



Sustainability & the environment

Most people are aware that the environment is a very broad subject that has echoes in many other issues – our countryside and ecology; transport; waste management; energy efficiency; and climate change. Because it is so broad it can be daunting, and there's a tendency to regard it as something to put to one side because, as individuals, we don't have the power to influence or improve it.

However because it is such a big subject which will influence the way our lives - and those of our children and grandchildren - are led in future, it's too important to ignore. Many communities throughout the country have taken on the challenge of creating a better environment, both at the local and more national scale, by planning for carbon neutral villages and towns. Church Stretton's Climate Care initiative is an example of this.

Could Bayston Hill follow this example, and if so, what particular issues do you think would be worth exploring to make the village a more environmentally friendly place?

- **Energy Efficiency:** This is potentially a win/win situation, since making our energy use more efficient not only reduces our carbon footprint, but also reduces our energy bills. There are already a lot of houses in Bayston Hill with solar panels, and Christ Church has 126 of them on its roof! But there is scope for much more: what would you feel about a solar farm on the edge of the village for example, or one or two wind turbines to generate electricity locally? Should new housing development be designed to be highly energy efficient – the design and technology already exists to build houses that have zero heating bills. Would you be prepared to be part of a scheme that offered high standard retro fitting of insulation to your home?

- **Transport:** This will be considered in more detail in a separate paper, but while most of us still drive petrol and diesel cars we have a dramatic effect on both carbon dioxide output as well as particulate pollution leading to poorer air quality. Bayston Hill is in effect a suburb of Shrewsbury, and a centre for commuting to Shrewsbury and further afield, so a car is deemed essential. But could we make changes to the way we travel to reduce our climate impact, for example by walking and cycling more; or by taking the bus if the service could be expanded and improved? Would you be prepared to be part of a car pool or cycle hire scheme? What improvements would you like to see that would help you reduce the impact that your transport methods currently have on the environment?
- **Wildlife and Ecology:** While our landscape is still attractive, we know that beneath the superficial picture there have been massive changes and declines in plant and animal life, and the richness of our countryside is continuing to erode. There are many reasons for this, and a Community Led Plan is not going to put things right by itself. However, you may feel that there are initiatives which the community in Bayston Hill could press for to provide local improvements, such as the creation of more community woodland around the village; the establishment of Local Nature Reserves; or better footpath access out into surrounding countryside. These initiatives are not just valuable in themselves, but could help the health and wellbeing of local people, as well as providing opportunities for children to learn about, and help improve, their local places.
- **Waste Disposal:** Bayston Hill is fortunate in having a comprehensive waste collection and disposal system which has greatly reduced the amount of waste that goes to landfill. About 80% (?) is now reused and recycled. However, issues such as fly tipping around the edge of the village can sometimes arise. Is this a problem, and are there other matters that you feel could be improved to provide a more sustainable waste service?

This is a very brief snapshot of a huge subject, but one which is too important to ignore – even in small communities like Bayston Hill. Please let us know if these issues are important to you, or if there are others under this heading that we have missed out.

Have a think and let us know your thoughts!

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Or write to CLP, c/o the Parish Office

www.baystonhillcommunityplan.org.uk