



# Green Ixworth

## Newsletter

January 2023

<https://www.greenixworth.org.uk>

### Next Meeting of GI.

All the issues in this Newsletter plus others will be discussed at the **Green Ixworth AGM** at 7.00pm on **26th January** in the Methodist Hall a few yards up the hill from the Pykkerell Inn (IP31 2HH) and on the same side of the High Street. Hot drinks will be available.

Following the launch of our energy Campaign we are fortunate to have Claire Ling, Community Support Officer with Suffolk Climate Change Partnership (SCC), to make a short presentation at the meeting to let us know what the partnership is doing and how we might work better together. As well as a quick review of our work during 2022 we have some new ideas for this year and I am sure you will have even more to contribute and help us decide our priorities. We met some great people during the Energy Launch who I am sure will add a lot to our activities. We look forward to seeing you all.

### Home Energy Campaign

When we launched the campaign, we were unaware of the huge interest it would generate. Not just from the 60 or more who attended the launch but others who attended the first of the drop-in sessions at the Ixworth Library in January. More sessions are to be held on 4th Feb, 4th March and 1st April.

Bookings for the Home Heat Maps can be made with the library staff whenever the library is open. We must apologise, to those who have already applied, for any delay. It is down to illness on the part of the camera operators and the large number of applicants. We have now bought a second camera thanks to past funding from Ixworth Association and Cllr John Griffiths, so we may catch up.

### Good news on Heat Pump Prices

British Gas have joined Octopus Energy in offering air source heat pump installations from as little as £3,000.

### How are other countries doing?

**France** has recently passed a law requiring car parks with over 80 places, to be equipped with overhead solar power panels. Many French supermarkets already do this for economic reasons. Large car parks, over 400 places, have three years to complete the program with smaller ones five years. The French Government believes this action will generate 11 gigawatts of electricity.

**Greece** last October met 100% of its electricity needs were from renewable sources for five hours.

**Austria** is targeting 1 million roofs to produce solar electricity and 100% renewable electricity by 2030. €1billion annual government funding will be provided for renewables.

**Finland** has built the first “sand battery” which uses surplus renewable energy to heat sand in a large container. Heat is then drawn off to heat homes on a heating network as and when needed.

## **Otters**

Two otters have recently been spotted by Hempyard Bridge. Good to know that last year’s drought has not had a permanent impact on numbers in the Black Bourn. It would be helpful if dog owners took care in letting their pets off the lead near the bridge so as not to discourage the otters.

## **Green Redgrave**

Our friends in newly established Green Redgrave have just completed their first Project and have planted 3,500 trees in two locations. Didn’t they do well!

## **Big Garden Birdwatch**

This annual count is essential for keeping track of what is happening to our Garden Birds. It is the largest citizen science wildlife survey in the UK and takes place over the weekend of 27th to 29th of January. Simple to take part in just download details and the report form from:

**[rspb.org.uk/birdwatch](https://www.rspb.org.uk/birdwatch)**. You just need to count the birds in your garden for one hour at some time over the weekend.

## **EDF Sizewell – Pakenham Fen**

The legislation granting permission to go ahead with the new Sizewell C Nuclear power Station is in the form of a Statutory Instrument, the normal method of producing the laws which run our lives. Its impact on ourselves is significant in two ways. First a new high voltage grid line will be built to the East of us. Second the construction of the nuclear station will destroy Fen Pasture bordering the RSPB Minsmere Reserve and indirectly damage the water flow in the remaining reserve.

EDF are therefore obliged to create fen meadow elsewhere to mitigate the loss. The three areas selected are two small ones in Benhall and Halesworth and the largest at Pakenham. The new sites are in total, approximately ten times the area of that being replaced. It will take 10 years or so for the new fen to be effective so a bigger area is needed in the short term. The new fen runs to the west of and along the Pakenham Stream between Fen Road and Thurston Road. To recreate the fen meadow some 50cm of dried out peaty soil which does not readily absorb water will be removed. The surface will then be sculpted and some of soil removed at Sizewell, transported to Pakenham along with turf containing original plants and seeds. The existing fen and mowing’s of local fen meadow will provide additional plants, seeds, fungi and invertebrates and help them all to thrive.

The soil removal with less replacement will bring the soil surface closer to the ground water level. The water table will be maintained by building what is effectively a very low dam across the valley with two weirs controlling and maintaining the water level. Water in the Pakenham Stream and the central drain should not be affected. The existing summertime surface water extraction licence will continue, removing water from the new fen area. What impact this will have on the volume of water entering the Black Bourn is unclear but is likely to be reduced, we have asked for clarification.

The 23,000 m<sup>3</sup> material to be moved will be by 20 tonne lorries over a 6 day a week, 16 week summer campaign, bringing Sizewell C soil to Pakenham and taking away old material. EDF estimate this will involve 48 return trips a day, 96 movements. Removing approx. 15,000m<sup>3</sup> and replacing it with about 8,000m<sup>3</sup> It is assumed that this will take place in 2026, unless a more local destination for the removed soil becomes available, not requiring access to Sizewell, then work could take place much earlier.

All Sizewell C HGV traffic has to use designated routes. For Pakenham this involves lorries using the A12 to the A14 to Bury St Edmunds, at junction 43, then the A143 towards Ixworth, turning right into Thurston Road. The access point for the work site is about one mile towards Thurston and beyond the windmill. We are concerned that this involves heavy lorries turning across an opposing traffic lane at the ghost junction into Thurston Road, which is hazardous. We have suggested to Suffolk CC that the route uses the Mulley's roundabout so any turns will be left. We understand that Ixworth PC will be asking for a similar arrangement.

There has been no effective consultation over Sizewell, in spite of the enquiry, as the Infrastructure Commission, responsible for planning permission on such large projects, properly, on the evidence submitted, refused the application largely because of a shortage of fresh water, something we can well understand. The government overruled them and granted permission, subsequently enforced by a Statutory Instrument in Parliament.

If it were not for quick action by Cllr Joanna Spicer spotting the consultation with Pakenham, neither we nor the Ixworth Parish Council would have known anything about this. The application was for land within the parish of Pakenham so they were a statutory consultee but not Ixworth, regardless of the impact on the river or the roads in Ixworth. All part of our tortured planning system.

More details including a helpful summary with links and maps from SCC plus our presentation to the Ixworth and Ixworth Thorpe Parish Council are available on our website <https://www.greenixworth.org.uk>.