

6 inches of Soil

That, along with a reasonable supply of water, is all that keeps our various global communities fed. Overuse and misuse is threatening that shallow layer of soil.

On Saturday 13th September in Ixworth Village Hall, Green Ixworth, with Friends of Ixworth Library (FOIL) and Suffolk Wildlife Trust (SWT) showed the film "6 inches of soil" along with a panel of local experts from Little Haugh Farm, Norton, Wyken Vineyards, Stanton and the Farm Liaison Officer from SWT. The audience of 50 or so local residents were both interested and concerned for the consequences of our historic poor treatment of our soil.

Global warming has disrupted our weather and rainfall leading to higher temperatures, floods and drought. The message of the the film and discussion was clear. First to help stop and then decrease those higher temperatures helped by recovering the quality of soil using natural methods of reintroducing carbon and life which healthy soil requires. Techniques such as regenerative farming using few if any chemicals and stopping the damage to soil structure caused by ploughing and heavy tilling are available already being practised in West Suffolk to regenerate soil on large as well a smaller farms.

After Drinks and Cake provided by FOIL, the discussion ranged widely over several related issues which are concerning to all of us. The higher price of food which climate change is causing; the need to ensure we have a national and indeed international Policies to secure our future supplies; a change in our diet to reduce meat intake which uses huge quantities of feed much of which could feed humans directly. A third of our food is just wasted.

Although the supermarkets have in the past reduced the cost of food this has led to severe financial problems for producers and failed to sell local produce, fresher and generally nutritionally better than imports from countries such as Brazil, Spain and France with bigger increases in temperature than the UK. These countries are the biggest food suppliers to the UK and with others supply more than 50% of our food. We need to be more seasonal in our tastes.

Lots to be done by farmers, their customers - individual and commercial, governments and international bodies. In West Suffolk we can join with those already caring to make a change.

Roger Spiller
Chair Green Ixworth.
39 Micklesmere Drive
Ixworth
07585945372