

WIGGINTON PARISH COUNCIL - CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

On 18th June 2019 Wigginton Parish Council declared a “Climate Emergency” and committed to launch a community-led consultation in co-ordination with Wigginton CC Working Group to develop an action plan over the next 6 months. The Parish Council provided representation on the working Group.

This draft action plan has been prepared by the working group - renamed “Sustainable Wigginton” (SW) - following an open meeting on 21st September at which members of the community discussed and voted on ideas for inclusion in the plan. Further ongoing community consultation and involvement will be invited.

The plan was adopted by Parish Council on 17th December 2019 and reviewed and readopted on the 20th December 2022.

Implementation will be led by SW who will monitor progress on the actions, regularly update the plan and obtain endorsement from the Parish Council as needed.

WIGGINTON PARISH COUNCIL - CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN

Wigginton Parish Council:

1. Has declared a Climate Emergency.
2. Agrees it will work with other local authorities and organisations to determine and implement best strategies and actions to limit global warming to less than 1.5° C above pre-industrial levels.
3. Will encourage and support the community of Wigginton to:
 - become carbon neutral by 2030
 - increase biodiversity
 - encourage and promote existing and new activities which sustain the community.
4. Calls on Parliament at Westminster, Herts County Council and Dacorum Borough Council to provide the powers and resources to achieve the 2030 target.

Calls on Westminster to appoint non-political Citizens Assemblies to develop the policies to deliver this target.

5. This plan contains a series of proposed actions intended to achieve these aims.

It may be modified over time in the light of experience and following further community involvement.

Implementation will be led by the Sustainable Wigginton action group (SW).

SW will monitor progress on the actions, regularly update the plan and obtain endorsement from the Parish Council if needed.

THE ACTION PLAN

Contents:

A Wildlife

B Transport

C Energy

D Food Production

E Food Waste

F The Built Environment

G Waste and Plastics

Notes:

- This is a list of actions to combat climate change which can be taken by individuals, by Wigginton village and by society.
- These will be encouraged and promoted by Sustainable Wigginton with the support of Wigginton Parish Council.
- The list may be amended or added to at any time.
- The Plan will be publicised on SW's Facebook page, on WPC's website and Facebook page, in WPC's annual newsletter (the Oddy), and elsewhere.
- If you would like to get involved in the actions please see contact details at the end of each section.

A. WILDLIFE

1.0 Tree planting

Tree planting is considered to be one of the top climate change-busting measures because trees remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, protect soil from erosion, reduce the risk of flooding and provide habitats for a vast range of animals and other plants.

In its recent report [Net Zero: the UK's contribution to stopping global warming](#), the Committee on Climate Change says the UK needs to increase its woodland from 13% of land area to 17% (the European average is around 35%) and so this means that, according to the Woodland Trust, we need to plant around 6 times more trees than we currently do in the UK.

At a village level, we are blessed to be surrounded by wonderful woodland, much of which is managed by the Woodland Trust who are leading many efforts to plant more trees.

- On an individual level we will encourage people to plant a tree in their garden.
In the words of John Tucker from the Woodland Trust, “One individual tree might not make a difference but if 10m people put one tree in, that would.”
“If people feel they want to do something, then planting a tree in the right place is a good thing to do. Get trees that are produced from seed that is sourced from the UK and grown in the UK”.
(<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/sep/04/grow-your-own-forest-how-to-plant-trees-to-help-save-the-planet>).
- At a village level, we can and do participate in organised tree planting such as that organised by the Woodland Trust on 30th November 2019. We can also consider what might be done with common areas, such as the Recreation Ground off Vicarage Road.
- There are also some grants available for tree planting for communities and schools and we will explore these opportunities.

2.0 Wildflower verges

According to Plantlife, “With over 97% of ancient wildflower meadows destroyed since the 1930s, road verges are a vital refuge for many bees, butterflies, birds, bats and bugs - a good verge will supply a diverse source of nectar and pollen.”

- For roadsides managed by the council, we will liaise with them to find a cutting regime that maximises wildflower diversity, whilst ensuring road safety and practical management.
- Where residents manage their own roadside verges, we will encourage planting with wildflowers and grasses and organise the construction and positioning of planters will enhance wildlife and create an attractive feature for the village.

3.0 Workshops (knowledge sharing e.g. building bird and bat boxes, composting etc)

- We see opportunities to bring the community together to learn new techniques such as composting and to share ideas and skills on building habitats for a range of wildlife. These may be workshops or just ‘bring and build’ events.

4.0 Wildlife corridors

A wildlife corridor is an area of habitat that provides passage for wildlife across artificial obstacles such as dams, roads, railways and fences.

Wildlife corridors vary in size substantially some existing at an international level.

- Therefore from a local point of view we will look to coordinate with other efforts in our region and look at ways to encourage residents to connect their gardens to the wider environment. For example, making gaps in hedges and fences for hedgehogs.

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B. TRANSPORT

1.0 Car share scheme

Car share schemes are effective ways of reducing carbon emissions, saving money and enhancing community cohesion. With major operators such as Liftshare already providing the infrastructure introducing/expanding use would be relatively cheap and easy.

Factors likely to make any scheme work are:

- practical considerations such as common destinations, times of travel and number of users; and
- trust and social connection.

Alternatives could be a car club (centrally owned and located car which can be hired for short periods) though this is not likely to be viable in Wigginton

- 1st stage action - Promotion via leaflet drop or inclusion with other events.

2.0 Speed limits / safer roads

Roads safety, fear and intimidation are major reasons for low cycling levels and contribute to community “severance”. Remembering that roads, particularly in built up areas, are public spaces as well as means of travel can enhance uptake of walking and cycling as well as support community cohesion. Actions to encourage this could include:

- Speed limits (20mph in built up areas)
- Cycling training
- Vehicle type restrictions
- Repairing road
- Community “street” events (street closures for this kind of event are relatively easy now)

Some of these interventions are substantial requiring action by the local authority where we are likely to be promoting/campaigning. Others can be more direct actions.

- 1st stage action - Contact local transport officer to discuss options
- 1st stage action - A community “street” event

3.0 Community bus / transport

A range of community and public transport options already exist, many aimed at supporting mobility for less able people including:

- Hertfordshire County Council - Dial-a-Ride (door to door for less able / elderly)
- Community Action Dacorum - Community Transport
 - Community minibus hire
 - Community car (volunteer drivers)

- Door to store
- Day tripper (outings club)
- Community wheels (Bus service - Fridays only Route 207)
- Red Rose also operate a bus 6 days a week from Beech Park Homes to Tring/Tring Station.

Public transport is a good option to reduce car use, but expensive requiring substantial infrastructure.

- 1st stage action - Contact local transport officer to discuss options
- 1st stage action - Promotion of existing options via leaflet drop or inclusion with other events.
- 1st stage action - Contact existing bus companies to discuss switch to electric/biofuel (post waste)

4.0 Electric bike scheme

Bike share schemes are relatively widespread with e-bike schemes becoming more popular. The E-bike option also assists with people's reticence to take on the hills locally. However, the costs of the infrastructure and viability of the scheme remain questions.

An alternative would be to encourage uptake of electric bikes and cycling in general.

- 1st stage action - Contact providers to discuss options
- 1st stage action - Promotion of cycling and e-bikes via leaflet drop or inclusion with other events (perhaps repair workshop for bikes)

5.0 Electric car charging points

Electric cars and charging networks are increasingly popular and benefit from substantial government support (particularly for private residences) and a large number of providers. A variety of charging technologies are available in the marketplace which affect who can use it, how quickly the car charges and the cost of installation. Consideration needs to be given to location of the parking bay(s)

- 1st stage action - Contact providers to discuss options

Contact : mark_burrage@hotmail.com

C. ENERGY

Around 50% of the total carbon footprint of an average household is created by heating and power for the home. With renewable sources of energy making up around a third of the UK's energy resource in 2018 there are multiple opportunities for us all to ensure that the energy that we use is renewable, sustainable and not reliant on burning of fossil fuels.

1.0 Green Energy Supply to Homes.

SW have already sent out a leaflet containing a link to the Which? Website which gives useful guidance. Here is the link:

<https://www.which.co.uk/news/2019/09/how-green-is-your-energy-tariff/>

Immediate actions that every household in Wigginton can take:

- Check the credentials of your current energy supplier on the Which? Website.
- Are you on a green tariff already?
- Is the supplier actually supplying your home with renewable energy? Many suppliers will promote tariffs as green or renewable, but in fact the supplier and the tariff is anything but!

2.0 Energy generation in your home. (see also section F, Built Environment)

Several homes in Wigginton already have their own renewable energy supply and many of these will have benefitted from the now defunct Feed in Tariff for solar panel installations.

There is a considerable amount of choice for anyone considering generating their own power. As ever there is a need to understand clearly which solution is best suited to you and your property.

All these systems involve a significant initial investment. Impartial technical advice from knowledgeable certified providers is key to avoiding costly mistakes.

Actions:

- Identify qualified installers and invite them to share information in a workshop format with interested parties or have a stall at SW village hall events.
- This will be an opportunity to share knowledge and answer questions, look at examples of systems and how they work, and understand the pros and cons.
- See section F - "Built Environment" for further information.

3.0 Energy generation on community buildings/ community energy schemes

We have several community buildings in the village with potential to generate green electricity, especially solar. This could be used by a community group for sale to the market, for private use or a combination of the two.

A project of this nature would require things such as:

- Consideration of factors including age, construction, size and orientation of the building.
- Creation of a community group with its own legal structure and rules. The way in which the Wigginton shop was set up and is run is an example of this in practice.
- Consultation and legal agreement with the building's stakeholders.
- Initial funding for a feasibility study. There are some grants available for this if we qualify.
- Discussions with the company that manages the national grid as this may carry additional system design and cost considerations.
- Funding for the construction of the project. This could be from local crowdfunding together with any available grants.

Initial Actions:

- Initial technical considerations of feasibility.
- Consult building owners/occupiers about the options.
- Investigate funding for a feasibility study.
- Use existing communication channels to gauge the level of interest for such a scheme from fellow villagers.

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D. FOOD PRODUCTION

1.0 Fruit Picking - making the most of home grown produce.

Millions of tons of perfectly edible but “ugly” commercially grown fruit and vegetables in the UK are wasted, even before it leaves the farm:

Less well known is the waste of fruit grown in cities, towns and villages across the country. It is estimated that between 70% and 90% of fruit grown in back gardens falls to the ground and rots. Some is composted at home but much ends up in the green refuse collection bins. This is a waste of a valuable nutritious food and a cost to local authorities and to the tax payer. Local authorities charge on average £42 a year to collect green household waste.

In many parts of this country and across the world there are community projects bringing together fruit growers and pickers.

Some of these share crops between the grower and local individuals or groups and can also add value by turning produce into jams, chutneys, juices and even cider which they sell or donate to community groups.

There is no reason why community fruit picking should not take off in Wigginton.

Actions:

- Publicise a community fruit picking scheme and seek growers and pickers to take part. Set up the scheme and produce a map of fruit trees and bushes in the village forming part of it.
- Investigate the feasibility of growing fruit and nut trees and bushes on publicly owned land within the village. Plant where possible and add to the map.

2.0 Allotment sharing scheme

Plants are nature’s way of capturing carbon but their good work can be undone by the use of chemicals, petrol driven garden equipment and over watering.

Gardeners, as well as farmers, are stewards and guardians of our environment, and can make a difference in the fight against climate change. Allotment gardeners can choose to garden organically and avoid ingesting chemicals that are likely to be present on shop bought fruit and vegetables.

If managed properly, an allotment can produce enough food to supplement a family's weekly shop, with fresh fruit and vegetables over the year.

It is well-known that gardening has benefits for mental and physical health and well-being. Gardening can also help to maintain good gait and balance in older gardeners and help with cognitive decline.

One of the drawbacks to having an allotment is the time and experience needed to make it a success.

An answer can be to share a plot with another more experienced allotmenteer. This is already happening on a small scale in Wigginton. The benefits include sharing of workload, skills, plants and seeds, and also the social interactions involved.

Actions:

- Discuss with the Wigginton Pools Allotment charity the possibility of encouraging allotment sharing.
- SW has recently distributed a leaflet giving information about allotment sharing.

3.0 Community Food Garden

An alternative to allotment sharing is the creation of a community food garden.

There is an award-winning garden in Tring, sited on the allotments, which shows what can be achieved in quite a short period of time.

<https://www.tringintransition.org.uk/community-garden>

Actions:

- Investigate with the Pools Allotment charity the possibility of a community garden on the allotment land, or look for a site elsewhere in the village.
- Publicise a community food garden and seek volunteers to set it up and run it.

4.0 Sustainability and the Community Shop

The award-winning Wigginton Community shop has achieved a great deal to make the village more sustainable.

It has made it possible to buy basic produce without driving to Tring and it offers an opportunity for all sections of our community to meet up for a chat and a cup of tea or coffee.

The shop's aim has always been to sell as much local produce as possible. It claims that 60% of its goods are sourced within 30 miles of the village and that most of its fresh produce is produced even closer.

The shop committee wants to do more to reduce its carbon footprint and proposes to review this in the coming year. It will be seeking ideas from individuals and groups within the village.

Actions:

- Contribute to the community shop's consultation on how to make it more sustainable.
- Continue to support the shop and where possible involve it in any initiatives to address the climate emergency and make the village more sustainable.

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E. FOOD WASTE

One third of all food produced worldwide is lost or wasted.

- Food lost is that which gets spilled or spoilt before harvesting - or when being stored, packed or transported. Food loss can be caused by weather or insects, or by high temperatures and poor storage. Food waste is that which is fit for human consumption, but isn't eaten.
- Food waste which is disposed of in landfill has a disastrous effect on the environment. As rotting food decomposes it releases methane, a greenhouse gas that contributes to global warming. The wasted food has taken fresh water, land and labour to produce.

UN data suggest that 8.4 million people in the UK are struggling to afford to eat.

- Wasted food in the UK has an estimated value of £20 billion a year. “WRAP” (the government agency, Waste and Resources Action Programme) estimates that the average family could save around £800 a year by reducing their food waste.
- Research by WRAP finds that in 2015 we threw away 7.1 million tonnes of household food waste in the UK. 70% of this was food we could have eaten.
- A further 10.1 million tonnes of food is wasted in the UK during manufacturing (18%) hospitality and food service (10%) and retail (2%).

A third of the world's grains are used to feed animals, hence the environmentalists' call for us to eat less meat. If we fed crops to people, instead of to livestock, we could feed an extra 4 billion people.

1.0 What government and business can do to cut food waste:

The government could halve food waste by 2030 by legislating to:

- Get every point of the supply chain to report on - and reduce - food waste
- Require all edible food surplus to be offered to hungry people, and then to animals as feed.
- Require all inedible food waste to be composted or used to generate energy, not sent to landfill.

Businesses could:

- Stop demanding perfectly-shaped fruit and vegetables so that no edible food is wasted in the field.
- Educate customers about food waste and how to avoid it.
- Support measures to treat farmers well - avoiding unfair deals that lead to food waste.
- Work with food redistribution charities to get surplus food to people who really need it.

2.0 What we can do in Wigginton to cut food waste:

- Research the possibility of installing a “Garbage Guzzler” at a central point in the village, to produce compost or biomass fuel.
- A workshop to share ideas on reducing food waste.
- A workshop on composting.
- A demonstration on cooking with leftovers, recipe sharing.
- A talk on reducing the amount of meat in our diets.
- Talk to Sunnyside about having their veg box scheme deliver via the community shop.

3.0 What we can all do at home to cut food waste:

- Make compost Fruits, vegetables, dairy products, grains, bread, unbleached paper napkins, coffee filters, eggshells, meats and newspaper can be composted. If it can be eaten or grown in a field or garden, it can be composted using the correct techniques. Items such as red meat, bones and small amounts of paper are acceptable, but they take longer to decompose.
- Shop smart - make a list, do a meal planner and avoid buying more than you need.
- Store food properly. Check that your fridge is set at 5 degrees or below. Avoid clutter in the fridge and freezer.
- Don't over serve. Save and eat leftovers.
- Keep a track of what you throw away and learn from mistakes.
- Food which is past its use by date may be edible - check carefully.

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F. BUILT ENVIRONMENT

1.0 Skill- or Tool- Share

Objective:

- The objective is to:
 - minimise carbon footprint by maximising the use of skills and tools which exist within the village.
 - save money paying for skills or tools which could be spent on (for example) insulating homes and reducing carbon footprint.
 - encourage interaction and friendships within the community.
 - This ties in with swap shops, see section G.

Actions:

- Devise a method of achieving a fair exchange system.
- Carry out a leaflet survey to identify, as part of a fair exchange system, those having a skill or tool to offer and those wanting to borrow a skill or tool.
- Set up a skill- and tool-sharing program online, publicise and hold a launch event.

2.0 Bulk buy solar panels and other micro-energy generation installations.

Objective:

- The objective is to decarbonise the energy used in households.
- Payback times for many energy saving measures (in CO₂ and ££) such as insulating your house, will be quicker, so these should be done first.

Actions:

- Prepare advice for homeowners on basic measures to reduce heat loss, which should be done before spending money on generation installations.
- Identify installers who are prepared to partner with us and give free surveys/ quotations and favourable prices
- Identify by leafletting and advertising a number of homeowners who are interested in exploring this with no obligation and put them in touch with the installer(s).
- Monitor progress and feedback from homeowners.

Types of micro-generation

Solar Photovoltaic (PV):

- PV panels generate electricity directly from sunlight and even in bright conditions when the sun is not shining.
- There is now no government incentive but a PV roof could be a worthwhile long term investment, especially if electricity prices rise. A 3kW solar PV costs about £5,000 to £7,000 and can generate a saving of about £375 per annum.

Solar Water Heating (Solar Thermal):

- Uses sunlight to directly heat the water for taps and showers, unlike solar PV, which produces electricity. Can meet about half of your annual domestic hot water demand.
- A roof-mounted system for a typical house should cost between £4,500 and £7,500. Subject to conditions it qualifies for the government Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) which offsets some of the cost.

Air Source Heat Pump (ASHP):

- This is like a refrigerator in reverse, and in fact it can be made to run in reverse as an air conditioner. The unit is sited outside the house, powered by electricity, and it extracts heat from the atmosphere and pumps it into the house, into radiators or underfloor heating.
- A typical ASHP has a lower climate change impact than a gas boiler and subject to conditions, qualifies for RHI payments.
- Cost for a typical 3 bed family house is about £6000-8000. It is cost effective with the RHI payments, especially if it is replacing oil or LPG which is more expensive than gas. With RHI payments a family house could attract RHI payments of about £11,200 over 7 years.

Ground Source Heat Pump and Wind Turbine.

- For financial or planning reasons these are not included in this plan.

3.0 Free* Heat Loss Surveys for Homes

(*or voluntary donation)

Objective:

- The objective is to find out - for free or for a £15 donation - where most heat is being lost through the external envelope of a home to enable the homeowner to target insulation or draughtproofing measures cost effectively.
- The survey will be done using a thermal imaging camera loaned by Tring in Transition. It has to be done in cold weather with the heating on to maximise visible heat loss and takes less than 2 hrs.
- The homeowner receives a report showing the areas of high heat loss, with probable causes and remedies.

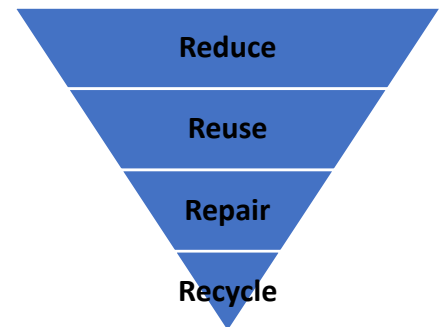
Actions:

- Deliver publicity leaflets and obtain a list of homeowners wanting the survey.
- Research methods of insulation and local suppliers/installers. Prepare an information sheet to accompany the reports.
- SW arrange and carry out the thermal imaging surveys with TinT and prepare reports.
- Monitor progress and feedback from homeowners.

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G. WASTE AND PLASTICS

“Waste and plastics” is a complex area in which public confusion should probably be accepted as inevitable. In the end what we are aiming for is to reduce the total amount of material we use whilst minimising the harm caused by what we do use. This concept is captured usefully in the waste hierarchy which should form a basis for prioritising action.



Waste Hierarchy

1.0 Better information on recycling etc (for adults and children)

Local recycling is largely operated by local authorities who have specific rules based on their operator. Raising awareness would help and could usefully be accompanied by other disposal/re-use options.

- **1st stage action - Contact LA waste officer**
- **1st stage action - research alternative disposal/re-use options (charity shops)**
- **1st stage action - distribute leaflet / combine with event**

2.0 Swap shops

Swap shops and related ideas such as repair workshops, remakeries, Men in Sheds, bring and buys, car boot sales and ebay/gumtree are increasingly popular. They provide useful opportunities to reduce waste, consumption and transport.

They also support social cohesion/engagement and in some cases, such as Men-in-Sheds, have clear benefits to mental health and well-being. Some support is available from local authorities and other funders for this type of facility.

- **1st stage action - Swap shop or similar event**
- **1st stage action - Research and promote other local options.**

3.0 Competition for innovative ideas

A community innovation challenge/competition would provide an excellent mechanism for engaging interest and brain power over what we could do locally. This may have to be preceded by an effort to identify challenges we could usefully set.

- **1st stage action - Discuss and set challenge**
- **1st stage action - Promote via community groups, school etc...**

4.0 Refill stations

Refill schemes and refill shops are increasingly popular, with many businesses looking to support the idea.

Locally there are a number of shops offering refills including: Healthfare; Mead Farm Shop; Dunsley Farm Shop; Home delivery services; Charity shops; and many more. Joe Stopps in Tring has done lots of work <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mnzjnz7BXnc>

Options include:

- A refill range at the village shop;
 - A stand-alone refill event;
 - A plastic free challenge;
 - Raising awareness of refill options;
 - 1st stage action - Contact Shop Manager / Committee to discuss options
 - 1st stage action - Promote options via leaflet or in combination with an event. (refill stall/market)
- SW has recently distributed a leaflet giving information about green swap shops and refill suppliers.

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The Action Plan was reviewed and adopted by the Wigginton Parish Council in December 2022.

Next review: December 2023