

Climate Change Communications and Community Engagement Strategy

Agreed November 2021

1 Aims

The Climate Change Communications Strategy has three key aims.

1. **Tell** – To get our own house in order and communicate with communities, partners, businesses, Members and staff about our progress.
2. **Provide** – Provide community leadership on climate change working with a range of stakeholders and partners.
3. **Mobilise** – to enable the mobilisation of residents, communities and organisations to accept responsibility and adapt their behaviours.

2 Background

The Climate Change Action Plan provides a clear path to understand the actions the Council must now take to meet its key ambitions.

Climate change requires a huge effort by all sectors of the community. In a post-Covid climate, it is recognised that some communities desperately want to see the way we live change to a more environmentally sustainable one. But, this is also balanced against some residents living in financial hardship and in this case, climate change will certainly not be at the forefront of people's minds.

Climate change action requires a huge amount of motivation and continued positivity. Those working together on this agenda must recognise that every action counts and share in the successes. Different people will be motivated to act for different reasons. We recognise that message around climate change must also cover co-benefits and that we need to repeat messages and utilise a variety of channels.

3 Communications Objectives

Our Communities

- To develop a clear narrative around the shared ambition towards achieving the Council's goals.
- To raise awareness within our communities about climate change risks (global and local) and the impacts this will and could have on our daily lives
- To set an example and motivate others to do likewise
- To help our communities (residents and visitors,) understand how they can play their part in mitigating and adapting to climate change

- To inform our communities about the work the District Councils are doing in relation to climate change, particularly where this provides opportunities for local people or visitors to adapt their behaviours
- To listen to the ideas and initiatives that our communities have in relation to climate change so that we can consider how to align our work with local ideas

Our Partners and Business

- To raise awareness within our communities about climate change risks (global and local) and the impacts this will and could have on our daily lives
- To share respective climate change priorities, targets opportunities and challenges with partners and business
- To help local businesses and organisations understand how they can play their part in mitigating and adapting to climate change
- To listen to the ideas and concerns of local businesses and organisations and use these to inform the action plan.
- To inform businesses about the work the District Councils are doing in relation to climate change.

Our Staff and Members

- To raise awareness about climate change risks (global and local) and the impacts this will and could have on our daily lives
- To inform staff and Members on the work we are doing on climate change and motivate to support the work in meeting the climate change targets.
- To enable staff to champion climate change initiatives and narrative when they have contact with residents and other customers

4 Key Activities

- Gain expert comments and quotes to reinforce messages and build trust
- Planned, regular themed messages on an ongoing basis (#onesmallthing)
- Develop a suite of case studies to reflect progress, so that it can be seen to be real and achievable and to celebrate successes
- Identify stakeholder involvement to discuss the work programme and be helpful 'critical friends' in the process. This will include a variety of forums for dialogue with these stakeholders
- Ensure staff and councillors have the highest levels of awareness to play their part in climate communications through everyday communication mechanism
- Use all our channels to reach all groups of our community and recognise that different channels will be important for different parts of our communities

- Coordinate with partners (especially WCC) to support mutual messaging and to channel messaging through the most effective “mouthpiece”
- Link to co-benefits such as health, improved air quality, warmer homes, cheaper bills etc)
- Think about how people make changes: the need, the capability, opportunity and motivation

5 Communications Channels

There are a range of communication channels we can use. These need to be used to align with the message and the audience at different times and in different ways. Communication channels must consider the ‘every contact counts’ means of using effective and existing mechanisms or channels to deliver messages to the widest of audiences. All communications should consider which of these should be utilised at any given time and are broken down into internal and external action methods.

Internal	External
Member briefings – emails or PABs	Website updates
Staff updates - Intranet	Press releases
Webinars – carbon connected sessions	Social Media
Staff briefings	Residents newsletters including Social Tenants newsletters
Sustainability Officers Group	Webinars
Clear and constant message from senior managers	Stakeholder groups and other partner organisations
Team meetings	Conferences

6 Stakeholder mapping

We have held a People’s Inquiry into climate change. We are committed to reporting to the People’s Climate Change Inquiry members panel on our progress. Furthermore, a stakeholder mapping exercise will be completed to identify:

- “vocal friends” who the Council can work with to supplement our communications
- Stakeholders who are active around climate change who may have overlapping and/or contradictory message, whilst recognising the importance of keeping communication channels open
- Stakeholders who we need to work with to achieve our ambitions, but who may need some encouragement to support our communications strategy.

The Stakeholder mapping will be informed by the CCAP priorities and will therefore be completed following the adoption of the CCAP.

7 Communications and community engagement highlights from the past six months:

Action:	When:	Notes:
Clean Air Day event	June 16 th 2022	<p>Clean Air Day event</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint initiative to highlight Clean Air Day on 16 June 2022, between Climate Change Team, Air Quality Officer in Health and Wellbeing team and Clean Air Warwickshire • Press release on 8 June 2022 • Promotion of Bike Wheel Art displayed at Jephson Gardens and promotion of pledges to improve air quality
Commonwealth Games Cycle Road Race	August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alongside Commonwealth Games organisers, promoted both the temporary cycle parking along the route and the permanent cycle parking available in the vicinity.
Ecofest	September	<p>Over 2,000 residents attended this very successful event. The climate change team promoted A5 postcard information on the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate Quiz & Climate Champions • Walking & Cycling • Electric Vehicles • Make your home warmer & greener • Tree planting • Plastic free • Hydrogen plans
Mini COP27	November	<p>A showcase of Local Action. A range of speakers from local groups, WDC, WCC, Heart of England Forest Partnership etc. The theme was 'Think Global, Act Local'. A range of stalls from local groups provided information. Networking sessions. The venue was at capacity for the event and it is available to view on Youtube.</p>
Cycle Parking Infrastructure	September	<p>Press Release over new cycle parking in Leamington</p>
Green Homes Grants scheme promotion/ Sustainable Warmth Campaign		<p>The Sustainable Warmth 'green homes grants' private scheme was launched in July and has been promoted via press releases, social media, direct mailing and events.</p>

Carbon Connected – Sustainable Food	May	A Carbon Connected session was recorded to share publicly supported by both the NFU and the Vegan Society to share information about sustainable food choices.
Tree Week	November	A range of activities in the community to promote tree week <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership activity • Progressing large scale planting opportunities • Adapting projects to an uncertain climate • Proactive tree planting in the community • Commemorative tree planting for legacy
Attendance at Bar Zero community event	October	WDC attended this community engagement event
Better Points		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Press release Nov 22 highlighting “Choose How You Move” initiative in light of the year’s extension • Christmas Countdown campaign with CJ events promoting attendance at Christmas markets with prizes and giveaways for Better Points App users • In liaison with Community Wellbeing Team have promoted Cost of Living Events across the District and the WDC Cost of Living pages on the web-site • Promoting WDC’s Wellbeing Walks in conjunction with Community Wellbeing Team

8 Rolling Four Months Communications and Engagement Plan December 2022 – March 2023

Action	When	Notes
Carbon Literacy Training	Ongoing (Launched Nov 2022)	This is available to all staff. A special session for senior leadership was held in November 2022. Training for members is being explored for Autumn 2023

Warm Winter Messaging	Ongoing throughout winter 2022/23	Regular messages are progressing alongside Act On Energy. Leaflets have been included in Council Tax bills and reminders as well for community centres and partner agencies. Act on Energy have attended a number of events including Money Market, Ecofest and others.
Local Climate Engagement	Ongoing (pilot events due in early 2023, members training and briefing session held 28/11/22)	Working alongside partners to deliver a series of engagement sessions, with particular focus on rural communities to help communities develop their own climate change action and feedback into WDC CCAP
Climate Change Champions	Ongoing – With monthly showcase on social media	Showcasing inspirational ideas and good practice through our social media channels and website. There are currently 9 climate champions
Adaptation and Biodiversity	2023	We are looking to develop communication and engagement in relation to the council’s work on adaptation and the recently declared ecological emergency.
Carbon Connected Sessions	Ongoing (Relaunch in 2023)	Webinars/Recordings to share with staff and residents on themes including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air Quality • Sustainable Travel • Home Energy Efficiency
Green Homes Grants	Ongoing	Continue the promotion of the green homes grants schemes through regular press releases, social media, events, and radio advertising
Active travel	Ongoing	Promote active travel initiatives during March, in particular those associated with installing B2022 legacy cycle parking stands, bike sharing and continued promotion of Better Points
Big Energy Saving Week	January 2023	Refresh the top energy saving tips already available to have a heating focus to reflect where most energy can be saved.

9. Measuring Success

The measure of success with fully engaging with the community to drive down carbon emissions could realistically come from the bottom-line carbon emissions reduction data, for example from the domestic sector, although this is always two years behind.

There are also more immediate ways to establish the success of a communications exercise, and these are already monitored by the Media team as follows.

- Engagement – the number of people interacting with a social media post in some way (reacting, commenting, sharing).
- Link clicks – a measure of engagement which usually forms part of a call to action.
- Impressions – these are numbers given by the social media platforms that tell us how many accounts will have seen our post in their timeline. The more impressions, the more people who will potentially engage with our content.
- Press coverage – Where the press release has been picked up by the local newspapers for coverage. Whether the press release has been adapted (if and the overall tone of the newspaper's coverage (negative, neutral, positive).
- Website – Traffic to the climate change web page, how many visits, how long someone spends on the web page and number of people that have completed a form/survey/quiz.
- Events and Webinars – Numbers of people attending and feeling or 'vibe' of the event (negative, neutral, positive).

10 Governance and Reporting Progress

Progress reporting on the Communications Strategy will be through the WDC Climate Emergency PAB and the SDC Climate Change Panel on a quarterly basis along with updates to Committee as required. The four month rolling programme will form the basis of this reporting and, recognising the vital role of members in communications, will provide members with the opportunity to advice on the ongoing review of the rolling programme.