

Hucclecote Climate Change Action Group (HCCAG) Draft Strategy/Action Plan for 2023

Introduction

The HCCAG was formed following the Community Conversation event that was staged in late April 2022. Since then, there have been a series of meetings, and lots of research undertaken by the various members of the Group.

This work enabled us to prioritise the initiatives we think Hucclecote Parish Council should take forward, to create the widest local impact on the Climate Change front.

The recommended Actions fall under the following key headings:

1. BIODIVERSITY

The three main things we want to do are: -

a. Plant new wildflower areas around the parish. We have identified ten main areas that could be transformed by careful wildflower planting – in total these locations, add up to 593 sq m. We propose that this work is undertaken by a professional landscaping company, and we have engaged with several to obtain competitive estimates. Based on this we estimate the work will cost £2,700, and ideally it should begin in late autumn of 2022 or March/April 2023. We have had a generous offer from Nurture (via Benefact) to fund this work – they will do all the ground preparation, sowing and maintenance during the first year for free. Some on-going maintenance will be required in future years, and we believe this may also be supported by Benefact/Nurture. If they don't choose to help the annual cost to the parish for re-sowing or other work is likely to be a few hundred pounds each year.



Seven of the ten proposed wildflower areas are shown in red on this satellite image

We plan to engage local volunteers in some of the work and the ongoing maintenance (such as seed collecting for future years).

b. Provide allotments/community garden/community composting. We recommend that these elements can be delivered as part of the re-landscaping of 'The Mound' – an area of around an acre, behind the bowling green and outlined in yellow in the aerial photo above. We have had a useful discussion with Bovis (which has responsibility for removing or re-landscaping the area) and we believe it will fund the work.



A landscape architect has been commissioned by Bovis (see initial draft proposal, left) and we hope to agree the fine detail over the next few months – for example, how many allotments can we include, etc etc. It may take a while to get the proposal agreed, signed off by Tewkesbury Borough and implemented. We will also need to consider how we manage the Mound in the future, and if the Parish Council is willing to adopt the land/take responsibility for it.

c. Tiny Forest – Benefact Group is keen to sponsor the installation of a Tiny Forest in the area (possibly on 'The Mound' site, though we have identified other possible locations). This would involve planting around 600 trees and creating an outdoor 'classroom'. Volunteers would be recruited to maintain and manage the trees (some will probably be from the Benefact Group). We need to convince Tewkesbury Borough Council of the merits of the Tiny Forest and secure its consent for it to be planted on an agreed site. There should be no cost to the parish.



There are nearly 150 Tiny Forests in the UK – all of them initiated and managed by Earthwatch Europe. Tiny Forests connect people with nature and support general wellbeing.

They offer a place to relax, watch wildlife and they are an educational resource (Coopers Edge School is interested in utilising the outdoor 'classroom' that would be included).

The wider benefits on a Tiny Forest include:

- Enhanced carbon sequestration due to accelerated tree growth
- Attracting up to 500 animal and plant species
- Climate cooling
- Improved air quality
- Empowering communities to take positive action for the environment through taking part in a community-wide engagement programme.

Two lesser priorities under the Biodiversity heading are:

d. Seed and plant swaps – We think this can be done informally, perhaps as part of the Hullabaloo or the launch event for the Climate Change Action Plan – so there would be no cost to the council.

e. Insect Hotels and Bird Boxes – we'd like to encourage local people to make or buy their own, by publishing instructions/guidance on the parish website – so again there would be no cost to the parish council.

2. TRANSPORT & TRAVEL

The two main priorities are:

a. Promoting car sharing/lifts to work. We want to run a publicity campaign and perhaps set up a local Facebook page or website to help local people get in touch with others so they can share cars, reduce their commuting costs and their Carbon emissions. We recommend a modest budget for this of £500.

b. Encouraging 'no car' days. This initiative would involve urging people to use public transport or cycle or walk rather than their cars. It would again take the form of a publicity campaign, and we'd like to launch it to coincide with the Sustainability Fair/main launch event in the early summer of 2023. Again, we have allocated a modest budget to promote the campaign of £500.

Three lesser priorities are:

c. Lobbying Gloucestershire County Council to integrate Hucclecote into the county's emerging cycleway network. We plan to team up with Brockworth and Churchdown parishes to progress this, and there would be no direct costs to Hucclecote

d. Educating e-scooter users. We believe we can tackle this by liaising with Zwings and encouraging it to organise a training event in our area. There should be no costs involved with this.

e. Lobbying local bus companies to move to electric vehicles and – where appropriate – use smaller buses. This will involve contacting/lobbying the relevant bus operators, perhaps

in conjunction with other neighbouring parish councils, so this should cost us nothing, apart from some volunteer time.

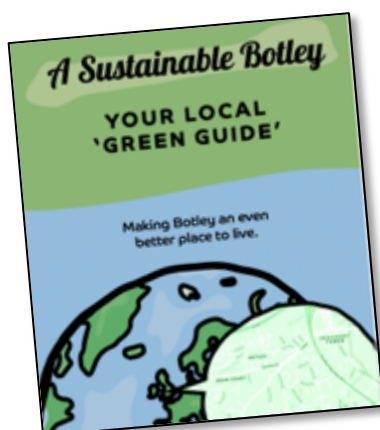
3. ENERGY AND HOMES

Three main priorities have been identified:

a. Providing practical guidance to residents on how to reduce their energy consumption.

With the impending cost of living crisis and soaring energy prices we believe we need to help our parishioners by providing practical Top Tips and guidance on things they can do to reduce their power consumption. This is likely to be done online (in a series of punchy one-page 'Top Tip' sheets across a range of topics). The full set will also be available in the form as part of a 48-page printed Eco Guidebook.

When we launch the Climate Change Action Plan with our Sustainability Fair in the summer of 2023, we'd also like to run a programme of talks/face-to-face meetings/workshops to explain the many issues and topics involved in reducing home energy consumption.



The initial blitz of online information would start in the autumn of 2022 and is likely to cover:

- Information about any energy conservation/insulation grants residents might be eligible for
- Simple tips on saving energy in homes – for example, how to fit better draught proofing, how to use/adjust thermostats and radiator valves, the benefits of installing an energy meter/monitor, reducing hot water usage, how to save energy when cooking, minimising heat 'leakage' etc
- The pros and cons of heat pumps, solar panels and other new technologies, the challenges of making them work efficiently and what they cost to install
- Details of any bulk-purchase discount schemes we may have set up by then (eg cheaper solar panels, insulation etc)
- Details of courses and organisations that can provide additional guidance beyond what we can include on the web or cram into the Guide



The content for all this will be assembled by volunteers, but the printed Guide and the artwork for some of the information we provide online will incur some costs. We have had a print estimate of £1,450, and we think we ought to allocate a similar amount for artwork. Our overall budget is therefore £3,000.

However, local business HATs has offered to sponsor the Guide by contributing £1,500 towards the production costs, so the net cost is just £1,500.

Because of the current energy price rises we plan to start some of the publicity on how to save costs in the autumn of 2022.



b. Bulk purchase discount scheme for fitting solar panels (PVs) to local homes. Initiatives like this have already been set up in several communities (the image above shows a scheme in Frome). In essence they work by getting neighbours to liaise with each other to see if they can get a group of ten or more who want to take part. If they can find enough households, the PV installer provides a 10% discount to all the homes. (The PV installer saves money by doing a group of homes close to each other in one go, so they are not out of pocket).

We are exploring which PV installer to work with – ideally it will be a well-established local firm that has a track record of running similar schemes. We would need to rigorously check their credentials and make it very clear to participating households that the parish would not be responsible should anything go amiss.

We don't think there will be any costs involved in delivering this initiative as the selected installer would also fund the local publicity.

c. Lobbying Tewkesbury Borough Council to encourage higher eco standards on new homes. This is another initiative that won't cost anything, as it just requires us to formally respond to new planning applications suggesting to TBC that it insists on higher energy efficiency targets for all new homes.

Two lesser initiatives were also identified:

d. Reduce Street lighting/check if low energy bulbs have been installed.

The Parish Council has been exploring if its own external lighting at the village hall is as energy efficient as possible. For example, it could install LEDs and switch to a system where external lights are only turned on when activated by a movement sensor. The Action Group has allocated £3,000 towards the cost of this work and would like to work with the Parish to explore how we can maximise the wider energy savings at Pineholt Village Hall.

Similarly, we should inspect the wider street lighting provided across the parish and liaise with Gloucestershire Highways or other relevant organisations to ‘fine tune’ the current lighting to reduce the amount of energy being used.

e. Electric vehicle charging points. While most electric car users in Hucclecote should be able to charge their cars from a home charging point, there are some residents who will struggle – for example those living in apartments where it is impractical to run a cable to a car. We have asked Pod Point to advise us on the practicalities and costs of installing public charging points at, say, the village hall or alongside the new Co-op store proposed off Lobley’s Drive. We understand that if there is enough demand, charge point providers will fund the installation work, and pay a modest commission to the owner of the land that is being used.

An alternative option is for the Parish Council to fund the installation. We understand there is only single-phase supply at Pineholt Hall, so we would only be able to install a slow charging point (7 kWh). The ballpark cost for installing a charger like this is between £1,500 and £3,000. A detailed survey would be needed to get a more accurate estimate and this would cost £250. At this stage we do not think this should be a priority.

4. RECYCLING AND WASTE

Three priorities for action were identified:

a. Signpost people to existing recycling facilities and set up a collection point for any hard-to-recycle items. It’s not always easy to find the most convenient places to recycle stuff, so we want to communicate to residents where and how to dispose of a wide range of items that can be recycled. We’d do this online and via the eco Guide we plan to publish in 2023. We may also need to set up a collection point for any hard-to-recycle items at the village



hall. So, we want to allocate a small budget to cover any costs associated with this. We suggest £200.

b. Install new, larger/better waste bins in locations across the parish. We have researched where the existing bin capacities are being stretched and have identified several locations where we want to install new bins or replace existing ones with larger double-bin receptacles. These bins will help pre-sort items into ‘general waste’ and ‘recyclables’.

Overall, we have allocated £4,500 towards this Action. We believe this will fund the purchase and installation of five double-bins and 2-3 smaller ones in the areas where most litter is dropped – along Hucclecote Road, the bus stops on Lobleys Drive and the new picnic bench alongside the Wootton Brook.

c. Organise a ‘Repair Café’ to encourage reuse and repairing. We have looked into how best to organise this, and we believe the answer is to persuade one of the existing repair shops to organise a ‘pop up’ event in Hucclecote (eg the recently created repair shops in

Churchdown and Brockworth, or the long-established Nailsworth one). The first event could perhaps be organised to coincide with the Sustainability Fair we plan to run in the early summer of 2023. There would be minimal costs, other than providing the village hall for free, and arranging some good advance publicity. We have allocated £300 for the publicity campaign.

5. LOCAL PROCUREMENT/BUYING

Two actions are proposed:

a. A 'showcase' for local growers/makers/crafters. We believe we should be doing all we can to help support local businesses in these tough times. We are therefore exploring the possibility of setting up an online showcase for local makers, producers, and crafts businesses – a Facebook and/or Instagram page perhaps called “Made in Hucclecote”.

This would illustrate the sort of things local people make or grow, and their contact details. Sarah has volunteered to set this up, she already has contact details of several potential makers/producers/growers, and she's willing to contact them, encourage them to showcase their work, and to 'moderate' the site.

A small promotional/advertising budget will be required to administrate and launch the online showcase – we have suggested £500.

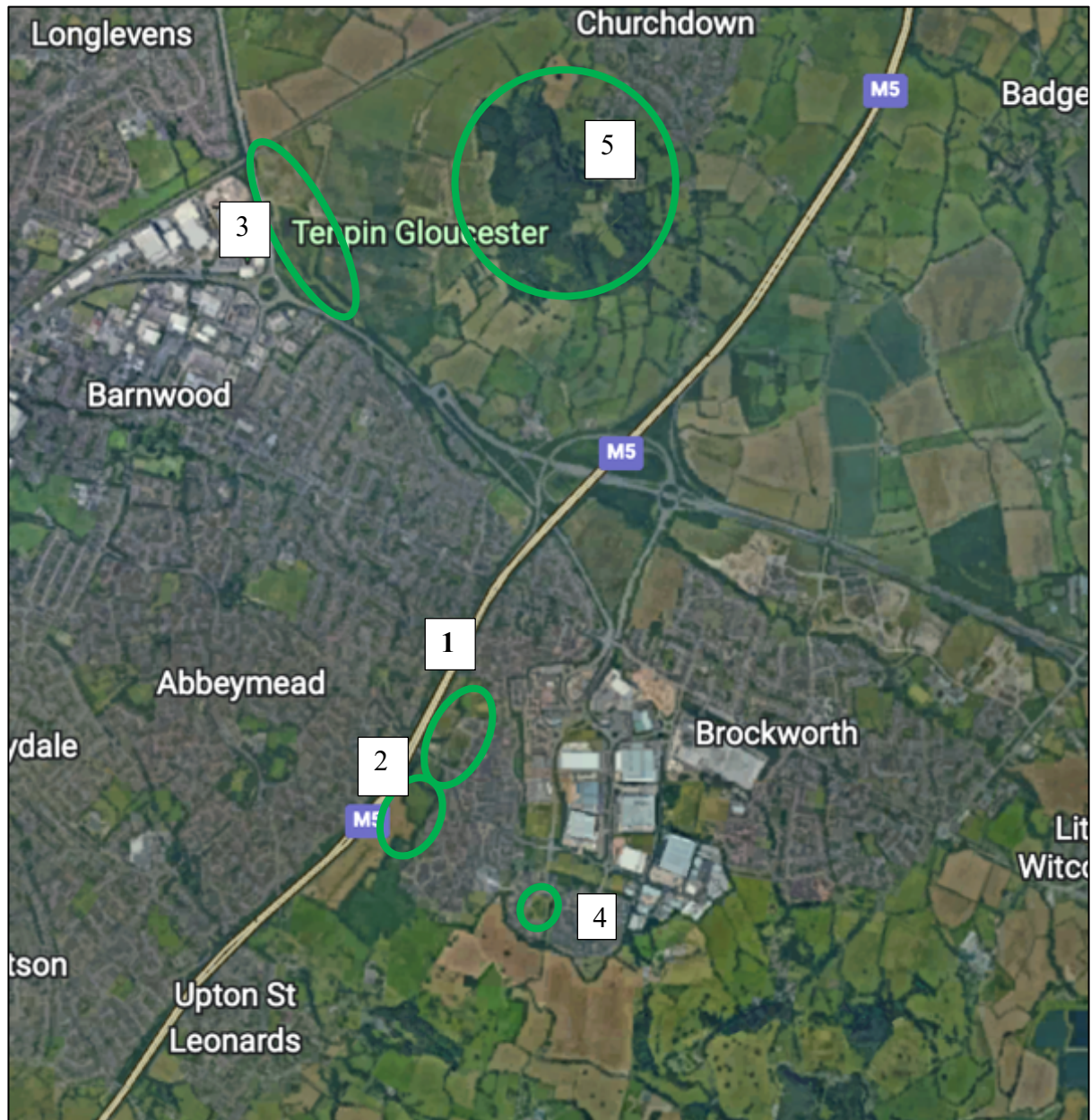
b. Prioritise Local Suppliers - One thing the parish council can do is to always try to find local suppliers for the various purchases it makes; for example, the parish should proactively seek local businesses to provide any cleaning, handyman, or landscaping work we procure.

The same applies for the Climate Change Action Plan's work – as much as possible of the £20,000 budget we have should be spent with businesses based in or around Hucclecote.

6. LAND USE

Just one action is proposed under this heading

a. Identify those areas in the parish that could potentially be protected from future development. We have undertaken a survey of green areas and other important community spaces in the parish.



The five main areas we think *could* be designated as community assets are:

- The public open space that surrounds Pineholt Village Hall, the new sports facilities and the Wootton Brook corridor (1)
- Hucclecote Meadows SSSI (2)
- The Horsbere Brook Nature Reserve (3)

- The public open space that fronts onto Guan Road/Digby Grove, on the Coopers Edge development (4)
- The wooded area on top of Chosen Hill (5)

The last two may require us to co-operate with Upton St Leonards and Churchdown Parish Councils as the sites are either partially or wholly in their areas.

This work just involves a little volunteer time preparing a submission that needs to go to TBC for its approval. We propose preparing the documents one at a time, over the course of 2023, so we learn about the process. No budget has been allocated to this action.

7. COMMUNICATION/INSPIRATION

One major initiative is proposed under this heading

a. Sustainability Festival/Launch event. We have looked at two ways of running an event like this – a grand fair/exhibition staged in a large marquee; or a more modest ‘spread out’ event using a range of small local venues, and perhaps staged over a longer period. The cost of hiring a suitable marquee is significant, so we have decided to go for the latter option.

The current plan is to run the event in the early summer of 2023 and make it a follow on/replacement for the Hullabaloo.

We plan to organise a programme of events on different days/evenings to ‘signal’ the start of the Climate Change initiative. And, once it is launched, we hope to arrange a series of ongoing session (perhaps monthly) to maintain the campaign.

The format could include:

- A programme of talks/demonstrations/workshops on a wide range of eco topics (energy/biodiversity/recycling/transport etc) at various locations (eg Pineholt Village Hall, Benefact’s offices, Coopers Edge School or The Edge cafe).
- We could also stage ‘Open Days’ when residents can visit local homes that have already installed, say, a heat pump, extra insulation, or PV’s, to ask about the technology and learn how to do it themselves.
- We would try to set up an association with BBC Radio Gloucestershire which would help us promote the event(s). It might even broadcast from some of the talks/visits.
- Hopefully we will be able to attract a suitable VIP to ‘launch’ the initiative and our Hucclecote Eco Guide.

We’d like to involve a wide range of organisations in the talks and workshops - bodies such as the RSPB, CPRE, Glos Orchards Trust, Glos Wildlife Trust, the Environment Agency, WWT, Woodland Trust, Defra, Glos Farming and Wildlife Advisory group, Vision 21, Campaign for Better Transport, Zero Carbon Britain, Transition Towns etc.

We would expect most of the speakers (and venues) to give their time for free, but we will probably have to cover some travel expenses and hire equipment (eg PA). The bulk of the

work setting up the event will be done by volunteers, but we'll need to do lots of publicity, so we have allocated £3,000 for the event in total.

Two lesser actions are also proposed:

b. Re-branding the Hucclecote parish signs. We would like to proclaim that Hucclecote is seeking to tackle Climate Change by augmenting the current signs with a 'strapline' like 'Committed to becoming Greener' underneath. There are currently two signs that would need a new panel made and attached underneath, and we have had a quote of £720 for doing this. We'd also like to use 'Committed to becoming Greener' (or whatever we finally settle on) on the parish website and all stationery etc.

c. Social media and engaging with younger residents. We are keen to establish a Hucclecote Climate Change Action Group Facebook page and we are looking into the other media platforms we ought to use, to ensure we are seen by younger people.

PROPOSED BUDGET

We have a maximum of £20,000 to allocate, and the Actions identified in this report total £14,720.

We would like to allocate the current difference (£5,820) as a Contingency, to fund future initiatives or to top up any Actions impacted by rising prices.

Hucclecote Climate Change Action Group - proposed budget for 2023		
	£	Notes
BIODIVERSITY		
Wildflower planting across the parish		<i>Benefact/Nurture will cover the £2,700 cost of this work in year 1. Thereafter we may need to allocate a few hundred pounds each year to keep the areas looking good</i>
Allotments/community garden/composting - The Mound		<i>Funded by Bovis</i>
Tiny Forest		<i>Funded by Benefact</i>
Seed and plant swaps		<i>No cost</i>
Insect hotels and bird boxes		<i>No cost</i>
TRANSPORT & TRAVEL		
Campaign to promote car sharing/lifts to work	£ 500.00	
Campaign to encourage 'no car' days.	£ 500.00	
Lobbying GCC to improve cycleway links		<i>No cost</i>
Educating e-scooter users/training course		<i>Funded by Zwings</i>
Lobbying local bus companies to move to electric vehicles		<i>No cost</i>
ENERGY AND HOMES		
Practical Eco Guide on reducing energy consumption, etc	£ 1,500.00	<i>HATs will contribute £1,500 towards the total cost of £3k</i>
Bulk purchase discount scheme for fitting solar panels		<i>Funded by selected installer</i>
Lobbying TBC for higher eco standards on new homes.		<i>No cost</i>
Reducing street lighting/ low energy bulbs at Pineholt village hall	£ 3,000.00	<i>Contribution towards the current £4,475 estimate to improve external lighting</i>
7 kW vehicle charging point at village hall		<i>Estimated between £1-3k</i>
RECYCLING AND WASTE		
Signpost people to existing recycling facilities	£ 200.00	
Install new, larger/better waste bins	£ 4,500.00	
Organise a 'Repair Café' to encourage reuse and repairing	£ 300.00	
LOCAL PROCUREMENT/BUYING		
A 'showcase' for local growers/makers/crafters	£ 500.00	
Prioritise Local Suppliers		<i>No cost</i>
LAND USE		
Designate areas to be protected from future development		<i>No cost</i>
COMMUNICATION/INSPIRATION		
Sustainability Festival/Launch event	£ 3,000.00	
Re-branding the Hucclecote parish signs	£ 720.00	
Sub-Total	£ 14,720.00	
CONTINGENCY		
To fund later phases/or to cover any price increases	£ 5,280.00	
TOTAL	£ 20,000.00	

REVEIWING PROGRESS & EFFECTIVENESS

The Action Group is keen to develop practical methods for measuring the environmental impact of the Actions set out in this report, so that we can monitor what works best/is most effective, and then we can adapt our strategy going forward.

We also plan to formally review the Strategy at least once a year, and then update the document.

Because of the current 'cost of living crisis' we feel it is important to begin key elements of Action Plan as quickly as possible. This may involve a 'soft launch' later this autumn, ahead of the formal launch in the Spring of 2023.

CREDITS

We would like to thank the following people – a mixture of residents, representatives of local businesses and parish councillors - for the time and commitment they have put into developing this Action Plan.

Sorcha Anderson
Dave Bentley
Maria Clutterbuck
Darren Macdonald
Chris Pitt
Andrew Pugh
Gem Urquhart
Luke Riley
Sarah Shewan
Ted Stevens
Sarah Watkins

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