

Carbon Neutral Northleach (CNN)

An independent community group initiated by Northleach with Eastington Town Council

Project Plan-January 2020

(Updated 21st August 2020)

The COVID-19 pandemic has of course interrupted progress, but we are now underway and with the help of the community look to make progress on reducing our carbon footprint.

Introduction and Scope

At the Town Council meeting of 20th November 2019, it was resolved to set up a working group to reduce the carbon footprint of the parish, with the initial working name of Carbon Neutral Northleach (CNN).

CNN has now been set up as an independent community organisation supported by the Town Council. A policy & Strategy Group chaired by Peter Mills has been established, with four active members in administration, marketing and finance roles.

This document sets out the proposed programme, which was agreed at the working group meeting of 9th January 2020.

Background

As a Parish we do not precisely know the size of our carbon footprint, but an initial survey in early 2020 shows it is at least 8,000 tonnes of CO₂ a year. Carbon Neutral Northleach (CNN) is a long term project (at least 10 years). Our eventual aim is to be carbon neutral, but even if we are only 25% successful we will reduce our footprint by over 2000 tonnes a year.

Our success will be dependent upon engaging the community in the project. *Many hands make light work*

Principles

There are of course lots of approaches. Initial thoughts below.

1. Through questionnaires, surveys, research etc identify a good estimate of our carbon footprint. We can then establish a starting point.
2. Learn from other Community Energy Projects across the UK.
3. Engage the community in the objectives of the project. Get their support.

4. Identify a plan for energy reduction and where we cannot reduce, how we can effectively offset by supporting CO2 reduction elsewhere. The key will be to have a number of different initiatives.
5. Implement the Plan
6. Pursue funding, grants, sponsorship, business partnerships to resource activity.
7. Initiate easy wins e.g. green energy preferred electricity supplier for the Town.
8. There should be no negative financial impact on residents.
9. All working group members contribute on a purely voluntary basis.
10. All sponsorship funds are managed through the Town Council.

Priorities

“The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing”

Climate change is a massive issue with many different strands. We are a small group and it would be easy to spread our work too wide. It is therefore proposed that we focus primarily on mainstream carbon footprint reduction projects, i.e. projects that clearly reduce our footprint. This is the *“main thing”*.

Other projects such as improving recycling and reducing waste to landfill, whilst worthy, should be something to support, but not part of our main work in the first year.

Year one and two should be working on those projects which are the *“low hanging fruit”*, i.e. projects where we can readily see an impact and raise the profile of the CNN project.

To be able to actually measure (as far as practicable) what we achieve will be crucial.

In summary

Five main strands to the plan:

1. Learning- research, specialist advice
2. Measurement-current position, actual savings
3. Education/Communication- community, schools, PR & promotion

4. Reducing carbon emissions - green energy, energy efficiency/using less/insulation, buying local produce
5. Offsetting carbon emissions - tree planting, supporting world wide programmes.

And further down the line:

6. Waste and recycling- improved recycling, reduced landfill

The Plan

Task	Progress/Notes as at 21st August 2020	Timescale (short/medium/long)
<p>1.Learning- Research</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Register as a Community Energy Project (CEP). This will provide some useful information on support and choice of initiatives. 2. Examine support from different organisations specialising in climate change issues. 3. Encourage feedback and views of the community 	<p>Links and partnerships have been established with a number of organisations including- Northleach with eastington Town Council, Cotswold District Council, Northleach Town Trustees, Cotswold Fosseway Lions Club, Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust and the National Trust at Lodge Park.</p> <p>Funding for trees from organisations such as the Woodland trust has been explored.</p> <p>A dedicated page on the town Council website is in place. CEP registration has not been progressed at this time.</p>	Short.
<p>2.Learning- specialist advice and support</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cotswold District Council (CDC)- discuss how they can support and guide what we do. Advice on initiatives. 2. Southampton University- A relationship 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Meetings held and ongoing 2. Partnership in place. Student placement agreed to develop their “carbon Diet” project, but postponed to 2021. Proposed this is focussed on measurement (see below). 	Short

<p>has been established with the University and their department specialising in climate change issues.</p> <p>3. Cotswold Conservation Board will be a useful link.</p> <p>4.</p>		
<p>3.Measurement- what is our current carbon footprint?</p> <p>We are a parish of around 1000 dwellings and 2000 people. We have a small business community and farming is an important part of our identity. To identify a ballpark figure of the amount of CO2 and methane we produce seems a daunting prospect, but actually we can individually calculate what we produce. There are a number of free on-line calculation tools. If sufficient of us complete it and extrapolate for similar properties/streets we can get a working number. The impact of having a number (a large one) is important in promoting what we are doing.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Household calculation of basic carbon footprint is set up on the web page and has been completed by a number of residents. Ongoing completion to be promoted. 2. Current estimate of domestic CO2 production is around 8000 tonnes across the parish. 	Short
<p>4.Measurement- set up a database to log savings</p> <p>This is probably one of the most important early tasks. By showing actual savings (irrespective of knowing the actual existing footprint), everyone can see the impact the project is having.</p>	See above, good progress	Medium
<p>5.Education/Communication- Promotion and PR plan</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. leaflet/newsletter planned to all households 2. Parish newsletter feature published. 	Short

<p>PM has met with Debbie Calgie (DC). Debbie's experience as a journalist and in PR is a real asset to us. The telling of our story beyond just the Parish newsletter is important. It can generate support and funding.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Plan to set up our own facebook page 4. Utilise the Town Council website until own website set up 	
<p>6.Education/Communication- engaging the community Part of the education process has to include providing practical guidance for people to reduce their footprint. We should be able to link into existing information. Adults Over 1500 adults living in the parish. We need to;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create awareness 2. Engender support 3. Get as many people as active as possible in the programme <p>Children Important to engage in the schools, both in awareness and actual carbon reduction projects. Focussing the initial tree planting project on children is an opportunity.</p>	<p>Adults</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Publishing concise practical local guidance to promote participation in CNN 2. Formal membership system being set up <p>Children</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The proposed first phase tree planting project (see below), one per child in the Parish. 2. Engage with the primary and secondary schools 3. When we know more, delivering talks to school children on what we are doing etc. getting their ideas etc. 	<p>Medium</p>
<p>7.Fundraising-coordinated approach Offset and insulation projects require funding. It's important we approach this in a coordinated way. One enthusiast may get £100, when a coordinated approach might generate £1000</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop one fundraising plan to ensure a coordinated effort from local and national businesses etc. 2. Pursue grants from charitable organisations. Lions have kindly provided initial support. 3. Bulb energy partnership established so CNN receives a 	<p>Short</p>

from the same sponsor. All funds will be held by the Town Council.	£20 donation for new subscriptions.	
8.Reducing Carbon Emissions- Domestic Green Energy (Electricity). This is actually an"easy win". Swapping to a green energy supplier for electricity is simple individually. Using the weight of the Town wide CNN project may lever an even better deal.	Partnership with Bulb energy set up.	Short
9.Reducing Carbon Emissions- Business Green Energy (Electricity) Swapping businesses (and the Town Council) to a green energy supplier is a little more tricky.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To be progressed 2. When above established, approach local businesses to switch 	Medium
10.Reducing Carbon Emissions- Using less energy One of the lessons from Li in Finland is the work they did on using less energy. We will need advice on this, over and above just improving insulation.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Seek advice from CDC and Southampton University. 2. Google research 3. Implement programme 	Long by 2023
11.Reducing Carbon Emissions- Insulation/low energy lightbulbs etc How can we provide support for people to make their homes more energy efficient.	Seek advice from CDC and Southampton University.	Long by 2023
12.Reducing Carbon Emissions- Buying local produce Its sounds easy to buy local rather than produce that has flown around the world. However this may involve for some a significant	Action to research how we can provide helpful local information. Discuss with local traders. Possibly a scheme with shops in the Town and a supermarket in Cirencester.	Medium

change in lifestyle and then there is the issue of being able to identify which produce really is local.		
<p>13.Offsetting Carbon Emissions- Tree planting</p> <p>40 fully grown trees will offset about one tonne of CO2 per year. Our medium term target is to get a tree planted for every resident (2000 trees). Our first phase target is to plant 300 trees (one for every child). One acre of land can accommodate around 40 trees. It is not necessary for all the trees to be planted locally, but should be achievable in phase one.</p>	<p>Good progress was made in advance of the formation of CNN. There are a number of locations identified locally. Many discussions have taken place and there are a number of initiatives currently ongoing. These include use of the green ring in the Town Plan and edges of local farmland to be pursued. Feedback has identified trees available from the I Dig Trees project and Cotswold and Vale Ash Dieback Forum. National Trust locally has a major tree planting project that can be concurrent with this target.</p>	<p>Short phase one- 300 trees by 31/12/20 31/12/21</p> <p>Medium - another 1700 trees by 31/12/24 31/12/23</p>
<p>14.Offsetting Carbon Emissions- Supporting worldwide carbon/methane reduction</p> <p>Generating funds, we can support other projects e.g. Methane capture, energy efficient cookers for the third world.</p>	<p>Seek advice from CDC and Southampton University.</p>	<p>Long</p>
<p>15.Reducing waste and landfill-</p> <p>The education process can include guidance on how to recycle better</p>	<p>Include in discussions with CDC and Southampton University. Work alongside the Terracycle yellow bin initiative and include guidance in education and information programme.</p>	<p>Medium</p>
<p>16.Town Council- direct contribution</p>	<p>Improving energy efficiency of our buildings i.e. the Westwoods Centre and the Pavilion. The Westwoods is 25 years old - its heating and lighting systems are old, inefficient and not easy to control so that we have heat and light when we want it and not when we don't. Switching to a green energy supplier.</p>	<p>Medium</p>
<p>17.Lobbying and political support- Engaging</p>	<p>Worthy of its own section as to engage the support and</p>	<p>Medium</p>

the political and professional support and Town, District and County Council level.	resources of the local authorities is a must. Combination of professional support and rolling some initiatives out at a district level, e.g. Cotswold DC publishing a consumer help guide.	
18. Reducing emissions-petrol and diesel consumption?	Reducing the travel fuel emissions. Commence research on how we can educate and put in place carbon reduction initiatives e.g. electric charging points in the town- visible step. develop a car sharing scheme for commuting to Cheltenham/Cirencester. examine possible savings on supermarket travel. Funding for low carbon replacement vehicles.	Long

Others/Long term issues not currently in the plan:

These are items not in the plan at present:

1. Solar Panels- value can be researched, but if we are getting clean electricity anyway, it's less of a priority. Costs involved in installing and eliminating feed-in tariffs reduce the benefit. Advice is that payback is practically 10-15 years, but investment in solar batteries as part of the package is recommended. Then excess power generated can be stored and used.