

14th SECA Steering Group
Zoom Meeting
11th March 2021

Present: Tony Whitbread (Chair) Sussex Wildlife Trust, Your Better Nature

Gonzalo Alvarez	UN Association, Climate and Oceans
Geoff Barnard	Greening Steyning, SECA newsletter/website
Sally Barnard	Greening Steyning, SECA coordinator (minutes)
Tom Broughton	Chichester XR
Sherry Clark	Transition Hastings, Emerging Futures
Viviane Doussy	Your Better Nature, UN Association Climate and Oceans
Paul Hannam	Your Better Nature, Greening Steyning
David Johnson	CPRE Sussex
Danny Lee	Petersfield CAN (PeCAN)
Alison Marshall	Transition Horsham
Karen Park	Horsham Eco Churches, No Incinerator For Horsham
Pat Smith	Dorking Climate Emergency, Dorking XR
Paul Street	Dorking Climate Emergency, Surrey Climate Commission
Liz Thorns	Horsham XR, Transition Horsham
Fran Witt	Divest East Sussex

Michael Royalton-Kisch South Coast Alliance for Transport and Environment
(SCATE)

Apologies: Pauline Cory, Juliet Merrifield, Anne Davies, Wilf Hardy, Ben Samson, Jay Mercer, David Allen, Brenda Pollack, Carrie Cort, Nicola Peel

1. **Welcome** and introductions as above.

2. Local elections 6th May 2021

ABCD PLEDGE CARDS

Sally has written to most of the Leaders of the political parties in the County Councils to let them know that the ABCD pledge campaign will be happening.

All the details are in the [abcd pledge blog](#) on the SECA website home page. There is a new link where candidates/campaigners can add pledges online <http://bit.ly/ABCDregister> .

A register of signatories is also on display <http://bit.ly/ABCDsignatories>.

The next step is to hand over to SECA member groups to contact their own local candidates. Not all will choose to, and coverage is sure to be patchy, but the main aim is to generate interaction around climate issues in as many constituencies as we can.

Pat told us about their plans in Surrey- Dorking CE is coordinating other groups in Surrey to write individual letters to as many candidates as possible, saying what they feel strongest about, and they will use the SECA pledge cards as well. Dorking CE is producing an election toolkit.

Discussion:

OVESCO and Divest East Sussex are planning to use the pledges. Liz has been circulating to XR groups.

Sally has kept Hampshire CAN in the loop about the pledge campaign .

A suggestion was made to focus particularly on councils we know are lagging behind.

ACTIONS:

SALLY will send updated info to all SECA member groups in the next newsletter and encourage them to contact their candidates.

KAREN will contact the Ecochurch network and No Incinerator for Horsham

SHERRY will contact the Hastings Quakers

DAVID will raise it at the CPRE regional meeting

HUSTINGS

Geoff said that several SECA groups had indicated an interest in holding hustings. There is a question of whether local debate at a local hustings or higher level debate at countywide hustings is of most benefit. There's pros and cons to both. The main aim is again to raise climate in the minds of candidates and also voters.

Discussion:

The ABCD pledge could be a useful basis for hustings questions – and ask/expect them all to sign up. Also pick some urgent local issues to attract attendance and to demonstrate the candidates commitment to the environment eg the new A27 plans Lewes/Polegate.

Zoom hustings might draw a bigger crowd than usual?

West Sussex: Geoff would like to gauge interest in a West Sussex hustings. Karen offered to help. Tom / ChichesterXR may be interested. *Nb Info after meeting: Jay says there will be a local Horsham hustings on March 29th. Juliet from Transition HKD says they are going to run a local hustings in Hassocks/Hurst.*

East Sussex: Michael /SCATE and Fran/Divest ESx are interested. Andrew Durling (Eastbourne FoE), Dinah Morgan (Lewes Climate Hub) and Gemma McFarlane (Seaford Env Action) may be interested. Sherry will check with Hastings.

Surrey: Pat doesn't think there is impetus for hustings in Surrey as they have a lot of other plans.

ACTION: GEOFF/SALLY will send out an email to interested East Sussex groups so that they are in touch with each other and they can take it from there.
GEOFF will follow up with TOM and KAREN to gauge interest further about West Sussex.

3. Heading toward COP26

Viviane has created a dedicated email address for COP related matters SECA-COP26@outlook.com. She is working on an online form to gather information on COP activities and will supply information to the SECA newsletter about this.

The Climate Coalition are coordinating activity nationwide and Viviane is in touch with them <https://thetimeisnow.uk/about-the-campaign>. They are planning a [national festival](#) in September.

There are various events in our area that Viviane is aware of: Carrie has dates for COP events in E and W Sussex where she is taking her Roadshow ; David Allen (Brighton FoE)) is involved in planning a cycle 'murmuration' to Glasgow ; Pat / Dorking CE may be going to Glasgow and booking a house- she warned that accommodation will run low. UNAC&O are holding several events throughout the year for its 'From Paris to COP 26' plus thinking about a fringe COP in Nov.

Gonzalo described a Biodiversity and Climate Crisis summit event on 2nd June that UNAC&O are holding on 2nd June :

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/biodiversity-and-climate-crisis-summit-on-the-road-to-cop-26-tickets-142094168483> He will be inviting SECA to join with other organisations to support the event and add our name to a report to the UN that will be coming out of it.

Discussion: There was discussion on how to make the capture of COP-related activities across our area as simple and useful as possible. SECA groups may find entering information online a step too far? Can we just use a hashtag? Can we 'scrape' websites for information? Can we use MURAL /MIRO to record things visually? (Sherry has used this successfully for Common Treasury in Hastings) Should we create a COP channel on the FOE Slack Platform? – we have tried these and they fizzled out. Activities will escalate through the year- how do we keep up? Does SECA need to keep up, or is it the 'tidal wave' of activity that counts?

Agreed it all needs more thought/discussion.

ACTION:

GONZALO to send information to SECA about the June summit
DANNY will look into possible ways to make info gathering easier.
VIV / GEOFF to discuss further

- 4. Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill** Liz has been engaging with various people and organisations to write to their MPs about this. There is currently no time line for the next reading in the House of Commons. An Oxford alliance has produced a good open letter signed by organisations and businesses. Should SECA do similar?

Discussion: we would need to consult with groups before sending out an open letter from SECA. It would be best to send a template out and suggest groups could send it to their own MP. Many letters on the same subject are more influential than one open letter. Its good to make the link with biodiversity which often gets missed out.

ACTION: LIZ to draft a generic letter to send around to SECA groups in the newsletter.

- 5. June 2021 SECA gathering**

Planned for **Saturday 19th June, 10am to 1pm** : an online half day gathering .

Alison suggested that she provide some information on this for the next newsletter as time was getting short in this meeting . The organising team will need help before, during and after the event. They are particularly looking to attract engagement from Crawley, Arun, Rother, Wealden, Hampshire , Kent and the Isle of Wight where SECA is under represented.

ACTION : ALISON to provide info for newsletter

- 6. Highways England Plans for A27 Lewes to Polegate**

Michael from SCATE outlined the plans for a new £1bn dual carriageway north of the existing A27, cutting across countryside and sensitive ancient village locations on a floodplain. SCATE is promoting a sustainable alternative of upgrading the existing road at junctions and pinch points. They are setting up a crowdfunding scheme to finance their campaign and have launched a competition with the New Civil Engineer magazine to come up with a detailed alternative plan. They need help with publicising and fundraising.

It was suggested they look into an Ecosystem Services Report to boost their case (South Downs National Park and Edinburgh University are experienced with this)

ACTION : MICHAEL will write a blog about this for the SECA newsletter

- 7. AOB** Danny pointed out two useful resources for SECA to highlight .

The Impact Community Carbon Calculator <https://impact-tool.org.uk/about> . This allows analysis and comparison of community carbon footprints.

The [National Atmospheric Emissions Calculator](#) which gives info on emission levels on an interactive map.

Both could be very useful in discussions with candidates /councillors.

ACTION: Danny will liaise with Geoff to produce a blog on these for the SECA newsletter

8. **Date of next SECA Steering Group meeting: Thurs 13th May 2021 at 7pm by Zoom**