

Ways to Protect the Environment



Date	Monday 25 November 2024	Time	3-4pm
Attendees	Hannah Worthington (BATS), Jacqui Warren (Torbay Council), Sarah O'Connor (Ellacombe Community Partnership), Tanny Stobart (Play Torbay), Davina Luther (Torbay Communities), Lisa M, Jo M, Rebekah D		

Agenda
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates and developments from partners • Life after CAF • People's Parkfield update
Summary

Updates and developments from partners

Hannah Worthington:

- This weekend's farm visit was canceled due to the weather, but efforts continue to organise activities for the coming weeks. They are working with farmers on hedgerow surveys.
- Work being done to build knowledge around Wildlife monitoring apps and resources, with the aim of supporting others in using these tools.
- Last weeks Connect Cafe focused on exploring some of these apps like iNaturalist and Merlin Bird. Hannah offered this out to the group, if of interest, within their own community groups or on the farm.
- Had discussions with Tanny and James at Play Torbay, coordinating with James to plan future activities, including potential in-house sessions at Indigo's.
- There are slots available for secondary-age youth groups for farm visits before the end of the year. Hannah encouraged people to reach out.
- Lisa suggested Hannah share details about these sessions to share with the partnership.

Jacqui Warren:

- Submitted a bid for Sherwell Valley Primary School to replace old boilers with air-source heat pumps as part of the decarbonisation program. Solar developments may be included in future projects via feasibility studies on council estate buildings.
- Similar upgrades have been implemented at Watcombe Nursery and are ongoing at Paignton Library. The goal is to replace aging gas boilers with air-source heat pumps across various sites.

- Progress is being made on collating green skills offerings. Jacqui has connected Jo with South Devon College, where Gareth Parsons is advancing a new low-carbon heating apprenticeship standard. Support is also being developed for current employers in the green skills sector. More updates on the green skills will follow once they've received a definitive list.

Tanny Stobart:

- WildFox secured levelling-up funding to rebuild after antisocial behaviour resulted in the destruction of a shed and compost loo. Progress has been slow due to council processes, but planning permission is now in place, and an architect has been involved. Funds are tight, but the project is moving forward.
- Tanny sought advice on growing living walls to make the new metal container structure greener. She is open to tips or resources, especially from Jacqui or others knowledgeable in this area.
- Play Torbay participated in a carers' event at Paignton Library, where they introduced "eco squishy snowmen" (an adaptation of squishy rabbits) as part of the *How to Be an Eco Champion* initiative. The activity was well-received.

Davina Luther:

- Submitted a joint Sustainable Urban Drainage bid for Sherwell Valley, Watcombe Primary, and Cuthbert Mayne schools to address flooding issues in playgrounds. Awaiting results in the new year.
- **Refugee Youth Group:** Weekly sessions at Parkfield are thriving, with children enjoying and benefiting greatly. **Combe Pafford Green Skills:** Running six-week sessions, with plans to continue after Easter. **Volunteer Group:** Focused on preparing land for next season and creating habitats for winter wildlife. The group is also forming plans for co-delivered activities in the new year. As we preparing land for next season and creating habitats for winter wildlife.
- Exploring partnerships with organizations like the Met Office for STEM workshops, the Seal Project, and coastal conservation efforts in Plymouth. Notably, a seagrass restoration project may involve Parkfield creating a "seagrass letterbox."
- Working to improve the Woodland area at Parkfield to enhance accessibility and ecological value. Plans to organise outdoor events in the meadow while balancing community access and sustainable management.
- Davina is currently developing a Heritage Fund bid to create a trail through the Woodland, tying into the UNESCO Geopark over the road and linking spaces like the beach, green, skate park, and BMX track. The goal is to enhance environmental engagement and provide a safe, appealing area for community use.

Sarah O'Connor:

- Youth activities typically pause from November to December due to weather challenges as an organisation with no indoor space, resuming in January.
- A community gathering is planned for December 7th in the community garden with youth group members and their parents. Activities include carol singing, free mince pies, and non-alcoholic mulled wine, serving as a festive thank-you to those involved in the garden over the summer.
- Youth work in the garden will restart in January.

Updates from Jo

- **CAF Bid Submission:** The bid has been submitted, and it reflects significant collaborative effort, even though the application itself feels modest. The process has been valuable for fostering partnerships and generating ideas for future projects.
- **Timeline for Results:**
 - The first stage decision will take about 10 weeks.
 - If successful, a second-stage application will need to be submitted within six weeks.
 - A final decision would then take an additional four months.
 - The project start date is tentatively set for October 2025.
- **Reflections:** The collaborative process has been enriching, creating a "treasure trove" of ideas for potential future initiatives, regardless of the bid's outcome. No conflicts arose during the process, which was seen as a bonus.

Evaluation

- An internal evaluation of the past year for *Imagine This* is being conducted, focusing on its impact, benefits, challenges, and gaps within the partnership.
- **Methodology:**
 - The evaluation is based on Sarah's Ellacombe Partnership Lottery evaluation, which received positive feedback. This approach is being referred to as the "Ellacombe framework."
 - It will include insights from impact groups, including this particular group, which is viewed as highly successful and collaborative.
- **Feedback Collection:** Jo plans to send out a questionnaire to gather experiential feedback from members about their involvement in this group, its effectiveness, and the influence of major funding bids on collaboration.
- **Goals:**
 - The evaluation aims to maximize impact for the next two years of *Imagine This*.
 - It will also help plan for the project's long-term future beyond the current timeline.

Acorn Centre:

- Work is ongoing with the youth team to revitalise environmental and gardening projects as part of the youth offer. This builds on similar projects in other community centers like Windmill, Great Parks, and People's Parkfield.
- A new CIC formed by the former Love Sport and Love Enterprise youth team, Fuel Youth, is partnering to shape the youth offer at the Acorn Centre.
- There's potential for cross-group collaboration, including with the "More Space to Hang Out" impact group, to rethink youth and play offers across community centres with a fresh perspective.
- The initiative aims to leverage new ideas and partnerships to create a more impactful and cohesive youth offer across centres.

People's Parkfield / Youth Justice Service:

- A new collaboration is being developed between *Imagine This* and the Youth Justice Service through the People's Parkfield steering group.
- The partnership aims to pilot opportunities for young people with community or out-of-court orders, integrating them into meaningful projects.
- Ideas include involving these young people in environmental and outdoor initiatives, such as the Walled Garden development at Parkfield (supported by Taleblazers), or other volunteer

opportunities.

- Jo encouraged the group to identify or propose suitable projects that could accommodate and benefit these young people.
- A meeting with Youth Justice Service managers is planned for the new year to move the initiative forward.

Green Skills Pathway

- There's progress towards creating a joined-up pathway for green skills education, from programs like Trailblazers' environmental leadership course to Level 4 courses at South Devon College, with the goal of making young people aware of these opportunities.
- To ensure these opportunities reach young people, it's important to engage careers advisors, especially through Devon Careers Hub. Meetings with the Hub and the Careers Team are planned to align and formalize these opportunities.
- One of the young people in the One Space group is tasked with researching careers advice offerings in Torbay, and they'll be connected with the relevant contact at Devon Careers Hub (likely Jackie Hobson) to further explore these resources.
- **Next Steps:** There will be continued work on this pathway, including meeting with the Devon Careers Hub, sharing contact details, and aligning with local schools.

Moreover, in regards to Green Careers Pathways, the group discussed the current use by Plymouth University of the former AstraZeneca building in Brixham having a huge link to science. The possible link between pathways and Regenerative Farming, **Jo** mentioned the Apricot Centre would be a great partner in that. **Davina** mentioned that [Earthwatch](#) provides free resources for schools to develop courses and pathways related to green initiatives, climate change officers, and future needs. **Davina** also raised the idea with **Hannah** around taking schools groups on farm visits.

Tanny shared that they are developing an AQA unit focused on Forest School and the environment. This program aims to provide step-by-step skill development for excluded children, home-educated learners, and those with additional needs, helping them transition from school to work. It offers pathways for environmental and practical skills, addressing challenges faced by children with additional needs in preparing for employment. **Davina** added that similar work is being done with Coombe Pafford's sixth form, focusing on opportunities for voluntary roles post-school. She highlighted the Tiny Forest resources she shared, which include curriculum links for both key stages and SEND provision, offering valuable support and ideas for such initiatives.

Sarah mentioned that her colleague Hayley is a qualified Forest Bathing practitioner, a mindfulness practice involving the benefits of nature, particularly negative ions from running water. Hayley works with all age groups and could contribute to Forest School projects with running water. She suggested Hayley's involvement for anyone interested in incorporating this into their projects. **Lisa** responded by suggesting this idea be noted as a potential long-term One Space development opportunity, as it aligns with Jarvis' wellbeing initiatives.

Hannah mentioned multiple initiatives involving farms and education, highlighting the integration of sustainable practices and opportunities for learning:

- **Tree Planting & Silver Pasture:** Some farms are planting trees in meadows to combine grazing with carbon capture. One farm with Highland cattle and "woolly pigs" offers a unique experience, and farm visits may be arranged to explore sustainable agricultural practices.
- **Regenerative Farms & Education:** The Apricot Centre and Bicton College, both linked to regenerative farming, can serve as career and educational pathways for local students, particularly those interested in land-based careers. Paid junior roles (18+) are available, requiring only GCSE-level qualifications in maths and English.
- **School & Community Engagement:** Plans are in place to collaborate with secondary schools, community groups, and organisations like Play Torbay. Students could engage in farm visits, explore environmental issues, and develop projects such as campaigns or fundraising efforts.
- **Expanding Outreach:** The initiative now aims to involve younger students (ages 11+), extending beyond the original plan. Farms with orchards, livestock, and diverse crops, including soil and composting activities, will provide varied learning experiences.
- **Challenges & Opportunities:** The lack of farms in Torbay was noted, emphasising the need for partnerships with nearby farms to showcase different models, including traditional and regenerative approaches.

Lisa wrapped up the meeting by highlighting the value of connections formed within the group and encouraging members to stay in contact outside the meetings. She offered support for anyone uncomfortable reaching out directly, emphasising the importance of collaboration for driving projects forward. **Hannah** also asked Jo to link her with Jarvis to bring a youth perspective to a project with Natural England in East Devon, focusing on well-being, nature, and farming.

Jo plans to send a feedback form to evaluate the group's effectiveness and gather input for future improvements. As this is the last meeting before Christmas, Lisa encourages ongoing communication via email or phone and reassures members that planning for January meetings is underway. She concludes with gratitude for everyone's contributions and well wishes for the holiday season.

Action	Owner
Share info about school age farm visit opportunities to share with the partnership	Hannah
Share contact for Devon Careers Hub with Jo & Liam from One Space via email	Jacqui
Find out what the former AstraZeneca building in Brixham offers career-wise	Tanny
Further conversation about Roselands school group visit to farm	Hannah & Davina
Share info about Natural England with Jo & Jarvis	Hannah