

Swansea Council for Voluntary Service

Your local county voluntary council

12. Climate change

12.12 Take local community level action on climate change



Climate change is one of the many challenges faced by community groups in Wales and by tackling climate change we can also address a range of other issues which affect us and our communities. Communities and community organisations play a vital role in engaging with people on the ground and often play a leading role in developing grass roots action and awareness. This information sheet points to some sources of information and inspiration to start the ball rolling.

Inspiration

Many of the groups taking action on climate change in Wales are proving to be a source of inspiration to their communities, other community groups and are helping to shape and influence government policy. For example take a look at what the four winners of the Low Carbon Communities challenge have achieved:

<http://tinyurl.com/Low-Carbon-Community-Challenge>

Communities First Partnerships are also considering the impacts of climate change and improving their environment e.g. the Green Town project in , Blaenau Ffestiniog: <http://tinyurl.com/Blaenau-Ffestiniog> and the Hydro Electro Scheme in Cwm Clydach : www.energyshare.com/cwmclydach-community-development-trust/

Transition Initiatives have become a popular community led response to the pressures of climate change, shrinking supplies of cheap energy and the economic down turn in villages, towns or cities in Wales. www.transitionnetwork.org

Each year Cynnal Cymru the Wales network for organisation working on climate change and sustainable development produce the Wales Green List, highlighting different people taking action in Wales. www.cynnalcymru.com/project/wales-green-list

Information and Guidance

The Community **Action Eco-Guidance** packs were developed by a partnership of environmental and related organisations with input from Communities First Partnerships and local authorities. They have been produced to cover each local authority area in Wales.

The packs provide a range of information about what's possible, who can help you and examples of what other communities or groups have done. For example developing a community woodland project or an angling project, how to be prepared if you are at risk of flooding or care for your local wildlife. It also provides information on how to get started and the role of the land-use planning system.

For copies contact the WCVA helpdesk, help@wcva.org.uk

The **Welsh Government** provides information and guidance on communities taking action on climate change which can be found on their website www.walescarbonfootprint.gov.uk/?lang=en. This includes examples of what community buildings and pubs have done to reduce their carbon footprint and a Community action pack.

www.walescarbonfootprint.gov.uk/community/actionpack/?lang=en

The Welsh Government also facilitates the [Community Action for Climate Change Network](#) which provides capacity development communities and practitioners and has established the Pathfinder action research programme to support community action on climate change. www.swea.co.uk/proj_pathfinder.shtml

Community Pathways is a web resource of community approaches to taking action on climate change – based on real working examples from across the UK. With independent information and guidance on nearly 40 different [community approaches](#) to action on climate change - from running pledge campaigns to establishing bulk buy schemes to developing community renewables projects - Community Pathways can show what resources and experience are needed and what others have discovered in taking each approach. You can also find links to a wide range of [community examples](#) in action and [further resources](#) to support choices and planning. The site currently has an emphasis on energy issues but other issues like food and transport are touched on. www.communitypathways.org.uk/

PlanLoCaL is a suite of resources including films, a resource pack and this website which aims to support communities and groups that are 'planning for low carbon living'. www.planlocal.org.uk/

Focus: Transport and Energy in the Community

There are a number of energy agencies and organisations based in Wales who provide a range of services on either/or domestic and community energy efficiency and energy generation:

- Severn Wye Energy Agency
- Wales Eco Centre
- South East Wales Energy Agency
- Eco Dyfi www.ecodyfi.org.uk/
- Awel Aman Tawe
- The Green Valleys
- The Home Energy Service

Several of these organisations provide support for larger scale community energy schemes through the Welsh Governments Ynni'r Fro programme. These organisations have also been instrumental in coming together to establish Community Energy Wales. The National Energy Agency works on Fuel Poverty issues in partnership with housing associations and Local Authorities. If you are looking at how best to address Fuel Poverty in your local community your Local Authority housing department or energy agency might be a good place to start.

Have a look at www.sustrans.org.uk for ideas on making smarter travel choices within your community and projects which demonstrate how you can take action.

The Community Transport Association aims to shape the voluntary and community transport network. Visit the site for information sheets, training and advice - www.ctauk.org/in-your-area/wales.aspx

There has been much work recently exploring how communities can foster sustainable behaviour. For more information on sustainable behaviour change in communities visit the Cynnal Cymru/Sustain Wales website

www.sustainwales.com/behaviour-change-resources

And Environment Wales –

www.environment-wales.org/grants/supporting_sustainable_living/browse_behaviour_change_resources/787

Further Support and Guidance

Cylch - information, advice and support to existing and emerging community reuse, recycling, composting and reprocessing organisations across Wales - www.cylch.org

Groundwork Wales - helps people and organisations make changes in order to create better neighbourhoods, to build skills and job prospects, and to live and work in a greener way - www.groundworkinwales.org.uk

BTCV Cymru – helping to create a more sustainable future by inspiring people and improving places - www2.btcv.org.uk/display/home

Keep Wales Tidy - considers that a "clean and tidy Wales" can be primarily achieved by changing people's attitudes so that they are less likely to engage in activities that have a negative impact on their local environments - www.keepwalestidy.co.uk

CVC's – contact your local CVC and find out if they can offer help, for example with help in reducing your organisations running costs or setting up a community energy generation project. If they're not able to provide direct support they'll often know someone who can.

Disclaimer

The information provided in this sheet is intended for guidance only. It is not a substitute for professional advice and we cannot accept any responsibility for loss occasioned as a result of any person acting or refraining from acting upon it.

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Produced by WCVA, County Voluntary Councils and Volunteer Centres.

Last Updated: 12/02/2013



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