

Climate Emergency Annual Report 2024

Climate Emergency Working Group 2023-2024

CLLr Denise Denis, CLLr Sarah Powell, CLLr Deborah Orrett, CLLr Georgie Robbins, CLLr Gordon Folkard, Maddy Milnes and James Mochrie

Climate Emergency Working Group Aims (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, timebound).

1. Develop, lead and/or enable, in conjunction with residents, local businesses, community organisations and Unitary Council Sustainability leads, a minimum of three agreed projects that have one or more of the following objectives:

(a) Promote a better understanding of energy loss and savings, leading to lower energy usage (b) Promote the use of green infrastructure and renewable technology to generate energy. (c) Promote and develop training and employment potential in both energy production and energy saving areas. (d) Encourage the use of low carbon alternatives to the private car. (e) Strengthen links to tackle energy poverty (f) Reduce waste, through minimising packaging for example, re-using, and recycling

2. Support the work of the Wells City Council (WCC) on projects that relate to the Council's resilience objectives.

3. Work with the WCC and allied partners/projects to ensure joined up thinking with local organisations.

5. Work with other similar post holders across Mendip and Somerset to share good practice.

6. Identify opportunities for relevant funding, grants and awards and support business and community organisations with accessing these funds

Outcomes from Strategies for 2023- 2024

1. Winning Hearts and Minds Campaign March- December 2023:

- Climate Emergency Wells City Council webpage regularly updated, and posts added to Facebook.
- 2 online and street surveys to find out where people are in their understanding and journey for climate emergency actions. 56 people took part. In the second survey 90.63% respondents were worried about climate change and 50% rated climate change 10/10 as a concern for National Government, Somerset, and Wells. (appendix A)

- Coordinated a community event- WEN Open Day on 1 July at Portway Annexe to showcase local organisations working to improve the environment, protect biodiversity and mitigate effects of climate change- attended by 60 people and young persons.
- Manned a stand on the Market- 4 October to engage with the public and promote online survey.

2. Improved Knowledge and Understanding within the Council

- 4 councillors- D Orrett, D Denis, S Powell and G Robbins attended Radical Adaption for Parish & Town Councillors: Creating Green and Resilient Communities (on Wednesdays 11th, 18th and 25th October) run by Centre for Alternative Technology.
- Cllr Denise Denis attended a certificated course- Zero Carbon Britain: Carbon Literacy Training for SALC on Tuesdays 3rd, 17th and 31st October 2023- along with other councillors in Somerset. Pledged to offer a Carbon Literacy Seminar to Councillors and staff in 2024.
- Monthly Reports to Wells City Council Outside Spaces Committee.
- Part night lighting- the Climate Group brought a proposal to Full Council for consideration to offer to support any future Somerset-led initiative. This was turned down on grounds that further work is required to provide more information for a fuller debate.

3. Worked with Local Partners and Organisations:

- The Climate Working Party members attended 4 Wells Environment Network Meetings over the year to link up with other organisations to share knowledge and assist in organising the WEN showcase event in October 2024.
- Avalon Community Energy is developing partnerships with Citizens Advice/ parish councils/Wells City Council to enable a bid for funding to help residents who are in fuel poverty. The Climate Group have supported this initiative from Maddy Milnes for a presentation to Full Council.
- Supported Bus Partnership to apply for WCC Community Grant and Cllr DD reports regularly to Full Council.
- Supported Litter Picking Volunteers led by Cllr Orrett.
- Tor Hill Lane Pilot project supported by WCC through signage and insurance and Outside Spaces team.

4. Climate Budget: £5000 allocated 2023-2024. Current spend £587 on training, and survey leaflets. Reserves were allocated by CWPG to replace windows Town Hall for energy efficiency but remains unspent. The CWPG request that these reserves are carried forward for this purpose to 2024-2025.