

16th SECA Steering Group
Zoom Meeting
19th July 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)
Natasha Barnes	Horsham Ethical Business
Tom Broughton	Chichester XR, Eco Chi
Sherry Clark	Transition Hastings, Emerging Futures
Viviane Doussy	SECA membership , Your Better Nature
Les Gunbie	Hanover Climate Action
Paul Hannam	Greening Steyning, Your Better Nature
Philip Maber	Singleton Forest Watch, EcoChi
Dinah Morgan	Lewes Climate Hub
Karen Park	Horsham Eco Churches, No Incinerator For Horsham
Pat Smith	Dorking Climate Emergency
Paul Street	Dorking Climate Emergency
Liz Thorns	Horsham Green Hub etc
Luka Simanowitz	Divest East Sussex

Apologies: Pauline Cory, Carrie Cort, Nicola Peel, Danny Lee, Alison Marshall, Jay Mercer, Brenda Pollack, Juliet Merrifield, Wilf Hardy, Anne Stephenson, Christine Southam, Leonie Harmsworth

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

2. **Discussion and reflections on SECA 'Step Change' event**

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION:

Positive comments:

- It was a successful networking, sharing, learning event
- It was energetic and rallying
- The online format helped attract new people from further afield

- The event organisation was seen as professional
- The resources gathered from the chat are really useful in their own right
- Maybe the Miro board could be developed as an on going resource in its own right?
- The YouTube videos are great, could they be presented in an accessible way to attract more views?

Other comments:

- There was one comment that the meeting was quite diffuse, and would have liked more focus on what SECA is and where it is going. (However it was pointed out that we had deliberately avoided it becoming a strategy meeting to allow more blue sky thinking)

ACTION:

VIV and GEOFF to discuss how to summarise the meeting and the chat resources for the website and the next newsletter. Consider continued use of the Miro board.

3. The future of SECA SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

Feedback on the current value of SECA:

1. Networking and 'umbrella' functions

- Feeling part of a bigger whole, strength in numbers, strength in affiliation.
- Boosting the impact and clout of member groups
- Sharing good practice
- Collective energy, representing 1000s of people
- Learning from each other
- Helping with information overload by summarising and collating information in a central resource.
- A place to come to for support if a group is taking a new direction. A sounding board for groups when needed.
- SECA is a communications-led organisation- the newsletter gets lots of praise- but do we know how much climate impact we are actually having?

SECA networking relies heavily on the newsletter/ blogs and website (Geoff). Also the coordinator (Sally) to respond to enquiries and pass on requests for help. Additionally Viv, Tony and Alison have done a lot of work organising SECA events.

The 'core group' of Tony, Viv, Alison, Sally and Geoff has evolved to help steer day-to-day decisions. We currently meet online on an ad hoc basis approx. every 3-4 weeks.

2. Devising campaigns and coordinating action eg the Declare a Climate Emergency and election Pledge campaigns and Education Projects across the SE

These campaigns have relied on 'champions' to lead each campaign, produce campaign materials and follow through on the detail. So far it has been Sally and Geoff on Councils and Carrie Cort on Education.

3. The overview work, holding councils to account

This has relied on Sally, with Alison's support, to lead and coordinate member groups to contact councils and keep the SECA survey up to date

Overall SECA has become the victim of its own success and the set up has become very labour intensive for a few people.

Thoughts on the future of SECA :

- The overall feeling was that SECA has a lot of value, and is even growing in importance, and that now is not the time to wind it down.

NETWORKING/LEARNING SUGGESTIONS:

- Tony: SECA could move away from 'doing' and become more of a networking and learning together organisation. We could become a support network of 'change champions'.
- Pat/Liz: SECA could formalise its current sharing of ideas and hold learning sessions on different topics eg Climate Emergency Centres/Hubs or Divestment where members meet to learn/share experience.

- Paul H: SECA could start up a 'Mastermind Group' where some members meet regularly (eg monthly for 2 hours) and give mutual support to raise each other's game.
- Geoff: a similar concept would be for SECA to hold 'peer assist' sessions /'knowledge clinics' where people ask for help on certain topics and others gather together to help them. These are best done face-to-face, but can work online. Requires good facilitation.
- Tom is setting up a Climate Emergency Group in Chichester and asking the council to report to them on progress. Could he set up a SECA forum of other groups interested in that approach? Could there be a SECA zoom account/advertising he could use?

ORGANISATION/ADMINISTRATION SUGGESTIONS:

- The replacement for Geoff on the website and newsletter is crucial.
- We need to find new people who are prepared to offer leadership.
- We could break down roles into smaller parts
- We could create some 'job adverts' for the newsletter to attract new helpers. They need to be punchy, and maybe break down and simplify the roles needed.
- We could raise funds through an annual subscription from member groups to pay a coordinator/website manager? Or fund raise in other ways.

Interim arrangements

Sally will be passing on the Coordinator role to Alison shortly.

Sally will carry on the council overview work, supported by Alison, but would like to find someone to share the leadership.

We need to find replacements for Geoff (website and newsletter) in the next 6 months.

Viv will carry on monitoring membership and mailchimp.

Tony will carry on as chair of Steering Group meetings.

We need to find other leaders to take on projects they are enthusiastic about.

We would like to find one or two people to join the core group- especially if they have a project they would like to lead on (eg the networking/learning initiatives)

ACTION: SG discussions to be summarised in next newsletter to feed developments back to the wider membership. GEOFF to create 'job

advertise' for the website and newsletter roles, and will send them out as a separate newsletter.

CORE GROUP to discuss next steps.

ALL to consider where we might find newsletter/website expertise.

4. Change of SECA logo.

SECA has been contacted by an International Red Cross lawyer. We need to change our logo as the Red Cross symbol is protected by international law. They are being understanding, but there is an implicit threat of legal action. We need to let them know that we have paid attention and will be putting a plan in place. They have said they will help us, but it's not clear in what way.

Sally feels that we should let them know that we will change the logo ASAP and find a temporary simple solution such as changing the colour of the cross or not using the symbol at all. It does not feel like the right moment to be diverted into a discussion on a big change of logo.

ACTION: SALLY will let the Red Cross know that we will change the logo and ask CEUK what they are planning to do (as they have the same logo and in the process of changing theirs). Then we will find a simple solution in the near future.

5. ESCC divestment demo Oct 12th 2021

Luka from Divest East Sussex explained that they are planning a rally outside ESCC headquarters in Lewes on this date. They want ESCC to divest fully from fossil fuels and to announce openly that they are doing so. They would like to involve as many SECA groups as possible. There will be an online planning meeting toward the end of August and they would like to gather contact details of interested groups ASAP.

Sherry suggested linking up with Julia Hilton (Green ESCC councillor for Hastings) if this hasn't already happened.

Paul S suggested linking with Surrey Divest campaign <https://www.surreypensions.org/>. It may be possible to bring together other divest campaigns in the region too.

Geoff suggested it would be interesting to collate a regional overview of progress across the various Divest campaigns in county councils in the SECA area to go out in a SECA blog.

ACTION: SALLY will email LUKA and GABRIEL and ask them to send details and links about their plans to SECA for the newsletter. SALLY will float the idea of a regional divestment overview to Gabriel as well.

6. AOB

Sherry flagged up the new Hastings 'Bale House' visitor centre , opening in the Country Park

https://www.hastings.gov.uk/parks_gardens_allotments/parks/visitorcentre/

Liz is in touch with Ben McAllan from ZeroCarbonGuildford and they are thinking of a SECA session on Climate Emergency Centres on either 21st or 22nd Sept (in Great Big Green Week). It was agreed that was a good idea, and could be the first example of a SECA learning session.

ACTION: LIZ will go ahead and make further plans with Ben. Then details can be sent to GEOFF for the newsletter.

7. Date of next meeting : will be late August /early September

ACTION: ALISON and CORE GROUP to discuss and send out the date .