

SHROPSHIRE'S TWO-DAY EVENT ON PROMOTING CLIMATE ACTION

Cllr Allan Wilson, vice-chair of Shropshire Association of Local Councils (Telford & Wrekin) and climate change champion

Shropshire Association of Local Councils is leading in promoting Climate Action across Shropshire, they held a two-day event in late 2021, partnering with Shropshire Voluntary Community Sector Assembly.

Tony Green, Green Shropshire Exchange, a voluntary organisation promoting carbon-zero practices, hosted both events. At the first event, Cllr Ian Nellins of Shropshire Council and Climate Change Portfolio Holder defined the local (parish and town) council's ambitions to link climate change policy and planning across various services requiring investment to save for the future.

Andy Whyte, Sustainability West Midlands, a not-for-profit organisation aiming to achieve net zero by 2050, described its cross-regional work with Midlands Combined Authority, construction companies, Local Authorities and Green Business Networks.

Adrian Cooper, Shropshire Council's climate change manager, reported reducing the council's carbon emissions to zero by 2030 by moving to renewable energy and increasing work to capture and store carbon through council land. He emphasised the role local councils could play working with the voluntary and community sector in providing leadership for a low-carbon future by sharing good practices, collaborating on bids, action planning, challenging any practice failing to consider climate change, and taking action to make use of renewable energy and improving efficiency.

Justin Griggs, head of policy and communications at the National Association of Local Councils (NALC), spoke of its work nationally and locally to address flooding, the pandemic and climate change. Four hundred case studies illustrate how local councils have supported people and communities through the pandemic. Not weighed down by bureaucracy, they can respond efficiently and effectively deliver support through food, medicines, and social networks. NALC supports a range of local activities through national action, developing resources and advice, sharing ideas, seeking powers to address

climate change and engaging with the government and other relevant organisations. He emphasised the importance of people power and engaging young people in work taking place locally. Read the case studies: <https://www.nalc.gov.uk/library/our-work/climate-change/3297-climate-change-case-studies/file>.

The second event focussed on achieving local action in Shropshire

The Association of Charitable Foundations has financial assets of £50 billion and, therefore significant influence on mitigating climate change. The association's Richard Hebditch reflected on the first COP in 1995 and looked ahead to COP26 in Glasgow. Since the Climate Change Act of 2008, there has been a need to significantly amend targets for 2050, acting sooner rather than later.

Helen Ball, town clerk at Shrewsbury Town Council, described the council's climate action plan and steep learning curve over the last two years. Starting with 'what do we do now?' the council had always been frugal with resources, but it had been essential to take stock and establish a baseline showing leadership and encouraging others to act.

Miranda Cooper described carbon literacy as: "An awareness of the carbon costs and impacts of everyday activities and the ability and motivation to reduce emissions, on an individual, community and organisational basis." Work was taking place to deliver a local authority toolkit for community leaders.

Allan Wilson, vice-chair of the Shropshire Association of Local Councils (SALC), had established Save Our Shropshire with a mission to act and fix the problem by cascading education, starting with local councils, then to educate climate champions, local voluntary and community sectors and members of the community and every household. Covering communications, energy, transport, buildings, consumption of goods and food. Shropshire's carbon emissions of 17.6 tonnes of CO₂e per household and Telford & Wrekin's 15.2 tonnes of CO₂e per household must be reduced to 5 tonnes per household and can only be achieved through changes in behaviour.

Tony Green outlined critical steps in the net zero journey:

- Recognise the need for action and develop a plan
- Deliver actions and consider the impact
- Support the community

Be proud of what has been achieved, and going forward, consider the following:

- Training
- Decarbonising and managing resources
- Including social value in procurement
- Measuring/monitoring carbon footprints
- Tree planting

Read more on climate action:

<https://www.alcshropshire.co.uk/news/2022/01/04/summary-report-0-climate-action-event-6th-october-2021>

<https://www.alcshropshire.co.uk/news/2022/01/04/0-summary-report-climate-action-workshop-13th-october-2021>

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