

## An Introduction to the *Corfe Village: Green* Initiative.

At the start of the year, a group of us got together and had a chat addressing our individual concerns regarding the state of the environment and the climate changes that we have seen in the past few years. This was abruptly put on hold due to coronavirus, but the restrictions of coronavirus have highlighted even more clearly how quickly our behaviour can change if the reason is compelling enough.

In the past few years alone, we have had a number of events which show how easy it is as a village to get cut off even if just for a few days. In the winter of 2019, we experienced wet and windy weather which left the main access into town being flooded. In the heavy snowfall in 2018, the village was cut off for some time. The recent panic buying due to the pandemic as our travel is restricted also highlight that, as a village, we need a plan B in place to help get us through any future tough times ahead.

So, we have joined together with a vision to create a 'Green' initiative incorporating ethics, community resilience, and environmental sustainability. This collaboration is called Corfe Village : Green.

We are asking residents to come together with ideas that they would like to see implemented locally. We know that as a community we can improve the lives and our environment for everyone, something that may seem difficult to achieve individually in our homes. With changing times led by the climate emergency, many of us are interested in ways to reduce unnecessary travel into town, reduce our use of plastic, change our eating habits, and be able to eat local fresh produce, and all with as little waste as possible.

Many of us do not have fruit trees, vegetable patches, compost areas that others take for granted. So, providing an area where we can come together and share knowledge and the fruits of our labour would be beneficial at a personal level and environmentally at a global level too. Something as simple as being able to provide tomatoes, salad, and herbs for the village would reduce a large volume of plastic waste generated.

Our thoughts so far are that we would like to create an extended idea of the allotment system that has worked so well in the past. To construct raised beds, have a green polytunnel that is inoffensive to the landowner and their neighbours, to erect a shed with a pitched roof so we can install gutters to collect rainfall in water butts, to install a communal compost area for green waste, and for the future, the prospect of being able to generate electricity.

We approached the Parish Council at the last meeting to introduce our thoughts and to gauge their support and we are pleased to say that they appointed an Environment Portfolio Councillor so we can work together as a village to build a more sustainable community. Our aim is to collect all our ideas together and put forward a suggested project that we would like to achieve to the Parish Council on behalf of the village. Together, we will be able access grants available that would enable the project to be successful. The project will be ongoing and forever changing but with the environment and sustainability the main driver behind decision making.

We would like to start the conversation by looking for a home for our growing project, so we are appealing to anyone who would be willing to allow access to a plot of land, approximately half an acre in size, for long term use, within easy walking distance within the village. We would love to engage villagers in discussion and receive their views and wishes to achieve a sustainable future for our village. We had initially had the idea of gauging ideas from villagers at our regular village events, but as these are not able to go ahead, it would be interesting to hear the viewpoint from villagers on a different forum instead. So please, if this article interests you and you want to help the project along the way, then please contact either Louise Cobham on [jonnieandlouise@hotmail.com](mailto:jonnieandlouise@hotmail.com) or Grace Alexander on [gracie.alexander@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:gracie.alexander@hotmail.co.uk)