Together for Good - Building our resilience for climate-related chaos



Last November, our town Bradford on Avon, was flooded, and cut off for 24 hours in all directions. Flooding has happened before, but this was more severe. People realised that it was likely to happen again, and we could be cut off again, due to floods, or trees felled by storms blocking roads.

Whatever we manage to do to cut emissions, we are going to need to build our resilience to climate chaos and try to adapt our lives, our homes and our towns to survive and thrive in the future.



I decided it was time to bring people together to talk about this, and our May meeting of Climate Friendly Bradford on Avon was titled as above. I was delighted that 34 people turned up. I introduced the topic very briefly by speaking about the latest report of the government-appointed Climate Change Committee, on the preparedness of government and the country for adapting to climate change. Of 46 measures, including energy security, water, and food security, none scored well.

The conclusion to draw from the disastrous unpreparedness of our government is that local communities will need to draw on their own resources to be prepared for what is surely coming. How to prepare our homes for colder weather, or a winter power cut? Or for sustained temperatures of well over 30 degrees? What if a power cut or storm-felled trees prevented delivery of food to our supermarkets? Or maybe another cyber attack on the Coop, as happened recently, resulting in many empty shelves?

I asked people to choose one of three topics to focus on: preparedness in the home; preparedness by the wider community including Town Council; and identifying skills and resources that we would need if government could not provide services for various reasons. People worked enthusiastically for 45 minutes in small groups before sharing their ideas in plenary. There is enthusiasm for following the event with a day for people in the town to find out what would be good to have in the home, and a few of us will develop the ideas for community action further, working with the Town Council, for inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan.

Rachel Berger