

# District Councillor's Report – August 2023

Dear Residents,

I thought that this month I would focus my report on Global Warming and nature recovery. The first three weeks of July have been the warmest three-week period on record and the month is on track to be the hottest July and the hottest month on record. These temperatures have been related to heatwaves in large parts of North America, Asia and Europe, which along with wildfires in countries including Canada and Greece, have had major impacts on people's health, the environment and economies. This seems different from the far wetter and cooler summer experienced in Buckden, Southoe and Diddington so far, but I note that:

- The UK's climate continues to change. Recent decades have been warmer, wetter and sunnier than the 20th century.
- The observations show that in the UK extremes of temperature are changing much faster than the average temperature.
- The UK has warmed at a broadly consistent but slightly higher rate than the observed change in global mean temperature.
- The UK's record warm year of 2022 and unprecedented July heatwave were both made more likely by climate change.

Ref: <https://rmets.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/joc.8167>

Ref: <https://public.wmo.int/en/media/press-release/july-2023-set-be-hottest-month-record>

It seems that eating less meat may be a really good way of reducing our Greenhouse Gas emissions. An analysis in Nature indicates that substituting only 10% of daily caloric intake from beef and processed meat for fruits, vegetables, nuts, legumes and selected seafood could offer substantial health improvements of 48 min gained per person per day and a 33% reduction in dietary carbon footprint.

Ref: <https://www.nature.com/articles/s43016-021-00343-4>

## Putting Nature on the Road to Recovery with a Local Nature Recovery Strategy

The Combined Authority has been selected as part of a group of 48 individual local authorities set to receive £307,974 from a funding pot of £14 million to develop a Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS).

Local Nature Recovery Strategies were introduced in the Environment Act 2021 as a new system of spatial strategies for nature. They will make use of existing partnerships with local authorities, landowners, stakeholders, NGOs, businesses, charities and community groups to write a local strategy that is collaborative and locally led.

The strategy will support efforts to recover nature across England; help planning authorities incorporate nature recovery objectives; support the delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain; and help deliver our national environment targets, driving a more coordinated and focussed action to help nature.

With the best ways to support nature recovery depending on local geography, Local Nature Recovery Strategies will help communities map out the action needed in their area to restore nature and help reverse nature's ongoing decline. The strategy will also underpin existing projects being led

by the Combined Authority to strengthen nature restoration including the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Fund for Nature and the support for Natural Cambridgeshire.

The Combined Authority will work collaboratively with other local organisations, with input encouraged from across the public, private and voluntary sectors to establish shared proposals for what action should be taken and where. Cambridgeshire County Council will lead on preparation of the LNRS, with Natural Cambridgeshire working alongside them as a key strategic partner. Each council in the area will also have a formal role in the preparation of the strategy as supporting authorities.

### Plants for Moths

I was recently made aware that a housing estate has more biodiversity than an equivalent field of wheat due to the use of pesticides and herbicides on our agricultural land. In summary, our gardens are fantastic source of biodiversity and vitally important to insect and bird-life. I have been so pleased to see villagers turning their lawns into meadows, cutting their grass far less and leaving a few logs to rot.

Our pollinators are of vital importance, and I note that Moths can sometimes be overlooked in favour of their generally more colourful cousins, the butterflies. But moths provide important services too: as well as pollinating our night-flowering plants, they play an important role in pollinating crops and wildflowers; complementing the services of daytime pollinators. Moths are vital players in a healthy ecosystem and a valuable food source for garden birds.

Many of our moths are in severe decline so, if you can, please try to grow some moth loving plants in your garden. Here's a top 10:

1. Evening primrose (*Oenothera*)
2. Honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*)
3. Summer-flowering jasmines (e.g. *Jasminum officinale*)
4. White campion (*Silene latifolia*)
5. Sweet rocket (*Hesperis matronalis*)
6. Foxgloves (*Digitalis*)
7. Lady's bedstraw (*Galium verum*)
8. Mullein (*Verbascum thapsus*, *V. bombyciferum*)
9. Mint (*Mentha* species)
10. Mixed native trees or hedge

Ref: <https://www.rhs.org.uk/wildlife/plants-for-moths>

Of the above I would say that the herb Mint is the easiest to grow. Not only is it great for moths – it will provide you with mint leaves for your potatoes, for Mint Tea and, if you are partial to a cocktail, for your Mojitos!

Wishing you well,

*Martin*

**Martin Hassall**

District Councillor for Buckden, Diddington and Southoe

Executive Councillor for Corporate & Shared Services - Phone: 07480 798 342

Email: [martin.hassall@huntingdonshire.gov.uk](mailto:martin.hassall@huntingdonshire.gov.uk)