



John Wright
Town Clerk

Lyme Regis Town Council
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Environment Committee

Core Membership: Cllr P. May, Cllr S. Cockerell, Cllr N. Hampton-Rumbold, Cllr S. Larcombe, Cllr A. Wood, Cllr M. Denney, Cllr G. Turner, Cllr C. Aldridge, Cllr G. Stammers

Co-Opted Membership: G. Barr, J. Breeze, V. Elcoate.

Notice is given of a meeting of the Environment Committee to be held at the Council Offices, St Michael's Business Centre, Church Street, Lyme Regis on Wednesday 11 March 2026 commencing **on the rise of the extraordinary Full Council meeting** when the following business is proposed to be transacted:

John Wright
Town Clerk
23.04.26

The open and transparent proceedings of Full Council and committee meetings will be audio recorded and recordings will be held for one year by the town council.

If members of the public make a representation to the meeting, they will be deemed to have consented to being audio recorded.

If members of the public have any queries regarding audio recording of meetings, please contact the town clerk.

Members are reminded that in reaching decisions they should take into consideration the town council's decision to declare a climate emergency and ambition to become carbon neutral by 2030 and beyond.

AGENDA

1. Public Forum

Twenty minutes will be made available for public comment and response in relation to items on this agenda

Individuals will be permitted a maximum of three minutes each to address the committee

2. Apologies

To receive and record apologies and reasons for absence

3. Minutes

To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the Environment Committee meeting held on 11 March 2026

4. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

Members are reminded that if they have a disclosable pecuniary interest on their register of interests relating to any item on the agenda they are prevented from participating in any discussion or voting on that matter at the meeting and to do so would amount to a criminal offence. Similarly if you are or become aware of a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter under consideration at this meeting which is not on your register of interests or is in the process of being added to your register you must disclose such interest at this meeting and register it within 28 days.

5. Dispensations

To note the grant of dispensations made by the town clerk in relation to the business of this meeting.

6. Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting held on 11 March 2026

To update members on matters arising from the previous meeting that are not dealt with elsewhere on this agenda and to allow members to seek further information on issues raised within the minutes of the previous meeting.

7. Update Report

To inform members about progress on significant environmental developments

8. Environment Committee – Objectives

To allow members to review progress of the committee's 2025-26 objectives

9. Bathing Water Quality Meeting Minutes

To allow members to receive the minutes from the Bathing Water Quality meeting held on 22 April 2026

10. Co-option

To allow members to consider the co-option of non-members on to the committee

11. Biodiversity Policy – Draft for Consideration

To present a draft Biodiversity Policy for Lyme Regis Town Council, based on a recognised sector template identified by the vice-chairman of the Environment Committee, and to invite members to consider adoption of a Biodiversity Policy and how it should be integrated within the council's existing environmental framework.

12. Action Plan for Achieving Net Carbon Zero Emissions by 2030

To allow members to review the up-to-date and live action plan for achieving net carbon zero emissions by 2030

13. Carbon Literacy Accreditation and Training

To update members on progress relating to Carbon Literacy training within Lyme Regis Town Council, including the current status of Silver Carbon Literate Organisation (CLO) accreditation, staff and councillor participation, and the options, costs, and requirements associated with renewal or upgrade ahead of the accreditation expiry

14. River Lim Action Group Report

To allow members to receive a report from the River Lim Action Group

15. Great Big Dorset Hedge Project – Information Update

To allow members to review a paper submitted by Vicki Elcoate, on behalf of Dorset Climate Action Network (Dorset CAN), regarding the Great Big Dorset Hedge (GBDH) project, and to provide members with background information on the scope of the project and its potential relevance to Lyme Regis.

16. Exempt Business

LYME REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 11 MARCH 2026

Present:

Chairman: Cllr P. May

Members: Cllr C. Aldridge, Cllr P. May, Cllr M. Denney, Cllr G. Stammers, Cllr A. Wood, Cllr G. Turner

Co-opted members: G. Barr, V. Elcoate

Officers: K. Newman (administrative and community engagement assistant), S. O'Connell (operations manager)

Guests: P. Benfield (Turn Lyme Green)

25/56/ENV Public Forum

There were no members of the public who wished to speak.

25/57/ENV Apologies

Cllr N. Hampton-Rumbold – holiday
J. Breeze – illness

25/58/ENV Minutes

Proposed by Cllr G. Stammers and seconded by Cllr P. May, the minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2025 were **ADOPTED**.

25/59/ENV Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were none.

25/60/ENV Dispensations

There were none.

25/61/ENV Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting held on 26 November 2025

Monitoring and Bathing Water Quality Church Beach Notices

Although it was a Dorset Council responsibility to display the notices, it was suggested the town council could contribute financially to an electronic display system.

A member asked for a future agenda item to allow members to consider approving unbudgeted expenditure for the electronic display.

Carbon Literacy

Members who hadn't already done Carbon Literacy training were encouraged to do it now that the operations manager would be accredited to deliver the training.

The operations manager said he has asked for clarification on how many members from the town council needed to be trained in order to remain a carbon literate organisation.

Food security discussion

A member asked this to be flagged as a potential objective for the next financial year.

25/62/ENV Update Report

Garden QR codes and Signs project

The operations manager was concerned QR codes could be easily tapped into for criminal use and that the technology may become obsolete over time. He didn't think it would be achievable to spend the allocated budget within the necessary timeframe and that the objective may need to take a different steer towards something long-term and self-managing.

It was noted the budget would need to be accrued to the next financial year.

25/63/ENV Environment Committee – Objectives

Members noted the report.

25/64/ENV Bathing Water Quality Meeting Minutes

Proposed by Cllr C. Aldridge and seconded by Cllr A. Wood, the minutes from the Bathing Water Quality meeting held on 13 January 2026 were **RECEIVED**.

It was noted there were still no confirmed details or dates for South West Water's Turning the Tide works and it was suggested the council put pressure on them to confirm this.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr G. Turner members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** that officers write to Allan Burrows and Sarah Sharpe at South West Water to ask for an update on their progress of the Turning the Tide works in Lyme Regis, as well as another letter asking for them to engage with officers to minimise impact on the town.

25/65/ENV River Lim Action Group Report

A member asked the operations manager if the external works team would benefit from having a Bactiquick monitor, as mentioned in the report, for events like Big Paddle Out or Lyme Splash.

The operations manager said the team wouldn't have the need for it because it was external organisers that set up the events.

The operations manager was asked if the external works team would be able to assist in pulling up the Himalayan balsam.

The operations manager said the external works team would not be doing the work as it was Magna land but he suggested an external contractor could do the work. It was noted there was £7,000 in the budget to assist with river maintenance, which had not yet been spent.

A member asked for an item on the next agenda to consider this expenditure.

25/66/ENV Bee Friendly Lyme Regis

P. Benfield from Turn Lyme Regis was invited to present a report on the Bee Friendly Lyme Regis initiative. She asked for the council's support to collaborate and publicise the project.

It was suggested this project could work hand in hand with the existing Great Big Dorset Hedge project and that the council could assist with both.

The operations manager said funding would need to be put forward in a budget for this. It was suggested the council could identify areas on town council land for solitary bees.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr M. Denney, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** that the council recognises the importance of bees to local ecology, endorse and support the Bee Friendly Lyme Regis project, and promote its activities through council communication channels.

25/67/ENV Riparian Owners (River Lim) - Stakeholder Briefing Session

It was noted the consultation had a deadline of 30 April 2026 and the council, as a riparian owner, needed to submit a response.

The operations manager said he would ensure a response was submitted.

25/68/ENV Big Paddle Out 2026

Members noted the report.

The meeting closed at 9.25pm.

Committee: Environment

Date: 29 April 2026

Title: Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting held on 11 March 2026

Purpose of Report

To update members on matters arising from the previous meeting that are not dealt with elsewhere on this agenda and to allow members to seek further information on issues raised within the minutes of the previous meeting.

Recommendation

Members note the report and raise any other issues on the minutes of the previous meeting that they require further information on.

25/61/ENV – Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting held on 26 November 2025

Monitoring and Bathing Water Quality Church Beach Notices

Following discussion at the Environment Committee meeting on 11 March 2026, Dorset Council has confirmed the arrangements for bathing water signage at Church Cliff Beach for the 2026 bathing season.

Church Cliff Beach is classified as ‘poor’ bathing water quality by the Environment Agency, meaning the site is formally advised against bathing for the season. Dorset Council has advised that statutory signage, including clearer messaging advising against swimming, will be installed in the coming days in line with regulatory requirements and following agreement with Defra.

Dorset Council has confirmed that once the permanent signage is installed, daily notices will no longer need to be put out, except on the rare occasions where a specific pollution incident arises, in which case temporary updates may still be required.

25/65/ENV –River Lim Action Group Report

Following the discussion at the last Environment Committee regarding assistance with the removal of Himalayan balsam, officers have reviewed the budget position in relation to river maintenance funding. Unfortunately, the funding of £7,000 for river improvement projects available in 2025-26 has not been allocated or committed prior to the 31 March 2026 deadline for the current financial year and is therefore no longer available.

Members should note that any future request to fund or support works associated with Himalayan balsam removal or river maintenance would need to be brought forward to the Strategy and Finance Committee for consideration as an objective as part of the 2027-28 budget-setting process.

25/66/ENV – Bee Friendly Lyme Regis

Articles about Bee Friendly Lyme Regis have been published in the March and May editions of LymeLiving.

25/67/ENV – Riparian Owners (River Lim) - Stakeholder Briefing Session

The operations manager has submitted the Environment Agency Supporting Evidence Survey on behalf of Lyme Regis Town Council, in its capacity as a riparian landowner, following receipt of the Environment Agency's maintenance withdrawal letter relating to low-risk watercourses. The survey submission relates to the council-owned Lepers Well area. This forms part of the Environment Agency's wider evidence-gathering exercise to inform future decisions regarding maintenance funding. Officers will monitor any outcomes arising from this process and provide further updates to members as appropriate.

Sam O'Connell
Operations manager
April 2026

Committee: Environment

Date: 29 April 2026

Title: Update Report

Purpose of the Report

To inform members about progress on significant environmental developments

Report

Updates from Community Organisations

Members of any local community organisations present at the meeting will be asked if they wish to update the committee on their initiatives. A maximum of three minutes will be allowed for each organisation to present to the committee.

Great Big Dorset Hedge Project

The operations manager is currently reviewing the requirements of the Great Big Dorset Hedge project with the operations supervisor. Based on an initial assessment, it is considered unlikely that there is sufficient town council-owned land with the scale or continuity of hedging required to meet the project's minimum survey threshold. This view reflects the limited extent and fragmentation of hedgerows within town council landholdings when measured against the criteria set by the project.

There is a report elsewhere on this agenda with a more detailed updated about the project.

Monmouth Beach – Litter Bin Provision

Members noted that there is currently no litter bin in place at Monmouth Beach. To address this, the operations supervisor will arrange for a litter bin to be relocated and installed in situ, in a suitable location, to ensure it is appropriate and available for beach users. The bin will also be added to the cleansing operative's regular servicing round to ensure it is emptied routinely.

Sam O'Connell
Operations manager
April 2026

Committee: Environment

Date: 29 April 2026

Title: Environment Committee – Objectives

Purpose

To allow members to review progress of the committee's 2025-26 objectives

Recommendation

Members note the report

Background

1. During the 2025-26 budget-setting process, objectives were agreed for the year and a budget estimate identified against each project.
2. At the Full Council meeting on 3 April 2025, the objectives were formally assigned to committees.

Report

3. Members can review progress on the objectives at each meeting.
4. This committee's 2025-26 objectives, along with the allocated budget, completion date and lead officer, are at **appendix 8A**. Updates are highlighted in yellow.
5. Any recommendations from this committee will be considered by the Full Council on 13 May 2026.

Sam O'Connell
Operations manager
April 2026

Objective (RAG Rated) Red: Not Started/Behind Schedule Amber: Started/Action Needed Green: Complete/On schedule	Budget	Lead officer	Committee	Target completion date	Updates/comments
To progress the 2030 carbon net zero plan		SO	Environment	Ongoing	<p>The action plan and a summary of what's been achieved was presented to the Environment Committee on 12 March 2025. The plan will be populated with further actions and target dates and presented to the Environment Committee on 23 April 2025.</p> <p>On 12 March 2025, the Environment Committee made a recommendation to the Full Council on 3 April 2025 to establish a working group for the council's strategic plan to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2030. One of the purposes of the working group is to monitor the delivery of the action plan.</p> <p>The plan was considered by this committee on 23 April 2025 and a working group meeting took place on 8 May 2025 to further develop the plan. An update report is elsewhere on this agenda.</p> <p>The working group last met on 16 March 2026 to review the plan. Update presented elsewhere on the agenda.</p>
Support River Lym improvement projects	7	SO	Environment	March	
Migrate to electric hedge trimmers	1.4	SO	Environment	April '26	<p>The external works team has trialled equipment from three suppliers, with Stihl selected as the preferred option. Equipment was loaned for an initial three-month period and remains on loan. Feedback from the external works team has been very positive, noting quieter operation, no fumes, and adequate battery life.</p> <p>Hedge trimmer currently on order. Other battery equipment also due to be purchased in May 2026</p>
Undertake tree planting schemes	5	SO	Environment	Ongoing	<p>Officers are investigating suitable areas for tree planting along the boundary of the footgolf, due to the removal of</p>

					<p>diseased trees.</p> <p>Eight bird-friendly berry trees were planted in mid-October around the perimeter of the footgolf area, replacing the old dead ash trees that had been removed.</p>
Follow up on EPC recommendations	5	MG	Environment	Ongoing	<p>Assessments have been undertaken for all recently refurbished or reprovisioned council buildings, and all have achieved ratings better than the government's recommended target.</p> <p>Discussions are ongoing with the council's tenants regarding practical changes they can implement to further improve their EPC ratings, as part of the council's continuing commitment to energy efficiency.</p>
Undertake a hydro feasibility study	3	MG	Environment	TBC	<p>Officers have reviewed historical documentation, including a report commissioned by the council around 2007, which assessed the feasibility of hydro-electric generation on the River Lim. The report concluded that such a scheme was not feasible due to site constraints and technical limitations.</p> <p>Based on this previous report and current conditions, it is deemed not feasible to pursue a hydro-electric project at this time.</p> <p>No further action is proposed unless new technology, location conditions or funding opportunities significantly change viability.</p>

Undertake biodiversity projects	5	SO	Environment	June '25	<p>Projects identified in a biodiversity report considered by the Environment Committee will be undertaken by June 2025. A comprehensive biodiversity audit will be considered by the Environment Committee 16 July 2025, with a view to putting it forward for consideration as a funded objective for 2026-27.</p> <p>Officers have purchased bat and bird boxes for the woodland walk. Officers have sought advice from the council's geotechnical engineer, who has confirmed a pond is not viable due to stabilisation works in the gardens.</p> <p>This committee agreed on 16 July 2025 to put forward a comprehensive biodiversity audit as a potential objective for 2026-27.</p> <p>Biodiversity Policy adoption to be reviewed – Report elsewhere on Agenda.</p>
Undertake further investigation into rainwater harvesting	2	SO	Environment	TBC	<p>A 1,000 litre water butt has been purchased for the amenities hut, in addition to the one on the Garden Pavilion. The water butt at the amenities hut was fitted 9 July 2025.</p> <p>There are currently no plans to install additional water butts. However, officers will continue to monitor and review opportunities for further installations should suitable locations or reasonable options arise.</p>

Install garden signs	7	SO	Environment	<p>June'25</p> <p>September '25</p> <p>July 2026</p>	<p>A project to link QR codes on signs at the flower beds in the gardens to the council's website in June 2025 and completed in September 2025. The website would feature plans of each flowerbed and a full list of the plants within.</p> <p>The guide cost for 11 Lyme Regis Town Council garden signs, comprising bespoke aluminium powder coated lectern style signs with posts and digital print panels, is £5,940.00 including VAT for supply only and excluding installation labour. A QR code supplier has been identified through Joy of Plants.</p> <p>The operations manager was concerned QR codes could be easily tapped into for criminal use and that the technology may become obsolete over time. Project fund accrued to 2026/2027 and new approach not involving QR codes to be designed and brought to committee for review and approval, with the aim to install over the summer as per the last</p>
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Committee: Environment

Date: 29 April 2026

Title: Bathing Water Quality Meeting Minutes

Purpose of the Report

To allow members to receive the minutes from the Bathing Water Quality meeting held on 22 April 2026

Recommendation

Members note the minutes OF the Bathing Water Quality meeting held on 22 April 2026

Report

1. A Bathing Water Quality meeting was held on 22 April 2026, the minutes produced are attached as **appendix 9A**.
2. Any recommendations from this committee will be considered by the Full Council on 13 May 2026.

Sam O'Connell
Operations manager
April 2026

Minutes of Bathing Water Quality meeting on 22 April 2026

A meeting to determine the impacts on water quality and take action to improve the bathing water quality of Front Beach and Church Beach, and to improve the water quality and ecology of the River Lim, Lyme Regis, through collaborative effort of all agencies and councils.

1. Minutes of meeting on 13 January 2026 – accepted as a true record

2. In Attendance: Philip May (LRTC - Chairman), Pete Williams (LRTC), Belinda Bawden (DC), Alan Burrows (SWW), Jenny Eamer (SWW), Chris Angell (EA), Rob Thomas (RLAG), Vicki Elcoate (RLAG), Sarah Sharpe (SWW), Sam O'Connell (LRTC), Jim Flory (EA), Emma Teasdale (DC)

Apologies for absence – Adam Steele (DC), Stuart Cockerill (LRTC), John Wright (LRTC), Matthew Penny (DC), Esmari Steenkamp (DC), Mick McMorrow (RLAG), Pete Hackett (UPC)

3. Actions and updates since last meeting on 13 January 2026

A. Pollution Hotspots - SWW. Uplyme garage - there has been liaison with SWW customer's son but it is now with the family to resolve. VE reported that the outlet was now blocked with gravel; SWW will look at cleaning up the pipe - **ACTION JE**.

Town Mill - JE reported no further pollution reports so no further investigation has taken place; she explained that SWW need to attend when pollution is active to be able to try to identify the source.

Jericho - JE hadn't got the report in front of her so was unable to provide an update but promised to update soonest - **ACTION JE**

Talbot Road - VE pointed to Liz Davis' update, now with Catherine Chaple, that explained there was effectively an "open sewer" at this location and the reasons for urgency. JE promised to take up after the meeting. - **ACTION JE**

Ash Cottage, Church Street, Uplyme - VE explained that Terry Sweeney had written to Catherine. JE promised to follow up after the meeting. - **ACTION JE**

AB explained that finding the source of misconnections was challenging and that reporting pollution to the hotline when it was actually happening was helpful.

B. Turning the Tide Update - AB said that he was in possession of a preliminary plan from the engineering team that he wasn't yet in a position to share. But he confirmed that work would be starting in the Spring (2026) with surveys in various places, related to the CSOs. Once finalised the programme will be placed on the Turning the Tide section of the SWW website - **ACTION AB**

PM pointed out that Mark Green has said that the stream of communication to him from SWW had reduced recently, and that Mark was keen to help.

The planning application to use Charmouth Road Car Park had been withdrawn. The application to use Holmbush had been approved. BB expressed concern at the loss of parking spaces at Holmbush and that LRTC had undertaken to talk to SWW about possible alternative sites on their land. .

C. Biobeads - Fran Swann (RLAG) has sent a response recently to SS's communication with further requests - **ACTION SS**

D. Church Beach Bathing Water Notices - BB explained that DC had a permanent sign that stated that the water had a poor rating and so bathing was not advised. This meant that only pollution incidents would be

flagged separately. VE thanked BB for resolving this matter but said that the sign needs to state what is being done to rectify the poor rating - **ACTION VE/BB.**

JF pointed out that if there's a pollution risk forecast (PRF) then the testing will not be discounted unless there's a notice posted to flag the PRF.

E. Works in Marine Parade/Sea Front Drains - SO reported that Ian Fitz and Adam Steele had been looking at rainwater drainage from gardens. They had found a blockage in a gully behind the chalets. There are ongoing issues with water at the Kiosk which DC are supposed to be addressing. **ACTION AS**

VE asked if SWW will be doing their usual pre-bathing season checks and cleaning. JE confirmed these would be happening.

F. Farm Visit Updates - CA reported that the Cattle ring feeders at Cannington Farm had been moved, but there was a bigger issue of cattle getting into the water. He said he was directing the farmer to get funding for fencing to address this. In the meantime he had recommended installing temporary electric fencing - **ACTION CA.**

He reported that there had been a different pollution incident in March and that that wouldn't be happening again.

Shapwick Grange Farm had an issue with a cattle track, which was now addressed so the run off will go to a slurry store.

VE thanked CA for this fantastic progress.

G. Farming in the Catchment - VE referred to the work RLA had been doing with farmers and FWAG - see separate update.

H. MST and walk down the river with the EA request - JF stated that he had just had the MST results for last year. He explained that they only look at E. coli markers. They showed that it was mostly linked to human (as in prior years) and was notably higher between Woodmead road bridge and the mouth of the Lim, so mostly down to misconnections and other sources in the town. It had been a dry summer and he would expect ruminant to be higher in a wet summer. Seabird (including pigeon/dove) was significant. He promised to share the data - **ACTION JF**

JF promised to arrange another walk over to survey the river. AB suggested SWW attend this if they could arrange someone to attend, which was welcomed. A walk would be arranged in the tourist season ideally after rainfall - **ACTION JF/CA**

JF said the MST testing would continue - **ACTION JF**

VE shared the RLA monthly E.coli results which confirmed higher levels in the town.

AB asked if LRTC and DC could ask residents to check for misconnections. VE stated that there had been a recent article on the subject in the Lyme Living magazine.

JE said that SWW had released a video on social media relating to misconnections.

VE shared another RLA data graph which showed that CSO overflows were aligned with rainfall, with a significant lag from the USTW after heavy rain. AB explained that this supported the SWW rainwater separation strategy.

ET said that DC were happy to work with LRTC on any issues that might be an impact on pollution.

BB observed that pollution from overnight motor homes might be being put down drains. She had asked the Harbours team to include this in their waste campaign with Litter Free Dorset. ET agreed to look at getting appropriate signage in place and to talk to the Harbours manager in DC - **ACTION ET**

Next meeting 22 July 2026 - Action ALL

DRAFT

Committee: Environment

Date: 29 April 2026

Title: Co-option

Purpose of Report

To allow members to consider the co-option of non-members on to the committee

Recommendation

Members note the report, agree the number of non-members required, and approve the process for the appointment of non-members as detailed in appendix 10A,

Background

1. The terms of reference for this committee state in paragraphs 4.2 and 4.3:

‘Up to six non-members can sit on the committee, with no more than two people from one organisation¹. Non-members do not have voting rights.’

2. The following rules apply to the co-option of non-members:

‘Each individual must be co-opted by majority vote of the committee. A CV for the nominated person must be made available to the committee to assist in the selection process.

Each individual co-opted may sit on the committee for the remainder of the council year but must be co-opted again in each council year.

Members may vote non-members off the committee at any time by majority vote.’

3. The terms of reference do not detail the co-option process for non-members to this committee, nor do they fully explain other considerations that come with the co-option of non-members.

Report

The process

4. Before the recruitment and appointment process for non-members commences, the committee should determine the number of non-members it wishes to appoint, if any.

5. The committee should then agree the recruitment and appointment process; this creates transparency, allows all members of the community an equal opportunity to apply to join the committee, is consistent with democratic principles, and protects the committee, council and non-members from accusations of favouritism.

6. To allow the timely appointment of non-members, the proposal is to advertise ahead of the first meeting of this committee in the new council year; the first meeting of the Environment Committee in the 2026-27 council year is 1 July 2026.

¹¹ Section 102(3) of the 1972 Local Government Act.

7. The proposed advertisement date is Thursday 21 May 2026, with a closing date of 19 June 2026. Applicants will be required to submit a CV and a statement to confirm disqualification criteria do not apply, see paragraph 11.
8. The council has a procedure for co-opting councillors, and it seems the most appropriate method for appointing non-members. A copy of the procedure is attached, **appendix 10A**.

Considerations

9. Although up to six non-members can be appointed to the committee, the committee should think about the optimum balance of members versus non-members and the influence non-members can exert over the committee. To some extent this should be informed by the number of councillors on the committee; in the current council year there are nine councillors on this committee.
10. The committee needs to consider how it manages any conflicts of interests that could occur with non-members, e.g., if a non-member represents an organisation that receives funding from the council, and the adverse public perception that could arise out of this.
11. The committee must satisfy itself that any non-member is not disqualified from being a member of a local authority. In summary, a non-member cannot sit on a committee if they:

‘hold any paid office or employment (other than the office of chair, vice-chair or deputy chair) to which they have been appointed by the council or any committee or sub-committee of the council, or by a paid officer of the council, or by any joint committee on which the council is represented; or

are the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim bankruptcy order; or

have within the five years before the day of the election, or since their election, been convicted in the UK, Channel Islands or Isle of Man of any offence and had passed on him a sentence of imprisonment of at least three months (whether suspended or not) without the option of a fine; or

have been found guilty of corrupt or illegal practices or were responsible for incurring unlawful expenditure and the court order their disqualification.

are subject to the notification requirements of Part 2 of the Sexual Offences act 2003 (section 81A of the 1972 Act, in England)²

12. The committee needs to be clear that non-members must be excluded from exempt business.
13. Any new non-members are not included in the council’s induction training programme and are not currently subject to other requirements, e.g., the code of conduct, declarations of interests. The town clerk strongly suggests non-members appointed to this committee should be expected to comply with the general conditions applicable to elected members.
14. The council is currently undertaking a governance review; a report will be submitted to the Full Council on 13 May 2026. The review may affect the Environment Committee and any recommendations from this committee on the appointment of non-members.

John Wright
Town clerk
April 2026

² National association of Local Councils LTN 7 – Non-councillor member of committees, para 6a to 6e, July 2022.

Procedure**Co-option**

1. This procedure must be read in conjunction with the council's co-option policy.
2. Following notification from Dorset Council that there are fewer than 14 candidates for an ordinary election or fewer than 10 electors have called for a by-election following a casual vacancy, the full council will be notified, and the co-option process will start.
3. If a casual vacancy occurs within six months of an election, there is no requirement to co-opt a councillor.
4. Following Full Council notification, a public notice will be issued seeking candidates for co-option. The notice will be published in a local newspaper and posted on the council's website and notice board, and on social media. The public notice will give candidates at least two weeks to submit an application for co-option.
- 5.. Those considering applying for co-option will be given the opportunity to meet with the town clerk.
6. Each candidate's application must be accompanied by a qualifying address, a nominator and seconder, and a 250-word supporting statement.
7. Each candidate must also provide a written declaration to certify they meet the eligibility criteria set out in s79 of the Local Government Act 1972 and are not disqualified under s80 of the 1972 Act.
8. Receipt of applications will be confirmed, and candidates will be given a copy of the co-option policy and procedure to appraise them of the decision-making process.

The decision-making process

9. If there is only one candidate for co-option, the applicant is appointed, automatically.
10. if there is more than one candidate, the co-option appointment must be made by the full council. If appropriate, an extraordinary meeting of the full council can be arranged to consider and approve the co-option of a councillor.
11. Candidates will be invited to meet councillors 45 minutes before the start of the Full Council meeting.
12. At the Full Council meeting, applicants will be given the opportunity to give a five-minute presentation on why they are seeking co-option, and to detail their skills and experience.
13. When the candidates have made their presentations, they will be invited to adjourn to the mayor's parlour.
14. The council will vote on and move into exempt business to allow members to consider the candidates and start the process of voting for their preferred applicant.
15. If there are two candidates, members will consider each application and return to open session to vote on their preferred candidate.

The voting processes

16. If there are three or more candidates, a two-stage voting process will be entered into. At the end of stage one, two candidates will remain.
17. At any time in the process and in line with standing orders, members can request either a signed ballot or a recorded vote.

Stage one

18. Stage one of the process takes place in exempt business. The aim of this stage of the process is to reduce the number of candidates to two.
19. Members cast a single vote for their preferred candidate in one or more rounds of voting. The purpose of each voting round is to eliminate the candidate with the lowest number of votes until two remain.
20. At any stage in the process, if more than one candidate has zero votes, they will all be eliminated.
21. For illustration, if five candidates are being considered and more than one candidate has the lowest number of votes, e.g., in the first round of voting candidate A has 3 votes, candidate B has 3 votes, candidate C has 2 votes, candidate D has 2 votes and candidate E has 2 votes, then candidates A and B will go through to the next round and a further vote will take place between candidates C, D and E to establish who has the lowest number of votes. In this instance up to 12 votes will be divided among three candidates.
22. It is possible that a second vote at this, or any, stage of the elimination process may not produce a candidate for elimination, i.e., two candidates could tie with the lowest number of votes (6:3:3) or the three remaining candidates could receive the same number of votes (4:4:4).
23. In the first instance, the candidate with the highest number of votes would go through to the next stage of the process and a further round of voting would take place between the two remaining candidates. If there was a further tie, (6:6) the mayor would exercise their casting vote in favour of their preferred candidate and the remaining candidate would be eliminated.
24. In the second instance, the mayor would exercise their casting vote in favour of a candidate and a further vote would be held between the remaining two candidates.
25. The process will repeat itself until two candidates are left.

Stage two

26. The council will move back into open session; the candidates will be invited back into the council chamber and they will be informed of the council's decision, i.e., who has been eliminated and the two remaining candidates.
27. A vote is taken on the two remaining candidates and the successful co-option candidate approved by resolution of the council.
28. On request, the town clerk will provide feedback to unsuccessful candidates.

Declaration of acceptance of office

29. The successful candidate will be asked to sign their declaration of acceptance of office.

Implementation date: 16 December 2021

Review date: December 2024

Author: John Wright, town clerk

Committee: Environment Committee

Date: 29 April 2026

Title: Biodiversity Policy – Draft for Consideration

Purpose of the Report

To present a draft Biodiversity Policy for Lyme Regis Town Council, based on a recognised sector template identified by the vice-chairman of the Environment Committee, and to invite members to consider adoption of a Biodiversity Policy and how it should be integrated within the council's existing environmental framework.

Recommendation

- a) Members review the draft Biodiversity Policy and note that it is presented for initial consideration only.
- b) Members agree that the draft policy will be subject to further review and refinement by the town clerk and officers, prior to being brought back to the next Environment Committee or Full Council for formal consideration and adoption.
- c) Members decide whether biodiversity actions should be incorporated within the council's Climate Action Plan, rather than developing a separate Biodiversity Action Plan.

Report

1. The Environment Committee has previously discussed the importance of adopting a clear and proportionate approach to biodiversity, in line with national policy expectations and best practice for local councils.
2. A model Biodiversity Policy, published by the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC), has been identified and provided to officers by the vice-chairman of this committee as a suitable starting point, **appendix 11A**. The SLCC actively encourages the adoption of this policy, and it is widely used by parish and town councils, often with minimal local adaptation.
3. The proposed policy provides a clear framework for the council's role in supporting biodiversity, including:
 - recognising statutory and moral responsibilities
 - embedding biodiversity considerations into council decision-making
 - protecting and enhancing habitats on council-owned land; and
 - working with partners and the wider community
4. It is proposed that the draft policy be set out in the council's standard policy format, with numbered sections and council branding, and presented to members for consideration. Subject to member agreement, the policy would then be recommended to Full Council for adoption.
5. Members are also invited to consider whether biodiversity actions should be addressed through the existing Environment Policy, rather than developing a standalone Biodiversity Policy, to avoid duplication and ensure a joined-up and coherent approach to environmental delivery.

6. Any recommendations from this committee will be considered by the Full Council on 13 May 2026.

Sam O'Connell
Operations manager
April 2026

INTRODUCTION - STATUTORY DUTY

Under the 2021 Environment Act, public authorities (including town and parish councils) operating in England must consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity. Government guidance published in May 2023 clarifies that, as a public authority, town and parish councils must:

- consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
- agree policies and specific objectives based on their consideration.
- act to deliver their policies and achieve their objectives.

Town and parish councils, unlike other authorities, are not obliged to publish a report on their actions, but the Government guidance required all public authorities to complete their first consideration of what action to take for biodiversity by 1 January 2024 (though this is not being policed for town and parish councils). They were required to agree their policies and objectives as soon as possible after this and must then reconsider the selected actions within five years of completing their previous consideration, or more frequently if they choose.

To comply with the guidance, town and parish councils could as a minimum:

- have biodiversity as an agenda item for a meeting (if not already, as soon as possible).
- note what action they are already taking to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
- agree what further steps they should take to conserve and enhance biodiversity.

Such steps may include:

- reviewing what biodiversity or nature recovery plans are already in place from other local authorities, e.g. potential for jointly-supported wildlife corridors.
- making contact with local voluntary groups working on nature conservation.
- carrying out a biodiversity audit of council landholdings and/or the whole council area, potentially involving residents in a “BioBlitz”
- gathering expert advice on possible actions in support of biodiversity, such as from Caring for God's Acre and the Eco Church initiative in respect of churchyards
- drafting an action plan that covers action that the council will take itself as well as support for the actions of other local bodies.

Many of these matters are covered in the LRTC Environment Committee’s Climate Action Plan (CAP). It is proposed that the CAP also includes our biodiversity action plan.

Whatever action is agreed, as a minimum local councils could ensure they also address biodiversity concerns when commenting on planning applications.

All these steps may inform an agreed biodiversity policy for which a proposed version is attached.

BIODIVERSITY POLICY

BACKGROUND

In accordance with the duty imposed on town and parish councils by Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, updated by Section 102 of the Environment Act 2021, Lyme Regis Town Council (hereinafter referred to as the Council) which has any functions exercisable in relation to England must

from time to time consider what action the authority can properly take, consistently with the proper exercise of its functions, to further the general biodiversity objective.

This duty also means that town and parish councils can spend funds in conserving biodiversity.

DEFINITION

According to Defra (Biodiversity 2020), biodiversity is the variety of all life on Earth. It includes all species of animals and plants – everything that is alive on our planet.

Biodiversity is important for its own sake and has its own intrinsic value. A number of studies have shown this value also goes further. Biodiversity is the building block of our 'ecosystems' that in turn provide us with a wide range of goods and services that support our economic and social wellbeing. These include essentials such as food, fresh water and clean air, but also less obvious services such as protection from natural disasters, regulation of our climate, and purification of our water or pollination of our crops. Biodiversity also provides important cultural services, enriching our lives.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The object of this policy is to work towards conserving and enhancing the biodiversity of the Council's area.

The Full Council and any committees of the Council will consider sustainability, environmental impact and biodiversity when making decisions and will develop and implement policies and strategies as required.

In particular, the Council will aim to improve the biodiversity of the area in the following ways:

- consider the potential impact on biodiversity represented by planning applications.
- manage its land and property using environmentally friendly practices that will promote biodiversity.
- support local businesses and council operations in the adoption of low impact / nature positive practices.
- encourage and support other organisations within the town to manage their areas of responsibility with biodiversity in mind.
- support residents and local organisation activities to enhance and promote biodiversity.

ACTIONS

Planning applications

The Council will:

- when commenting on planning applications, support site and building design that benefits biodiversity through the conservation and integration of existing habitats or provision of new habitats.
- support protection of sensitive habitats from development and will consider whether the development would mean the loss of important habitats for wildlife in respect of all applications.
- consider what each proposed development might make in terms of biodiversity net gain.
- include policies in support of biodiversity within the neighbourhood plan.

Land and property management

The Council will:

- carry out a biodiversity audit of its landholdings.
- consider the conservation and promotion of local biodiversity with regard to the

management of its open spaces. This will include adopting beneficial practices with regarding to cutting and removal of vegetation, application of chemicals and timing of maintenance work, paying attention to the Government's regulations for plant protection products.

- take special care in the specification of grounds maintenance contracts to ensure that the work, whilst reaching acceptable standards, does not harm the natural environment
- source sustainable materials when procuring supplies for the Council's use
- consider biodiversity issues and the implementation of changes when managing its buildings.

Local community

The Council will:

- raise public awareness of biodiversity issues, including through its website, briefings, magazine and social media posts.
- engage with local businesses and residents regarding biodiversity in the community and how members of the community can assist and make a difference.
- where feasible, involve the community in biodiversity projects on its land including for example tree planting, wildflower meadows, birdbox making.

Partners

The Council will work in partnership with other organisations to protect, promote and enhance biodiversity within the council area.

It will review any local nature recovery strategies, species conservation strategies, or protected site strategies in respect of local Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and consider how it may become more involved in implementing the strategies' recommendations.

MONITORING AND REVIEW

The council will continually improve and monitor biodiversity performance by conducting annual biodiversity reviews against its objectives and by monitoring key performance indicators. The audit will feed into the council's annual corporate report and the council's strategic five-year plan.

This policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner if there are changes in legislation or best practice.

Implementation date: May 2026

Review date: May 2029

John Wright

Town clerk

May 2026

Committee: Environment

Date: 29 April 2026

Title: Action Plan for Achieving Net Carbon Zero Emissions by 2030

Purpose of Report

To allow members to review the up-to-date and live action plan for achieving net carbon zero emissions by 2030

Recommendation

Members consider the report, suggest any amendments to the live action plan for achieving net carbon zero emissions by 2030; and indicate whether, subject to any agreed amendments, the Action Plan should be progressed for adoption.

Report

1. The council's Net Zero Working Group has continued to review and develop the action plan for achieving net carbon zero emissions by 2030. The updated and live action plan is shown at **appendix 12A**.
2. A comprehensive review of the action plan was undertaken by the operations manager, with proposed amendments to improve structure, clarity, and accuracy, and to ensure the actions align with the council's role, powers, and governance responsibilities.
3. The revised action plan was circulated to members of the Net Zero Working Group and reviewed with the working group on 16 April 2026. The review confirmed that good progress has been made, and the document now provides a clear and proportionate framework for ongoing delivery.
4. As part of this review process, it was agreed that the "Costs associated" section would remain under ongoing development. The intention is for this section to capture costs incurred to date, any budgeted expenditure, and potential future costs where appropriate.
5. The Net Zero Action Plan is now presented to the Environment Committee for consideration as the next stage in the process, including whether the plan should be progressed toward adoption.
6. Any recommendations from this committee will be considered by the Full Council on 13 May 2026

Sam O'Connell
Operations manager
April 2026

Lyme Regis Town Council - Live Working Document - Climate Action Plan

1. Town Council Management	Summary	Costs Associated	2025/2026	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
1.1. Review vehicle & equipment needs and where possible move to electric machines.	<p>The Council is continuing its phased transition to electric vehicles and battery powered equipment, replacing machinery at end of life and prioritising cost effective electric and biodiesel or HVO options.</p> <p>During the transition period, suitable Council vehicles are operating on HVO renewable diesel as a lower carbon interim measure, reducing emissions while electric work vehicle technology continues to develop.</p> <p>As budgets allow, electric vehicles are being introduced to generate savings from reduced fuel use and lower maintenance requirements associated with battery powered equipment. This approach supports reinvestment and the development of procurement standards that favour electric first choices.</p> <p>By 2029 to 2030, the Council aims to operate a predominantly electric fleet and range of works equipment supported by appropriate charging infrastructure. Where full electrification is not yet feasible, approved biodiesel or HVO fuelled vehicles will continue to be used.</p>		<p>Options for the purchase of a battery powered hedge cutter were reviewed, and trials of battery powered tools and equipment were undertaken. Stihl battery powered tools have been identified as the preferred and most suitable supplier.</p> <p>The replacement of fossil fuel operated equipment is planned to be phased out during 2026 to 2027, subject to budget availability.</p> <p>Budget proposals were developed for the further replacement of petrol powered equipment with battery alternatives and for the phased replacement of vehicles with electric equivalents.</p> <p>Vehicle replacement options remain under review. A lower specification HiSun vehicle with an approximate value of £5,000 was reviewed and trialled in August 2025. Current estimates indicate a cost of approximately £15,000 for a suitable used electric vehicle replacement. The process to source an appropriate replacement electric vehicle will continue during 2026 to 2027 and beyond, subject to market availability and affordability.</p>	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering
1.2. Maintain an environmental monitoring system for the Town Council's business & operations, including tracking carbon use.	<p>The Council is looking to develop and maintain an environmental monitoring system to track carbon use and emissions across its business and operations. This will support improved understanding of operational impacts, enable more informed decision making, and provide a consistent basis for monitoring progress towards Net Zero objectives.</p>		<p>Investigations into suitable environmental monitoring systems were undertaken, including seeking professional advice. Low Carbon Dorset was contacted to explore the use of fifteen hours of time credit support.</p> <p>Further engagement with Low Carbon Dorset clarified that the allocated time credit covers remote work, travel, and back office activity rather than a fixed on site time allowance. Officers are therefore reviewing the most appropriate approach, including the option of submitting a new Expression of Interest and considering alternative external support.</p> <p>The potential use of the Low Carbon Dorset Toolkit Carbon Footprinting Tool remains under review alongside other available monitoring solutions.</p>	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering

<p>1.3. Develop a system to monitor & review the Council's waste streams, with a view to reducing waste with a target to be agreed; recycle above 80% (to be agreed) of waste where reducing is impossible.</p>	<p>The Council is reviewing and developing its approach to monitoring and managing waste streams across its operations. This work aims to identify opportunities to reduce overall waste generation and to maximise recycling rates where waste reduction is not achievable, supporting more sustainable operational practices.</p>		<p>An initial review was undertaken to explore the development of a system and formal policy for monitoring and reviewing the Council's waste streams. This work highlighted that ongoing monitoring, data collection, and analysis would represent a substantial operational commitment requiring additional staff resources and capacity to manage effectively.</p> <p>As a result, further consideration is needed to determine a proportionate and deliverable approach. Officers will continue to review alternative solutions and monitoring options before bringing further recommendations to the Environment Committee.</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>
<p>1.4. Provide carbon literacy training for all LRTC staff and councillors and take the necessary steps to maintain accreditation status.</p>	<p>The Council will continue to deliver Carbon Literacy training to staff and councillors, building on existing training provision and internal capacity.</p> <p>Officers will continue to engage with the Carbon Literacy Organisation to finalise training schedules, accreditation requirements, and budget provision to maintain the Council's Carbon Literate Organisation accreditation.</p>		<p>Carbon literacy training was delivered during 2025 with the aim of improving organisational understanding of climate impacts and supporting ongoing accreditation requirements.</p> <p>Online training was completed by seven staff members, followed by a further training event attended by fourteen additional members of staff, bringing the total number of staff trained to twenty one. No members attended the additional training session, and the total number of councillors trained therefore remains at four. Officers are considering alternative delivery options, including evening online training sessions, to improve member participation.</p> <p>Training for trainers had been planned for summer 2025; however, discussions with the training provider confirmed that no further external training courses were available until October or November. The Operations Manager has since been signed off as a Train the Trainer, enabling the Council to deliver Carbon Literacy training in house to councillors and new members of staff going forward.</p> <p>Ongoing engagement has taken place with the Carbon Literacy Organisation to clarify accreditation requirements, costs, and renewal options for the Council's Silver accreditation. Further work will be required during the next period to finalise training schedules and budget provision to maintain accreditation.</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>
<p>1.5. Move to a fully renewable energy electricity supply contract for LRTC.</p>	<p>The Council's electricity supply is predominantly sourced from renewable energy providers. 90% percent of electricity consumption is supplied by YU Energy, which is certified as one hundred percent renewable, with the remaining ten percent supplied by EDF, a recognised low carbon energy provider.</p>		<p>Complete - This action has been implemented and will be reviewed periodically to confirm continued delivery.</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>

2. Managing our built environment

<p>2.1. Identify & implement energy reduction measures.</p>	<p>The Council aims to reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions across its buildings and estate through a combination of energy efficient building design, retrofitting, and targeted operational measures, including lighting upgrades, sensor controls, and renewable energy generation.</p>		<p>During 2025, energy reduction measures were implemented across the Council estate. This included the delivery of new build and refurbishment projects in line with the latest building regulations for energy efficiency, including the Beach Store, amenities hut, and Cemetery Lodge, with photovoltaic panels and high-performance insulation installed.</p> <p>In addition, operational energy efficiency measures were delivered, including the replacement of thirty-nine streetlights with LED units, confirmation that all decorative garden lighting is LED, and installation of LED lighting and sensor controls within new offices, with works completed by June 2025.</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>
<p>2.2. Identify options for reducing water use and harvesting rainwater.</p>	<p>The Council aims to reduce potable water consumption and improve rainwater harvesting across Council managed sites, supporting efficient water use, resilience to drought, and sustainable operations.</p>		<p>Rainwater harvesting measures were implemented through the installation of water butts at the amenities hut and garden pavilion. Planning commenced for the installation of an additional water butt at the Cemetery Lodge. Engagement also took place with South West Water to explore opportunities for rainwater capture and measures to reduce combined sewer overflows.</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>
<p>2.3. Support community renewable energy initiatives and uptake</p>	<p>The Council aims to support, where feasible, community renewable energy initiatives and schemes that enable residents and businesses to install renewable energy technologies, such as solar panels and low-carbon heating, by promoting access to recognised programmes and trusted delivery partners.</p>		<p>During 2025, the Council supported, the promotion of community renewable energy initiatives by working with partner organisations to highlight schemes such as Greener Open Homes, Solar Roofs, and similar programmes. Information and signposting were provided through the Council's social media platforms, website, and Lyme Living magazine to encourage uptake by residents and businesses.</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>
<p>2.4. Support local energy champions</p>	<p>The Council aims to support and promote local energy champions who provide independent advice and guidance to residents on improving home energy efficiency, understanding available options, and making informed decisions about reducing energy use and fossil fuel reliance.</p>		<p>During 2025/2026, the Council promoted local energy champions and advisory services through its communication channels, including the website, social media platforms, and notice boards. This helped signpost residents to trusted sources of advice on home energy efficiency and reducing energy consumption.</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>

3. Protecting and enhancing the natural environment

<p>3.1. Garden organically and limit the use of chemicals</p>	<p>The Council aims to manage gardens organically and limit the use of chemical treatments to essential circumstances only, protecting biodiversity, soil health, and water quality.</p>		<p>In 2025, The Council continued to operate in line with its existing policy restricting the use of glyphosate, with limited exemptions for invasive species such as Japanese Knotweed and Mares Tail. Organic gardening practices remained embedded across Council managed green spaces. This action is considered complete.</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>
<p>3.2. Develop drought resistant and pollinator friendly planting</p>	<p>The Council aims to increase the use of drought tolerant and pollinator friendly planting across Council managed land, sourcing plants locally where possible and supporting biodiversity resilience.</p>		<p>in 2025, Drought tolerant and pollinator friendly planting continued across Council gardens, beds, borders, and planters as part of standard horticultural practice. Local suppliers continued to be used where feasible.</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>
<p>3.3. To increase biodiversity on Council land</p>	<p>The Council aims to increase biodiversity on Council owned land in line with national targets, supporting healthier ecosystems and long term environmental resilience. And we will adopt a revised Biodiversity policy by September 2026.</p>		<p>Initial consideration was given to national biodiversity targets for 2030 and 2050. Options for undertaking a biodiversity assessment were explored to help inform future delivery, target setting, and policy development. Biodiversity of all Council owned land budgeted for to take place in 2026/ 2027</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>
<p>3.4. Continue to plant trees and enhance local habitats where feasible</p>	<p>The Council aims to support tree planting, hedgerow restoration, and wider habitat enhancement, working in partnership to maximise biodiversity benefits where Council land availability is limited.</p>		<p>During 2025, tree planting and habitat enhancement continued through partnership working. The Council has previously supported the planting of approximately five hundred whip trees, gifted through the Wood Forest Organisation, and has established wildlife corridors in support of initiatives such as the Great Dorset Hedge. It is recognised that Council owned green spaces now offer limited further opportunities for additional tree planting.</p> <p>As a result, the Council will continue to engage with external organisations, including Magna and local schools, to review the feasibility of planting on alternative land.</p> <p>Consideration has also been given to initiatives that would enable DT7 landowners to receive and plant trees on their own land, supporting wider biodiversity outcomes beyond the Council's estate.</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>

4. Encouraging, educating and adopting environmental best practice

<p>4.1. Support Dorset Waste Services to improve recycling rates where feasible</p>	<p>The Council aims to support Dorset Council and partner organisations to increase recycling participation among households and businesses in Lyme Regis.</p>		<p>During 2025, the Council worked closely with Dorset Council, the local business association, and elected members to review existing recycling provision and identify opportunities for improvement. A meeting was held on 17 March 2025, at which the Council agreed to repost workplace recycling guidance and explore measures to improve access to recycling facilities across the town.</p> <p>As part of this work, the potential reopening of the Broad Street bin store was examined. This proposal was progressed to the Town Management Hub meeting on 9 April 2025 and subsequently scheduled for consideration by Full Council on 14 May 2025. However this is no further forward at this stage</p> <p>In parallel, the Council explored longer-term recycling solutions. A report submitted to the Environment Committee on 16 July 2025 considered the use of reverse vending technology, including EcoVend systems. Following initial review, this option has been placed on hold for further consideration in 2026/2027, pending additional assessment of feasibility, costs, and operational impacts.</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>
<p>4.2. Work with community organisations to deliver environmental improvements</p>	<p>The Council aims to work with, promote, support and consult community organisations like Turn Lyme Green, that deliver environmental improvements and sustainability initiatives which benefit the town.</p>		<p>During 2025, the Council continued to work collaboratively with community organisations delivering environmental initiatives. Support was provided through promotion, engagement, and partnership working, using Council communication channels and Lyme Living magazine where appropriate.</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>
<p>4.3. Support public events raising environmental awareness</p>	<p>The Council aims to support public events that raise awareness of environmental issues and encourage sustainable behaviours among residents and visitors.</p>		<p>During 2025, Environmental awareness events were supported through promotion and engagement via the Council's website, social media platforms, and other communication channels.</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>	<p>Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering</p>

4.4. Promote and Support Plastic Free Practices in Lyme Regis	The Council aims to support, where feasible, Lyme Regis's status as a Plastic Free town by working with businesses, organisations, and residents to reduce the use of single use plastics and encourage more sustainable alternatives.		During 2025, Plastic Free initiatives were supported through Council communications and engagement activities. In addition, a change was implemented within Council operations following work led by the Operations Manager with the Council's cleaning products supplier, AUK, to move to a collection and refill solution for cleaning products. This change supports a reduction in single use plastic across Council premises and marked a large shift away from disposable plastic cleaning product containers during 2025.	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering
5. Protecting local infrastructure							
5.1. Develop an Electric Vehicle charging strategy	The Council aims, where feasible, to increase the availability of electric vehicle charging facilities within Council-owned car parks to support the transition to low-emission transport for residents and visitors.		During 2025, initial engagement was undertaken with National Grid to explore existing grid capacity and the feasibility of providing additional electric vehicle charging infrastructure at key locations, including Monmouth Beach car park	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering
5.2. Support and encourage local businesses to put sustainability at the heart of their operations	The Council aims, where feasible, to support and encourage local businesses to place sustainability at the heart of their operations through engagement, information sharing, and partnership working.		<p>During 2025, the Council supported and encouraged sustainable business practices through regular engagement with local businesses and event organisers.</p> <p>Sustainability messaging was incorporated into meetings and briefings, and ongoing promotion took place through the Council's social media platforms, website, and communications channels.</p> <p>Work also progressed to introduce regular sustainability-focused features within the Council's magazine, supporting awareness and best practice among local businesses.</p> <p>Sustainability considerations were promoted through event management meetings, where event organisers were encouraged to adopt environmentally responsible practices for town events, including examples such as the Fossil Festival.</p>	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering
5.3. Support the provision of a community town bus in Lyme Regis.	The Council aims to support the provision of a community town bus service to reduce reliance on private vehicles, improve accessibility, and promote sustainable transport options for residents and visitors.		During 2025, the Lyme Link town bus service became operational, providing a sustainable transport option within the town. The introduction of the service supports reduced car use and improved connectivity.	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering

5.4. Support the provision of a Park & Ride facility.	The Council aims to support the provision and ongoing operation of a Park and Ride facility to help manage traffic congestion, reduce vehicle emissions within the town, and promote more sustainable travel options for residents and visitors.		During 2025, the Council continued to support and underwrite the Park and Ride service as part of its wider transport and congestion management approach. The facility remained operational during key periods, helping to reduce traffic volumes within the town centre and supporting sustainable travel choices.	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering
5.5. Promote the retention of essential services in Lyme Regis	The Council aims, where feasible, to support the retention of essential services in Lyme Regis to strengthen community resilience, support local accessibility, and reduce the need for residents to travel outside the town for key services.		During 2025, the Council supported the retention of essential services through a range of measures, including the provision of grant funding and operational support. This included support for services such as the Post Office, the community town bus, the Park and Ride scheme, and grant funding for the local food bank from April 2025.	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering
6. Supporting Sustainable Tourism							
6.1. Continue to provide and maintain a beach equipment recycling box.	The Council aims to continue providing and maintaining beach equipment recycling facilities to reduce waste generated by visitors and support responsible and sustainable tourism.		During 2025, the beach equipment recycling box continued to be provided and maintained, enabling visitors to recycle unwanted beach equipment rather than disposing of it as general waste or leaving it on the seafront.	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering
6.2. Develop & promote a sustainable tourism vision for Lyme Regis.	The Council aims, where feasible, to develop and support a sustainable tourism vision for Lyme Regis that balances visitor demand with environmental protection, community wellbeing, and long-term economic resilience.		During 2025, sustainable tourism principles were supported through Council communications and partnership working. This included engagement with local tourism, environmental, and cultural stakeholders, such as town event organisers, community groups and businesses. These relationships provide a foundation for future collaboration with organisations involved in tourism promotion, environmental stewardship, transport, and visitor management to help shape and deliver a more sustainable tourism approach in Lyme Regis.	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering

6.3. Work with Dorset Council to improve signage that reduces traffic congestion in the town.	The Council aims, where feasible, to work with Dorset Council and highways to improve signage that supports traffic management, helps reduce congestion, and improves the visitor experience within the town.		During 2025, traffic congestion and signage matters were considered by Lyme Regis Town Council through officer review and member consideration. This included discussion of signage in relation to existing traffic management measures, including the 20 mph speed limit within parts of Lyme Regis. Matters identified were considered within the scope of the Town Council's advisory and representative role and were raised, where appropriate, through ward-level engagement and liaison with Dorset Council as the highway authority. Any implementation remains the responsibility of Dorset Council.	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering
6.4. Promote sustainable transport and safe walking in and around the town to reduce the need for visitors (and residents) to use cars.	The Council aims, where feasible, to promote sustainable transport options and safe walking routes to reduce reliance on private vehicles by residents and visitors and support healthier travel choices.		During 2025, sustainable transport options were referenced and signposted through Council communication channels. This included information relating to the community town bus service and the Park and Ride facility. General communications that support awareness of sustainable travel choices will continue to be promoted where feasible.	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering
7. Resilience & adaptation measures							
7.1. Maintain emergency plans to address and mitigate future challenges	The Council aims to maintain and regularly review emergency plans to support preparedness and resilience in response to future challenges, including flooding, storms, power outages, blocked roads, and coastal defence incidents.		During 2025, existing emergency planning arrangements were maintained and reviewed in line with established procedures. The Council's Emergency Plan was reviewed and made available to support clarity around roles, responsibilities, and response arrangements in the event of an incident. This will continue to be reviewed as and when required.	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering
7.2. Work with partners to promote local food security	The Council aims, where feasible, to work with partners to support local food security by encouraging local food growing initiatives and helping to promote more resilient and shorter food supply chains within the town.		During 2025, Lyme Regis Town Council supported local food security through partnership-based activity rather than direct provision. This included ongoing support for the community growers bed and access to local allotments, as well as engagement with local organisations involved in food access and distribution, such as the community café and the local food bank. These actions were undertaken within the scope of the Council's enabling and supportive role.	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering	Ongoing - To be reviewed annually in September before the budget setting process commences to confirm we are still delivering

Committee: Environment Committee

Date: 29 April 2026

Title: Carbon Literacy Accreditation and Training

Purpose of the Report

To update members on progress relating to Carbon Literacy training within Lyme Regis Town Council, including the current status of Silver Carbon Literate Organisation (CLO) accreditation, staff and councillor participation, and the options, costs, and requirements associated with renewal or upgrade ahead of the accreditation expiry

Recommendation

Members note the update on Carbon Literacy training and accreditation, including the options available to the council when the current Silver accreditation expires, and note that any decision to renew or upgrade, and the associated costs, will need to be considered

Report

1. Lyme Regis Town Council currently holds Silver Carbon Literate Organisation (CLO) accreditation, with the current accreditation due to expire on 7 March 2027. Accreditation operates on a three-year cycle, after which organisations may choose whether to renew, upgrade, or allow accreditation to lapse.
2. The Carbon Literacy Organisation has confirmed that maintaining silver accreditation requires an organisation to continue to meet both bronze and silver level criteria. Based on the council's workforce size (between 10 and 99 staff), this includes:
 - Certification of at least 40% of the workforce as Carbon Literate; and
 - Certification of at least one organisational leader, which may include a councillor.
3. To date, 17 members of staff have completed Carbon Literacy training. In addition, the following councillors have completed the course:
 - Cllr Stammers
 - Cllr May
 - Cllr Aldridge
 - Cllr Cockerell
4. The Carbon Literacy Organisation has confirmed that training materials for parish and town councils remain free to use, allowing the council to continue delivering training internally. To support further councillor participation, the operations manager has advised that delivering training in the evening would require approximately 10 hours of delivery time, equivalent to the standard half-day course delivered across two five-hour sessions.
5. Indicative costs provided by the Carbon Literacy Organisation are:

	Organisational Revenue / Turnover						
CLO Level	< £25k**	£25k - £50k	£50k - £250k	£250k - £5m	£5m - £100m*	£100m - £1bn	£1bn+
Bronze	£150 +VAT	£375 +VAT	£750 +VAT	£1,500 +VAT	£2,250 +VAT	£3,750 +VAT	£7,500 +VAT
Silver	£300 +VAT	£600 +VAT	£1,125 +VAT	£2,250 +VAT	£3,750 +VAT	£6,750 +VAT	£13,500 +VAT
Gold	£450 +VAT	£825 +VAT	£1,500 +VAT	£3,000 +VAT	£5,250 +VAT	£9,750 +VAT	£19,500 +VAT
Platinum	£600 +VAT	£1,050 +VAT	£1,875 +VAT	£3,750 +VAT	£6,750 +VAT	£12,750 +VAT	£25,500 +VAT
Upgrade	£150 +VAT	£225 +VAT	£375 +VAT	£750 +VAT	£1,500 +VAT	£3,000 +VAT	£6,000 +VAT

6. The operations manager has been advised that a customer onboarding form must be completed before final costs can be confirmed, however.
7. The council is not obliged to renew accreditation, and members will be asked to consider whether they wish to continue, upgrade, or discontinue accreditation, considering the benefits, costs, and resource implications.
8. If additional councillors wish to complete Carbon Literacy training, the operations manager would be required to set up and deliver the sessions. Given the length and interactive nature of the course, which is normally delivered as two half-day sessions, it is considered that a daytime session would be more practical than evening delivery to accommodate all interested members and ensure effective participation.
9. Any recommendations from this committee will be considered by the Full Council on 13 May 2026.

Sam O'Connell
Operations manager
April 2026

Committee: Environment Committee

Date: 29 April 2026

Title: River Lim Action Group Report

Purpose of the Report

To allow members to receive a report from the River Lim Action Group

Recommendation

Members note the report from the River Lim Action Group

Report

1. The River Lim Action Group has provided a report on their latest activities. The report is attached, **appendix 14A**.
2. Any recommendations from this committee will be considered by the Full Council on 13 May 2026.

Sam O'Connell
Operations manager
April 2026

River Lim Action update for LRTC Environment Committee, April 29th 2026

Most of the update is covered by the minutes of the Bathing Water Quality meeting.

The latest on the Turning the Tide programme can be found here:

<https://www.southwestwater.co.uk/about-us/what-we-do/engineering-projects/wastewater/lyme-regis>

Sewage discharges into the river

The latest data out from the Environment Agency on permitted sewage overflows in 2025 show that untreated sewage spilled into the River Lim for 660 hours (equivalent to nearly a month). That was down from 834 hours in 2024. But River Lim Action has uncovered inaccuracies in the data which make the results unreliable.

Although the annual report shows a decrease in discharges, it was a dry summer so that would be expected.

RLA uncovered serious inaccuracies at the Mill Lane CSO in Uplyme. After pointing out it was discharging when nothing was being recorded South West Water admitted that data for the whole of 2025 for that CSO *“is unrepresentative and inoperable, meaning that it cannot be compared to data produced in previous years.”*

The Turning the Tide programme should deliver a significant reduction on these numbers.

E.coli pollution

See the graph at the end for the results of RLA E.coli monitoring (funded by LRTC) for the last six months. These highlight the ongoing problem of high levels of pollution below Woodmead Road bridge. Samples are taken once a month at four locations.

Parliamentarian visits

We have had recent visits from Ed Morello MP and Baroness Jenny Jones. Both have offered to raise issues about water quality in Lyme Regis in Parliament.

Himalayan Balsam

The effort to pull out the invasive plant Himalayan Balsam resumes in May. Thanks to LRTC for funding the equipment. Volunteers welcomed!

Farm improvements

In addition to the actions highlighted by the Environment Agency in the minutes, River Lim Action has been progressing its work with 10 farmers/landowners in the catchment.

With a grant from Farming in Protected Landscapes (FIPL) to date the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group has conducted 10 detailed surveys of farms and larger landowners in the River Lim Catchment on behalf of River Lim Action.

The driver for this initiative principally has been to identify any potential run off issues and diffuse pollution which may be impacting the water quality of the river. Each individual holding visited has been given a confidential report highlighting any issues. In addition, advice on possible mitigating measures which could be applied has been given. Other outcomes could be an improvement of biodiversity within the catchment

Recommendations have included:

- Best practice guidance on hedgerow, soils, bracken, scrub and pond management
- Botanical surveys of certain steep, shallow soiled slopes to see whether they may be eligible for species rich grassland payments at 2 farms
- Use of herbal leys on 2 farms
- Planting of trees to restore old boundaries at 2 farms
- Installing ponds/scrapes to slow water and provide wildlife habitat at 1 farm

- Hedgerow restoration at 2 farms
- Hedgerow planting at 2 farms
- Pond restoration at 3 farms
- Support with Sustainable Farming Initiatives (SFI) applications at 2 farms
- Riverbank restoration at 1 farm
- Slurry storage improvement. 1 Farm
- Riparian fencing to exclude cattle from sensitive areas and reduce erosion
- Improving camping facilities at 1 farm
- Installation of leaky woody dams to slow water flow at 2 farms
- Wall restoration at 1 farm
- Support with a woodland management plan at 3 farms
- Considering agroforestry or wood pasture at 2 farms
- Removal or installation of fish/eel passage at 1 farm
- Establishment of grass margins to slow runoff from arable at 1 farm

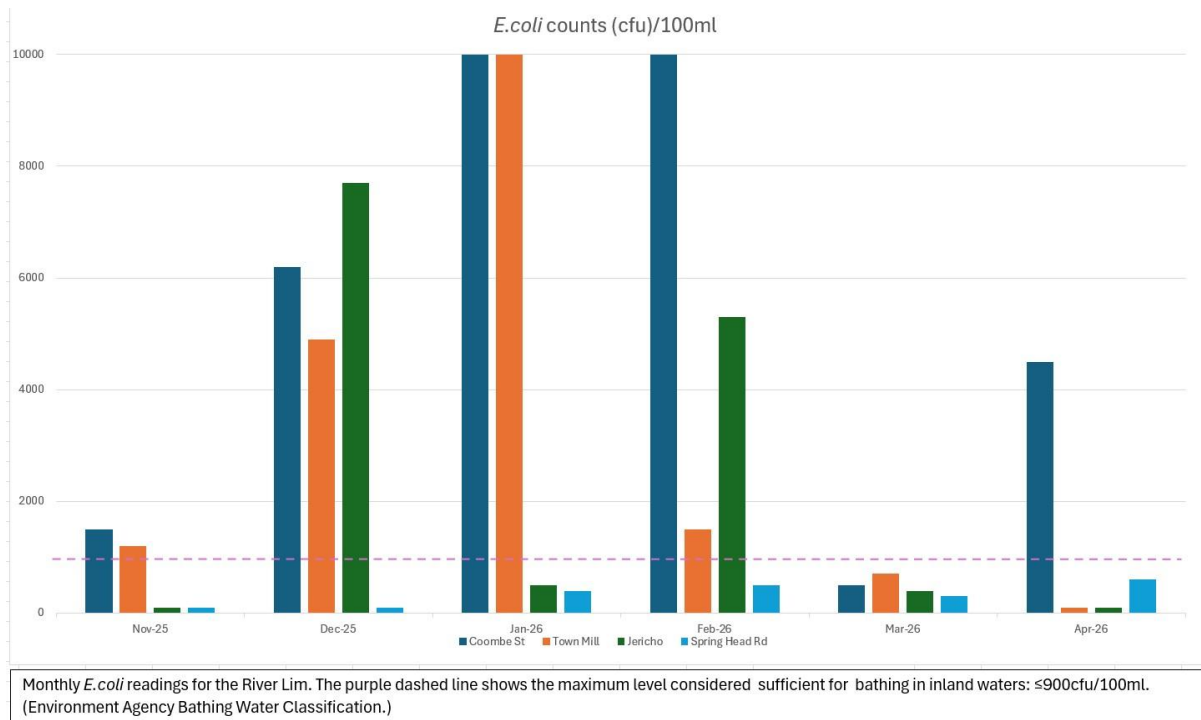
Please note the largest farm in the catchment so far has not engaged with the River Lim Action Group or FWAG but it is hoped that a follow up visit now certain funding streams are confirmed that they will come on board.

The next stage will be to look at various funding streams to implement the recommendations. These will include applications to FIPL, the Sustainable Farming Initiative, Dorset Wild Rivers and specific grants from County, District and Town Councils. We also aim to build a relationship with the Great Big Dorset Hedge project.

It is essential where required that the Environment Agency (EA) support these initiatives and ensure compliance where water quality is being compromised.

A follow up meeting with all the Farmers and Landowners involved is scheduled for the 7th May.

River Lim Action, Vicki Elcoate and Graham Roberts



Committee: Environment

Date: 29 April 2026

Title: Great Big Dorset Hedge Project – Information Update

Purpose of Report

To allow members to review a paper submitted by Vicki Elcoate, on behalf of Dorset Climate Action Network (Dorset CAN), regarding the Great Big Dorset Hedge (GBDH) project, and to provide members with background information on the scope of the project and its potential relevance to Lyme Regis.

Recommendation

Members note the information provided regarding the Great Big Dorset Hedge project and consider whether any future engagement or promotion of the initiative is appropriate

Report

1. An information paper has been submitted by Vicki Elcoate, Dorset CAN, providing an update on the Great Big Dorset Hedge (GBDH) project, **appendix 15A**.
2. The GBDH project is hosted by Dorset Climate Action Network and coordinated by John Calder. The project focuses on surveying, enhancing, and expanding hedgerows across Dorset and neighbouring areas through partnership working with farmers, landowners, volunteers, and specialist contractors.
3. The appendix outlines the delivery and impact of the project to date, including the scale of hedge surveys undertaken, volunteer engagement, specialist input, and alignment with emerging policy frameworks such as the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and the Sustainable Farming Incentive.
4. The paper explains the criteria under which the GBDH project will consider undertaking surveys, including the requirement for a minimum length of approximately two kilometres of hedging or field boundaries. It also notes that there are currently no participating farms within the Lyme Regis parish boundary, with participation instead concentrated in neighbouring areas.
5. Any recommendations from this committee will be considered by the Full Council on 13 May 2026.

Sam O'Connell
Operations manager
April 2026

Great Big Dorset Hedge update for Lyme Regis Town Council Environment Committee

Vicki Elcoate, Dorset CAN

The GBDH project is hosted by Dorset Climate Action Network and organised by John Calder, who has land in Charmouth. The project has gone from strength to strength and is covering an increasingly wider area across the county. *Lyme Regis Town Council could benefit from the surveys offered by GBDH which can lead to a significant improvement in hedgerows. LRTC could also promote the project to other landowners (eg the park and ride site) to enhance hedgerows more widely. GBDH will consider the request if over 2 kms of hedging/field boundary is available to survey.*

In its early days an initial GBDH project was funded by LRTC focusing on education and work with young people. The focus of the project is currently on direct delivery of hedgerow enhancement.

Within the parish boundary there are no participating farms (see map sent separately). Meanwhile, in Charmouth and Wootton Fitzpaine there are four and in Devon the farmland at Harcombe Bottom is part of Furzeleigh Down Farm (Axminster). The GBDH will be working with the River Lim Action group in the Lim catchment to help farmers and landowners here.

Extract from a briefing paper prepared by John Calder earlier this year. John is on the Nature Recovery Dorset Delivery Group for the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

While GBDH operates as a stand-alone project, Dorset CAN provides essential administrative and financial support. The project is led by a well-established core team under my voluntary leadership as Project Manager. The core team currently comprises two volunteers and eight part-time specialist contractors. Together, we coordinate and support a network of more than 400 trained volunteers across Dorset, all sharing a common vision: to enhance, restore, and expand hedgerows throughout the county.

Delivery and Impact

In just three years, GBDH has delivered hedge survey reports covering over **1,200 km of hedgerows**, alongside the mapping of **350 km of plain fencing**, much of which represents clear opportunities for future hedgerow creation. We have engaged directly with **over 120 farmers**, helping them better understand, manage, and enhance their hedgerow assets. This rate of delivery demonstrates both the effectiveness of our model and the depth of demand from the farming community. However, sustaining this pace will require **more stable and secure funding**.

Volunteer Network and Farmer Engagement

Our volunteers are drawn from across the county, and we have a proven, scalable process for growing volunteer capacity in any local area where demand arises. Farmer engagement has been achieved through a wide and trusted network. Partners include the NFU, Dorset Wildlife Trust, FWAG, and numerous farmer breakfast groups. In addition, farm advisers and peer-to-peer recommendations between farmers have been instrumental in widening participation and building confidence in the project.

Specialist Expertise

GBDH's specialist contractors provide vital professional skills, including survey methodology, data management, ecological assessment, and reporting. Their expertise ensures that all outputs are robust, credible, and aligned with the emerging policy frameworks - especially the Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI).

Budgeting for Planting Projects

GBDH does not procure plants directly and does not manage large-scale planting projects, which are more appropriately delivered by commercial contractors. Our role is to enable and support planting where appropriate, with farmers typically making a nominal donation. In the current season, we estimate the planting of approximately **3 km of new hedgerows**.

Project funding includes:

Campaign for the Protection of Rural England

Dorset National Landscape (via its FIPL programme)

Wessex Water

Farmers and landowners

Highways Agency

Clipper Tea

Vicki Elcoate, April 22nd 2026

