

### **Northamptonshire Larger Councils Partnership 10 November 2021**

Danny Moody opened the meeting and welcomed all attendees and introduced the keynote speaker, Councillor Ed Gemmell. Ed is a parish councillor and chairman of the Climate Emergency Working Party in Hazlemere and on NALC's climate emergency committee. He is also Buckinghamshire Unitary Councillor sitting on the Transport Environment and Climate Change Committee in Bucks and a member of the LGA's Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board. Ed also works as Managing Director of Scientists Warning Europe (a limited company and charity whose work is to promote science led action on the climate crisis) and is the founder of No Disposable Cup Day. He stood in the General Election in 2019 with only one policy to "reverse climate change".

Ed gave a summary of the events leading up to COP26 including the 1992 warning from over 1000 scientists of the impending climate crisis and the warning from 15,500 scientists in 2017. Scientists Warning Europe have written to the Prime Minister and is calling for leaders to lead, but leadership is required from all levels of the local government sector and parish councils can really make a difference.

Hazlemere PC has a net zero carbon target of 2030 and has declared a climate emergency, but has also started to put measures in place to deliver the target. The working group page on their website has lots of information: [Hazlemere Climate Change Working Party • Hazlemere Parish Council](#)

To achieve net zero the following projects are being worked on:

- Switching to a green energy supplier
- Using a smart meter
- Using battery storage
- Solar panels and heat pumps
- EV charging points at 3 council buildings
- Solar Streets (Need 10 residents to obtain a good price on installation)
- Community energy schemes
- Advanced recycling (collection of crisp packets, coffee pods, Hasbro games) [Recycling - Climate Action NOW !!](#)
- Food waste awareness
- Repair cafes [Home | Repaircafe](#)
- Hazlemere climate talks occur on the first Monday of each month
- Repair café (2 hour event with seamstress, electrician, handyman)
- Youth group

Every tree is essential, while planting is good, much better to not cut down in the first place. TPO's are critical and the amenity value can now extend to climate change and environmental concerns. Get residents to walk the streets to prepare a map to show where trees could be planted in verges, when trees are then planted ask the families around that tree to look after them to keep ongoing costs down.

Wildflower meadows are being planted to help pollinators, WWF reported that 17 bee species are regionally extinct, so we need pollinator corridors to let bees travel between areas. Hazlemere has the Bee Squared project: [Bees - Climate Action NOW !!](#) Residents were asked to use 1m<sup>2</sup> of their lawn for wildflower planting. Seeds and envelopes were purchased which equated to 28p/household and the envelopes were posted through each letterbox. Sponsors covered the cost so it did not cost the parish anything.

Neighbourhood Plans and planning applications can be a way to influence the climate by making sure trees and green spaces are not overlooked.

Older people have been very keen to get involved and it has been a challenge to get the youth group started, but it is possible.

<p>Marion Turner-Hawes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have you considered schemes to leave cars at home or to have electric vehicles?</li> </ul>	<p>You have to make sure you include the whole community, getting the message out about not idling your car outside schools is very important. On average you need to have 50,000 miles of electric vehicle driving before you see the climate benefit, car sharing is a better way.</p>
<p>David Brede</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have you considered 20mph zones?</li> </ul>	<p>20mph zones are difficult to police and enforce. Both EV and fossil fuel cars should drive more conservatively to help with fuel consumption and emissions.</p>
<p>Julie Bainbridge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guidance to achieve carbon neutral would be really helpful to parish councils.</li> <li>Julie launched the Bertie Bottle campaign and has written a book which is aimed at primary age children, really would like a school to review.</li> </ul>	<p>Not using single use plastics is a great idea. As a family we go to MacDonalds and take our own containers and cutlery so we don't use their packaging.</p>
<p>Andrew Dutton</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How popular are your repair cafes?</li> </ul>	<p>Its early days but really popular so far. (Wellingborough and Kettering have them)</p>
<p>Dez Dell</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I'm a unitary and town councillor and am finding it much easier to get things done as a town councillor.</li> </ul>	<p>All levels of local government should make a difference. Boris Johnson could make a grand gesture at COP26, we will wait and see.</p>

Danny thanked Ed for his time and contribution to the meeting and opened the floor to find out what town and parish councils are doing in Northamptonshire.

Around 1/3 of the NCLP councils have declared a climate emergency and 99% felt there was a real climate emergency.

Jane Birch

- NTC have declared a climate emergency. We have gone paperless (as far as possible), we buy local, use local contractors, invest in the local economy and use environmentally responsible suppliers. Northampton in Bloom – we want to use more sustainable plants that will last longer than the summer season. If you have any ideas, please let me know.

Alan Bottwood

- Need to educate as well as doing things.
- Should work with developers in the early planning stages so you can steer environmental developments.

Rosie Smart

- You can google teracycle to find out what recycling opportunities are in your local area.

Sam Kilby-Shaw

- There is a lot of information about climate change, but some climate change is part of the normal process for the planet. Need to understand more before spending lots of money on this.

Peter Allen

- Mature trees being retained in new developments can cause issues with roots.
- Solar panels are not standard on new builds as they say the grid is not able to cope.

Marion Turner-Hawes

- [Transition Network | Transition Towns | The Circular Economy](#)
- The National Lottery has a fund available but the deadline for grant submission is 18 November: [Together for Our Planet | The National Lottery Community Fund \(tnlcommunityfund.org.uk\)](https://www.thenationallottery.com/communities/transition-towns)

## Ali Moses

- At Brackley, when we remove the bedding flowers we post out on social media for residents to come and help themselves to them from a trailer, which they do within a few hours and are very happy with this and often post pictures of the flowers replanted in their gardens
- We have a community orchard, tree planting, wildflower meadows (although some people don't like them as they are untidy). The challenge is to change the mind of the community to make meadows more acceptable.
- New hall in Brackley is lovely, but it hasn't got solar panels or heat pumps. Planners need to do more to make this happen on new builds.

## Danny Moody

- The Northants CALC partnership with Weedon-based Clear Utility Solutions (CUS) is paying dividends, both in terms of cash savings and carbon reduction. The scheme started in Autumn 2020 and to date parish and town councils have between them saved a whopping £30,000! More importantly, as a result of CUS switching councils to greener energy suppliers for the long term, nearly 200 tonnes of CO2 will now not be dissipating into the atmosphere. The buying group is open to all member parish and town councils in Northamptonshire. To see if your council can save money and/or carbon now, please visit <https://www.clearutilitiesolutions.com/ncalc-partnership>
- If your council is part way through a fixed-term contract and not ready to renew just yet, CUS will take a note of the contract end date and send you a helpful reminder when it is time to start looking at renewal rates.
- Northants CALC had planned to arrange a Climate Change Conference, but Covid struck. Very happy to re-arrange this.

## Meeting chat:

### Tina Charteress

- offered to arrange a Bertie Bottle book talk in Wootton's new library

### Dez Dell

- Is everyone aware of the Climate Action - West Northants (CA-WN)?  
In the North Northants there is a NN Eco Forum group  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/nnecoforum>
- I was at the UoN COP26 week last week and Freegle are trying to get established in Northants - email [councils@ilovefreegle.org](mailto:councils@ilovefreegle.org)

- Carbon Literacy training will be available for town and parish councillors in the new year, once trained you can train other cllrs - <https://carbonliteracy.com/toolkits/local-authorities/>
- A report on EV Charging points came to the NNC climate change advisory panel in September here: <https://northnorthants.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s3169/Agenda%20Item%2005%20-%20CCEG%20EAP%20Report%20on%20EVCPs.pdf>
- You can suggest other sites for EV CP's as part of the consultation here: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/WNNHVPACH3>
- There's an NNC covid recovery grant available 'which supports the move to Net Zero' details here: <https://www.northnorthants.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/discretionary-recovery-and-innovation-grant>
- [Bee-friendly-circle.pdf \(saveweekleyhallwood.com\)](#)
- Big banks such as Barclays, HSBC, Santander, Natwest have invested billions in fossil fuel companies. There are ethical banks that don't - most building societies, Triodos, Nationwide don't invest in fossil fuels

#### Marion Turner-Hawes

- Have you thought about creating an edible landscape, creating sustainable planting that people can grow, eat and clear?
- NNC Climate Conference on 16th Nov [NNClimate21 - Speakers and timetable | North Northamptonshire Council \(northnorthants.gov.uk\)](#)

#### Julie Bainbridge

- Could we have the bus stops shelters in town be roofed with pollenating plants?

#### Elaine Wiltshire

- The reason that commercial business on the trading estates do not have solar panels is because the grid cannot take the extra electricity generated until they have been upgraded
- The WNC Document on Climate Change was written jointly by SNC and Daventry District Council prior to Unitary. The Document was passed to WNC to implement at the last Full Council of each District Council. I was part of the working group at SNC for the last 2 years and helped to put it together.

#### Kevin White

- In Moulton I'm hoping to get our PC to agree to a small 'permaculture' trial. It's not a well known technique but, after getting established, is self sustaining-capturing carbon, providing food, but not requiring infinite inputs. I will share more information as we progress.

- Excess power from solar panels is sometimes literally 'dumped' into the ground. A travesty for sure. The solution may be in so-called 'smart grids', battery-based solutions (this is a weak point) to smooth out the peaks/troughs. EVCs can form part of the smart grid.

Paul Enright-King

- The installation of solar panels as standard, together with better insulation requires primary legislation, just as was achieved under Disability Discrimination legislation, where doorways are required to be wider in newbuilds and front steps have been lowered for wheelchair users. perhaps builders should be offered incentives, but since they are companies who contribute massively to greenhouse gasses, in the use of concrete for example, they should be 'encouraged' to consider improving their game.

Lesley Sambrook Smith

- **On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme guidance for local authorities** The application process is open to relevant local authorities throughout the UK. OZEV defines 'local authority' using the 'public authority' definition as listed in Schedule 1 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

For the purposes of the scheme, the applicant authority must have the explicit support of the relevant highways authority that has responsibility for maintenance of the highway on the residential streets where chargepoints are to be located. This support must be obtained before any application is submitted in the form of a formal letter or email.

- Parish councils are public authorities according to Schedule 1 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000
- [On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme guidance for local authorities - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Next steps:

- Northants CALC to have a dedicated webpage to climate change: [Climate Change | Northamptonshire County Association of Local Councils \(northantscalc.com\)](#)
- Northants CALC to host a climate change conference