

Case studies
Tree Charter

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National Association of Local Councils (NALC)

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FOREWORD

Legacy of Tree Charter

Between the years 2017-2020, The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) partnered with the Woodland Trust, the National Union for Students (NUS), and the Tree Council to embed the ten principles of the Charter for Trees, Woods, and People (the Tree Charter) within communities across the UK. The partnership was funded by The Big Lottery.

The call for a Tree Charter was initiated in 2015 by the Woodland Trust in response to the crisis facing trees and woods in the UK. Before the launch of the charter, there was no clear, unifying statement about the rights of people in the UK to the benefits of trees, woods, and forests. The Tree Charter was launched at Lincoln Castle on 6 November 2017 and set out the principles for a society in which people and trees can stand stronger together.

NALC believes that local (parish and town) councils have a key part to play in protecting trees and woodland. The Tree Charter drew its strength from the grassroots – from people and communities across the UK who stand up for trees, and help others to realise the importance of living by the charter's ten principles.

The charter branch network included local councils, schools, community woodland groups, artists and campaigners. By gathering the stories that shaped the ten principles, and collecting signatures in its support, charter branches gave the Tree Charter real impact in society. The charter looked to shape local policies to support the role of trees and helping people understand the value of trees and what they can do to help them.

NALC encouraged all 10,000 local councils in England to become charter branches in order to join a network dedicated to delivering the principles of the Tree Charter to their communities.

Tree Charter Day

During the last week of November the UK celebrates National Tree Week. Tree week looks to celebrate the relationship between people and trees and the multitude of benefits that trees provide us. Tree Charter Day is a specific day within the National Tree Week to celebrate the principles of the charter. Each charter branch was encouraged to celebrate in their own way, while nationally the partners of the charter would organise a national campaign or event.

Case studies

This booklet of case studies is designed to be used by county associations or local (parish and town) councils as an example of work that can be accomplished within our communities. These are examples of best practise and demonstrate actions large and small to benefit trees and local wildlife locally.

The publication features chapters on Biodiversity, climate change, innovation, inspiration, landscapes, longevity, planning, planting, protection, sustainability and the Tree Charter Day.

BIODIVERSITY

Camborne Town Council, Cornwall

Camborne Town Council has recently ordered 200 native trees through The Woodland Trust community pack delivered in November; this is in perfect timing to celebrate Tree Charter Day on the 29 November 2020.

Tree planting is part of a wider body of work by the council on the protection of local spaces. Camborne highlights the importance of trees on their website as “the canopies of trees act as a physical filter, trapping dust and absorbing pollutants from the air. Each tree removes up to 1.7 kilos every year. They also provide shade from solar radiation and reduce noise. Over 20 species of British trees and shrubs are known to have medicinal properties.”

In addition to highlighting the importance of trees, the council plants trees every year to replace the ones they have lost to house building, disease, and over maturity (trees that are reaching the end of their time). The council plants wildflower margins for pollinators and cultivate nature corridors for small mammals in their green spaces to increase the biodiversity and to encourage more nature into their parish. The council manages seven green spaces, some of which are multiple fields.

Hassocks Parish Council, West Sussex

‘Trees for Hassocks’ are a group of volunteers who work with Hassocks Parish Council and West Sussex County Council to facilitate the planting of street trees in the village. Since the project started in 2008, 215 street trees have been planted in roads including Dale Avenue, Grand Avenue, Downs View Road, Clayton Avenue and Mackie Avenue.

The Village Tree Fund was set up a few years ago as a way for residents to directly contribute towards the funding of street tree planting, and the contributions to date have been greatly appreciated. Help is still very much needed to enable this project to continue as a long term investment in the environment of the village.

There is still much more tree planting that could be done and the more money that can be raised, the more trees can be planted. The need to plant trees as one element of tackling the challenges of climate change has been well documented in the press over the last few months. Here in Hassocks, we have had a specific initiative in place to plant more trees since 2009.

Since 2009, Hassocks Parish Council has funded the planting of 345 trees in the verges of the residential streets of Hassocks. This has also been generously supported by donations from a number of other organisations including the Hassocks Community Organisation, donations from residents via the collection

tins around the village and personal donations from individuals. 2009 was the year when a small group of people decided to take forward the replacement of old trees and the introduction of new planting which was envisaged in the Parish Council's 'village design statement' document of that time. The group called itself 'Trees for Hassocks' and aims to do what it says on the tin! They do the following things:

- They coordinate with funding organisations to secure funding where we can for ongoing planting and aim to supplement this with contributions to the Village Tree Fund (which is held by the Parish Council) from individual donations to the fund and money raised through the green collecting tins you'll see at various businesses on the village high street.
- They identify possible potential planting sites with local residents. We started initially with specific planting schemes aimed at certain streets and now find that we have got to the point of filling gaps in verges and replacing trees as they die.
- They work with the highly skilled tree specialist at West Sussex County Council, Jim Mellor, who has a specific role to play in the next step, by assessing suggested planting sites (not all of which are suitable for a range of reasons) and coordinating the tree buying and planting work itself, which is undertaken by the Council during the winter months.
- They then identify the residents' choices of trees from a list of specified street trees and place the order for trees with the Council.
- They also try to keep people informed of the planting work through the Talk about and now on the Hassocks Uncovered Facebook page.

Lyndhurst Parish Council, Hampshire

Following the success of last year's event, families are once again invited to celebrate a birth, marriage or life of a relative with the planting of a community woodland in the New Forest.

Over 300 people attended last year's event at Jubilee Fields in Sway, choosing to plant one of Forest's six native tree species in the event run by the New Forest National Park Authority.

Registration is free and open to all, with the tree planting taking place in Ashurst in the New Forest on 3 December. Anyone who registers will receive a free personalised certificate as a memento, even if they cannot attend the tree planting day.

Trees and woodlands are a key feature of the natural beauty of the Forest and they also make an important contribution to the appearance of towns and villages

within the area. As the Family Trees woodland grows and matures it will provide a legacy for future generations and provide a lasting memory of a loved one.

Senior Tree Officer Nik Gruber from the New Forest National Park Authority said: 'Following the success of last year, we are delighted to be running the Family Trees event again. We have an ideal site with the Recreation Ground at Ashurst with scope for new tree planting and to enhance the existing trees that are there.

'The Parish Council has been keen to get involved with the project and we are grateful for the added support from the Tesco Bags of Help and Waitrose Community Matters schemes.'

Ashurst and Colbury Parish Chairman Max Coaker said: 'We're very pleased that Ashurst will be the site for this year's Family Trees event. Planting a tree to mark an important life event or remember a loved-one ensures that special memories live on for generations. Ashurst is a wonderful location to bring together people of all ages and create new woodland for the Forest. I hope that everyone who takes part in December will enjoy being a part of such an uplifting event.'

Matlock Town Council, Derbyshire

On 17 June 2019, Matlock Town Council declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency and committed the council to become carbon neutral by 2030. The council have also committed to supporting Matlock town in reaching the same goal.

At the council meeting on 16 February 2020, councillors agreed to implement the Climate and Ecological Action plan. This plan details the councils approach to tackling Climate Change. Councillor David Hughes is the Lead Councillor for Environment and Climate Change. They are looking for local businesses and organisations that are engaged with reducing their carbon footprint to share practical ideas with residents.

At the town council meeting on the 17 June, Matlock Town Council declared a climate and ecological emergency. There was unanimous support for the motion proposed by Councillor Matt Buckler. The motion is seeking to put in place local actions that can make a difference – the important role of local government in tackling climate change was highlighted by students from Highfields School who attended and urged the council to take urgent action.

Residents in attendance gave inspirational examples of actions they had taken to reduce their carbon footprint. The town council has recently signed up to the Refill scheme, which aims to make it easier to reuse and refill your bottle with free tap water in the town. The average person in the UK will use 150 plastic water bottles every year – or around three a week. The objective of Refill is to stop millions of plastic bottles at source each year and therefore reduce plastic pollution. The Imperial Rooms will be also implementing a recycling scheme for

their waste with immediate effect. The council will be taking a range of further actions to improve sustainability and will provide support and encouragement to residents within the town. A working group has been established and the first meeting took place on the 24 of June.

Cllr Buckler said, “We’ve heard some fantastic examples of things that people have done, but we need everyone to be doing it. To help this we need all of our tiers of government to take action where they can and help those within our communities to do the same. We will work with the District and County Councils, and learn from other good examples from around the country to ensure Matlock is an environmental beacon, as we work towards being a zero-carbon town by 2030.”

Cllr Cruise, co-sponsor of the motion, added “The climate crisis needs to be tackled at every level of society. I am confident we can make Matlock an example of how communities can do more to tackle climate change. It was great to have students from Highfields School and residents at the Council meeting. Importantly, as a Town Council, we need to continue to involve the community as we develop and implement our plans.”

Whitton and Tosson Parish Council, Northumberland

Whitton and Tosson is a small parish (circa. 100 households) in rural Northumberland. Cllr Alan Winlow, Vice-Chair of the Parish Council, has been working to combat climate change by planting trees for some years now. Collectively, the council has planted hundreds of trees. This increases the tree cover of the local area while combating the carbon usage of the community and providing safe habitats for local wildlife.

Derelict lands, and wide road verges, have been identified as potential spaces to plant. Alan has worked closely with Graham Bucknall, Northern Area Highways Manager, Northumberland County Council, to ensure the most appropriate trees are planted in the right spaces. Alan works with a team of volunteers who plant, weed, and maintain the trees.

The trees are grown from seed by volunteers who are helping with the project. Many people donate tree seedlings which they have carefully nurtured. The team also transplant seedlings from where they have self-seeded in a less advantageous place to a more beneficial location.

In addition to this, the council purchases sapling for roughly 40-50p each which is a small expense. However, the expense comes with the need for tree shelter accessories. Fortunately, kind residents have donated copious amounts of these which have helped enormously with the costs of the project.

Cllr Winlow said “We have a team of volunteers helping us to plant and maintain the new trees, but we will always welcome new people. We also hope that

residents may consider planting trees to the memory of loved ones; this would enable such memories to grow into the future for the benefit of many generations to come”.

Woolsington Parish Council, Tyne and Wear

Woolsington Parish Council has just completed its first year of an ambitious Biodiversity Programme. Each year, the council will enact carefully constructed plans and investment to develop the local landscape into a centre for conservation. This will include the planting of trees, flowers and wildflowers while focussing on local wildlife. The Newbiggin Hall, Bedeburn, Callerton and Woolsington Village areas already contain wonderful landscapes, veteran trees and areas of outstanding scenery. The programme aims to improve habitats for insects, bees and butterflies and in doing so enhance the importance of green spaces for residents and visitors alike.

The biodiversity plan is specifically designed to build on and enhance these natural assets. The programme for 2021 is in the process of being composed. The council hopes to support a significant amount of school initiatives, including large-scale planting of trees, which incorporates celebrating Tree Charter Day in November!

The main focus of the Biodiversity Programme in its first year was the planting of spring bulbs, namely daffodils and crocus, with help from pupils from a local primary school and members of the community. The Biodiversity Project is especially important at this time of development and it seeks to mitigate the losses to wildlife. Woolsington Parish Council Biodiversity Project plans to further enhance the existing landscaped green spaces of the area.

The council plants natural wildflowers, together with spring and summer bulbs, and herbaceous perennials, are vital for bees, butterflies and insects. Their berries and seeds also provide food for birds and mammals. Not only are wildflowers attractive themselves and uplifting for all those who see them, but wildflowers are also an essential supply of nectar and pollen for insects. Additionally, the Biodiversity Project aims to increase the insect population which itself will help encourage more of these birds to return as they are in a decline nationally.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Ashburton Town Council, Devon

Ashburton Town Council, alongside Cornish charity Surfers Against Sewage (SAS) as well as 16 communities across the South-West of England, has become the latest to sign up to a plastic-free movement to reduce its single-use plastic. SAS said it is about “shifting things back to how they used to be”.

Communities can work towards plastic-free status by achieving various objectives towards the national project run by [Plastic Free Coastlines](#). Including local (parish

and town) councils who are committed to plastic-free alternatives and encouraging local businesses to get on board.

Ashburton town clerk Bruce Broughton said the council has designed its reusable cotton bags as a way of "starting small" to get people thinking. "It's the hearts and minds thing. You've got to get people on side to do their little bit," he added. The council is working with Facebook group Plastic-Free Ashburton to find ways to encourage others to reduce plastic-use.

A commitment for Cornwall Council to phase out single-use plastics in the next two years across the whole county was also passed this week. The motion was introduced by eight councillors and supported at a full council meeting on Tuesday. As featured on the BBC: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-devon-43143439>

Barwell Parish Council, Leicestershire

Barwell Parish Council has recently set up a Climate Change Working Party and before lockdown, met for the first time. Once a full council meeting is in place, the council will create an action plan to tackle climate change locally. However, the council had already implemented several climate change policies.

For example, Barwell Parish Council leased an eco-friendly transit van as their previous van became uneconomical and expensive. The transit van has been leased for five years from January 2020 and will result in the reduction of carbon within the parish.

In addition to this, Barwell Parish Council planted 105 new trees in Barwell Park and have another batch of trees waiting to be planted locally. Councillors were arranging to meet with local church ministers and look at the campaign of 'love your neighbourhood' to encourage the parishioner to take pride in their village with the possible good garden competition. The council has also planted wildflower seed in Barwell Park and Kirkby recreation grounds to increase the biodiversity of the town.

All of these initiatives will reshape Barwell to tackle climate change locally. The council will be picking this work back up shortly once face-to-face meetings commence.

Calne Town Council, Wiltshire

Calne Against Climate Change (CACC) is a local group campaigning for action to tackle the unfolding of climate catastrophe. Our aim is to help Calne reach 'net zero' carbon by 2030.

Having a net zero carbon footprint, means balancing carbon emissions with carbon removal or simply eliminating carbon emissions altogether (the transition to a 'post-carbon economy')

This is a challenge for all of us. It needs global action and action by world governments, local government and business as well as by individuals. We believe we can make a real difference at the local level: right here in Calne.

And it's not all bad news; we know we have the technology to help us reach net zero carbon emissions. If we can improve on this along the way, all the better.

Some of the things CACC are doing:

- Supporting the Mayor's and Town Council's zero carbon initiative, following declaration of a Climate Change Emergency for Calne.
- Working to find affordable renewable energy sources for the town.
- Working for improved air quality and less traffic congestion.
- Helping develop a zero carbon strategy suited to a small rural economy.

East Suffolk Council, Suffolk

East Suffolk Council is encouraging all local (parish and town) councils to plant trees in their communities to tackle climate change. Since declaring climate change in 2019, East Suffolk created an Environment Task Group which meets quarterly to understand the necessary actions to become carbon neutral by 2030.

- One of the group's first initiatives is to encourage local councils to plant trees in their area. As trees help absorb carbon; reduce pollution; create habitats for local wildlife; is significant for mental health and, prevent flooding. As trees require specific care and locations, it is essential that tree planting is well-planned to give the tree the best chance of survival.
- Any local council in Suffolk that wishes to plant trees should contact their district councillor to determine whether there is any East Suffolk-owned land which would be suitable for planting. If the land is not suitable for tree planting, it may be possible for it to be allocated for rewilding or to become a wildflower meadow.
- Tree planting schemes can be supported through East Suffolk councillors' individual Enabling Communities Budgets, with trees available through third-party organisations.

Fen Drayton Parish Council, Cambridge and Peterborough

Fen Drayton Parish Council, alongside Fen Drayton Primary School, picked up their spades and planted trees to help tackle climate change. They organised a collaborative tree planting event in response to a report which highlighted the need to increase the numbers of trees in the area. The report, published by Greater Cambridge Shared Partnership, shows that South Cambridgeshire villages have an average of 17% tree cover. Fen Drayton currently only has 6%.

Councillor Jackie Isden, stated “It is important to us that we are an environmentally responsible community. Historically, Fen Drayton was an agricultural village, which might explain the low numbers of trees in the area. But it also has a rich history of testing new forms of sustainable living. We knew we needed a plan to increase the tree coverage. This project is the start of that plan.”

The Woodland Trust provided 250 trees as part of their mission to support communities across the country to plant more trees, through free tree packs for local communities. The trees were planted in collaboration with The Woodland Trust’s Big Climate Fightback campaign and to celebrate The Tree Charter.

The council are delighted to be involved in a project to improve their local environment. Additionally, including young people in this tree planting event is a great opportunity for local children to be able to connect with nature. All children in the village have been allowed to plant a tree and add a personalised plaque.

Frome Town Council, Somerset

Frome Town Council is one of the 200 plus local (town and parish) councils that have signed up to The Tree Charter. On 5 December 2018 Frome declared a climate emergency and committed to going carbon neutral by 2030. The 17 councillors also unanimously agreed to sign-up to the Covenant of Mayors to track progress and link with towns around the world that are also cutting emissions.

This vital work in helping the local community to combat the key signifiers of climate change tie into the 10 principles of The Tree Charter and ensure that the community is consistently climate conscious. This also promotes switching to cleaner energy, reducing energy use, improve air quality, minimise fuel poverty and boosting the local economy through jobs and training. Frome has highlighted a multitude of ways that other town councils can follow their lead.

They have introduced a solar funding project which helps local residents install solar panels at a significantly discounted rate. Cllr Rob Collett said: “So far 15 Frome homes have had solar installed under the solar streets programme and more are in progress. However, although the solar panels save households money and cut carbon, many households don’t have £3,000 spare to fund the upfront costs. It’s fantastic that Wessex Resolutions are able to potentially support these households in accessing low interest finance for solar”. Additionally, in 2017 the council signed a pledge to stop using single-use plastics in the town hall. They have made a clear impact within their community and have made it easy for other town and parish councils do the same.

Frome Town Council also look after 16 parks and green spaces within their community. The care of these green spaces is imperative to the health and wellbeing of local residents. By addressing climate emergency issues, such as the

use of carbon; the lack of clean energy sources and the over use of single-use plastics, Frome is directly ensuring the longevity of our planet and green spaces. This work therefore directly ensures the future of trees and the relationship between people and trees within communities.”

Saddleworth Parish Council, Yorkshire

For some years we have been committed to planting trees to enhance the landscape. Working with the Woodland Trust, Saddleworth Parish Council will form part of the Northern Forest. November is the best time to plant trees which gives us time to plan & identify suitable sites for planting.

The Northern Forest: with our partners, the Parish Council are planting 50 million trees and transforming the landscape of northern England.

The Northern Forest is already in progress, but once complete it will:

- help tackle climate change and encourage nature-rich landscapes;
- reduce the risk of flooding;
- create thousands of new jobs;
- cool and clean air in towns and cities and;
- improve health and wellbeing.

Sandford Parish Council, Devon

Back in December 2019, Sandford Parish Council Celebrated their 125th Anniversary. As part of the celebrations, the council held a Parish Party, cutting of a cake etc. and planned a Walking of the Boundary for 2020.

The clerk suggested to the Parish Council that they plant 125 trees to mark the Anniversary at the end of the Sandford King George's Field to act as a boundary. The council made contact with Sandford School who were very keen for the pupils to assist with the planting.

The trees duly arrived and were planted on the afternoon of Friday 13 March the last time the Village met together. The council numbered all the Trees so each child had a number and in the years to come will be able to check on the progress of the tree. The children were thrilled and so were we with how well this went and the coverage this received locally in the Crediton Courier.

Sandford Parish Council was heartened to be joined by our new Mid Devon District Councillor Elizabeth Wainwright who said that this was one of the happiest events that she has attended.

Sevenoaks Town Council, Kent

Sevenoaks Town Council has recently resolved to formally recognise the Government and Kent County Council's declarations for aiming for Zero Carbon emissions. Sevenoaks will integrate this within their Neighbourhood Development Plan and within the council's general operation.

Sevenoaks will start work on creation of an Action Plan to review:

- Reducing cars / traffic particularly in relation to school traffic.
- STC new buildings to be as sustainable and eco-friendly as possible. Existing buildings to be improved to be more sustainable with reduced carbon footprint where practicable.
- Include planting of more trees, where possible fruit and nut trees
- Continue to promote Refill Scheme and Sevenoaks Plastic Free Pledge
- Cycle racks / planters to be installed
- Install drinking fountains where possible at STC sites
- Increased safety for pedestrians and cyclists
- NDP Transport Strategy recommendations including 20 mph, one-way system in town centre and shared space.
- Link STC open spaces together with 'green routes'
- Encourage increased use of public transport – buses and trains by having improved facilities including live running information.
- Install electric car charging points at STC sites

Consider enabling community initiatives for sustainable living e.g. Toy Library, Zero Waste Shop, Community Orchards, Community Cycle Workshops, Repair Café, promotion of alternative resources e.g. nappies.

Shrewsbury Town Council, Shropshire

Shrewsbury Town Council has created a £250,000 fund to press on with plans to reduce its carbon footprint and, at its first virtual meeting on Monday night, proposals to establish the group were agreed.

Councillor Alan Mosley, leader of the town council, said: "We have been at the forefront of local councils in declaring a climate emergency and in reviewing all

our operations to reduce carbon emissions. We have a wealth of expertise and experience in Shrewsbury to advise us in moving forward. So, we are calling on key stakeholders to nominate people to join a strong advisory group to help ensure we set appropriate targets, help us to achieve them as quickly as possible and monitor our performance in doing so."

In addition to this, the council undertook tree planting sessions at Monkmoor River Ground. The council also encouraged volunteers to join in with the planting. The project aims to create a mix of open grassland, scrub, hedges, woodland and park trees on an area of land owned by the Town Council.

As part of more extensive work to improve the area, the Environment Agency has funded habitat and access improvements at land off Monkmoor Lane, including the construction of new fishing pegs along the river bank and the planting of about 2,000 trees of 40 different species. Shrewsbury Town Fisheries has carried out the peg construction for anglers while Shrewsbury Town Council's Countryside Team, along with volunteers, are carrying out the tree planting.

Both Shrewsbury Town Council and the Environment Agency have pledged to become carbon neutral by 2030, and trees play a vital role in this aim. The trees will also provide wildlife habitat, stabilise the river banks and reduce air pollution.

Several local groups helped with the tree planting throughout January and February, including Shropshire Wildlife Trust, Trinity Churches, Extinction Rebellion and the Porthill Posse. As well as providing funding for the project, the Environment Agency's 'Green Group' volunteers are coming along to help.

Stanley Parish Council, Derbyshire

Stanley Parish Council has agreed to support a local group to establish a wildflower area at the Stanley Village Recreation Ground. The council has proposed that the grass be left uncut for the coming year to see what naturally establishes itself. Additional advice and guidance will be sought from the Derbyshire Wildlife Trust, who has been working with the parish on the Fallow Field project at Stanley Common.

This initiative will produce a beautiful meadow for locals to enjoy as well as creating a new habitat for wildlife. This green space is imperative to the health and wellbeing of residents while promoting the value of the countryside.

INNOVATION

Bridgewater Town Council, Somerset

The latest Community Forum set up by Bridgewater Town Council focussed on Climate Change. The Forum met at Bridgewater Town Hall and was attended by members of the public and set out to develop a Climate Change Strategy for

Bridgwater. Key speaker at this inaugural meeting was ecologist and wildlife release co-ordinator Jamie Kingscott from Secret World Wildlife Rescue.

The aims of these meetings would include raising awareness in order to reduce the effects of climate crisis, global heating, economic instability and natural catastrophe. To take steps to reduce carbon emissions and to seek direct measures that Bridgwater could introduce. Kingscott stated he was seeing a difference to wildlife as a result of loss of habitat due to interaction with humans. The key issue is land-use and an increasing population causing a conflict between the natural environment and where people live.

The key areas that the forum addressed is:

- Biodiversity-protecting wildlife habitats-Pesticides-encourage grassroots community projects such as gardens and orchards-plant based diets-tree cover/sponsor a tree-natural enhancement of green spaces and parks-natural food production
- Energy-encourage green energy providers-oppose fracking-reduce reliance on fossil fuels-encouraging the use and production of sustainable energy
- Plastics Waste -increased recycling-looking at alternatives to plastics-production and disposal
- Transport-electric cars-public transport -reduction of traffic and the reliance on cars
- Built Environment-deregulation-new homes-sustainable energy on new buildings-insulation-brownfield development
- Commerce and Industry-buy local/shop local-encouraging sustainable, more ethical businesses-reducing consumerism.

Goldaming Town Council, Surrey

In July 2019, Godalming Town Council unanimously passed a resolution acknowledging its commitment to support the climate emergency and biodiversity motion.

In recognising the climate emergency, the council resolved to work to reduce carbon emissions and become a carbon neutral organisation by 2030 with an earlier target for carbon neutrality by 2025. The council agreed to audit its carbon emissions to enable it to monitor progress and also to create a budget to provide grants to support and encourage carbon reduction and mitigation schemes within Godalming and projects to encourage our community to reduce direct CO2 emissions and to conserve and enhance the bio-diversity of our town.

The Mayor of Godalming, Councillor Penny Rivers, said “We recognise that there is a climate emergency which means we have to take action. I’m pleased that Godalming Town Council is leading the way locally. But we all need to change our life-styles radically - we need to live more simply so that our home planet may simply live.”

In supporting the motion, Members agreed on an action plan to ensure that the Council transfers to green energy providers, reduces its reliance on gas heating, has carbon offsetting arrangements in place and will ensure that its vehicles are electric powered by 2030. The Council’s action plan aims to achieve carbon neutral status without incurring extra operating costs or financial penalties.

Malvern Town Council, Worcestershire

Malvern Town Council is looking for people to join its new environment panel and help tackle the problems of climate change.

The council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting held last month, following a motion proposed by Cllr Sharon Taylor and seconded by Cllr Samantha Charles. At the meeting, Cllr Taylor said: “If we are to take climate change seriously and create a carbon neutral and sustainable Malvern, we need a new sense of urgency. More than just declaring a climate emergency, we must take a fresh look at the environmental impact of all council business.”

The new panel will hold its first meeting 24 October 2019. Its brief includes reviewing update the council’s environmental policy, exploring ways of reducing its carbon footprint and encouraging residents to do likewise.

Cllr Taylor said: “We will be looking for Malvern people with knowledge of green issues and expertise to join the panel after this date.

INSPIRATION

Baildon Town Council, West Yorkshire

Baildon Town Council has helped form a tree planting partnership to enhance tree coverage and help tackle climate change locally.

Richard Nottidge, a Baildon resident, approached Baildon Town Council with his idea and with the council’s assistance; the Forest of Bradford and Friends of the Earth have now created The Baildon Tree Planting Partnership.

The remit of the partnership, is to identify suitable areas for planting, design the planting scheme, including types of trees, create risk assessments and plan and deliver the planting scheme.

Bradford Council, the land-owner, has given its support, along with the Forest of Bradford have already planted 700,000 trees. The next stage will see Bradford

Council agree the plan, with planting commencing between Christmas and March 2020 (as the planting season ends).

Baildon Town Council's Environment Committee has previously discussed declaring a climate emergency and was identifying ways in which it could support carbon reduction initiatives. This is only one of many initiatives that Baildon Town Council is planning to reduce the impact of climate change locally. This will enhance the environment for residents and wildlife in the area.

The Woodland Trust supplied the trees for free, tying in with their own aims and initiatives including the Tree Charter day on 30 November 2019.

Buckingham Town Council, Buckinghamshire

Buckingham Town Council has recently bought a new electric van for the Greenspaces Team, meaning that the council will be able to serve the community in a more energy efficient and environmentally friendly way.

The Renault Kangoo is the newest addition to the fleet and is 100% electric. The new van will assist the Greenspaces Team in carrying out its duties in the town such as building and parks maintenance and, event support. Through purchasing an electric vehicle, the council aims to reduce its carbon footprint and make the council more eco-friendly.

Councillor Ruth Newell, Chair of the Environment Committee added: "I am pleased that we had the opportunity to replace one of our vehicles and that we have been able to fund an electric vehicle perfect for our green spaces team to use around the Town and Parks and environmentally friendly in line with our Climate Change Action Plan.

Market Deeping Parish Council and Deepings St James Parish Council, Lincolnshire

Market Deeping Parish Council and Deeping St. James Parish Council were runner's up in The People's Award at Transport Planning Day 2019 with their 'Green Walk' initiative.

The two parish councils are set in small towns and although all of their local services are within an easy walking distance, the councils decided to develop the 'Green Walk' initiative in their neighbourhood plan for new developments.

All new footpaths are required to be 'safe, accessible, attractive, and rationally linked to existing routes.' They also plan to create The Deepings Green Walk – a 15km circuit which aims to join up local facilities, housing and green spaces. The councils have already planted trees; completed a new footbridge over the river Welland and, introduced traffic calming.

The community is planning for expansion with the green agenda at their heart by supporting residents to do without their cars. Congratulations to both councils on their initiative and their award.

LANDSCAPES

East Ilsley Parish Council, Berkshire

East Ilsley parish council demonstrates the passion of a community and of individual campaigners who can have such a profound effect on their communities. One parish councillor, who is also a district councillor for West Berkshire, Carolyne Culver has spear headed projects around East Ilsley to ensure that it has a green and eco-friendly future. She plays an important part in planning meetings and works with potential developers regarding local land; wildlife and, emissions to ensure that they are working within the climate emergency protocol that is being worked on within West Berkshire.

The council are currently in development with two green initiatives in the village. The first is to build a 'Community Orchard' for the village. Carolyne is leading on this with a small sub team who are identifying the right location, types of fruit trees and have just applied for matched funding from West Berkshire Council to help the council install the orchard. The entire village supports this project and is excited for it to be put into practise. The other initiative is to plant 'wild flowers' around the village. Carolyne has identified some areas in the village that would be eligible for wild flowers and again, match funding has been applied for. The idea is that areas in the village which are going to 'waste' can be made to look beautiful and to provide new habitats for different species, particularly bees and butterflies which help's with their eco system.

Additionally, West Berkshire have great difficulty in recycling various plastics so the council is taking action to helps residents recycle more. The council use a dis-used green waste recycling bin which is placed in the village for people to drop off their cleaned out crisp packets and cat food pouches (which can't be recycled here). These are then sent off to be upcycled. For example, the council has seen aprons made from crisp packets!

On 7th September East Ilsley co-hosted a GreenFest event with a nearby village called Hampstead Norreys. This was a one day event for all ages to learn more about green initiatives, recycling, upcycling, and the environment and so on. More info can be found at their website: <https://communitygreenfest.weebly.com/>

Fownhope Parish Council, Herefordshire

Fownhope Parish Council declared a Climate Emergency in June 2019 and, since making their declaration, they have been working to create a document that sets out exactly what this means for Fownhope, not only for the parish council, but for local businesses and the community, as individuals and as a whole. This document is an action plan to support their declaration. It incorporates plans to

encourage and develop local action in five main areas: transport, buildings, waste, energy and green infrastructure.

The council have considered how community groups could be set up to run 'make do and mend' or 'repair' cafes to reduce waste and to work to reduce the amount of unwanted junk mail deliveries in the village. They are considering a collective green energy purchase; a communal composting area or a communal green waste skip to reduce individual journeys of the 12 mile round trip to the nearest refuse centre; and recycling stations for both visitors and residents, to give a few examples of the many actions proposed.

In addition to this, Fownhope are in discussion with a recognised supplier (and working to secure funding) for a further innovative opportunity to support the local community. They hope that the development of a parish wide electronic carbon calculator and reporting tool kit would enable Fownhope to gain an understanding as a community about where their carbon emissions need addressing, enabling them to reduce emissions and report on them meaningfully. The toolkit could be used across the whole county, thereby supporting Herefordshire Council's own aspiration for the county to become carbon neutral. Fownhope are fortunate to have a committed team of residents and councillors working together on our Environment Working Group.

Rattery Parish Council, Devon

Rattery parish council is tackling climate change locally by declaring a climate emergency and creating an action plan locally:

1. Rattery parish council started by offering every household a free tree this winter to be planted in people's own gardens, or around Rattery town.
2. The council had a 'climate and environment' stall at their recent annual garden/sports show, where they offered free trees and had information about local wildlife, parish council climate and environment actions and tips and guidance for residents to take locally.
3. Rattery is working and partnering with their neighbouring parish council, South Brent, in a newly-established Zero Carbon Group (a working group of the charity 'Sustainable South Brent'). Both Rattery and South Brent have parish council representatives in this group. One of the main aims is to hold a 'Climate and Environment Fair' next spring.
4. Rattery Parish Council have 'Environment' and 'Climate Heating' sections on their website, on which they post information for residents on local plastic recycling, ash tree dieback and so on. The councils also disseminate information via their Rattery Google-group e-mail, which about half the parish has joined, in addition to the usual noticeboards.

LONGEVITY

Bridgewater Town Council, Somerset

Bridgewater Town Councillors and passionate volunteers are investigating ways to encourage more people to walk and cycle in Bridgewater. Bridgewater is associated with long queues of traffic and to combat this, Bridgewater Town Council, along with the Bridgewater Area Cycling Campaign (BACC) want to make cycling a viable and attractive alternative to driving.

At Bridgewater Town Council's first public meeting via Zoom, Gary Perrett, BACC chairman spoke about the threat of climate change and why it was vital to seize this opportunity to change our transportation habits.

The Town Council is keen to support the BACC manifesto and wanted to prioritise pedestrians and cyclists where possible. The council understood the need to reduce congestion, help the environment and boost residents' physical and mental wellbeing.

Bridgewater Town Council will now be working towards its own Green Bridgewater Climate Change Plan, highlighting a travel plan for walking and cycling, a public transport service development plan and, a parking plan.

The Town Council has also welcomed the return of 'On Your Bike to Trinity Hall', which takes old donated bikes and fixes them up and provides them back to the community. They aim to train and employ the socially underprivileged, along with ex-servicemen and women and the long term unemployed, to help recycle and sell bikes. So far at their Taunton sites, they have recycled or serviced over 3,000 bikes and aided over 300 individuals.

Kendal Town Council, Cumbria

Kendal Town Council, alongside South Lakeland District Council and South Lakes Action on Climate change, created a Pollinators Project from 2016-2019. The project saw the stakeholders provide funding for schools and community groups to take part in a range of activities that will explain the importance of pollinating insects while creating homes and habitats for them.

The project aimed to develop a corridor for pollinating insects on the canal towpath through the middle of Kendal. Schools and community groups were asked to develop plots on the canal towpath that will, in different ways, explain the importance of and encourage pollinating insects. This project will form an outdoor public gallery of mini-projects, ideas and experiments all about the importance to us all of our pollinators.

The project saw an increase in the amount, and types of bees; beetles; butterflies and moths throughout the project. The project involved 720 children and culminated in community awareness as well as increased wildlife habitats.

Woodley Town Council, Berkshire

At a Full Council meeting in October 2019, Woodley Town Council adopted a motion to declare a climate emergency and committed to becoming carbon neutral by 2030. Woodley Town Council will work with Wokingham Borough Council as part of a cross-party working group, beginning with the formation of an action plan over the next six months.

Meanwhile, Woodley Town Council will also continue its commitment to climate change through its current campaigns and initiatives. In January 2020, the council installed solar panels on the Oakwood Centre to provide cheap daytime electricity and return renewable energy to the grid. Also, the systems will generate renewable energy with the equivalent saving of around 13 tonnes CO₂ per year.

Since February 2020, all town council buildings will provide carbon-neutral gas and are under a three year supply contract. The carbon-neutral gas supplied will offset almost 100 tonnes of CO₂ per year. In addition to this work, the council are developing a Climate Emergency Plan which will identify measurable targets and will link in with the work being carried out by Wokingham Borough Council and other town and parish councils across the Borough.

Currently, the council are working to replace council building lights with low LED bulbs and are considering options for rainwater harvesting. They will also be providing information to residents and the community on national environmental initiatives.

PLANNING

Bishop Waltham Parish Council, Hampshire

Bishops Waltham Parish Council in Hampshire is one of the 200 plus local (parish and town) councils that have signed up to The Tree Charter. As part of the council's initiative to save green spaces in the area, they have been developing a Priory Meadow (see image above) for a number of years. The meadow is situated in a tree-edged field with a logged seating area as well as a Community Orchard (planted by the Gardening Club) and a wildflower area. The meadow is extremely important for conservation as it provides a natural habitat and food source for bees and other insects.

The council also produces a Nature Reserves Leaflet, as part of the initiative, which highlights the four local nature reserves (Fenland, Chalk Meadows, Claypits and a disused railway line) that they are lucky to enjoy. They have also collated a Pubs Walk leaflet. By creating these leaflets, the council has inspired local residents to value the countryside.

The council also have Tree Wardens for the town that attend the Planning, Environment and Highways Committee and keep an eye on trees in the town,

especially those with Tree Preservation Orders, which ensures that the council are looking after their trees.

The council's Gardening Club and Bishops Waltham In Bloom groups are also active in the town. They provide borders, planters and hanging baskets, and more, as well as wildflower areas which are located at Tangier Road, Hoe Road and Cricklemede roundabout.

The forward planning initiative of Bishops Waltham Parish Council has produced a beautiful meadow for local residents to enjoy as well as creating a new habitat for wildlife. These green spaces are imperative to the health and wellbeing of residents whilst promoting the value of the countryside.

Falmouth Town Council, Cornwall

Falmouth Town Council recently partnered with their principal authority to protect and transform a green space into a wild-life rich habitat in their local area.

Falmouth Town Council has had numerous experiences in planting wild flowers and creating meadows across Cornwall. It was for this reason that they were approached to work with Cornwall council in transforming Prislow fields from a ploughing field into a green space to be enjoyed by all. The councils introduced seating, pathways and wild flowers into the area. This money came from a Section 106 agreement.

Councillor Jacqui Owen worked to introduce 'bug hotels' at the open day at Prislow Fields. It is an ingenious way of transforming old plastics into safe havens for wildlife in the area. It encouraged children to forage for materials to 'decorate their hotel'. By teaching residents to use plastic in a sustainable way – the council aims to inhibit the use of single use plastics. The hotels were then covered in wild flower seed and became works of art in themselves. Following this, a local bee expert, Kevin Thomas, observed several varieties of bees within the meadow including one species that had yet been recorded in the area.

Falmouth Town Mayor, Councillor Steve Eva, thanked the team who brought the project to fruition. He said: "We have heard a lot recently about climate change and decline of wildlife. Sometimes we are left feeling helpless about the scale of the problem and what we can do to change things for the better. But if there is one thing we can do, it is to start to make a change in our own back gardens and community spaces. Lots of small changes all add up to big changes. Here at Prislow Fields a start has been made."

See more information in the link below: <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/council-news-room/media-releases/news-from-2019/news-from-july-2019/community-joins-together-to-make-space-for-nature-at-prislow-fields-falmouth/>

Loughton Town Council, Essex

Loughton Town Council was NALC July's 2019 spotlight council. It has an estimated population of over 30,000 with a precept of £665,000 and 22 elected councillors. The council is also accredited with the Quality Gold Award under the National Association of Local Councils' (NALC) Local Council Award Scheme.

One of the council's main initiatives is the 'Community Tree Strategy'. They fight to protect the existing landscape, the countryside and trees, to encourage new and appropriate planting for the future. Trees are very important the Loughton and there is a great deal of public attachment to individual trees and groups of trees; people rightly want to protect and enhance the town's open spaces and treescape. There are two well-wooded local nature reserves within the town, Home Mead and Roding Valley Meadows.

PLANTING

Bardney Group Parish Council, Lincolnshire

Over the last two months, Bardney Group Parish Council have planted 420 trees and 420 hedges on 15 acres land. The trees and hedges are part of a newly created community land and are already being utilised and appreciated by residents.

Wragby Young Farmers applied for the trees as part of their 'Plant the Future' national strategy with the intention of planting them on land owned by Bardney Group Parish Council, however, shortly after the trees arrived lockdown kicked in and as such the BGPC Handyman, John Major and Cllr Luke Cluett, Portfolio Holder for the Allotments and Community Land, stepped up and planted them over three days. A woodland walkway has been created by forming five distinctive spinney's with a grassed amenity land in the middle. The woodland walk is being named 'Bearda's Walk' using the Saxon name for Bardney, with the individual spinney's being named after five Saxon and Norman leaders with links to our area, Oswald, Ostridd, Gilbert, Rudolphus and Walter.

Bardney Group Parish Council applied for 420 hedging plants to create a boundary between the Community land and our allotments. They have deliberately chosen the edible hedgerow as it complements the community orchard that was planted in the autumn of 2019.

Burbage Parish Council, Leicestershire and Rutland

Burbage Parish Council has introduced a number of initiatives to increase the tree cover as well as the biodiversity of their community. Such as applying for community packs from The Woodland Trust which contacted four packs of native hedging the plants. The hedges were planted in a local recreation ground as part of a parish-wide project to increase biodiversity on council-managed green spaces.

In addition to this, the council applied for a Shire Environment Grant from Leicestershire County Council. Burbage Parish Council received £3,000 towards the planting of trees, hedges and wildflowers as well as putting up bird and bat boxes in the community. These small actions can have a large and long-lasting effect on Burbage as they help counteract the effects of carbon as well as providing habitats for local wildlife.

Councillor Blake Pain, the County Council's cabinet member for environment and transport, said: "It's essential that we work together to conserve nature, landscapes and ecosystems, both locally and globally. Nature recovery and environmental growth are at the forefront of our Environment Strategy and we are committed to implementing solutions that set the path for a healthier, greener Leicestershire."

Cambourne Town Council, Cambridgeshire

Cambourne Town Council, with the help of South Cambridgeshire District Council, has planted more than 1,200 trees and shrubs in and around Cambourne.

The District Council operates a Zero Carbon Communities fund, which was established in May 2019 to drive the ambition for the district to become carbon neutral before 2050. The fund allows local groups to apply for pots of monies to undertake projects that will reduce carbon emissions. Cambourne Town Council was awarded £2,538 to plant a large number of hedgerows and trees around the Great Cambourne cricket outfield.

On the 14 February 2020, 30 pupils from Cambourne Village College helped members of the two councils begin the first stage of planting around the cricket field. The second stage of planting will occur in February half term and is supported by local volunteers. The trees planted at Cambourne will remove around 420kg of CO₂ per year as they reach maturity.

John Vickery Town Clerk for Cambourne Town Council said: "The Zero Carbon Communities grant offers a great opportunity for Town and Parish Councils to work with the District Council to reduce the Carbon Footprint. We would like to thank South Cambridgeshire District Council for the grant. We look forward to seeing the residents of Cambourne come out to help our grounds team plant the remaining hedges on Wednesday 19 and Thursday 20 February."

Dorchester Town Council, Dorset

Dorchester Town Council is planning to plant 20,000 trees by 2030.

The council is supporting ten years of community tree planting to maintain the longevity of the council, as well as tackling the effects of climate change locally. The number of trees that Dorchester Town Council has chosen to plant is significant, as this is the number of residents living in the town. This tree-planting project is being undertaken by Transition Dorchester in collaboration with the Council.

An additional project that the council has undertaken, to respond to the climate and ecological emergency, is hedge planting. Councillors battled through Storm Dennis in February 2020 to plant a hedgerow. Dorchester Town Council created a grant fund for the planting to take place. The council chose to plant a series of hedges to tackle climate change locally.

The council also hosted a Plastic-Free Picnic, 27 July 2019, to demonstrate to residents that living plastic-free is easy and achievable. This is part of a wider initiative of the council going plastic-free! You can see a video of the event [here](#).

East Ilsey Parish Council, Berkshire

On Sunday 19 January 2020 the village of East Ilsey transformed a plot of derelict land into a community orchard, a space for all to share and enjoy for many years to come. With support from East Ilsey Parish Council, West Berkshire Council, East Ilsey Trust Fund and private donations: the villagers were able to prepare the land for planting, purchase 20 apple and pear trees and plant them on the new site during a community event organised by the Parish Council.

The idea for a community orchard in East Ilsey came from a local event held in the nearby village of Hampstead Norreys in September 2019 called 'GreenFest'. This was a one-day event held in various locations around Hampstead Norreys with speakers, forums, stalls and activities designed to inform and advise on all issues relating to becoming greener and more sustainable. Cllr Carolyn Culver, District Councillor for Ridgeway Ward and Green Party Member in West Berkshire was a key organiser in the GreenFest event and lucky for East Ilsey, was also one of their Parish Councillors.

With Cllr Culver's expert guidance the Parish Council was able to submit a bid to West Berkshire Council, to request funding to help set up the community orchard. West Berkshire agreed to help with the costs and East Ilsey were able to begin the preparations.

Cllr Culver commented "Thank you to everyone who helped plant East Ilsey's new community orchard. Thanks to initial donations from East Ilsey Parish Council and East Ilsey Trust Fund I was able to secure match funding from West Berkshire Council. We look forward to watching the orchard mature over the coming years".

Haydon Wick Parish Council, Wiltshire

Haydon Wick Parish Council has introduced green measures to help increase the habitats of animals in the parish while helping add some colourful flowers in the community. With the help of volunteers, the parks and open spaces team were able to plant 5,500 bulbs.

The council chose to introduce a mixture of flowers in order to provide exciting displays from December to March. The council wanted to provide some space for people to go to ahead of the second national lockdown in November 2020 due to

the coronavirus. Green spaces can act as a safe haven and have a positive effect on all our mental health.

In addition to this, the council has identified four areas within the community for wildflower planting. Two areas are for seeding and the other two are for leaving fallow. This will again increase the natural habitats for birds and insects in the community and help restore the biodiversity of the parish.

Haywards Heath Town Council, Sussex

Haywards Heath Town Council has embarked on an ambitious 'tree project' which aims to improve the area to attract more residents and visitors to the local high street. The town council are planning to plant a number of trees on the high street to improve the public realm and make it more appealing to visitors.

A spokesman from the council said "The better environment in South Road will benefit residents and visitors to the town by improving the area. Our streets are important places for people, and successful streetscapes are inclusive, providing for the needs of their users, and moreover supporting local employers and businesses which we hope will thrive in a more sustainable environment."

"We've already been approached by a leading independent business employer elsewhere in the town asking if they can sponsor further improvements to the street scene, specifically planters as they believe the collaboration will help them attract and retain customers."

Haywards Heath Town Council has been working closely with Mid Sussex District Council, to obtain additional ancillary funding and West Sussex County Council for strategic advice, including highways approval and support to deliver this project for the local community.

Hazlerigg Parish Council, Tyne and Wear

Hazlerigg Parish Council recently agreed to take local action to respond to the climate emergency and biodiversity crisis. One of their aims is to increase tree cover and areas managed for wildlife in and around the parish.

The council has now planted two hedgerows in the village and five Silver Birch trees, with the support of Newcastle City Council, residents and trustees of the local community centre.

Silver Birch trees are thought to be one of the best trees for absorbing air pollution, which will be of particular benefit given the recent construction of hundreds of new houses around the village, which has led to increased traffic congestion and air pollution locally. Silver Birch trees are also thought to support around 300 different insect species and will provide food and shelter for urban birds.

Hazlerigg has applied for a Community pack from the Woodland Trust which includes native English trees. This should be delivered around March, the perfect time for planting! The National Association of Local Councils looks forward to seeing them plant more trees in the future.

Iwerne Courtney and Stepleton Group Parish Council, Devon

Iwerne Courtney and Stepleton Group Parish Council own and maintain the recreational land in the centre of the village. Six years ago they set aside land as a wildflower and fruit tree area. The council then planted fruit trees: pear, apple, cherry and Bramley.

Councillor Judith Hewitt took charge in creating a wildflower meadow; she mowed the area to soil and fundraised £250, by selling cakes to the community, and bought and sowed locally sourced Wildflower seeds. This, however, produced disappointing results as the mowed grass grew back thick and fast.

In the autumn, Cllr Hewitt bought yellow rattle seeds and planted them in small patches within the field. The next spring she started to see results! Councillor Hewitt now waits until late July before cutting and removing the grass. Now Cllr Hewitt plants yellow rattle seeds in small patches and gradually different plants are being let in to grow amongst the grass. To give the wild seed a better chance of growing, the grass needs to be kept short until early spring which is weather dependent.

Councillor Hewitt now mows a path around the area and gives updates to the village as to what is growing. She has had positive responses from residents appreciating the wildflowers. Iwerne Courtney and Stepleton Group Parish Council work alongside their principal authority, Dorset Council, to plant a wildflower meadow. Councillor Hewitt is making use of a special mower which shag the seeds and plants them while picking up the grass.

Laverstock and Ford Parish Council, Wiltshire

Earlier this month, Laverstock and Ford Parish Council launched their project to create a new woodland in their local area by planting over 1000 trees at Castle Hill Country Park, which will act as a First World War Memorial.

The local council called on local residents to help them plant the first 600 trees at the woodland and made it a priority to get the community involved in the project. Cllr David Burton (Laverstock and Ford Parish Council) said “The whole County Park is being put together with community effort. That brings people together, helps people really own the place, and to love it and care for it.”

The additional 400 trees will be allowed to grow naturally from regenerating species. The local council hopes the new woodland will be a useful place for wildlife, with volunteers managing the land. The woodland is also believed to be

the first of its kind in South Wiltshire area to be managed using traditional farming and forestry techniques. The planting of trees will be continuing throughout the remainder of the year.

Leamington Town Council, Warwickshire

Earlier this year, Leamington Town Council formed a partnership with Age UK and a local school to support a project to revamp a woodland area to help people with dementia. The revamped woodland area was named in honour of the late actor and Leamington resident Norman Painting OBE of The Archers BBC radio show.

Volunteers from Age UK Warwickshire and the local business community spent the winter and spring clearing overgrown areas and putting down, new, safer, paths and re-creating a woodland pond. The volunteers have continued to maintain the woodland since it has been re-opened.

Leamington Town Council provided grant funding to the project. The woodland contains a mixture of trees, bushes, walkways and sheltered seating areas, which have all been included to provide a safe space for those with dementia and an environmental education resource for children.

Staveley Parish Council, Cumbria

In June 2016, the National Park Authority informed Staveley Parish Council that they were proposing to sell local woodland, Craggy Wood, to raise funds for other projects.

Upon hearing the news, the parish council set up a steering group to run a campaign to keep Craggy Wood in community ownership. The steering group managed to get Craggy Wood designated as an Asset of Community Value by South Lakes District Council.

The parish council negotiated a deal which gives the local community the opportunity to buy the woodland. If the community can raise £120,000 to buy the woodland, Cumbria Wildlife Trust will take on the ownership and long-term management of the site. The council plans to raise £46,000 by the end of 2018, with the remainder of the funding being raised in 2019.

Thorpe St Andrews Town Council, Norfolk

Thorpe St. Andrews Town Council, throughout 2019, has planted roughly 900 trees. In March 2019, Thorpe St. Andrews Town Council planted 420 trees alongside their Parks and Estates Team and Broads National Park. Councillors worked alongside the Lime Tree Day Nursery to plant trees with nursery children. Additionally, in November 2019, Thorpe St. Andrews Town Council ordered 400 trees to plant in Fitzmaurice Park.

The Town Council Parks and Estates team also maintains Sir George Morse Park, Fitzmaurice Park, Tree Plantation and River Green open spaces and River Green hanging baskets.

New trees can enhance streets, private gardens, hospitals and schools, in both rural and urban settings. Councils are perfectly placed to set up community orchards and work with local schools to get children involved in planting activities. This comes under the principle for 'planting for the future'.

Wells City Council, Somerset

Wells City Council has launched an initiative to make Wells a more Wildlife Friendly City by increasing the number of wildlife-friendly trees in the community.

On Saturday, 31 October the council set up a dedicated market stall to selling a variety of native woodland sapling for £1 each. This price also included the option of free tubes and stakes if the saplings are planted in places prone to grazing animals. A mature native woodland tree in flower can provide a large amount of food for pollinators and also other wildlife that eats the fruits and nuts produced. Given that a mature tree can provide the same amount of nectar and pollen as over an acre of land with just flowers shows how important trees can be in providing extra food. Add the fact that a Hawthorn hedge or tree can support more than 300 species and it is easy to see how important these types of trees are.

Newly appointed Mayor of Wells Philip Welch said: "It is good to see this exciting idea that Councillor Joe Parker presented a few months ago start at the ideal time to plant saplings and trees. This is a great opportunity to see if we can all help our local wildlife while also offering fantastic value to residents, clubs, and businesses in and around Wells."

The city council hopes that this idea becomes part of many other actions we can take to collectively make Wells a more Wildlife Friendly City.

West Swindon Parish Council, Wiltshire

Last week, (February 2019) volunteers and parish councillors from West Swindon laid the foundations for a miniature woodland in their local park. The community came together to clear the dead woodland and strip away high brambles that were affecting residents in the local area. The community then planted saplings in their place, with the expectation for new trees to grow within a few years.

West Swindon Parish Council is now encouraging local residents to look after the park. Once the trees have grown, the parish council is planning to plant English blue bells and red campions to make the woodland more attractive to residents. The parish council has been increasingly active in clearing up and improving the area's green spaces recently, through litter picks which have collected over 200 bags of litter from their local woodland.

Wombourne Parish Council, Staffordshire

Wombourne Parish Council organised a Tree planting initiative in collaboration with their local primary school, St Benedict Biscop Primary School. Students from the school helped plant 250 trees which the council organised from The Woodland Trust community packs.

The tree planting took place at Sytch Lane Cemetery Wednesday 2 December and have been used to create a new tree belt at the rear of the site near the natural burial meadow as part of National Tree Planting Week.

The council were grateful to the local children for their help and were also very impressed with their knowledge of climate change and the benefits of tree planting.

PROTECTION

Ashington Town Council, Northumberland

The town, in its industrial heyday regarded as “the largest coal mining village in the world”. At its height the industry locally employed tens of thousands of people and sustained the community and local economy. It is perhaps fitting therefore that Ashington Town Council should lead the way in looking to play its part in addressing climate change.

Cllr Liam Lavery in proposing the motion to the council said “The fight against climate change, as well as being an enormous global challenge, at a local level also brings an opportunity to look to build and focus on a future Ashington with well paid jobs and investment. The full motion proposed by Cllr Lavery and unanimously agreed sets out the Town Council intent to:

- Recognise the global climate emergency and publicise this to the people of Ashington in order to raise awareness and build support in taking action,
- Work with local Colleges and Universities to measure and understand the town’s carbon footprint and subsequently prepare a series of achievable actions
- Embrace the Green Industrial Revolution and work with local, regional and national bodies to ensure Ashington can benefit from the jobs created,
- Call on Northumberland County Council and central government to look to provide the powers directives to make Ashington carbon neutral,
- Commit to reviewing all spending in the next financial year

- Positively work towards carbon neutrality by balancing carbon emissions with carbon removal
- Initiate a yearly competition of Ashington Schools to develop ideas to make the town carbon neutral, and look at the establishment of a forum including businesses, local organisations and residents to develop ideas to make the town carbon neutral.

Penrith Town Council, Cumbria

Plastic Clever Penrith is a stakeholder group, consisting of representatives from Penrith Town Council, Cumbria County Council, Eden District Council, PACT, CAFS, Penrith Bid and Penrith Chamber of Trade aiming to provide initiatives and advice to both residents and businesses in Penrith about how small changes can help reduce plastic waste. This initiative directly helps stop unnecessary waste and improve the local environment.

The Plastic Clever Vision is to have every consumer business in Penrith sign up to a voluntary plastic-clever scheme which will include:

- Plastic bags – This could involve biodegradable alternatives, an incentive for customers to use their own bags or provision of themed/branded bags for sale, with profits to local charities.
- Plastic cups/straws/stirrers – To be replaced with biodegradable alternatives – paper or pasta straws, discounts for using your own cup, bamboo stirrers.
- Plastic/Polystyrene packaging – To be replaced with biodegradable alternatives.
- Use of own containers by customers by purchasing loose products such as fruit, vegetables and some dry goods.
- Town events will be asked to include plastic-free guidelines for traders and attractions.

SUSTAINABILITY

Mossley Town Council, Lancashire

Mossley Town Council has set aside £1,000 grant to kick start a tree planting initiative. The council has planned to plant 1,000 trees over the next ten years as a lasting legacy to the community. The council initially estimated that it would cost £1,000 annually to plant 100 trees, yet later concluded that saplings were less expensive and the council could use tree planting initiatives such as that through The Woodland Trust.

Unfortunately, lockdown from COVID-19 has delayed plans to plant two new planters in Mossley to commemorate the 75 anniversary of Victory in Europe Day. Yet the council hopes to re-plan this planting for a safer time.

Tree planting will significantly improve the carbon output from the community and will help the council tackle climate change locally.

Prescot Town Council, Merseyside

Prescot Town Council organised a Tree Planting Event on Carr Lane. A mixture of residents, members of the Friends of KGV Browns Field and Carr Lane Woods, Friends of Eaton Street Park, Pupils from Evelyn Primary School and local councillors joined the Mayor of Prescot in the planting of 50 *Cercis siliquastrum* along the boundary of Brown's Field and Carr Lane. Those in attendance were provided with some interesting tree facts from Kevin Bushell and Son's Tree Services, who were on hand to lead the planting activities.

This was the final stage of a project which has seen the removal of the long-standing Poplar Trees which had adorned the roadside for many years. Unfortunately, these trees had reached the end of their natural life and were at the point of becoming unsafe, indeed just days after they were felled, high winds blew down a healthy tree on the inside of the park which blocked the perimeter footpath. The requirement to remove the trees has allowed the town council to develop a project that was able to engage with the community and involve them in the planting of the town's new green infrastructure. Those involved on Saturday will be able to watch their tree grow over the years knowing that they have personally contributed to the enhancement of one of the main gateways into their town.

Wimborne Minster Parish Council, Dorset

Wimborne Minster Town Council declared a Climate Emergency at their Full Council meeting in July 2019. The council set up a Task and Finish Group to look into proactive measures and policy creation. The Task and Finish Group met monthly and created project streams specific to climate change topics:

- Buildings
- Biodiversity and Land
- Waste and Recycling
- Plant and Machinery

One of the key tasks that the council is taking steps to reduce polluting chemicals used in the operation of the town council, such as weed killing. Other purposes of the Task and Finish Group are:

- To identify opportunities to reduce carbon footprint and increase biodiversity within the boundary area
- To conduct research into various energy savings technologies, including potential suppliers, prices, and change time-spans to implement
- To consider the ability to reduce waste e.g. looking at single use plastic and recycling opportunities.
- To attempt to influence other people and organisations e.g. residents and businesses where they are able to also make positive changes to support the policy, thereby increasing the overall benefits to the town and beyond.

TREE CHARTER DAY

Charlton Kings Parish Council, Gloucestershire

Charlton Kings Parish Council celebrated Tree Charter Day through organising and promoted three different activities. The council organised a tree walk, which allowed residents to take part in a guided walk around their local park. The council emphasized its oldest and largest tree and encouraged residents to plan their walks to go and see it. Thirdly, the council championed their local Woodland Trust nature reserve, Lineover Wood, as a destination for families to go for walks. This case study demonstrates the tenacity of the council in championing their local green spaces when they couldn't plant trees themselves.

Newent Town Council, Gloucestershire

Both Newent town council and Newent in Bloom have signed up to the tree charter. Newent is an attractive historic small market town situated at the heart of the three counties, at the northern border of the forest of dean. On Saturday morning Nov 30th the council joined forces with volunteers to plant young trees around Newent Lake, including ten silver birch whips at 100m intervals so that walkers and joggers can pace themselves to improve their health and wellbeing.

North Hinksey Parish Council, Oxfordshire

North Hinksey Parish Council organised a tree planting event to celebrate National Tree Week and The Woodland Trusts Big Climate Fightback campaign. The council looked to include its community in the tree planting event to incorporate community feeling in this activity. Joint ownership allows people to feel invested and gain the benefits of the project.

The tree planting event was in collaboration with its local Rugby Club, Oxford Rugby Club. They planted saplings of hawthorn, birch, larch, and the occasional oak. The council received 250 free trees from The Woodland Trust as part of tree packs for community groups.

Oxford Rugby Club, President Martin Walsh was thrilled with the turnout from the club and the village. He commented that: 'It is important for any sports club to be a focal point for their local community and today shows how much can be achieved when many hands make light work. When these whips become fully grown, they will enhance the environment, capture carbon from the local A road, provide a haven for nesting birds, and a safe corridor for smaller mammals'.

Cllr Chris Church praised the efforts of the community initiative, stating that in years to come the young people involved will be able to look back with pride at their endeavour.

Skipton Town Council, North Yorkshire

Skipton Town Council has declared a Climate Emergency and has started to look for ways to reduce its carbon emissions. A Councillor working group was set up to look into how this could be accomplished. Despite the group being in its infancy it has achieved some early wins and has some big ambitions for the Town. They have committed to significantly increase their tree cover with over 500 trees due to go in over the next planting season 2019-2020. They have also planted a wildflower meadow with hopes to install three more next year. The council is reviewing their grass cutting schedule to identify areas where they can reduce the frequency of cut without upsetting the general populace and they believe the Wildflower meadows will be key in this.

The council has recently had a large local business agree to fund a community Orchard that will initially consist of 30 native fruit tree species including apples; pears; damsons and, nuts. The business has facilitated the establishment of a community planting project Incredible Edible Skipton that utilizes underused public spaces for the growing of vegetables and herbs for anyone to help themselves to and have attracted a dedicated following for this project. The council is also working alongside Bugs Life on a pollinator action plan that will help them to create bee lanes and dedicated spaces for pollinators to thrive, which goes hand in hand with their Bio-Diversity action plan and Wildflower.