



# **Royston Environmental Group**

## **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting**

**Held on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2024 at 19:30 at the Walmsley Room, The Old Schoolhouse, Market Hill, Royston**

### **Present**

#### **Committee:**

Carol Stanier	Chair
Lynne Beaney	Treasurer and Membership Secretary
Sarah Lewis-Hayes	Secretary
Michael Wright	Website

#### **Other Attendees:**

Chris Lee – Royston Repair Café  
Becca Edwards – North Herts Council  
Fiona Hughes – Green Heat  
Pam Wright  
Paul Evans  
Aline Gendrin  
Anouk Peigne  
Ruth Brown

### **1. Apologies for absence**

Alix Cooper (REG Committee Member - Media and Publicity)

## **2. Reports**

These had been circulated via the group's website and e-mail prior to the meeting.

### **A. Chairman**

CS – Focus has been on Sustain-Ability and it was successful and we had positive footfall. We are looking at how we will run it next year. We have received a lot of support and financial help from Johnson Matthey. Alix has a regular column in The Listing which keeps us visible. We have the Community Garden which runs parallel to REG but it is also Tesco's. It's going well. The main big thing is the Thermal Imaging Camera which we have purchased with money from Johnson Matthey. Only a few of REG are trained to use it to give helpful information and you can see where there is heat leaking from the building. We hope to offer this service to new members and existing members but we wondered if it might incentivise membership. If members would like to do the training and join this process then please let us know. We worked on the Christmas jumper swap this year and the conversations that were held with people were so positive we thought we would run this again. Anyone who would like to support us with this would be very welcome. Cambridge Carbon Footprint have 'environment maps' that they hand out to show anywhere local that supports environmental aims. We are looking at doing this in Royston. Suggestions of places to include would be very welcome.

AP– Has offered to get some training for the thermal imaging camera. MW – suggested that Anouk look at the Cambridge Carbon Footprint website to see if they are still running the training.

### **B. Treasurer.**

LB - The end of our fiscal reporting period is 30/6/23 and our bank account balance was £575. This amount has reduced significantly due to our expenditures. Quite a lot of money has come in from Johnson Matthey. We will spend some money on extra training for the thermal imaging and on Sustain-Ability 2024. If we keep a stable amount of members we might need to request sponsorship for Sustain-Ability or ask Johnson Matthey for more funding.

### **C. Membership Secretary**

LB – The membership stayed stable. Reporting covers the period 1 July 2022 to 31 January 2024. Our last renewal was on 1 April 2023, 4 memberships lapsed. As of 31 Jan, Royston Environmental Group has a total of 20 memberships, of which 7 are new and 13 are memberships which were renewed. Our household memberships represent a total of 35 people. An individual membership costs £10, a household membership is £15.

## **D. Website**

MW – the website does not reflect day to day events but gives more general information about REG. The way the REG has changed is reflected on the website content. For example, we no longer update on the plastic free status. Now we focus more on Sustainability and the groups involved in supporting this.

The website continues to be the repository of information about REG and has developed over its lifetime to reflect the growth of the Group and its changing priorities. A further change of emphasis has seen the reduction in the amount of information held on the site regarding past events. These now concentrate on the most recent and any which may be coming up in the immediate future.

The Sustainability page and the Membership page have had the most visits. There have been a smaller number of visits to the website compared with 2023 but that is because we are sharing information in different ways such as the column in The Listing.

REG will add booking information, costs and who would be eligible for using the Thermal Imaging Camera on to the website in the near future.

## **E. Media and Publicity**

CS – offered to take questions about the report.

FH – asked whether we can get any stats for the Facebook Group to see how many people see and engage with REG posts. Is it a useful way to get information out or not?

CS – need to look at the trends, year on year or month on month to interpret what that means in real terms.

## **3. Amendments to constitution to accommodate new banking arrangements**

LB – HSBC started charging for community accounts and so we moved to Metro bank. The Treasurer and the Chair will be the two members who have full access and all payments go through Treasurer and these can only go through when they have been confirmed by another committee member. We can no longer do three cheque signatories.

CS – asked for any questions or comments

LB – all of the big banks now charge for community accounts.

CS – moved that we accept the amendment and it was seconded by PW. A unanimous vote agreed to pass the motion.

## **4. Discussion of future events**

CS – we are quite a small committee and we are focusing on our core things that we do. The main things we've got going on include the Thermal Imaging Camera and other

people are interested in this scheme although we are not able to do much over the spring and summer.

The Community Garden is established and it is run by a nice group of people and they do use the garden for HomeStart etc. to use it for other things.

The other thing is we would like to do this year is the Map Project. We would like to share information with people that they are going to use again and to highlight the people we are working with who are making Royston greener.

CS - Sustain-Ability 2024: We talked about doing it with the Arts Festival again and someone suggested The Street Food Heroes. So we are looking at working with different events. The organiser of The Street Food Heroes would have to charge us but it's not a huge amount but around £100 per event. He would cover the waste disposal etc. So it would be cheaper if we did it on our own. He offered us the three dates 20<sup>th</sup> April, 22<sup>nd</sup> June 10<sup>th</sup> August 11.00am to 6.00pm. We have traditionally run it later in the year than these dates but CS feels that there would be a way we would get in with it. CS asked for feedback about this possibility for Sustain-Ability. We were hoping to do something for plastic free July too. July and August are not practical due to school holidays.

PW – fed back that having three competing sound systems last year was stressful.

CS – we learned a lot about how the Arts Festival was run and the communication could have been better but now we know we would hope it could go better.

LB – Arts Festival has a large footfall and a positive atmosphere.

CL – Royston Repair felt that the Arts festival worked well in terms of generating contacts.

FH - Layout of the stalls meant that people did not find us.

CS – Something we learnt was that we need to plan a better layout to ensure footfall.

PW – Asked whether there was anywhere we could host Sustain-Ability?

CS – Whilst we just have stalls, it might work better in the park. In the park, people will be walking past so we are getting footfall this way. It sounds as if the general idea is that the park is the best place.

PW – Did the Arts Festival have an appropriate theme for us to join last year?

CS - We could find a hook in and the themes are very broad so we could probably join regardless. No vote on this but it sounds like the majority feel that the Arts Festival is the best way to go.

CS - May Fayre: Run by the town council on the first May Monday bank holiday. They have a few performances and stalls from local organisations. Some stalls are visibility raising. We have booked a stall but we have an issue with the gazebo as ours is too big for the allotted space. We will be looking for volunteers to man the stall at the May Fayre.

CS asked if anyone has a gazebo. FH offered Green Heat Co-ops gazebo which is the right size.

CS – Plastic Free Picnic: We hope to do something in July but we had the plastic free picnic last year in July 2023. We could make it a bigger event and invite non-members. We think it might be better to run it at the Priory Gardens rather than the Heath this time. And Alix suggested we could do a tree audit. We do need to book the park quite soon and

advertise it. As it will be an hour or two hours at most we might not need to have any planning or permits or first aid etc. CS will look into this.

CS - Litter Picking – Keep Britain Tidy 15<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> March: Lots of other groups will be doing this but we will pick a weekend and arrange a litter pick for REG.

CS – Christmas Jumper swap: We felt that a full scale Swish would be too much but the Christmas Jumper Swap (and other Christmas items) worked very well. We could look into doing a more full scale Swish but this would cost us money as we would need a venue. CL suggested that we combine a Swish with a Repair Café and use the facility and the joint publicity. We should talk about dates with a joint Swish with the Repair Café. CL – it is not very local but makes a statement by locating it at the Burns Road area.

PE – Shared that they have just started Sustainable Whaddon and that they are having a stall at the Whaddon fete.

## **5. Thermal Imaging Camera Scheme Launch**

CS – Has already talked briefly about this and asked if anyone has any concerns about this project and the scope of it.

MW – We do not have expertise in this area but we will direct and signpost people to organisations that they could speak to to seek advice about the heat issues with their homes.

CS – We will do it for members with the hope that we will increase our membership. We will not be lending the camera out and only members who have had the training will be allowed to use it to ensure that they get meaningful information.

FH – There is now a group starting called the Cambridge Retro Fit Hub. They arranged the training that is focused on upskilling people in the building trade and potentially people could go on that two day training. They are looking for a fee of £200 per person but they are trying to be social and there might be some flexibility in that. FH talked about this training and how it shows drafts whilst using a Thermal Imaging Camera.

CS – We will encourage other people to get training including possibly people from Johnson Matthey. Perhaps we need to press JM more about providing volunteers as this is what was discussed originally.

MW – Different cameras have different facilities and need to understand the camera and what it capable of to make good use of that particular camera.

CS – Would feel more comfortable visiting a member to test it out as she is still learning how to use the camera. Everyone who has training should do at least two visits whilst the temperature is appropriate.

LB – Perhaps we can put together case studies to show where people can be signposted to.

PE – Do Cambridge Carbon Footprint plan to do a Train the Trainer event?

FH – Could it be upscaled to include a couple or a group of houses?

## **6. Election of officers**

a. Chairman

Nominated by SLH and Seconded by LB

b. Secretary

Nominated by MW and Seconded by CL

c. Treasurer

Nominated by CS and Seconded by PW

d. Publicity

e. Membership

f. Any other officers

Carol, Lynne, Michael, Sarah and Alix wished to continue in their roles if the meeting agreed.

These were nominated and seconded and it was voted that all would continue.

## **7. Any Other Business**

(To be declared at the start of  
the meeting or beforehand to  
the Chair)

No other business.

The meeting closed at 21:00.