

Statement at Council 21/1/21

I made a statement at Council regarding some of the issues that rural residents face which have a direct impact on Climate, Ecology and Sustainability.

I asked questions at Cabinet which were quite frankly, just dismissed. It is a real shame that there is a Can't-Do attitude.

I am here to ask you to assist and recommend that these issues are discussed and moved towards a Can-Do attitude.

The issues are:

1 Light pollution both commercial and residential.

Some commercial premises have high wattage lights on 24/7 spewing out light across the valley. Not ecologically or environmentally friendly. It has a real affect on humans – keeping them awake at night, let alone the impact this has on ecology, including some rare bats species..

Residential buildings also spewing out light. I'm told we cannot put on conditions for small extensions, it is too expensive to add mitigation. 7 rural parishes have a Neighbourhood plan with dark skies policies that cannot be rigorous implemented.

2 Tarmac/block paving drives –rural villages have drives where there is little greenery. There is massive water run off into our major arterial routes.

I would like to suggest where differences can be made in the spirit of helping:

1. Ensure that commercial premises comply with their conditions and prioritise enforcement. Ensure that pressure is kept up so Planning applications are put in without delay. Utilise Parish/Town and Ward Cllrs to help.
2. Put in conditions for extensions on the edge of villages or where they overlook green fields/ecological areas to include automated blinds and velux blinds in roof lights. Not expensive.
3. Recommend to Cabinet to include grass drives with grids when lowering curbs so that our rural village drives aren't tarmacked over.

4. Please add your voices to support small market gardens with viable living spaces to make them more sustainable. I know of planning applications turned down on Green Belt issues.
5. I urge you to ensure that huge renewable energy solutions are not situated in one locality in rural areas. We already know of about 3 potential sites and they are enormous 58 hectares plus. Just because they are big, outside Bath and meet our Climate Emergency targets doesn't make it right.

I said on Thursday that policies shouldn't be all or nothing or predominately borne by one locality, but they **should** be very creative.