

Notes of Climate Solutions group discussions Thursday 4th April 2024

We chatted about the wet weather, signs of spring, wildflower meadows and the possibility of a site visit to see Bowber Head Farm at Ravenstonedale. Looking at the Cumbria Wildlife Trust website, it suggests the hay meadows will be at their best in mid-late June.

We discussed an article about regenerative farming practices that prioritise soil health and natural systems rather than the production of arable crops and livestock. One farmer in Somerset has extracted himself from traditional supply chains for his wheat, introduced grass-fed pigs to restore the soil, and has developed a local 'circular' economy with local mills and bakeries, and with independent butchers and restaurants who buy his pigs.

There are many positive stories in the article even though it concludes that food supply chains in the UK are not well equipped to deal with small-scale production - <https://www.positive.news/environment/agriculture/spotlight-on-soil-farming-returns-to-its-roots/>

Some of the background to the current academic debate around a possible start date for the Anthropocene (man-made) geological epoch was considered. The differing points of view are explored in the article - <https://theconversation.com/the-anthropocene-is-not-an-epoch-but-the-age-of-humans-is-most-definitely-underway-224495>

There has been a recent contact about our paused 'Pollinator Park' proposal. We did say originally that we hoped to plant a site for public enjoyment in or around Barnard Castle but we have had no success promoting the idea of other organisations applying for grants for the potential sites we identified. It may be that the suggested farm project could fund itself.

Next Climate Solutions meeting: 10am Thursday 2nd May, when we will discuss changing weather patterns, particularly in the Arctic. If you would like to join us please contact the convenor, Kate Bailey.

Reminder for the Geography Group meeting for May 16th - Chris Greenwell, Head of Dept of Chemistry at Durham University will talk about "A Time of Waste: Geoscience and the Circular Economy" - *"As we enter an age where both industry and the public are increasingly aware of, and increasingly aspire to, reducing waste from processes, and reducing their environmental footprint, the idea of re-using what hitherto had been problematic wastes in an useful way has become more common place."*