

CLIMATE ACTION FOR SMALLER COUNCILS

One Page Summary October 2023

FIRST STEPS - WHAT CAN EVERYONE DO AT ONCE?

- Forge links with any initiatives by your local planning authority as well as any voluntary sector networks in your county.
- Contact neighbouring parishes to discover what action they are taking that you might support in some way – for example, wildlife corridors work best when joined up.
- Contact existing local climate action groups, from voluntary countryside management to car-pools, offering support in terms of publicity and meeting space if not actual funding and starting a two-way exchange of ideas.

COMMENTING ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS

All councils can ask telling questions when presented with local planning applications, such as:

- What is being proposed about insulation, energy use or renewable energy?
- Is new development linked to local amenities by public transport, walking or cycling?
- Do the plans include loss of green space or the creation of improved green space?

Local councils can also get involved with consultation on their planning authority's Local Plan, to help encourage the inclusion of policies that would support such critical comment of planning applications, as well as developing their own neighbourhood plans.

ASSESSING OUR OWN COUNCIL ACTION

- Review the council's own property, landholding and operations (including any regular travel) to see if carbon emissions could be reduced.
- Consider how nature recovery might be supported on green spaces we control.
- Consider developing projects such as tree planting, new allotments, and creating "bee squares" to support the migration of pollinating insects.

WORKING WITH OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY

Smaller councils cannot be expected to do it all on their own:

- Open a dialogue with the wider community using a range of means, such as through the annual parish meeting and other two-way channels including social media.
- Identify and encourage local support for climate action, involving existing local groups and empowering them to achieve their goals.
- Set up a working group with representatives from the local community to assess the practicalities of a local action plan and seek the necessary funding.

Further advice is available online such as www.nalc.gov.uk/our-work/climate-change, through joining the NALC climate emergency network via www.nalc.gov.uk/our-work/nalc-national-networks and from SLCC's Environmental & Sustainability Advisor andrew.maliphant@slcc.co.uk.