

## **Carbon Neutral Northleach (CNN)**

**An independent community group initiated by Northleach with Eastington Town Council**

### **Project Plan- 2020-2030**

**(Updated 1st March 2021)**

2020 was our first year as CNN and whilst the pandemic stalled a number of activities, we are looking forward to reducing the carbon footprint of our parish. with the help of the community.

### **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 is now established as an independent community organisation supported by the Town Council. A policy & Strategy Group has been established, with active members in administration, marketing and finance roles.

The aims and priorities of CNN were agreed at a public meeting on 9th January 2020. This document sets out the planned programme, as agreed by the Policy and Strategy Group, following further experiences and to enable synergy with the Cotswold District Council (CDC) climate emergency strategy.

### **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 CO<sub>2</sub> 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**

The agreed principles and purpose of CNN are;

1. Through questionnaires, surveys, research etc to identify a good estimate of our carbon footprint.

2. Learn from other Community Energy Projects across the UK.
3. Engage the community in the objectives of the project. Get their support.
4. Develop and regularly review a plan for energy reduction and where we cannot reduce, how we can effectively offset emissions 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.

### **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 early years.

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><b>1.Learning- Research</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Examine support from different organisations specialising in climate change issues.</li> <li>2. Encourage feedback and views of the community</li> </ol>	<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.</p>	Short.
<p><b>2.Learning- specialist advice and support</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cotswold District Council (CDC)- Working with CDC for an integrated approach.</li> <li>2. Southampton University- A relationship has been established with the University and their department specialising in</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Meetings held and ongoing with the CDC climate emergency officer. Attendance at the CDC parish councils Climate Action workshop.</li> <li>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).</li> </ol>	Short

<p>climate change issues.</p> <p>3. Cotswold Conservation Board will be a useful link.</p> <p>4.</p>		
<p><b>3.Measurement- what is our current carbon footprint?</b></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.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>2. Current estimate of domestic CO2 production is around 8000 tonnes across the parish.</li> </ol>	Short
<p><b>4.Measurement- set up a database to log savings</b></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>	<p>See above, good progress. No process is currently in place to measure savings. This is on hold until there is greater engagement with the community.</p>	Medium
<p><b>5.Education/Communication- Promotion and PR plan</b></p> <p>Production of a communications plan is important to ensure a joined up/efficient approach.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. leaflet/newsletter planned to all households</li> <li>2. Parish newsletter feature published.</li> <li>3. Plan to set up our own facebook page</li> <li>4. Utilise the Town Council website until own website set up</li> <li>5. Communications plan in progress</li> </ol>	Short
<p><b>6.Education/Communication- engaging the community</b></p> <p>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.</p>	<p><b>Adults</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Publishing concise practical local guidance to promote participation in CNN</li> <li>2. Formal membership system being set up. Supporter registration in place.</li> <li>3. Run a community seminar post pandemic, i.e. in the</li> </ol>	Medium

<p><b>Adults</b> Over 1500 adults living in the parish. We need to;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create awareness</li> <li>2. Engender support</li> <li>3. Get as many people as active as possible in the programme</li> </ol> <p><b>Children</b> Important to engage in the schools, both in awareness and actual carbon reduction projects, e.g. delivering talks to schools. Focussing the initial tree planting project on children is an opportunity.</p>	<p>autumn. Focus on practical advice on reducing carbon emissions.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Host community meetings post lockdown, (i.e. step 4).</li> </ol> <p><b>Children</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The proposed first phase tree planting project (see below), one per child in the Parish.</li> <li>2. Engage with the primary and secondary schools. This is on hold due to lack of volunteer support and difficulties with the access to schools during the pandemic.</li> </ol>	
<p><b>7.Fundraising-coordinated approach</b> 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 from the same sponsor.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop one fundraising plan to ensure a coordinated effort from local and national businesses etc.</li> <li>2. Pursue grants from charitable organisations. The Town Council and the Cotswold Fosseway Lions have kindly provided initial support.</li> <li>3. Bulb energy partnership established so CNN receives a £20 donation for new subscriptions.</li> </ol>	Short
<p><b>8.Reducing Carbon Emissions- Domestic Green Energy (Electricity).</b> 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.</p>	Partnership with Bulb energy set up. Residents can now sign up to green electricity on the Town Council website.	Short
<p><b>9.Reducing Carbon Emissions- Business</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To be progressed. The project requires further research</li> </ol>	Medium

<p><b>Green Energy (Electricity)</b> Swapping businesses (and the Town Council) to a green energy supplier is a little more tricky.</p>	<p>and a volunteer to coordinate. 2. When above established, approach local businesses to switch</p>	
<p><b>10.Reducing Carbon Emissions- Using less energy</b> 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.</p>	<p>1. Working with CDC and Southampton University.</p>	<p>Long by 2023</p>
<p><b>11.Reducing Carbon Emissions- Insulation/low energy lightbulbs etc</b> How can we provide support for people to make their homes more energy efficient?</p>	<p>Working with CDC and Southampton University.</p>	<p>Long by 2023</p>
<p><b>12.Reducing Carbon Emissions- Buying local produce</b> It sounds easy to buy local rather than produce that has been flown around the world. However this may involve for some a significant change in lifestyle and then there is the issue of being able to identify which produce really is local.</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>Medium</p>
<p><b>13.Offsetting Carbon Emissions- Tree planting</b> 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</p>	<p>A carbon offset plan is in place, with 5 tree planting initiatives. 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. The National Trust locally has a major tree planting project that</p>	<p>Short phase one- 300 trees by <del>31/12/20</del> 31/12/21  Medium - another 1700 trees by</p>

necessary for all the trees to be planted locally, but should be achievable in phase one.	can be concurrent with this target. Positive discussions with the Northleach Trustees have taken place. Discussions with other landowners to progress post pandemic.	<del>31/12/24</del> 31/12/23
<b>14. Offsetting Carbon Emissions- Supporting worldwide carbon/methane reduction</b> Generating funds, we can support other projects e.g. Methane capture, energy efficient cookers for the third world.	Working with CDC and Southampton University.	Long
<b>15. Reducing waste and landfill-</b> The education process can include guidance on how to recycle better	Included in discussions with CDC and Southampton University. Work alongside the Terracycle yellow bin initiative and include guidance in education and information programme.	Medium
<b>16. Lobbying and political support-Town Council</b>	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. The Town Council is in the process of switching to a green energy supplier.	Medium
<b>17. Lobbying and political support- Cotswold District Council (CDC)</b>	CDC has declared a climate emergency and is coordinating the district wide approach. They are providing support, expertise and training through Parish council workshops etc. CNN will continue to work with CDC and has identified a number of areas of joint working. See Annex A.	Medium
<b>18. Reducing emissions-petrol and diesel consumption?</b>	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. Develop a car sharing scheme for commuting to	Long

	Cheltenham/Cirencester. Examine possible savings on supermarket travel. Funding for low carbon replacement vehicles.	
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**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. The bigger idea of building our own PV farm is not within our resources at the moment and will be introduced as a long term goal as part of any CDC initiative for the wider Cotswolds area.

**Annex A- CDC Climate Emergency Strategy support**

CNN will work with CDC on the following areas;

1. Within the CDC communications and engagement strategy,
  - Encourage CDC to promote CNN and participation through CDC resident communication channels.
  - Support networking with other Parish and Town councils to share information and initiatives. We need an active network to communicate/blog etc.
2. Electric car recharging points- support and participate in the promotion of the CDC Sustainable Transport Policy, when published.
3. Heating buildings with fossil fuels
  - promote efficiency through improved insulation
  - support the CDC rooftop PV initiative
  - provide advice on home energy retrofits
  - promote the fitting of smart meters to reduce peak time consumption
4. Support CDC Neighbourhood-wide PV bulk purchasing initiative
5. Road transport- work with CDC to promote vehicle use efficiency/road transport emission reductions

6. Tap into to promote local energy initiatives- e.g. South West Energy Hub,