**APPENDIX 4**

**BRA AGM – 18 APRIL 2023**

**GUEST SPEAKER: JOHN SLEIGH - BACKWELL CLIMATE ACTION 2023**

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity of speaking to you. Especially to Chris our group member and the committee.

When I was teaching PSHE years ago the threat was AIDS, and the aim was to enable students to make an informed decision if a situation arose. We never knew the outcome but always had the view that if our teaching saved one life it was worthwhile. We are faced by a situation of which we know the likely outcome and we know what we have to do to make change.

BRA does a great job of representing the views of residents with regard to local planning issues These are in specific places at specific times, and they are within set boundaries.

Covid 19 has taught us that some threats do not respect boundaries even when we have what we consider to be good services of health and social support. We found controlling the spread and impact difficult. Indeed, some African countries had a better response due the experience of recent epidemics of Ebola and cholera, even to the extent of sending doctors to support European countries.

So, what of climate change? It too does not respect boundaries…last summer we saw drought and fires across S and W Europe, with fires even in the UK near settlements. There were also record temperatures. River levels remain low, are producing less HEP and for irrigation.

Now is teacher time.

I was born in 1950 when the world’s population was 2.5 bn. What figure was passed towards the end of 2022? 8 billion A 3-fold increase in 72 years…. that means more food crops needed…more urban growth…production…consumption. More pollution…and not just 3-fold increase. There is bound to be an effect on the Earth’s natural systems.

There are about 6 beekeepers in Backwell producing honey,,,some bees are loving my lavender. However … when was the last time you had to clear your windscreen of insect splatter? We have had little to report for the wasp survey for at least the last 3 years. In 2017 a German study confirmed that there had been a massive decline in the number of flying insects in Europe: their numbers had fallen by 75% over a period of 27 years. I first visited Bristol in 1973 and leaving temple meads on a Sunday evening was marked by the starling murmuration …. now we have to visit Somerset levels. Between 2015 and 2020, 24% of species increased, 28% showed little change and 48% declined. Woodland birds continue to fare the worst, with a 12% decline between 2015 and 2020.

We know what we need to do to bring about change and Covid showed that we could make drastic change in a short time when instructed. How do we know? David Attenborough tells us …so it must be true Waitrose tells us how much food we waste Energy prices tell us to turn down the thermostat Charity shops tell us to recycle clothes we wear 10 times or less Oat milk tells us by tasting better in coffee than cows milk.

There were 2 standout moments for me. The first was Martin Canning comment on the Climate emergency. Second was when I read that the average use of an electric drill is 15 minutes. I knew I had to do more.

We know what we need to do but when are we going to start making the change needed for our children, grandchildren and those that come after. Do just one thing to make a start. We all need to make changes to our lifestyles in order to make a difference. There are plenty of ways but Take the Jump was recommended to me by a group I spoke with when walking round the docks a couple of weeks ago. The Earth Day was very well attended last Saturday with promising outcomes for individuals as well as excellent contacts to take actions forwards.

Watch this space!

Thank You

**Slide 1**

**OPTIMISM + URGENCY = ACTION**

“The truth is, every one of us, no matter who we are or where we live, can and must play a part in restoring nature.

I am hopeful for the future, because although nature is in crisis, now is the time for action, and together we can save it.”

**David Attenborough March 2023**

“You cannot go through a single day without having an impact on the world around you.

What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make.”

**Jane Goodall. Naturalist 2017**

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

**Margaret Mead Anthropologist**

“Cultural change starts once 25% of a population join in. Spreading the word is then easier and more effective.”

**Rethink Climate. BBC R4 January 2023**

“What are you going to be able to tell your grandchildren you did to help stop climate change?”

**Martin Canning. Climate change meeting 2019**

**Double click on PDF link below to see leaflet distributed to every household in Backwell & available on the evening of the AGM**

