



<http://www.dacenvforum.org.uk>

**Dacorum Environmental Forum
Full Meeting – 21st January 2010**

MINUTES

The chairman welcomed everyone and wished them a Happy New Year then asked if we had any apologies for absence.

Apologies received from:

Cllr Herbert Chapman	Dacorum Borough Council
Cllr Alan Anderson	Dacorum Borough Council
Cllr Carol Green	Dacorum Borough Council
Cllr Fiona Guest	Dacorum Borough Council
Cllr Neil Harden	Dacorum Borough Council
Mary Dyson	Lions Club Berkhamsted
Dorothy Jackman	Hemel in Transition
Roger Hands	Water Group/Box Moor Trust
Sheila Doyle	Friends of the Earth
Douglas Walker	Resident

Attendees:

David Moore	Hemel Hempstead Society of Allotment & Leisure Gardeners (HHSALG)
Vanessa Manikin	HHSALG
Claire Covington	Dacorum Borough Council
Cllr David Nobbs	Chipperfield Parish Council
Cllr Garrick Stevens	Berkhamsted Town Council
Dennis Harvey	Hemel Nature
Emma Norrington	Groundwork/TBCC
Fleur Tucker	Berkhamsted Town Council
Gruff Edwards	New Conservation Society and DEF Vice-Chairman
Sharon Warner	HHSALG
John Warner	HHSALG
Jason Williams	Hemel in Transition
Lizzy Staincliffe	Dacorum Borough Council
Rudolph Kirst	HH GM Action Group & Kings Langley Biodynamic Group
Martin Hicks	Herts Biological Record Centre
Nicky Flynn	Dacorum Partnership Development Officer
Paul Harris	Friends of the Earth
Phil Pennington	DEF Chairman
Richard Blackburn	Dacorum Borough Council
Rudolf Kirst	Hemel Hempstead GM Action Group
Sylvia Davidson	DEF Water Group
Veronica Allan	Tring in Transition
Freda Earl	Sunnyside Allotment Society
Marion Baker	Transition Town Berkhamsted
Angela Wheeldon	Sunnyside Allotment Society
Neil Baldwin	Plot2pot
Chris Hopkins	Tring in Transition
Mary Harris	HHSALG
Peter Thring	CPRE Hertfordshire

73. Minutes of the last meeting & matters arising

- 73.1 Rudolph Kirst said that P4 56 9.2 “GM seed” should read “GM food”.
- 73.2 Garrick Stevens asked for P3 66.7 “principal” to read “principle”.
- 73.3 Gruff Edwards commented on 66.4 that responders to the East of England consultation had received an email listing the future sequence of events.
- 73.4 Richard Blackburn reported that the Regional Plan may be repaired in February. The DEF response to the recent consultation will be attached to these minutes.
- 73.5 R Kirst asked if the Sustainable Community Strategy was still alive. Nicky Flynn said yes and held up a copy of the strategy. Richard Blackburn responded that it will be refreshed later this year.
- 73.6 R Kirst asked if there was any answer whether the Council was using “Roundup”. Lizzy Staincliffe said that she had yet to find out.
- 73.7 G Stevens commented on 66.7 that the council had agreed to the principle of Eco Teams and that there was a ¼ page article in the current Dacorum Digest. He went on to say that there will be a training session by Global Action Plan for up to 50 people who wish to become Eco Team leaders at the Berkhamsted Civic Centre on 6th February 9:30 to 15:00.

74. Dacorum Partnership

- 74.1 L Staincliffe and Emma Norrington gave updates including “the Dacorum Partnership had agreed to support the 10:10 initiative and would encourage all organisations and individuals linked to the Partnership to sign up too”. L Staincliffe provided 10:10 family checklists (attached to minutes). E Norrington explained that work is continuing on forming bids for the grant money that is coming to Dacorum. DEF had submitted two ideas, one around food and one around transport. The bids would be taken to the next meeting of the Dacorum Partnership Board in early March. They also presented a copy of the Partnership’s Annual Report (attached to the minutes).
- 74.2 In response to questions from Martin Hicks and others, Nicky Flynn gave an explanation that the Dacorum Partnership was the Local Strategic Partnership and that she would be improving the block diagram in the 2009 Annual Report to show how DEF and the steering group fitted in to the Partnership (improved diagram to be attached to the minutes).
- 74.3 P Pennington stated that the DEF Steering Group should in future be acting principally as the conduit between the forum and the Dacorum Partnership and would report back to the Forum. He asked if any members had an issue with this and there were none. He then said that it was likely that the steering group would need to be expanded to cope with the extra work. It was agreed that the proposal would be brought back to the Forum at the next meeting.

75. Allotments – National Society for Allotment and Leisure Gardeners

- 75.1 P Pennington introduced Karen Kenney, East of England Representative for NSALG
- 75.2 Karen gave a presentation (notes to follow in due course) described new allotments within her area, how they were funded, what facilities were provided, and the aspiration that allotments could be beneficial to many sectors of society providing integration and therapy. A link to the community garden in Ipswich that Karen used as an example in her talk is provided <http://www.townandbridge.org.uk/garden/> She then asked for questions.

- 75.3 Dennis Harvey asked if there were still 222 people on waiting lists in Dacorum. He went on to ask if anyone from the Council could explain what the Council were doing about this. Claire Covington stated that the recommended provision should be 0.25 Hectares per 1000 people.
- 75.4 In the case of the Hemel Hempstead Allotment Society (HHAS) and the land, it was reported that the Council have stated that they will allow the use of certain land for allotment use at a peppercorn rent to the HHAS providing that they have the soil tested and create the allotments. K Kenny reported that this was contrary to the 1908 Act for provision of allotments. She stated that it is for the Council to provide suitable land to mark out the plots and to let them to those that wish to have them. All persons have a right to a full standard plot of 10 poles/rods/perches (300sq yds or 250 sq metres) indeed they are actually able to have a maximum of 40 poles etc should there be sufficient available. She suggested that the HHAS may be willing to assist with volunteer labour to mark out the plots etc.
- 75.5 She stated that the Council also has the opportunity to utilise the work for free probation scheme in the preparation of the site which benefits everyone.
- 75.6 She continued that the HHAS may after the allotments have been provided agree a devolved management arrangement whereby they take over the management of the site on behalf of the Council. The HHAS is willing to work in "partnership" with the Council to improve the site through application for funding for improved facilities etc. The Council also has the opportunity to apply for various funding for the provision of allotment facilities through locality funding, awards for all etc and the HHAS also has other possible funding opportunities.
- 75.5 Karen also stated that the recommendation now was for a lease of 14 to 35 years followed by a rolling lease. The normal annual rent was between £50 and £150.
- 75.6 R Blackburn commented that if extra land was needed for allotments, the area for Community Playing Fields was above the national average. He asked that C Covington or L Staincliffe confirm if there was a statutory or non-statutory requirement for the Council to provide.

ACTION: C Covington & L Staincliffe.

- 75.7 The NSALG web site is at <http://www.nsalg.org.uk>

76 Any Other Business

- 76.1 Marion Baker gave an update on the Sustainable Food Strategy and confirmed that DEF now have the official support of the Council for the development of a Sustainable Food Strategy for Dacorum. She thanked Councillor Bert Chapman and the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee for their support.
- 76.2 She went on to say that the Council Nursery (garden) is likely to become a site with vegetables and flowers being grown and traded and that the Sunnyside Rural Trust was taking a lead in this.
- 76.3 R Kirst gave a brief update (attached to the minutes) on several environmental issues including "Six global companies own 80% of world seed".
- 76.4 R Blackburn stated that there will be presentation to stakeholders in the Climate Change Planning Study the Herts CC have commissioned on the 25th February. He invited a representative from DEF to attend. P Pennington volunteered.

77 Meeting Dates

The next meeting of the Dacorum Environmental Forum will be on Thursday 15th April 2010 at 7.30pm in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre.

Note: The Agendas and Minutes from the Dacorum Environment Forum meetings can be found at <http://www.dacenvforum.org.uk>

The meeting closed at 9.20 pm