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The Time is Now - virtual mass environmental parliamentary lobby on the 30th June

First, yes I have signed up for The Time is Now lobby, including the all day Zoom 'main stage' which features speakers like Chris Packham and Caroline Lucas. I've emailed my MP, James Cartlidge, twice and am still waiting for a reply! I can certainly provide feedback.

Secondly, I'd be happy to keep in touch and share news about the initiatives/actions the post of climate ambassador has enabled and encouraged within Suffolk West Federation, though sadly there's not much to report as yet.

I haven't really got off the ground across the Federation, which is probably because becoming a CA coincided with becoming President of Glemsford WI; I'd only been a committee member for a year when that happened, and had only completely left teaching (primary) the previous summer, so there was a lot to learn!

However, since attending the mass lobby in London last year, and becoming a CA despite having missed the training sessions, I held a meeting on climate change with my own WI last August. As a result of that meeting our members asked Glemsford Parish Council to declare a climate emergency, which they did, and I agreed to chair the climate working group. There have been several village initiatives tied to that group, including setting up a village Facebook platform, Greening Glemsford, so fairly time consuming.

This year we invited our Gainsborough Group of WIs to join an afternoon meeting crafting green hearts for a Climate Coalition Show the Love display in Glemsford Surgery, which then moved to the village library and finally to the church! We had 4 visitors, not a great response but I was so pleased they made the effort to travel here and take part. I also went into the village school and helped children make a contribution to the display.

A spin off from the PC working group has been Community Organiser training through Cambridge Climate Emergency group (pure chance, saw an 'ad' on Facebook). Then I read in WI Life about the great things other CAs were doing; one was Jill Bruce, Essex Federation WI, and I met her at an Extinction Rebellion meeting in Colchester, when she was speaking about how to lobby your MP! She invited me to join a meeting of Essex CAs just before lockdown and they have been a revelation!

Jill is lead climate ambassador and they now have 18 CAs, including the Federation Chair, Jan Curtis. They are so inspiring. I realise I need to be more 'out there' to galvanise support in our own Federation, so made a small start recently when I submitted a short article (on less lawn mowing to encourage wild flowers) for the fabulous email magazine The Hive.

I'm still thinking what to do next to engage with all the WI groups in our Federation...maybe a mass emailing (I expect the office could circulate something for me) with updates on current climate change issues. I would be happy to do a presentation to a group of WIs if they were keen! Essex Federation's campaign this year is to revive SOS for Honeybees. They've planted 2,268 trees and have been selling wild flower seeds in their HQ shop. They have also made efforts to make their HQ more 'green' so maybe I should find out what's happening at our HQ?

So, once I've actually got something to report on, I'd be happy to join one of your PA committee meetings!