

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
- Keep the outcomes of the 2021 People's inquiry in mind as we plan activities

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
- Regularly revisit the 2021 People's Inquiry outcomes to ensure these are informing our Climate Change plans.
- Following the 2022 People's Inquiry Update and feedback report, consider whether to do this again in 2023.
- 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 |
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| 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: |
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| Clean Air Day event | June 15 th 2023 | Clean Air Day event <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Joint initiative to highlight Clean Air Day on 15th June 2023, between Climate Change Team, Air Quality Officer in Health and Wellbeing team and Clean Air Warwickshire •Social Media Campaign including bitesize video •Promotion of Bike Wheel Art displayed at St Nicholas' Park and promotion of pledges to improve air quality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visited a local schools eco-committee and held an interactive session on clean air. |
| Biodiversity | | Following our Ecological Emergency declaration in October 2022 we have been raising awareness of the Council's biodiversity work and the need to protect and enhance biodiversity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dec 2022 – spotlight on our biodiversity work during the COP15 event, through our website and social media channels May 2023 – supporting No Mow May and World Bee Day throughout the month of May using our website, social media, local press and other comms channels. |
| Leaflets provided for events | Occasionally | Where we have not had capacity to attend community climate events we have still provided our leaflet set which provides information on the following topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate Quiz & Climate Champions • Biodiversity and the ecological emergency • Walking & Cycling • Electric Vehicles • Make your home warmer & greener • Tree planting • Plastic free • Hydrogen plans |

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| Climate Change Champion – Monthly Showcase | | Warwick District Council Climate Champions. Our monthly social media showcase shines a light on those in the community, individuals, clubs or organisations that are demonstrating good practice in the district. |
| SPARK | February | The Climate Change team, alongside the Trees for our Future project attended the SPARK event for creatives at the Spa centre in February. We spoke to individuals and representatives of businesses on a variety of climate change and environmental issues, and promoted the Betterpoints scheme. |
| Betterpoints | | Employed Chloe Wiltshire Project Apprentice to concentrate on Better Points initiative. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Currently working with Communities team on promoting their Well-Being Walks - Worked in liaison with Two Castles Run, Leamington Half Marathon; Warwick & Kenilworth Food Festivals; - Run promotions at Leamington Rail Station to promote “Rail Trails” and WDC Everyone Active Leisure Centres. - Worked with Bicycle Bus in Whitnash and run promotional competitions across the three Whitnash Primary Schools that are covered. - Promoted “Dr Bike” sessions operated by WCC. - Promoted National Clean Air Day. |
| Abbey Fields Cycleway | March 2023 | Press Release following cabinet report |
| EV Charging Infrastructure | March 2023 | Press Release following cabinet report |
| Green Homes Grants scheme promotion/ Sustainable Warmth Campaign | | Attendance at local local events including at Whitnash to promote the scheme. Leaflets in food bags through the local foodbanks, community centres and regular social media promotion. |
| Net Zero Development Plan Document | | Subject to widespread publicity during the Examination Hearings and subsequently for the main modifications consultation. Further publicity anticipated as move towards adoption. |
| No Mow May | May 2023 | For the first time WDC took part in No Mow May, an annual campaign run by the organisation PLANTLIFE. We provided (and continue to provide) |

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| | | communications to residents about this. A survey circulated across our social media platforms received in the region of 4000 responses. 63% of respondents were supportive of participation and all responses are being evaluated ahead of a review for 2024. |
| Attendance at Low Carbon Leamington event in Cubbington Village Hall | June 2023 | A team from WDC attended the Low Carbon Warwickshire Network event in Cubbington. Officers provided information for residents on a number of ongoing projects and were on hand to respond to resident questions. |
| Local Climate Engagement Pilot Events | Throughout June 2023 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three engagement events alongside INVOLVE across South Warwickshire. The first of these involved pop up stands, and a third event was a facilitated round table event. • A 'Showcase event' Online aimed at town and parish councils, district councillors and active members of the community wishing to learn more about the South Warwickshire Climate Engagement Project • Media coverage has included press releases in the print media and local radio. |

Rolling Four Months Communications and Engagement Plan July – October 2023

| Action | When | Notes |
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| Carbon Literacy Training | Autumn 2023 | A Further opportunity for staff and, for the first time, elected members to take part in carbon literacy training. |
| Local Climate Engagement | Ongoing (Pilot events took place in June 2023 – next phase Autumn 2023) | 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. The next events in the pipeline are for Autumn 2023 |
| Climate Change Champions | Ongoing – With monthly showcase on social media | Showcasing inspirational ideas and good practice through our social |

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| | | media channels and website. There are currently 11 climate champions . |
| Preventing Wildfire | Summer 2023 | Messaging and signage on preventing wildfire, particularly during hot and dry periods. BBQ and campfire ban in all Council parks and open spaces with supporting comms through our website, social media channels, and physical signage in 'hot spot' areas. |
| Climate and Environment Mini Videos | | A series of bitesize videos are being produced to inform residents on a number of ongoing climate and environmental projects. These will be released as appropriate over the coming months often tying in with seasonal messages. |
| Home Energy Schemes i) Green Homes Grant Scheme ii)Home Energy Help Scheme iii)Complex Caseworker Support | Ongoing | Continue the promotion of the green homes grants scheme and additional HUG2 funding through regular press releases, social media, events and radio advertising Launch of 'Home Energy Help' scheme, a partnership with WDC, Act on Energy and Furbnow to support households able to pay for home energy retrofit work. Joint work with the Wellbeing team to promote additional new support funded by WDC for a complex caseworker to directly help low income, fuel poor and vulnerable households with complex needs. |
| ECOFEST | September 2nd 2023 | Ecofest returns to the pump room gardens on Saturday 2 nd September. A full day of entertainment, information and inspiration with an environmental flavour. |
| Love, Respect Protect Parks (including Love Parks Week 28 th July – 4 th August) | Throughout the summer | "Love, Respect, Protect" themes. Comms strategy for parks currently being developed with 3 key themes of love, protect and respect which will include messaging on wildfire, open water swimming safety, litter, anti-social behaviour. |
| Car Free Day | 22 nd September | Promotion through Betterpoints |

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| Mini Cop28 | November 2023 | Our second local climate change conference is planned for November 2023 at a venue to be confirmed. The aim of the event is to gather together key groups and individuals, and showcase good practice to inspire individuals and groups through presentations and networking. |
| Betterpoints | | Over Summer offering electric bike as prize for signing up to Better Points and this will be promoted at the following events: - - Pride Festival - Art in the Park - Eco-Fest Also promoting Better Points through National Bowls Approaching local businesses to promote Better Points to staff |

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.