



Plastic Free Steyning, Bramber and Beeding

Campaign update - Steyning Parish Council - December 2019

Background

- Greening Steyning's campaign to make Steyning, Bramber and Upper Beeding 'Plastic Free' was launched in April 2019 at Steyning Farmers' Market.
- The idea came from a talk in Nov 2018 when marine conservation group, 'Surfers Against Sewage', spoke of their national campaign to create 'Plastic Free Communities' around the country (there are now over 600 communities involved).
- Steyning is following the model set out by [Surfers Against Sewage](#) which focuses particularly on cutting down on use of single use plastics.
- Stakeholder engagement is a key part of the campaign. That includes schools, churches, businesses, and – importantly – local councils.
- The campaign has been met with a lot of enthusiasm from local people, as it is tapping into a widespread concern about the damage caused by plastic pollution.
- Highlights of the campaign so far have included:
 - Coming up with two plastics pledge cards, beginners and advanced.
 - Keen interest from our two local Primary Schools, who have introduced crisp packet recycling as a result.
 - Strong buy in from local churches through the Churches Together group.
 - An encouraging response from local businesses, who have been happy to engage with the campaign and discuss how they can cut their plastics use.
 - Active efforts to engage with the public through stalls at both primary school summer fetes, several farmers markets, and the Summer fair.
 - A well-attended litter-pick event along the Adur in September
 - A 'Mass Unwrap' event at the Steyning Coop in November.
- The campaign has already exceeded the targets set by Surfers Against Sewage for the level of activity and changes needed to meet the standard of being a 'Plastic Free Community'. The last remaining task is to confirm that Parish Councils are on board in backing the campaign.

Engagement with Parish Councils

- The idea of the campaign was first presented to Steyning Parish Council in December 2018, where it got an enthusiastic welcome. We got a similar response when we presented it to Bramber and Upper Beeding Parish Councils.
- Initial conversations on SPC engagement were held with Liz Trundle in March 2019. After the Council elections, Liz and Georgia Saunders agreed to be the SPC contacts with the campaign, and have been invited to join the Steering Group.
- We met with the Premises Committee in Sept 2018 and agreed that the next step would be to have a more concrete discussion with the Clerk and Deputy Clerk on specifics.

- A very productive follow-up meeting was held with John and Hazel on 18 Sept where we looked at SPC's 'plastics footprint', and its wider recycling practices in general. The main conclusions were that:
 - SPC is not a big plastics user because, by the nature of its operations, it doesn't give anything to its customers, other than offering meeting space.
 - Consumption of single use plastic is mainly a function of what customers choose to bring in themselves, which SPC has limited control over.
 - Apart from grass cutting, hedge trimming, cleaning of public toilets, and litter bin emptying, SPC's operations are all centred on the Steyning Centre.
 - At that time there are no onsite facilities for recycling at the Steyning Centre.
 - Hazel estimated that 90% of current office waste is paper, and that the volume of paper being consumed (mostly for meeting minutes and notes) has been going up recently, not down, despite the potential for moving to a 'paper free' world.
 - Initial discussions were held on possibilities for introducing separate litter bins for recycling, which is complicated by the split responsibilities with Horsham District.
 - The idea was discussed of raising funds for a number of public water fountains in Steyning, Bramber and Beeding. All three councils have shown interest in principle.
- The following action points were agreed:
 - Investigate options for beginning recycling at the Steyning Centre (John). Separate recycling bins have since been introduced on a trial basis.
 - Tighten up guidance to encourage Centre customers to adopt good practice (Hazel)
 - Encourage SPC contractors to adopt good practice on plastics (Greening Steyning to report back on approaches being suggested by Beeding PC).
 - Buying cleaning products in refillable containers (John/Hazel to investigate)
 - Look into the practical and cost aspects of the water fountain idea and consult further with all three PCs (Greening Steyning).
 - Consider segregated public recycling bins (Greening Steyning to talk to HDC).

Next steps with SPC

- The original plan was for Greening Steyning to report back to full Council on 21 October, spelling out the areas for investigation we identified and reporting back on progress. This wasn't possible because of the busy agenda.
- Greening Steyning is pleased with the progress that's been made in its discussions with SPC, which have shown a keen interest to engage on the plastics issue.
- What is missing still is a formal confirmation from SPC that it is backing the Plastic Free campaign. This is one of the requirements for Steyning to achieve 'Plastic Free' status according to the guidelines set down by Surfers Against Sewage.
- So Greening Steyning is asking SPC to pass a motion that:
 - Confirms it is backing for the campaign to make Steyning, Bramber and Beeding 'Plastic Free'
 - Confirms Georgia Saunders & Liz Trundle as representatives on the Steering Group.
 - Pledges to act by example and act to cut down on single use plastic from its premises and operations (the measures identified in this note already cover this).