



**Carbon Literacy
Project**



SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PLAN

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Approved by full council:

This is a draft action plan and is a working progress. The environment working group shall add extra ideas and discuss. Ideas welcomed from all members of the public, either at the working group sessions or via email. Contact Daisy on comms@banwellparishcouncil.org.uk.

Aims

Through this document, Banwell Parish Council plans **to protect and enhance wildlife and the environment** via the following aims:



Carbon reduction



Plastic reduction



Waste reduction



Enhancement of biodiversity and trees



Climate change readiness and community engagement



Consideration of sustainability issues in the parish and district council decision making process

Background and context

In August 2020 Banwell Parish Council passed a resolution in support of North Somerset Council's decision to declare a climate emergency.

- 1) A list of target activities has been produced by the Clerk which currently serves as the basis of a sustainability action plan.
- 2) A carbon emissions benchmarking exercise has been carried out by the Clerk on the 'Youth & Community Centre' which provides a baseline measure by which progress towards carbon neutrality can be measured.
- 3) The communication officer has begun the process of engaging with the community by taking part in the 'Climate Communications for Parish Councils' pilot run by the Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE).
- 4) The Clerk and Communications Officer attended a workshop held by The Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE) and are working with Future Leap.
- 5) The Clerk has been certified as "Carbon Literate" through the Carbon Literacy Training Project.

About the Action Plan

The aim is for this document to be incorporated into the Parish Council's Climate and Environmental Action Plan and there will be a distinction between:

- a. *Policies* – principles of action to be formally adopted by the Council, that support the Council and Officers when making decisions in a range of activities; and
- b. *Planned Activities* – Proposed actions or events that support the Council's stated aims in respect of climate action and environmental sustainability.

By making this distinction it is intended that climate action and environmental sustainability become ubiquitous considerations for all council decision making that are supported by a clear roadmap of planned activities.

This document also distinguishes between *Planned Activities* that relate to:

- a. *The Parish Council Estate*, i.e. where the Parish Council has full control over the outcome; and
- b. *Community engagement, stakeholder support and lobbying*, i.e. where the Council has the ability to exercise some influence over the outcome but does not have full control.

Making this distinction enables us to manage the expectations of the taxpayers with regards what the Parish Council is empowered to deliver with regards Climate Action and Environmental Sustainability.

It also helps to provide clarity around how the Council might wish to allocate resources and the extent to which activities are to be community, councillor, or officer led.

This document further distinguishes between the following categories of activity:

- Carbon reduction
- Plastic reduction – single use plastics/ plastic packaging/ disposable plastics
- Waste reduction – all other forms of avoidable waste
- Biodiversity and trees – trees and other plant life have an important role to play in carbon reduction as well as contributing to healthy, diverse ecosystems
- Climate change readiness and community engagement– preparation for a world in which extreme weather events are much more commonplace. Engage the community on how to prepare and protect existing assets,
- Environment and the decision-making process.

Categorising activities in this way helps to ensure that our portfolio of activities remains balanced and proportionate to the threats posed by inaction.

Policy Proposals

The following are proposed policy statements that the Council may consider adopting:

- Actively support small and large planning applications for new renewable energy in the area.
- Replace all felled trees and continue to introduce new native trees that are of the highest possible benefit to wildlife. To identify appropriate locations for planting.
- Develop a strategic plan for any new housing developments to require new homes to be energy efficient, nature friendly, and located close to public transport and amenities pushing for future housing to be zero-carbon and nature friendly.

- Working with the Local Plan team designate and protect sites as local green spaces, new play spaces (formal and informal) and green infrastructure networks, encouraging local residents into the fresh air, walking or cycling rather than using their cars for local journeys.
- Oppose high-carbon developments, promoting sustainable alternatives instead.
- Ensure any council funds are invested safely in low-risk sustainable banks or investment funds.
- Encourage, enable¹ and support community groups taking action to address climate change and promote environmental sustainability.
- Engage, inform and encourage the wider community to take action on climate change and make decisions that promote environmental sustainability.

Funding

This document seeks to propose suggestions as to how activities might be funded as follows:

It is proposed that wherever possible the Council should:

- a) Seek in the first instance to fund activities through existing income streams, i.e. through continuing to make environmentally conscious decisions when updating, maintaining and renovating property on the Parish Council Estate.
- b) Explore grant funding options where there is no existing income stream.
- c) Consider Salix² Loans where available and only in proportion to the environmental risk that the planned activity seeks to mitigate.
- d) Consider raising funds from an increase to the precept only where absolutely necessary, and only in proportion to the environmental risk that the planned activity seeks to mitigate.

Previous Activities: Progress to date

The following list represents the incredible achievements made by Council and Officers before and since the Parish Council made a commitment to supporting North Somerset Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency in August 2020.

Carbon reduction

- Carbon footprint benchmark carried out on the Parish Council estate by the Clerk in 2020 & 2021.
- Goods and services are purchased locally, where possible, to reduce mileage and packaging or combined with already planned journeys.
- Programme of replacement of old Streetlights to LED.

Plastic reduction

- Using glasses instead of plastic cups, as well as avoiding where possible the use of plastic plates and cutlery (anything in stock is being used up). Covid slightly changed this as one-use disposable items were needed. However, where possible recyclable or recycled products have been used.
- For refreshments at meetings the measures include use of crockery, metal teaspoons and glasses where possible.
- No usage of single use condiments sachets (anything in stock is being used up).
- Straws are not used in the office or at events (unless required for assistance with drinking).

¹ Enablement will require some level of financial support. See later proposal in the Planned Activities: 2020-2022 section.

² See <https://www.salixfinance.co.uk/loans/parish-councils>

- Staff try, where possible, to bring in their own lunch therefore reducing the use of single use packaging.
- Soap dispenser / Anti-bac gel in the toilets, office toilets and kitchen is refillable.
- Replacement of old YCC doors to make building.

Waste reduction

- Annual litter picking event incorporated with spring clean.
- Work with North Somerset Council to sort Spring Clean litter into recycling for collection.
- Providing litter picking equipment to members of the public when requested.
- If the office staff cannot make use of wastepaper, it is recycled (except confidential papers) along with recyclable plastic items, cardboard and tins via the North Somerset Waste.
- Glass bottles/coffee jars are recycled.
- All water meter readings are monitored, and action is taken immediately to identify the reasons when they are high, minimizing water loss if there is a leak.
- Councillors are encouraged to receive agendas and minutes by e-mail.
- All invitations to Parish Council events are sent via e-mail, where possible.

Biodiversity and trees

- Biodiversity in public spaces. The Parish Council is not responsible for the highway verges although, they support North Somerset's rewilding policy.
- Trees that are felled due to being dead, diseased, or dying, are replaced with 2 native species, where possible. Guidance is also sought from the Tree Officer at North Somerset Council.
- Edge/boundary of YCC & Rec are left and only strimmed once a year.
- Large trees have been planted to provide shaded areas on Parish Council owned outdoor areas

Climate change readiness and engaging the community

- Sharing social media communications from North Somerset & CSE.
- Comms communications plan in association with CSE.
- Supporting Sustainable North Somerset / CSE by sharing social media communications.

Environment and the decision-making process

- Supporting the North Somerset Council in its declaration of a climate emergency.
- Establishing the parish council Sustainability Working group.

Planned activities: 2022-2024

Whilst we will still look for quick wins to reduce carbon and waste and promote biodiversity, work will begin on ensuring that the Parish Council Estate is energy efficient and progressing towards carbon neutrality.

A carbon footprint benchmarking activity was carried out in 2020, 2021 and will again in 2022. An annual report submitted to full Council.

We will use data from the Future Leap / CSE carbon benchmarking tool to identify where Banwell needs to focus and use it to shape a Community Engagement Campaign.

Carbon reduction

- Replacement of remaining Streetlights to LED

- Replacement of old YCC lights to LED
- Explore funding opportunities for energy waste reduction measures on YCC
- Engage with the Local Plan and future developments regarding different sources of energy generation, i.e. solar panels
- Encourage walking by promoting the walking routes identified. Employees and Councillors should also be encouraged to walk, cycle or use public transport or car-share where possible.
- Encourage / support community minibus initiatives
- Reduce energy waste from YCC
- Introduce solar panels on the Youth & Community Centre if possible
- To consider and research a potential collaboration with other local groups to create an impartial local guide that provides information on accredited local businesses and could include information on local accredited energy assessors and renewable energy installers for solar panels, batteries, EV charging points and heat pumps, eco-friendly retailers, green builders and landscape companies, etc. It can also encourage sustainable transport options

Plastic reduction

- To research and cost the possibility of PPE recycling schemes for the Y.C.C.
- To consider starting a Refill Revolution scheme in Banwell.
- To advertise existing litter picking events and encourage more volunteers to participate in monthly litter picks and Spring Cleans.
- To investigate expanding the current litter picking zones across Banwell. Cllr Thompson volunteered to organise additional litter picks.

Other waste reduction

- Work with North Somerset Waste Team to ensure appropriate bins are made available at events and find out how additional recycling bins can be returned to locations where they have been removed.
- To begin a Terracycle scheme at the Youth & Community Centre.

Biodiversity and trees

- Encourage residents to increase biodiversity in their back gardens through wildlife friendly gardening.
- Encourage residents and local landowners could be encouraged to take part in tree planting. The Tree Charter, developed by the Woodland Trust, provides excellent guidance on how to increase tree cover. The National Association of Local Councils website provides case studies where it has been used.
- Researching alternatives to glyphosate weed killer and the possibility sharing a hot foam system with neighboring Town & Parish Councils.
- To investigate local areas for rewilding/wildflower planting.
- To promote garden sharing schemes for wildlife gardening. Ensure reputable charity that safeguards participants.
- Promote residents to create wild gardens and install habitats, such as hedgehog highways.

Climate change readiness and community engagement

- Support the introduction of safe walking and cycle routes and, where necessary, work in partnership with the local authority to deliver them.

- Ensuring money is invested wisely by researching the eco status of banks used.
- Researched funding possibilities for climate projects.
- To create a “Sustainable Banwell” Facebook page.
- To promote citizen science schemes including river monitoring with Bristol Avon River Trust, BioBlitz and U.W.E bat monitoring projects.
- Work with North Somerset Council to ensure strategic green gap.
- Parish Council to voice views on ensuring North Somerset’s local plan is as green as possible.
- To promote green homes grants to residents.

Planned activities: 2024-2030

Any Council buildings that have not already transitioned to electric will be transformed.

The Parish Council will seek opportunities to install renewable energy generation facilities on its own property.

We’ll showcase what we’ve achieved and learned and attempt to bring together community groups who can benefit from our organisational learning to bulk buy for their privately owned properties.

Carbon reduction

- Produce green energy. Install renewable energy generation, like heat pumps and solar PV, at council buildings.
- Bring together groups of people for bulk purchases. The costs of installing solar PV, or other renewable technologies such as heat pumps, should be much lower if done in bulk, street by street, or area by area. Local homeowners and businesses could be brought together to develop such a scheme – it’s a widely used model in the Netherlands and places such as Frome. Bulk purchases of energy audits or energy insulation is also possible.
- Promote a lift-sharing scheme. By convening local businesses and car-sharing schemes, such as the social enterprise Liftshare, it’s possible to help local people reduce the carbon pollution from car use, save money and foster new friendships. Liftsharing may often be a solution for people when public transport, cycling or walking to work isn’t. Car-sharing schemes for non-commuting journeys should also be promoted
- Buildings using renewable energy should also be used as a showcase to help local people see these technologies first-hand, particularly less familiar technologies such as heat pumps.

Plastic reduction

- To promote and facilitate a community leader to start a “Plastic Free Banwell” group with the Surfers Against Sewage organisation.

Other waste reduction

- Promote allotment produce sharing with the Church. Consider allowing the Church to run a harvest festival event at the Y.C.C

Biodiversity and trees

- To investigate and consider the planting of hedgerows on parish council land and to encourage residents to plant hedges.

- To investigate suitable locations for habitat creation, such as hedgehog homes, bird/bat boxes and bug hotels. To involve local young people in creating these.
- To investigate the possibility of community orchards and consider Thatcher's as a sponsor.
- Investigate installing hedgehog highways at parish council owned sites.
- Investigate increasing hedgerows and reducing fencing.

Climate change readiness and community engagement

- Banwell Parish Council should compile and maintain an Environmental Policy Statement. The statement should represent a high level, but comprehensive, commitment to minimising environmental impacts of day-to-day Parish Council Operations within its own estate.
- Continue climate communications plan and regularly update with latest news and advice for residents.

Notes: Ensure the climate change or nature implications of decisions are known before making them. It isn't credible to accept the need for rapid action on climate change and nature and then make decisions without knowing whether they'll be harmful or helpful. Requiring every decision to be well informed is common sense as well as good practice. This Action Plan will be a flexible, working document that can be added to and updated as and when required.

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Appendix 1: Banwell Parish Council Carbon Footprint

Banwell Parish Council estate carbon footprint benchmark

31 March 2020

Introduction

The following report provides a carbon footprint benchmark to help focus carbon reduction activity across the Banwell Parish Council estate.

Method

Banwell Parish Council’s carbon footprint has been calculated using a carbon footprinting tool provided by Future Leap.

Another measurement will be taken in April 2021 to track any progress made over the 2020/21 Council year.

Scope

The footprint relates to the Banwell Parish Council Youth & Community Centre only.

Summary of findings

Between April 2019 end March 2020 (pre covid), Banwell Parish Council’s carbon footprint:

- **5.4 tonnes CO2.**

The table below shows how this translates into 5.4 tons of CO2 emissions each year.

Source	Emissions tCO2/yr	% Footprint
Electricity	1.8	22.3%
Gas	0.0	0.0%
LPG	3.4	0.0%
Oil	0.0	0.0%
Petrol	3.0	4.1%
Diesel	0.0	14.6%
Water	0.1	2.0%
Waste	0.1	1.8%
Total:	5.4	tCO2e/yr

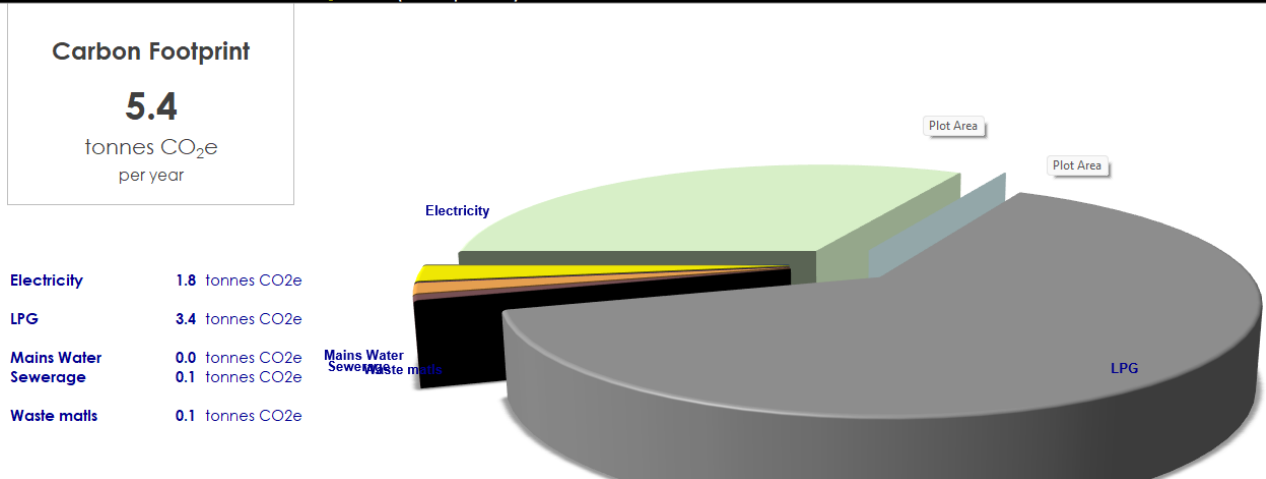


Figure 1: Banwell Parish Council carbon footprint estimation

The footprint breakdown above shows that 3.4 tons of CO₂e of the Parish Council estate carbon footprint comes from consumption of LPG gas at the YCC.

This is followed by electricity at 1.8 tonnes of CO₂e. Mains water sewerage accounts for 0.1 tonnes CO₂e, and waste at 0.1 tonnes CO₂e.

Strategies for reducing the Parish Council's carbon footprint and challenges that we expect to encounter to be discussed by the sustainability working group.

Appendix 2: Banwell Village Carbon Footprint

Centre of Sustainable Energy's (CSE, 2021) IMPACT carbon footprint estimator provides an approximate calculation of Banwell's carbon footprint (CSE, 2021). Figure 2 shows that the total approximate total territorial carbon footprint at 56,822 tonnes of carbon (equivalent). Territorial carbon footprint is the total emissions caused within the area of Banwell.

Figure 3 shows the consumption footprint at 23,415 tonnes of carbon (equivalent). Consumption footprint is on a consumption basis, relating to all emissions caused by residents of the area, regardless of where the emissions occur (CSE 2021). E.g. the burger you bought may not have come from Banwell, but it was bought in Banwell and required carbon to reach your household.

Banwell

56,822t CO₂e*

total territorial footprint (p.a.)

EMISSIONS BREAKDOWN (t CO₂e)

Road Transport	32,116
Industrial and commercial	7,732
Agriculture	5,746
Housing	5,498
Aviation	1,837
Waste management	1,284
F-gases	912
Shipping	732
Other Transport	720
Land use, land-use change, and forestry	213
Diesel fuelled railways	32

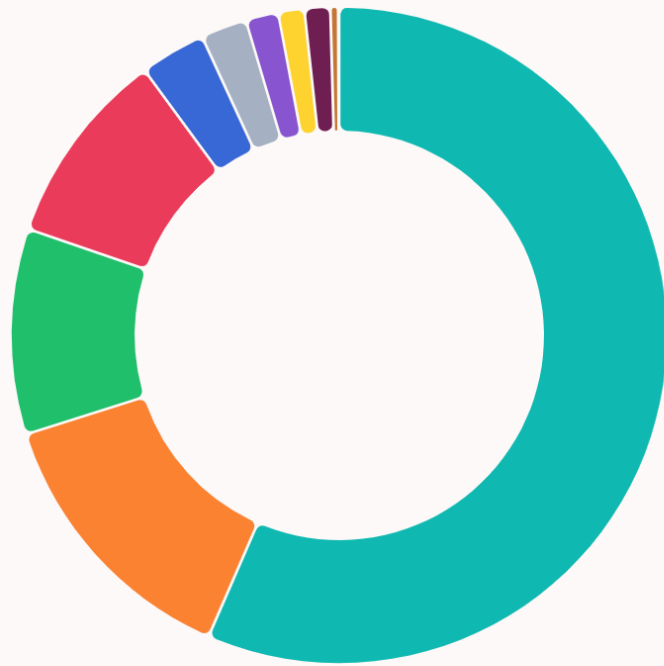


Figure 2 Banwell's territorial carbon footprint (total).

Banwell

23,415t CO₂e*

total consumption footprint (p.a.)

EMISSIONS BREAKDOWN (t CO₂e)

Consumption of goods and services	7,211
Travel	5,731
Housing	5,498
Food and diet	4,799
Waste	175

PDF Report

*CO₂e stands for "carbon dioxide equivalent" and is a standard unit of measurement in carbon accounting. It expresses the impact of a number of different gases collectively as a common unit.

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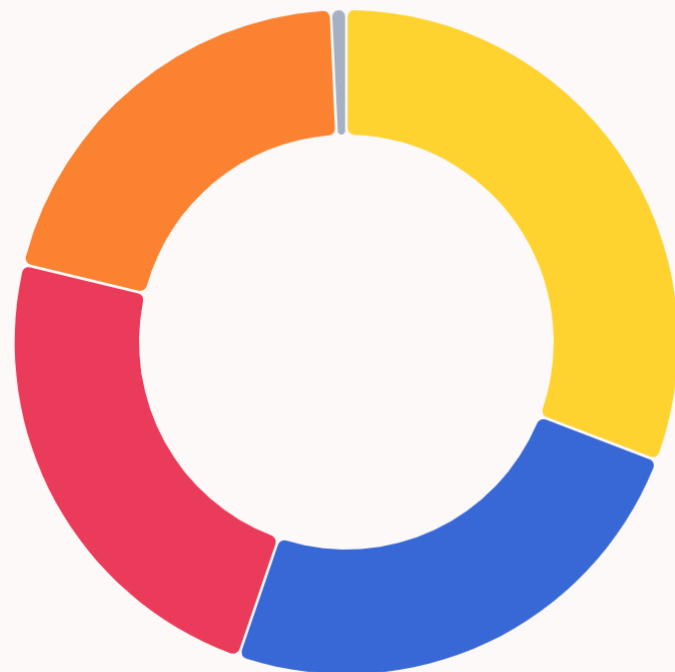


Figure 3: Banwell's consumption carbon footprint (total).

Reference

CSE (2021). IMPACT Tool. [ONLINE] Available at: <https://impact-tool.org.uk/> [Accessed 24/11/2021].