

**Minutes: Climate Change Forum
8 September 2026
MS Teams**

Attendees:

Cllr Robin Betts
Sarah Barker (SBa)
Jennifer Bate (JB)
Cllr Steve Crisp (Cllr Crisp)
Gill Fox (GF)
Cllr Anita Oakley (Cllr Oakley)
Norman Taylor (NT)
Cllr Tom Shelley (Cllr Shelley)
Min Stacpoole (MS)
Louise Stewart (LS)
Lyndsay Wayman-Rook (LWR)

Apologies:

Helen Longley
Fran Long

1. Welcome and apologies

1.1. The Chair welcomed attendees and noted apologies.

2. Minutes and actions from previous meeting

- 2.1. Membership and circulation lists will be reviewed on an ongoing basis.
- 2.2. LS confirmed that recycling-related correspondence previously requested by Cllr Shelley had been re-sent.
- 2.3. LS confirmed that the school plastics poster competition was launched and promoted to approximately 50 primary schools before the summer holidays, with a reminder issued in September. It was proposed that entries be judged at the next Climate Change Forum meeting.
- 2.4. Members discussed opportunities to further promote the competition through parish councils, schools and local community networks.
- 2.5. LS advised that publicly available recycling information from neighbouring authorities and local supermarkets had been reviewed following previous discussions on recycling communications.

3. Key items for discussion

- 3.1 Plastics and recycling
 - 3.1.1. LS shared a summary of information from a review of recycling information published by local authorities and supermarkets. Although differences in terminology were identified, recycling guidance was broadly consistent across local authorities reviewed.
 - 3.1.2. Members discussed soft plastics recycling, including end destinations for materials collected by supermarkets.

3.1.3. LWR provided insight into recycling processes, highlighting challenges associated with recycling soft plastics and contamination within recycling streams.

3.1.4. Members discussed the importance of prioritising waste reduction before recycling and improving public understanding of the waste hierarchy.

3.1.5. Cllr Oakley suggested further investigation through the Overview and Scrutiny Committee into:

- Soft plastics recycling
- Textile recycling
- End destinations of recyclable materials
- Contamination rates within recycling collections

3.2 Community events and engagement

3.2.1. LS provided an update on attempts to identify local community events where climate-related information and projects could be promoted.

3.2.2. Members discussed opportunities to strengthen engagement with parish councils and local organisations, particularly following increased public interest resulting from the recent summer weather.

3.2.3. LWR advised that future litter-picking events were planned through the Countryside Partnerships and that opportunities may exist to share Climate Change Forum messaging through these activities.

3.2.4. Members discussed recent screenings of the National Emergency Briefing film and the strong community response generated by these events. Further screenings were noted in Rusthall and Tonbridge during September. Members discussed how such events may help support new local climate and nature groups and encourage greater public engagement with climate action.

3.2.5. LS advised that details of additional climate-related projects and school engagement opportunities would be circulated following the meeting.

3.3 Community hubs, repair cafés and reuse

3.3.1. NT provided an update on the Tonbridge Repair Café, which will resume following its summer break at St Stephen's Church.

3.3.2. LS highlighted the Kent Community Waste Prevention Fund, which may provide support for repair cafés and reuse initiatives.

3.3.3. NT also highlighted the newly established Community Sustainability Support Network England (CSSN England), which aims to share information on funding opportunities, projects and sustainable community initiatives.

3.3.4. Members discussed bicycle reuse and repair schemes linked to Allington Household Waste Recycling Centre.

4. Round-table updates

4.1. JB highlighted climate-related projects being progressed in Hadlow and emerging climate group activity in Tonbridge.

4.2. The Chair highlighted the forthcoming Green Business Grant scheme, with the next application round opening on 17 September 2026.

5. Action Summary

No.	Action	Lead
1	Circulate plastics poster competition flyer and brief to Forum Members, and list of schools.	LS
2	Circulate plastics poster competition flyer and brief to parish councils, Hadlow Group.	LS
3	Promote plastics poster competition through networks.	All
4	Explore potential Overview and Scrutiny review regarding recycling processes, recycling rates, contamination rates and end destinations of recyclable materials including soft plastics (Supermarkets), textiles, refrigerators.	Cllr Oakley / GF
5	Share details of forthcoming Countryside Partnership events and engagement opportunities.	LWR
6	Investigate current bicycle refurbishment and reuse arrangements associated with Allington HWRC.	LWR
7	Circulate details of additional climate-related events, projects and school engagement opportunities for members to share.	LS
8	Promote Green Business Grant scheme opening on 17 September 2026.	All

6. Meeting closed

The meeting closed at 7:32pm.