

## NOTES FROM DARK SKIES GROUP MEETING TUESDAY 26<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2022

Present: Nigel Dodman, Derek Turner, Andrew Willemsen, Jenny Hodge, Nigel Dodman, Elizabeth Newman, Christopher Morgan, Richard Burden, Leigh Harling-Bowen.

Apologies: Phil Ram.

The meeting began with a review of the minutes of the previous meeting, and many of the points arising were carried forward into this meeting.

**\*The new Climate Change Officer for Powys CC is Ieuan Davies. Rebecca Jeremy is Economic Strategy and Climate Lead. Both work in the Regeneration Dept.**

### Main points:

1 Update on status of Whitton CC. Still no new council. Cllr Ed Jones to be contacted for an update.

2 Feedback from other CCs. Agreed that all six CCs should receive updates at their next meetings. Richard Burden informed us that Old Radnor CC liaised with the quarries from time to time, and he would inform them about our ambitions as a group in the hope that they would be supportive and helpful.

3 International Dark Skies Association (IDA). They have requested further information, including a map of the area, in order to consider our application as a group. N D to arrange this and report back.

4 Progress in Presteigne. Leigh kindly provided us with an update and a valuable insight into the amount of detailed work that has to be undertaken. It became apparent that this is no short term project! (Something we were made aware of at our very first meeting with Leigh Williams and Kerem Asfuroglu).

5 Seeking Funding. Elizabeth agreed to approach Sarah Price of Dolau for expert advice.

6 Setting realistic timelines. For consideration at next meeting following Leigh Harling-Bowen's story of Presteigne's journey, and after we get a reply from IDA.

7 Purchase of Sky Quality meters and baseline measurements. To be discussed after feedback from IDA and the 6 CCs.

8 Collating and recording data. It was suggested by Leigh that we consider using Epicollect App, which includes GPS location, date and time. Some of us have experience of using it with Citizen Science monitoring of water quality in the Wye Catchment area and confirmed its usefulness. Andrew agreed to look at it with Leigh's help.

9 Publicity. It was agreed that we should put together a press release containing our outline plan.

As the project evolves there should be a flier produced, and Mat Price would be asked to contribute night sky photographs. The design of a logo was also suggested. N D and Andrew to liaise over this.

10 Visit and outside speaker. The invitations from outside groups could be taken up in the Autumn. Leigh suggested inviting Chris and Les Fry from Newtown to our next meeting. N D to arrange.

11 Areas of responsibility. There was general agreement that we need more involvement from the communities as well as the council representatives. Members were urged to seek this out. We all agreed that community events like fetes and shows were an excellent opportunity to publicise and recruit.

Elizabeth volunteered to look at mapping (Landmap?).

Jenny would liaise with New Radnor Valley School.

NFU Cymru – N D and Leigh to talk.

Data collation – Andrew

12 AOB A discussion took place about how Bute Energy's plans for creating a huge Energy Park on Radnor Forest might affect our plans. At this stage we are seeking Dark Sky Community status and recognition. It was agreed that we should continue on that path with an eye on possible future developments

ND has spoken to Sharon Simcock of Esco's shop in New Radnor, who also runs a mobile pizza oven. She is happy to be involved with a joint effort possibly with the school in September/October where a telescope could be set up as an added attraction. This could happen in the school field but we need to speak to the school first. It is an idea that could be repeated in any of the other communities.

It only remains to thank Derek Turner once again for providing us with a very nice, comfortable venue.

Please let me know if I have missed anything or anyone out.

Best wishes

Nigel Dodman.