took place from Sept 24th to October 2nd, 2022 to coincide with The Great Big Green Week.

We had 401 walkers despite having to cancel two walks due to adverse weather conditions.

We are very grateful to our sponsor Oakcliff Holiday Park and to all the walk leaders and local groups who volunteered to lead the walks. We have had a lot of positive feedback by email and verbally. One repeated feedback is from people new to the area who found the walks an excellent way to get to know the area and local people.

We distributed 2500 programmes and there were 703 downloads of the programme

A big thankyou goes to Sue and Angie.

**More Actions undertaken by Sustainable Dawlish members to reduce energy use, reduce food miles, and protect nature.**

David Bailey has been working hard behind the scenes to liaise with organic food stall holders to encourage them to sell their produce at the proposed Dawlish Farmer's Market which will take place inside The Strand Centre with the support of Paul Lentle. An indoor event is preferred as it is not affected by the weather and easier to organise without TDC costs and regulations for using The Lawn. The Strand Centre has a cafe and attracts passing trade. We are almost there!

We responded to the **consultation on the Teignbridge Part 3 Local Plan** regarding the siting of Wind Turbines raising objections to some sites due to proximity to Wildlife, and other sites of ecological sensitivity.

We publicised the efforts of a local resident who is an expert on Swifts to help find suitable sites for nest boxes, to try and increase their numbers as they are on the BTO Red list as a bird of conservation concern. Most people don't realise that they have nesting swifts in their houses as they are very clean and quiet whilst brooding.

Sustainable Dawlish members attended a Community Talk – 'How we tackle climate change and get involved in creating a healthier and safer future for everyone' organised by the local XR group, in April 2023.

Later in April, we held a **Clothes Swap in the Council Chamber of The Manor House, Dawlish in April 2023**. We were pleased to be supported by the Devon Reuse Fund for our PLI, Venue hire, and publicity costs and organised an equipment loan from ReCycle Devon so we could offer free participation.

It is estimated that we only wear a third of the clothing we own, and this is an excellent way to save money and to remove the manufacturing footprint of buying new, plus saving the energy incurred through distribution and sale.

We worked in partnership with Dawlish Fair Trade Friends, who provided some delicious refreshments and any clothing not collected was donated to the Strand Centre for their give away rail. Although the Clothes Swap was not as well attended as we would have liked, we received some very good feedback and we hope to hold another one in a more central location for the Autumn Winter season, and perhaps work in partnership with the Dawlish organisers of the monthly children's clothes swap events.

Most recently on Volunteering Day of the Coronation Weekend, we attended the **Refresher's Fayre** on Dawlish Lawn to promote the work of Sustainable Dawlish, and were pleased to be able to add 15 more people to our mailing list. We hope to see them again at a future Sustainable Dawlish Meeting or Event.

Thank you again to everyone who has helped and supported us during 2022-2023,

Carolyn Ballard, May 2023