Tackling Climate Chaos

A guide for town and community councils

Introduction

Climate change / climate chaos / global heating, call it what you will, the fact is that we are in serious trouble with greenhouse gas concentrations being at their highest level in 2 million years. Our planet is now 1.1 degrees Celsius warmer than it was in the late 1880s and the decade 2011-2020 was the warmest on record.

Countries around the world are already experiencing the consequences of climate change from record temperatures, catastrophic forest fires, severe droughts and water scarcity, rapidly declining biodiversity, rising sea levels and melting ice caps and glaciers.

Decades of inaction have left us in a situation where we all now must act quickly and decisively. Scientists tell us that we still have a very slim chance of keeping global temperature rise to no more than 1.5 degrees Celsius which would help us avoid the very worst impacts of climate change but only if we all act now. Unfortunately, current national climate plans worldwide are inadequate, with global heating projected to reach 2.7°C by the end of this century.

The UK clearly has a crucial role to play in limiting the worst effects of climate change and despite our relatively small size, we currently sit at number 17 on a worldwide emissions list by country.

Here in Wales, the Welsh Government launched their Net Zero Wales plan in October 2021. Under the Environment Wales Act, Welsh Ministers must prepare and publish a report for each budgetary period setting out their policies and proposals for meeting the carbon budget for that period. The Net Zero Wales Plan sets out how Wales aims to meet the second carbon budget (2021-2025).

Welsh Government has also set out plans for the public sector in Wales to reach net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 in their 'Net zero carbon status by 2030 - A route map for decarbonisation across the Welsh public sector'.

The nature and biodiversity crisis is just as important as the climate crisis but hasn't as yet attracted nearly so much attention. Estimates suggest around one million animal and plant species are at risk of extinction due to our activities. Global animal populations have already plunged by an average of 68% since 1970.

United Nations scientists are stressing the importance of tackling the climate and biodiversity crises together.

While there are a lot of positive nature-based initiatives in Wales. A report for Natural Resources Wales (NRW) has highlighted the fact that very few wildlife habitats in Wales are in a good condition.

Community and Town councils have a range of individual powers including the provision and maintenance of community transport schemes, traffic calming measures, local youth projects, tourism activities, leisure facilities, car parks, village greens, public conveniences, litter bins, street lighting, street cleaning, burial grounds, allotments, bus shelters, commons, opens spaces, footpaths, bridleways, and crime reduction measures.

Furthermore, they can take action to improve the quality of life for local people and their local environment and, in some cases, they can deliver services to meet local needs. They can play a vital part in representing the interests of their communities and influencing other decision makers. The Welsh Government encourages Community and Town Councils to deliver more services and play a greater part in their communities.

With regards to climate change, there are of course limits as to how much Community and Town Councils can do but there are already many positive nature and climate projects and solutions going on in communities all around Wales.

By working together and encouraging good practice by residents within their local communities, Community and Town Councils can make a real difference. Public authorities in Wales which include Community and Town Councils are required to produce a report on what they have done to comply with the section 6 Biodiversity duty.

One Voice Wales and Friends of the Earth Cymru have compiled some ideas of what Community and Town Councils can do in the fight against climate chaos and nature destruction. What different Community and Town Councils can do will of course depend on a variety of factors, so we offer these as ideas. Some may be more relevant than others and some may or may not have been done already in your areas.

Some of the ideas are things you can do as a Community and Town Councils, some may just involve helping and supporting these sorts of schemes in your local area and some may lend themselves more to an information sharing role with residents through local newsletters, information boards or events for example.

If you would like more ideas and information on what individuals and communities can do, [visit this website](#).

A-Z of sectors and ideas

Chemicals

What's the problem?

The chemical industry itself has a massive global carbon footprint and the chemicals themselves can have huge climate impacts.

There is also evidence to suggest that some everyday chemicals can be harmful and that many people aren't aware of this.

Some ideas for action

Paint

Community RePaint estimates that 50 million litres of the 320 million litres of paint which are sold in the UK each year go to waste. They now help people donate and acquire paint via a network of schemes around the country.

If you have one on your area, can you help promote it to local residents? If you don't have one but would like to see one do contact Community RePaint.

Pesticides and weedkillers

Glyphosate is found in many weedkillers and could have a negative impact on human health and the environment, including honeybees.

You can take action in your community by ensuring that glyphosate is not used in local parks or green spaces. There are alternatives (and also here).

Or how about aiming to become a [Pesticide-Free Town](#)? Pesticide Action network UK run an interesting campaign and have lots of great [ideas and information](#) on how to reduce pesticide use.

The Soil Association has a useful [overview about glyphosate](#).

Another way of tackling the same issues is to become an official [Bee Friendly](#) community. This is a fun way to encourage more action to help bees and other pollinators in your area.

Fertiliser

If you look after local green spaces and use fertilisers, try to ensure they are [peat-free](#) and organic. Nitrogen fertiliser production for example is very energy intensive, with a high carbon footprint.

Some communities have developed their own [community composting schemes](#). Might this be something residents in your area would be interested in?

Cleaning products

The [chemicals](#) we use in our homes and buildings can affect our health in a number of ways.

If you use cleaning products in any buildings or premises, can you make the move to using [environmentally friendly](#) ones?

Medicines

This is slightly different but no less important. CHEMTrust have found that [fish have become contaminated](#) with the birth control pill, antidepressants (such as Prozac), sedatives, antibiotics, painkillers and anti-cancer drugs. They also found traces of anti-inflammatories and pain killers in fur taken from otters. Maybe you could highlight this issue in a community newsletter and urge people to take any

old or unused medicines back to the local pharmacy for proper disposal rather than flushing them down the loo or sending them to landfill.

Energy

What's the problem?

Where we get our energy from is changing quite rapidly. In Wales, approximately [56%](#) of our electricity consumption came from renewable sources in 2020.

However, electricity and heat generation still accounted for [16%](#) of Welsh climate emissions in 2020, making it the second largest emitting sector.

One important aspect that often gets overlooked is demand reduction, simply reducing the amount of energy we need. If we can reduce demand across the board then we will also reduce the amount of energy we have to produce in the first place and reduce emissions too.

Some ideas for action

Save energy and money

The [Centre for Alternative Technology](#) (CAT) in Machynlleth have lots of information and for a very comprehensive look at all types of insulation and money saving measures, have a look at the [Centre for Sustainable Energy's](#) website.

Switch to a green tariff

This may not be applicable if you don't own any buildings or facilities but for those who do, making the switch to a green energy tariff is one of the quickest and most effective things you can do.

The Energy Saving Trust have lots of good information available.

Appliances

If you have a building and reach the stage where you need to replace any appliances, do look for the best energy rated ones. The Energy Saving Trust and Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE) have lots of good information.

Smart meters

Smart meters are the next generation of electricity and gas meters. They measure how much electricity and gas you are using and how much they are costing you. If you have your own building, installing a smart meter can save money.

Could you use your position in your community to encourage others to also have them installed?

Smart Energy GB estimates that if everyone in the UK installed a smart meter, we could make the equivalent annual CO2 savings of 70million trees.

Green Open Homes

The Green Open Homes idea allows people to visit their neighbours and others in their communities to see and hear about energy saving or renewable energy improvements they have made. It can give people a valuable insight into how things work in practice and find out more about the options that might work for them. Is this something you could help facilitate in your own area?

Updated (6th September 2023)

Finance

What's the problem?

How and where an organisation invests its money can often be one of the biggest contributing factors to its carbon footprint. It is an often overlooked or ignored part of the fight against climate chaos.

Public bodies in Wales for instance still invest millions of pounds in fossil fuel companies via their pension funds. Town and Community Councils which pay into their regional Local Authority Pension Funds (LAPFs) will also be part of this.

Freedom of Information request figures in 2021 show that the 8 Welsh LAPFs had over £500million pounds invested in fossil fuel companies.

This report highlights the issues, the problems of continuing investment in oil and gas companies and what can be done.

Some ideas for action

One of the easier things a Town or Community Council can do is to formally ask their own LAPF to set a target and timetable for decarbonising pension investments.

The public sector in Wales has a decarbonisation target of becoming net zero by 2030. It would therefore seem sensible to align public sector pension decarbonisation to this timeframe. Most pension funds are still clinging to a 2050 timeframe however so we could end up with a situation where public bodies are effectively net zero across all their operations by 2030 but are continuing to invest in fossil fuel companies for potentially another 20 years after that.

Updated (6th September 2023)

Food

What's the problem?

The food we eat adds to our carbon footprint in a variety of ways and here in Wales, agriculture accounts for around 15% of Wales' emissions.

Food waste is a huge problem with about 70% of all food waste coming from homes. This wasted food has taken lots of fresh water, land and labour to produce. If it were a country, food waste would be the third highest emitter of greenhouse gases in the world.

Palm oil is also a huge issue. It is found in a huge variety of products from biscuits and crisps to cosmetics and ice cream. It also comes with a huge environmental and carbon footprint.

Some ideas for action

Depending on your circumstances as a council, if you are responsible for catering any events, try to support local Welsh producers and buy local. Moving towards more plant-based options will also help reduce your carbon footprint.

Smaller changes will also help, and you could start by only buying palm oil free or sustainable palm oil products. You could even work with people and groups in your local area to become an official Sustainable Palm Oil Community.

We all know about Fair Trade by now but it's important we still support the movement by buying fairtrade products such as sugar and coffee.

One very quick and easy change to make is to make the switch to only buying plastic free tea bags or shifting to loose leaf tea. Lots of tea bags still contain plastic (Polypropylene).

Again, depending on your circumstances, there are of course different local food schemes you might be able to support or promote in your areas such as [Grow to Give](#), [community composting](#), and [community orchards](#).

Maybe you could run an event for residents around how to reduce food waste in their homes. [Love Food Hate Waste](#) is a great place to go for more handy ideas and tips. Might a [community fridge](#) be something that your community would support?

Local community gardens

Setting up a local community garden or edible planters in your area, where residents and volunteers can grow and use their own fruit vegetables and herbs. This develops skills within the local community and can help develop a more integrated food production pathway. Community growing linked to Food banks or Community fridge schemes is a good way to increase local food production and

Nature

What's the problem?

Biodiversity around the world is declining faster than it has at any other time in human history. Although the entire human population represents just [0.01% of all living creatures, humanity has already caused the loss of 83% of all wild mammals and half of all plants.](#)

As already mentioned above, whilst there are a lot of positive nature-based initiatives in Wales, a [report](#) for Natural Resources Wales (NRW) has highlighted the fact that very few wildlife habitats in Wales are in a good condition.

The COVID-19 crisis has also highlighted the lack of access to green space suffered by some communities across Wales. Green space is recognised as being important for our mental and physical health, and this is recognised by the increasing encouragement of use of green space through social prescribing by health professionals.

Some ideas for action

Conduct a local green spaces audit

Where are all the community green spaces in your area? What state are they in? What would you like your area to look like in 2030 for example? Would there be more green spaces or a community garden or community orchard for example?

Might this sort of area help with outdoor learning, wellbeing, community composting and growing healthy produce?

Protect trees and green spaces

As part of any local green spaces 'audit' you might do in your local area, could you include any 'at risk' areas you know of and come up with a plan on how to save them? Fields in Trust and the Open Spaces Society have lots of information on how to protect and safeguard green spaces.

It is of course also vital that we protect existing trees and woodlands wherever we can. Trees in urban environments in particular face an ongoing threat from the pressures of development.

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Change Mowing methods.

By changing more of your green spaces to species rich grassland you can increase biodiversity, help pollinators and support small mammal, invertebrates and make your area greener and more beautiful. Changing mowing to less frequent intervals, using cut and collect methods all help reduce dominant grass species and allows native wildflowers a chance to grow and complete their life cycle providing essential habitat for a variety of species. Please see the [Welsh Government website](#) for more details.

There is also the popular ['No Mow May'](#) scheme run by [Plantlife,](#) however research shows that extending this into June and July has the maximum benefit for pollinators.

These newly created wildflower meadows can help curb the decline in pollinators and our native plants. Using the cut and collect method does not require herbicides and ground preparation so it less invasive and better for existing biodiversity. When using seed to enhance meadow areas please consider using locally sourced seeds and choose the right seeds for your area.

Plant trees

Getting involved in local [tree planting](#) schemes in your local areas is a great way to start doing your bit [on climate chaos](#).

The [Woodland Trust](#) have all the information you need and give away different free tree packs to organisations such as [schools](#), nurseries, sports clubs, youth clubs, community councils and community groups. They also have guidance on where to plant them, how to look after them and also have different sorts of [tree packs](#) such as 'hedge', 'wild harvest' and 'urban'. If this is of interest and you are

also thinking about going for your Bee Friendly accreditation, maybe these tree packs can form part of that project too?

The Tree Council are also a great source of information and also have a grant fund you can apply to for planting trees in your community or in your school. For lots more information about how to manage woodland and hedgerows do check out Coed Cymru.

> **Remember it's important to Plant the Right tree, in the Right Place, and for the Right reasons.**

Become a Bee Friendly area

Let's hear it for our small pollinator friends! Afterall, pollinator dependent crops contribute to 35 per cent of global crop production volume, including many fruit, vegetable, seed, nut and oil crops.

In Wales we have (probably) the first and only national Bee Friendly accreditation scheme. The idea behind the scheme is to encourage communities, towns, villages, schools, organisations, places of worship and public bodies to help and protect bees and other pollinators by taking some simple actions under 4 different themes. It is designed as a fun and easy to engage with way to get more people taking more action.

Some Town and Community Councils around Wales have already achieved their official Bee Friendly status. Could yours be the next?

On a similar note, if you are organising any summer flower or fruit and vegetable shows, how about including a special pollinator friendly category?

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Sustainable clothing and textiles

What's the problem?

The fashion industry has a huge carbon footprint. It is estimated to be responsible for around 10% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions.

Amazingly, the fashion industry emits more carbon than international flights and maritime shipping combined and is classed as the second dirtiest industry in the world, next to the oil industry.

Some ideas for action

Work with local schools on a school uniform swap scheme

Various schools around Wales already have a school uniform swap shop scheme. Some have even expanded this to include school sports kit swaps too. Is this something that you could work with your local school(s) on?

Clothes swap events

Could you work with others in your community to host or organise clothes swap or 'swishing' events?

Transport

What's the problem?

Transport in Wales was responsible for about 15% of all Welsh climate emissions in 2020.

The majority of emissions come from road transport and in particular cars. In fact, transport in Wales is dominated by the car more than in any other part of the UK.

We also know by now how bad air pollution is in parts of Wales and the UK. It is linked to 36,000 premature deaths in the UK each year (that's more than obesity or alcohol) and around 1400 in Wales. This obviously also increases the pressure on our NHS and is estimated to cost the UK economy £20billion per year.

Welsh Government's Llwybr Newydd – The Wales Transport Strategy 2021, National transport delivery plan and other strategies set out plans to shape the future of transport in Wales.

Some ideas for action

Whilst most of the solutions around transport will lie with other levels of government, there are still some more local solutions you might be able to help promote in your areas.

Air pollution

One idea might be to work with your local schools and nurseries to create clean air zones around their premises. This might be a good way to help children, parents, teachers, and other local residents to engage with and learn more about air pollution issues as well as overarching issues such as climate chaos.

Maybe a walking school bus and an anti-idling initiative might be interesting ways to involve your communities. Check out Sustrans Cymru and BBC documentary Fighting for Air for ideas and Welsh Government for more information.

Active travel

What opportunities exist in your local area to promote and support active travel?

One thing we can all do here is work in our local areas to help ensure that thought is given not just to cycle routes but also the associated cycling infrastructure such as bike parking facilities that are convenient, safe, secure, accessible and present in enough quantities.

One ongoing complaint about accessing local green spaces can be how to get there safely and conveniently. Are green spaces in your area served by public transport? Is there provision for safe and secure bike storage for example? Are there safe walking and active travel routes to the green spaces?

Maybe you can work with Wheels for All to ensure that provision is also made for those with disabilities and differing needs.

The Propensity to Cycle tool identifies the huge potential for increasing cycling in all areas of the country, particularly with good quality infrastructure, such as segregated cycleways and cycle parking, and with the use of E-bikes.

Car share and lift share

Covid-19 may of course have an ongoing impact on people's ability or willingness to car share or lift share but hopefully in the future these options might become more attractive to people once more.

Figures suggest that car sharing for example can save families money and for drivers who use a car for less than 6,000 to 8,000 miles annually, a car club can save up to £3,500 per year.

These schemes can also help reduce a driver's carbon footprint with a car club vehicle saving on average 1.392 tonnes of carbon each year. [Sustrans](#) have lots of information about the various schemes.

These schemes can also help reduce a driver's carbon footprint with a car club vehicle saving on average 1.392 tonnes of carbon each year. [Community Car Share](#) have lots of information about the various schemes.

[Lift sharing](#) is another option and [Traveline Cymru](#) have some ideas and links.

Might you be able to share these ideas and information in a local community newsletter for example to see if residents would be interested in setting one up?

Water

What's the problem?

Wales can be very wet! We all know that.

In Wales the average rainfall is 1.4 m per year that is equivalent to the height of an average 8-year-old child in rainfall covering the whole of Wales.

What is maybe less well known is that the water industry is the UK's fourth most energy intensive sector and [Waterwise](#) estimates that the industry is responsible for around 1% of the UK's carbon emissions.

We hear a lot about 'fuel poverty' but here in the UK, in the region of 1.5 million homes live in ['water poverty'](#), whilst a further 3 million are on the verge of it. Against that backdrop, it becomes even more necessary that we look at water saving measures.

It's an area in which we can all help easily and quickly by reducing the amount of water we use (and waste), thereby helping reduce our carbon footprint, saving money in our homes and protecting water resources.

Some ideas for action

Water saving measures

If you are responsible for any buildings, do they have water saving measures?

Could you use your position in the community to talk to others about what they can do and point them in the direction of more information?

Dwr Cymru Welsh Water for instance offer a water efficiency survey service for businesses and also offer educational visits to schools

For some T&CCs, maybe rainwater harvesting and grey water systems might be of interest. Waterwise has some ideas.

Water refill points

Water UK estimates that 'in the UK 7.7 billion plastic water bottles are used each year, with the average person in the UK now using 150 plastic water bottles every year'.

In Wales, the Welsh Government is committed to making Wales the world's first 'Refill Nation'. If you would like to work with others in your area on this and start your own local Refill project, all the information you need is here.

Planting trees

On a bigger scale, there is an increasing movement to use more Natural Flood Management schemes to help alleviate some flooding risks including planting more trees.

Whilethis needs to be done by experts in areas carefully identified, in your communities, you can certainly help by organising or joining in with local tree planting schemes or other green space initiatives.

Zero waste

What's the problem?

In Wales, waste accounted for 3% of national climate emissions in 2020. Over the past 40 years, worldwide plastics production has quadrupled. The move to a circular economy is a key part in the fight against climate chaos.

Food waste

Wasting food is bad for the environment - including the climate. We waste about a third of all food produced for human consumption. This wasted food has taken lots of fresh water, land and labour to produce. If it were a country, food waste would be the third highest emitter of greenhouse gases [PDF] in the world.

Paper

Paper has a surprisingly big carbon footprint but is often overlooked when we talk of waste and resources. The Environmental Paper Network (EPN) has a great little video explaining the situation.

Much paper is used wastefully, and it may only take a few weeks for forest carbon to be cut, pulped, shipped, used and dumped into the atmosphere.

Some ideas for action

Updated (6th September 2023)

Do a waste audit

Recycling is great, not buying and using the stuff in the first place is obviously better (and saves money). A good place to start would be to do an audit of all the things you buy and use. Do you need to buy them? If you do, is there an opportunity to buy different things, for example ones that are reusable instead of single use?

Litter picks

A quick and simple way of making an area feel quite different is to do a litter pick. It also happens to be an excellent way to build links between people and groups and also helps stimulate interest in the wider issues of plastics and waste. Is this something you can get involved with locally or even start off a litter pick if there aren't any going on already?

Here are some handy tips for organising a litter pick. Keep Wales Tidy can help you with equipment, advice, ideas and information on how to make a success of your litter picks.

Plastic Free Community

Surfers Against Sewage's Plastic Free Communities scheme has proven to be a great success since Penzance became the first plastic-free town in the UK in December 2017.

There are already many great examples of communities coming together in Wales to become 'plastic free' from Rhiwbina in Cardiff and Anglesey to Aberporth and Caerphilly.

If your area isn't already an SAS 'Plastic Free' community, maybe this might be a good thing to aim for to help build awareness? Contact SAS for information and help.

Repair Café

Repair Cafe Wales has been starting, running, and supporting repair cafés since April 2017. They are a great way to bring communities together, save people money and reduce waste.

If you would like to start up a Repair Café in your area then do contact Repair Café Wales who can help you get started.

Local share economy

The 'Share Economy' is growing around the world with Libraries of Things or 'Lots' becoming popular. In Cardiff an enterprise called Benthyg (Welsh for lend or to borrow) has been set up in Rumney to provide this service to the local community.

The team at Benthyg can help you set up a similar scheme in your area if you'd like to start one.

Children grow so quickly, and toys can be very expensive. Toy libraries are a wonderful resource for local communities, reduce waste, save money and help bring communities together.

Contact Play Wales Chwarae Cymru for more information about toy libraries and how to set one up.

Food waste

Love Food Hate Waste can help you and your community reduce your food waste. Is this something you could promote to residents in your local area?

Community Fridges

These are a great way of stopping good food ending up in the bin. They're housed in public, accessible places, making surplus perishable food freely available to

members of the public. Surplus food is provided by local businesses or members of the public and is then available to members of the community. They work on an honesty basis.

To find out more about community fridges, a 'How to Guide' on how to set one up, a nice video and a handy map, do have a look at Hubbub.

Terracycle

TerraCycle is a company that specialises in collecting and recycling traditionally hard to recycle products such as pens, coffee capsules, cigarette butts and crisp packets. They offer the opportunity for people and groups to sign up to act as collection hubs for different materials for which they then donate money to your chosen charity or charities. Is this something you might like to get involved in locally? Sara Lewis from Caerphilly is just one of many people around Wales already taking part and earning money for her local school.

Tackle paper waste

There are numerous things you can do from switching any paper products you use as a council to either not using them at all or swapping them for recycled paper (anything from office paper to toilet paper). Another thing you could do is help spread the message to residents in your area and encourage them to sign up to a Royal Mail service which allows you to stop unaddressed Door to Door mail being delivered to your door. The Citizen's Advice Bureau has lots of other ideas and links to help you reduce unwanted mail.

We hope that some of these suggestions give you ideas or inspiration for some of the things you could do in your local areas. They are of course by no means the only things you can do.

Updated (6th September 2023)

As well as these positive ideas and solutions, it is also important that you use your voice to oppose any new local carbon intensive or nature harming proposals.

It is important to use your role in the local decision making and the local Planning system to help promote climate and nature friendly decisions and solutions wherever and whenever possible.

Please see the appendix which provides examples of actions being taken by Community and Town Councils in Wales on climate and nature in an attempt to show how everyone can contribute to address the climate and nature emergency.

Appendix of good examples

This appendix provides examples of actions being taken by Community and Town Councils in Wales on climate and nature in an attempt to show how everyone can contribute to address the climate and nature emergency. Action at the local level is essential in meeting the Net Zero by 2050. More than half of the emissions cuts needed are dependent on individuals and businesses taking up low-carbon solutions. These are decisions made at a local and individual level.

The duties and powers available to Community and Town Councils in Wales in relation to climate change and biodiversity is covered by the Well-Being of Future Generations Act (Councils with a precept of £200k and over) and Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. Every Community and Town Council is required to publish a report on its activities under Section 6 of the latter Act.

Declarations of Climate and Ecological Emergency

Llangollen Town Council

The Council declared a climate and ecological emergency in 2020 and has adopted a plan in response to this. Its Place Plan has action to mitigate climate change as a goal.

Offa Community Council

Offa Community Council fully supports the work of Wrexham Council which declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency in September 2019 and

acknowledges that action is required by all of us to mitigate the impacts of climate change on our community, our country and our planet. The Council recognises that we are in a state of climate emergency. A Carbon Neutral Strategy 2021-2030 has been produced in response to the 'Net zero carbon status by 2030 - A route map for decarbonisation across the Welsh public sector'. The four key areas adopted are Buildings, Mobility and Transport, Land Use and Procurement and are set out in a long-term plan. The Carbon challenge is all about everyone playing their part. Offa Community Council wants to play its small part in reducing its carbon footprint by working with all residents and partners. Offa Community Council has 18 members; all 18 are committed to work within their Council and home environments to try and reduce their personal carbon footprint.

Pennard Community Council

Declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency in 2019 and has adopted a Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan which has had input from the community.

Energy

Gwersyllt Community Council

Gwersyllt Community Council's LED street lighting project won a One Voice Wales award for 'Best Sustainability Initiative' in 2019. As one of the largest Community Councils in Wrexham, Gwersyllt hopes to inspire other local authorities to follow its example and move towards the provision of LED Street Lighting.

During 2017/18, the Council upgraded all its street lighting units with more modern alternatives in a bid to reduce its annual energy usage and costs, whilst also limiting the effect on the environment. Over 490 outdated lanterns were

replaced with highly efficient LED luminaires which have a wattage of 25 W, reducing the amount of energy used without compromising on the quality of lighting outpt provided. The switch also reduced the Council's greenhouse gas emissions, making annual carbon savings of approximately 31 tonnes of CO2e, in line with the council's ambitions to contribute to a low carbon society. As well as financial savings, the upgrades have reduced maintenance cost. They also provide better lighting quality across the community, helping to improve both safety and wellbeing.

This work is contributing to the goal of global responsibility by creating a resource efficient, low carbon society. In addition, it will contribute to a "Wales of cohesive communities" ensuring Gwersyllt build an attractive, viable, safe and well-connected community.

The Council benefitted from an £81,000 interest-free loan from Salix Finance who also provided expert advice and guidance. This loan is being paid back over eight years from the savings recouped from the reduced energy bills. Once the Council has paid off the loan, it will be able to reinvest the savings in other service areas.

Llandeilo Town Council

A grant for solar panels for installation on the Bowls Pavilion in the public park to cover costs for the lighting and cameras used in the parks. This is being followed up by installing electric points on the pavilion and electric bike charging points through the 'Ten Towns' Grant from Carmarthen County Council.

Llanfrynach

Llanfrynach Community Council (South Powys) has produced a Biodiversity report. A double disk station is used for storage rather than icloud which is very very energy rich.

Llangollen Town Council

Has moved to Good Energy, one of the UK's first 100% renewable electricity suppliers and is continuing to replace lighting stock with LED lights.

Pennard Community Council

All energy use has been changed to 100% renewable.

Solva Community Council

The clubhouse has PV panels and a battery to minimise use of carbon fuels and is exploring the possibility of a PV farm on the local airfield. There are 18 units of sustainable housing which are zero carbon in use.

Finance

Llangollen Town Council

The Council has moved to more ethical banking services provided by Unity Trust Bank and offers financial support to projects that contribute to lowering carbon footprint through the community grants programme.

Pennard Community Council

The Clerk's Pension has been moved to a non-fossil fuel fund.

Food and Water

Pennard Community Council

Through the VocalEyes platform the Council has installed a drinking water fountain for people to refill their bottles and is working with the community to reduce waste.

Offa Community Council

The Council is working and liaising with two schools.

The secondary school, Ysgol Clywedog, has a very proactive and well attended eco-taskforce. They grow vegetables to share with families and staff, they have planted native tees in the grounds as a source of food for their native bees which is an initiative for this year. The work is being promoted in the community council's magazine. The school also has a Facebook page which is promoted on Offa's social media. This is addressing the Council's aim of working as an influencer.

The primary school, which is a feeder school for Clywedog, has an eco-committee which is attended by a member of the community council. A plan has been produced to improve the public space adjoining the school. The children have produced designs for growing edible plants, native wildflowers, insect habitats as well as insect gardens for pollinators. The community council has pledged to work with the school to realise these plans. The council also works with Incredible Edible Wrecsam to maintain the area and has membership on the group.

Litter Picks

Llangynidr Community Council

The Council organises 3 to 4 litter picks with local volunteers each year.

Nature

Amroth Community Council

Access to funding and practical support from Pembrokeshire Coast National Park and Keep Wales Tidy funds is helping to promote Biodiversity. In 2021 a small area of roadside verge was prepared and sown with wildflower seeds to encourage pollinators. Wildflower starter packages from keep Wales Tidy have been acquired for the two community green spaces managed by the Council. The

physical work and upkeep is carried out by the local gardening group on the Council's behalf. Two bee Hotels have been installed in the wards and these are filled with bee friendly natural items. The Council has collaborated with the PCNPA Ranger on their 70-year celebration initiative to plant 70 trees in the ward.

Betws Community Council

In 2023, the Council completed a transformation at Parc Betws. The project was funded by the Local Places for Nature scheme, and it saw some old tennis courts being transformed into a nature garden. Accessible pathways connect different habitats including a food growing garden which is used by local schools and the college, a community orchard, extensive wildflower meadow created by reduced mowing and enhanced with seed form the National Gardens of Wales. There are areas that can be used for picnics and an outdoor classroom, sensory beds and there are lots of trees. Over 5,200m2 of new biodiverse habitat has been created, including 100m2 of food growing space and 1600m2 of species rich wildflower meadows. The nature garden has over 100 volunteers helping to maintain the area and is proving very popular with resident and visitors alike.

Criccieth Town Council

In November 2020 the Town Council received a £20,800 grant from The National Lottery Heritage Fund in Wales and the Welsh Government to help fund its Cae Crwn project - a community allotment and butterfly garden near the town centre. This initiative is a partnership with Ysgol Treferthyr primary school, youth services, community volunteers, Gwynedd Council's Nature Partnership and Friends of the Nature Garden. Around 150 volunteers were involved in the design and delivery and 50 residents are working on communal plots, which also has an allotment for the school. This provides an opportunity to work with community partners and biodiversity experts to help bring people together,

promoting intergenerational work, whilst having fun learning about and benefitting from our natural heritage. The Butterfly Garden has storytelling areas and brightly painted information boards, themselves works of considerable creativity, illustrating the seasons of the year and the history of the area. A thousand wildlife plants have been planted on the basis of a biodiversity assessment and report from Gwynedd Council. The pupils have built bird boxes and bug hotels to place in the gardens. This concerted community effort has transformed a derelict piece of land - adjacent to the Nature Garden - into a thriving community resource promoting wellbeing and creativity where groups can meet and learn new skills. The Town Council also successfully secured a local package from Keep Wales Tidy for the Nature Garden over the summer of 2020.

The Town Council supports the work of Criccieth in Bloom whose members are very active in planting flowers and vegetables in the town. By working together Gwynedd Council installed new planting boxes in a central location in the town and edible plants are grown there annually. In 2022 Criccieth in Bloom secured a Keep Wales Tidy Package for a food starter package for Criccieth Railway Station, which was installed and planted in early 2023. This includes wild herbs, fruiting shrubs, strawberry plants and edible flowers. With financial assistance from the Town Council, Criccieth in Bloom has also planted an orchard of native pear and apple trees on community land donated to the town.

These developments support the Town Council's commitment to improving biodiversity. In response to the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 Part 1- Section 6, the Town Council publishes annually a Report on the Biodiversity Duty and Ecosystem Resilience showing how it provides services in the community and works with partners on services and activities that impact on biodiversity.

Hay on Wye Town Council

The Council works in partnership with local community groups and others e.g. Hay Community Woodland Group, Hay Warren Trust, Brecon Beacons National Park Authority, Powys CC, Welsh Government, Natural Resources Wales. It has produced The Warren Nature Recovery Management Plan which is part of a wider project, delivering nature recovery activities at five sites across the Brecon Beacons National Park. Each of the sites have been chosen as being of importance to local communities and have been developed through discussion with local groups and stakeholders. The project has been funded by the Welsh Government Local Places for Nature Fund, 2021/22, which includes the creation of a Management Plan, support by the Brecon Beacons Local Nature Partnerships Coordinator and funding for capital works. The Plan covers diverse areas including the Warren meadow, two areas of woodland, the Old Railway and Bailey Walks, Login Brook and Castle Mound. These areas include:

· Unimproved neutral grassland

· Semi-improved neutral grassland

· Riparian corridor

· Shaded woodland verges

· Woodland slope

Hirwaun and Penderyn Community Council

The Council became an official Bee Friendly community by taking part in the Welsh Government's Bee Friendly scheme. They came up with some fantastic ideas for local action including making sure their flower baskets and planters were pollinator friendly, working with 2 local primary schools to enter wild flower and tree collages into their Garden Show, held a seed bomb making session for local children who were able to take the bee friendly seed bombs home to plant, and have instituted both a Best Bee Friendly Front Garden and a Best Bee

Friendly Back garden category in their Hirwaun & Penderyn in Bloom competition.

Llandeilo Town Council

In 2020-21 the Council was successful in obtaining a Nature grant for bird boxes, trees and wildflower area.

Llandough Community Council

There is a Biodiversity Group and Allotments Committee.

The Council supports biodiversity in its large allotments site comprising 67 plots. A habitat audit has been undertaken to identify the birds, insects, mammals and reptiles on site, the condition of bird and bee boxes and ponds and produced a biodiversity map of the plots. The Biodiversity Group keeps detailed information of the range of wildlife and habitats indigenous to the area and this documentation is updated regularly to ensure it remains current. Several wildlife identification guides are available for tenants to use.

In 2020 the Biodiversity Group was successful in obtaining funding from a "Local Places for Nature" initiative for the creation of a wildlife garden. Delivered by the organisation "Keep Wales Tidy", this initiative included a trellised installation for the cultivation of a number of plants to encourage biodiversity, bird feeders, habitat boxes and bulbs for autumn planting. The flowering plants which are positioned at various sites include Snowdrops, English Bluebells, Wood Anemones and Fritillary. In addition to those bulbs provided by "Keep Wales Tidy" 90 Daffodil bulbs were purchased from allotment funds and these were also planted during the autumn of 2020

The Council has a forward-looking design for a new allotments site which has been approved to be developed for local food production and community use.

Updated (6th September 2023)

Llantrisant Community Council

Floral displays have been changed from annual bedding planting to perennials. They are better for pollinators, require less water and will come back each year.

Llanfrynach Community Council

The Council has an agreed biodiversity reporting template and is committed to encourage biodiversity wherever possible including:

- safeguarding principal species and habitats by managing the trees and grounds.
- restoring and creating habitats and resilient ecological networks. The pieces of land under its management (a recreation ground and playground and Groesffordd village hall) are grass habitat.
- using nature-based solutions and addressing invasive species.
- raising awareness of biodiversity & its importance in its minutes and on the website.
- reporting annually on its section 6 duties of the Environment (Wales) Act2016 Part 1-Section 6.

Llanengan Community Council

A wildflower meadow/meadow has been established on the Village Plot, Mynytho, in collaboration with Jo Porter, a local Ecologist working for Plantlife. The Council owns 'Coed yr Allt', a forest that runs down to the bank of the River Soch from the Village Quaker Field. Sponsorship has enabled the creation of a path and seating areas and installation of bird nest boxes, particularly for owls. Following a site meeting with Gwynedd Council's Biodiversity Officer a biodiversity study is planned.

Updated (6th September 2023)

Offa Community Council

The Council has responsibility for maintaining a small woodland area in Offa and has engaged a CIC, Woodworks. In addition to grounds work, the Council is working to encourage school and resident involvement and runs regular sessions in the woods, e.g. clearing areas, replanting, making bird boxes as well as running wellbeing sessions.

Pontypridd Town council

In 2022 the Council was awarded a grant from the Welsh government scheme - Local Places for Nature to develop the Meadow Street community garden. This has included installing a sensory garden, a large food growing garden, native fruit orchard, wildflower meadow and woodland walkways all connected by accessible pathways. It was also possible to remove an Invasive Non-Native species (INNS) Japanese Knotweed from the site.

The result is the provision of a community facility where groups can meet, volunteers can learn new skills and provide a focal point for the local community. Over 500m^2 of food growing space was created and biodiversity has been restored, enhanced, and created across the site. The Council works with the local food share scheme to provide seasonal fruit and vegetables. It now hopes to manage the large woodland area and ponds to expand this exciting project.

Rhosddu Community Council

The Council has implemented a few projects:

A successful application for two Local Places for Nature projects. One has enabled the planting of fruit bushes in a public park. The second on behalf of Incredible Edible Wrexham for a Greenhouse and plants to grow free produce for local groups.

Tree planting in the community

Solfach Community Council

In 2021 the Council planted 500 trees in and around the village.

Procurement

Llanfrynach Community Council

The Council commits to encourage biodiversity wherever possible and has embedded biodiversity into decision making & procurement.

Offa Community Council

The Council is committed to:

- a plastic free aim
- using recyclable materials
- working jointly with the community
- identifying where best to source play equipment
- promoting and encouraging low energy output street lighting

Transport

Llanengan Community Council

Apart from requiring safe cycle paths between Pwllheli and Abersoch in the Active Travel Plan Consultation, the Council seeks to have safe walking routes between Abersoch village and Sarn Bach. The Council has purchased three solar benches with support from the AHNE Llŷn from Croatia Sustainable Development Fund. Two of them will record weather and use, as well as charging mobile phones, scooters and e-bikes.

8.2 Llantrisant Community Council

The Council operates an all-electric van for maintenance staff to work around the community.

Offa Community Council

The Council is considering ways of reducing its emissions footprint by walking, cycling, and sharing cars.

Solva Community Council

A multi-generational path to link Upper and lower Solva has been constructed enabling less abled walkers, wheelchair users and pushchair users to easily get from one end of the village to the other without recourse to a vehicle.

Zero Waste

Criccieth Town Council

Town Council meetings are paperless, with the option of joining by Zoom. All used paper is recycled.

Llanfrynach

Print on double sided and on recycled paper and also recycle waste paper.

Llangynidr

The Council has a no printing policy unless necessary – and any printed material is on double sided and recyclable paper. All used paper is recycled.

Pennard Community Council

The Council is working with the community to reduce waste. Council meetings are paperless with the option of joining by Zoom.

Solva Community Council

Community Council meetings are paperless, with the option of joining by Zoom.

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