

Local Climate Action Group:

outline plan for group action

January 2021

Following the formation of the local Climate Action Group, it is useful to develop a number of working groups which help to both spread the load and enable people to work on the topics they are most interested in. Having different topics for action is also useful to reaching out into local communities and bringing more collaborators onboard. This approach can also be a tool to help enlist local people and councillors- town, parish and county, by indicating limits on the time required.

Each working group should develop its own role within its broad remit, particularly looking at best practice and relevant projects from other councils and municipalities, and researching relevant online sources.

Cornwall Council has a useful page on Climate Action <https://letstalk.cornwall.gov.uk/carbon-neutral-cornwall> and also see the Cornwall Climate Action Network Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/CornwallCAN> We now have 415 members. For other inspiration and resources from Friends of the Earth see - <https://takeclimateaction.uk/>

It is helpful to progress to set out a range of aims and objectives including tasks which can be achieved in each of the short, medium and longer terms.

Main aims

Generally, the aim is to help move the local area towards zero carbon in line with the science and ensuring wider environmental objectives and social justice are always part of the process. Tackling climate change will also assist increasing community cohesion, local resilience and job creation. Some useful tools to ensure that the work that you do has the widest impact include:

Doughnut Economics – pioneered by Kate Raworth (<https://www.kateraworth.com/doughnut/>), offers a ‘compass for human progress this century’, a model which will help us meet the needs of all within the means of the planet. See what Cornwall Doughnut Collective are doing here: <http://www.cafedisruptif.com/autumn-2020-eco-nomics-disrupted--the-cornwall-doughnut-collective.html>

Ashen Co-Benefits toolkit - <https://ashden.org/climate-action-co-benefits-toolkit/>

There are many sources of information to help group members get started and to help with methods and motivation over what can be a long journey. There are lots of useful resources on **climate communication** here: <https://climateoutreach.org/>

Always remember that we can all help move our society towards a more sustainable future and reduce the chances of the climate chaos we are presently headed towards.

Each group will be different and have its own main objectives which are right for them, within the overall aim of climate action.

Letting a thousand flowers bloom is the best way to a beautiful meadow.

Contents

1	Steering Group.....	3
2	Green Spaces/land and sea uses	4
3	Food and growing	5
4	Energy & transport.....	6
5	Consumption & waste.....	7
6	Local engagement	8

1 Steering Group

This is the location for the overall approach and agreeing targets, topics, planning actions and consists of the chairs of each group plus others as deemed necessary

1.1 Remit

Agree overall direction and the limit of carbon reductions to be considered. Agree general approaches to action and include finance raising actions

Main point for general lobbying and wider regional/national focussed action

1.2 Potential actions

- **Local carbon audit**
 - the energy audit is more accurate than land use emissions or the carbon emissions from goods and food imports, so an energy audit to estimate around 75% of local emissions is a good starting place
 - land use emissions and the carbon in goods and food imports are likely to be using national or international figures and hence are much less locally accurate, but still can be large
- **Define the local Vision & carbon reduction targets**
 - this can be a major piece of work and involve the local council, wider community and potentially schools, businesses etc
 - needs to include the wider issues of local resilience and supply chains for important supplies such as food and energy
 - should include ideas and actions for local involvement, social justice, improving local environment and both short and longer term actions
 - Transition Towns backcasting methods can be really useful to help define the Vision
 - work with local communities on both positive and negative impacts in developing actions on the Vision
 - generate a local idea of the “allowable carbon allowance” per person to aim for in tpa CO2e.
- **Develop household level plans and actions with each Working Group**
 - Suggest suitable actions for each main type of household
 - Cover each working group topics
- **Develop communications with wider area organisations**
 - Cornwall Council, SWW, Cornwall Wildlife Trust, local large landowners, local large businesses with a wider area of interest
 - lobby for policy changes, get to know politicians, consult to push for climate and ecological action
 - work on finance raising for projects, investigate new sources of finance and income generation
 - relates largely to the communications and outreach group.

2 Green Spaces/land and sea

2.1 Remit

Work on green spaces, land and water issues, include greening the urban environment

Work with local organisations to develop projects and raise interest and local involvement

2.2 Local actions

- **Develop a local action plan for green regeneration**
 - Work with local councils and other public and private sector bodies to stop pesticide and herbicide use, reduce grass cutting frequency, encourage widespread wild flowers and develop community initiatives
 - Prepare an audit of local green spaces and their owners
- **Set up community fruit and nut orchards, woodlands and open spaces**
 - Work with local landowners to develop community access for food growing and trees- nurseries and fruit and nut plantings
 - Work with local farmers to encourage hedgerow widening & other regenerative approaches
 - Encourage local groups to plant more locally relevant trees for wildlife, food and beauty
- **Engage with communities on the importance of green spaces**
 - Even very small spaces can be helpful and encourage local involvement
 - Develop local green spaces “action crews”

3 Food and growing

3.1 Remit

Agriculture and land use create around one quarter of local carbon emissions, so are important to the journey to carbon zero.

Bringing the message to the local community about the high carbon and environmental costs of the food we eat and how to improve this situation.

Suggesting and instigating actions to increase local supplies with higher environmental credentials, shorter supply chains and local markets.

Increase local household involvement in growing and buying local food.

Exploring successful examples elsewhere

Joining with other area groups to create a wider food region

3.2 Actions

- **Develop a local action plan with farmers, growers and the local market to increase local supplies**
 - Build on progress made during the pandemic
 - Increase access to local food supplies via existing/developing online & local market tools
 - Work with local fishers to get fish to local customers early
 - Propose community actions on local food
 - Work with large organisations to purchase their food locally
- **Work to develop more allotment space locally**
 - Approach local councils and landowners
 - Survey to determine likely demand
- **Develop wider messages about the carbon cost of food and how to reduce it**
 - High carbon cost of imported food (2.5tpa CO2e per person)
 - Reduced carbon foods ie local and more plant based
 - Relationship between soil & farm needs and local food of all types
 - Importance of soil health and human health
 - How to reduce food waste
 - Show examples of success
- **Food poverty action plan**
- **Develop a local regenerative farming plan**
 - With local farmers and growers, Wildlife Trust & landowners
 - Show how it works for farmers and growers
 - Check out examples and successes – eg Nourish Scotland, Oxford Real Farming Conference, Transition Network, Regenerativefoodandfarming.co.uk.

4 Energy & transport

4.1 Remit

Energy action is vital as the use of fossil fuel locally accounts for around three quarters of the local emissions of greenhouse gases. Therefore, changing all local energy use to renewable energy supplies makes a massive step towards zero carbon.

Aim to set targets and agree overall energy actions within the group and the Action Plan process, as well as integrate the energy actions with other groups

4.2 Actions

- **Carry out a local carbon audit of energy demand and supply**
 - Vital to understand the key actions required to achieve zero carbon energy
 - Cornwall Council matches crowdfunding for carbon audits and action plan development
 - Usually, oil is the main supply of energy to an area in Cornwall
- **Develop local plan for the journey to carbon zero**
 - Switch to renewable electricity supplies
 - Work with local businesses and householders to reduce demand
 - Install LEDs, efficient appliances & motors
 - Insulate and draught proof homes
 - Determine local renewable energy resource potential
 - Work with transport providers on increased public transport options
 - Work with councils on options for more active travel including cargo bike parking for local deliveries
- **Work up renewable energy project(s) for community ownership**
 - Once project ideas are developed the Rural Community Energy Fund can cover the consultancy costs to progress projects
 - Develop ideas such as an ebike lending library, to encourage their take-up
- **Develop local awareness raising and education initiatives**
 - Group advice on insulating curtains, LEDs, low energy appliances, loft insulation etc
 - Practical working groups on window, chimney and door draught proofing
 - Research local fuel poverty and actions to combat it
 - Promote car sharing and other low carbon transport options
 - Encourage no fly ideas

5 Consumption & waste

Consumption of goods and the waste when they are thrown away is a massive source of carbon emissions in their manufacture and transport to us.

The UK imports large amounts of goods and services which include “embodied carbon” – ie that used to manufacture and transport the goods to us.

Imported goods average around 5 tonnes pa of CO₂e per person in UK, with another 5 tonnes CO₂e pa for UK goods and services- excluding food.

Imported food is around 2.5 tpa CO₂e per person in UK.

5.1 Remit

The carbon content of goods and services in the local area and methods to reduce them locally.

Awareness raising on the impact of new goods in relation to their climate impact, determining general principles as there are many uncertainties in this field.

Local waste arisings and how to reduce them

5.2 Actions

- **Research and co-operation on the carbon content of common new goods and their local CO₂e tonnage**
 - Examples to include are new cars, mobile phones, large fridges, new clothes etc eg a new large car is c. 30 tonnes of CO₂e ie 30 years of an individual “carbon allowance”, whereas a small one is around 6 tonnes CO₂e
 - Can be difficult to obtain reliable figures: co-operate with other groups and accept uncertainties
- **Action plan to reduce purchase of new stuff**
 - Promotion of secondhand sales of more things
 - Encouragement of local manufacture with local materials
 - Local library of tools etc to reduce need for new
 - Set up repair café, and skills sharing
- **Action plan for waste reduction**
 - Promote beach cleans, reduction of single use plastics
 - Work with Cornwall Council to appoint local recycling champions
 - Promote refill shopping
 - Work with the Food group on reducing food waste

6 Local engagement

6.1 Remit

This group should be responsible for all aspects of ongoing communications between the Action Group and other organisations such as the local council, the wider community and its many groups and interests

Social media, website, press and radio are potential routes as well as local meeting places and via other community groups.

It is vital that this group liaises constantly with the topic groups to ensure clear communications and messages to all outside bodies and within the Action Group itself. The relationship with the Steering Group is also important to avoid overlap and potential confusion.

6.2 Actions

- **Set up a reliable and regular system for exchanging information within the Action Group**
 - Agree policies and individual responsibilities for external communications
- **Set up regular external communications**
 - Set up appropriate social media platforms
 - Ensure that regular messages are placed on these platforms and relaying a consistent message
 - Ensure that communications include a reliable contact person
 - Locate appropriate other local information sources and outreach organisations in community, business and the public sector
- **Use any and all local means to communicate**
 - Run campaigns in short life locations eg posters in shops

Use local events as “hooks” to base actions and messages

 - Encourage individual and group action via for example the Climate Vision 10 Pledges, Eco-churches scheme, SWW Upstream Thinking and others.
- **Business engagement**
 - Encourage businesses to carry out their own carbon audit and embrace the doughnut economic model, See <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/climate-emergency/what-can-i-do/organisation/>
 - Work with businesses to take the results forward into action
 - Encourage responsible tourism and environmental local action- see <https://www.coastproject.co.uk/>

There can be many paths to a meadow.