CARBON LITERACY FOR TOWN AND PARISH COUNCILS

Carbon Literacy Project

Take the lead in tackling climate change by becoming a carbon literate Parish or Town Council

Warwickshire County Council

WALC
Town & Parish Council Support

Carbon Literacy for Town and Parish Councils

Sarah Stear, Head of Climate Change, Warwickshire County Council

Claudine Pearson, Climate Officer, WALC

- Warwickshire County Council “Working to Deliver a Sustainable Warwickshire”
- Why should Parish and Town Councils engage on climate change?
- What can Parish and Town Councils do to tackle climate change?
- Why should Parish and Town Councils become carbon literate?
- Q & A

SARAH STEAR

Head of Climate Change

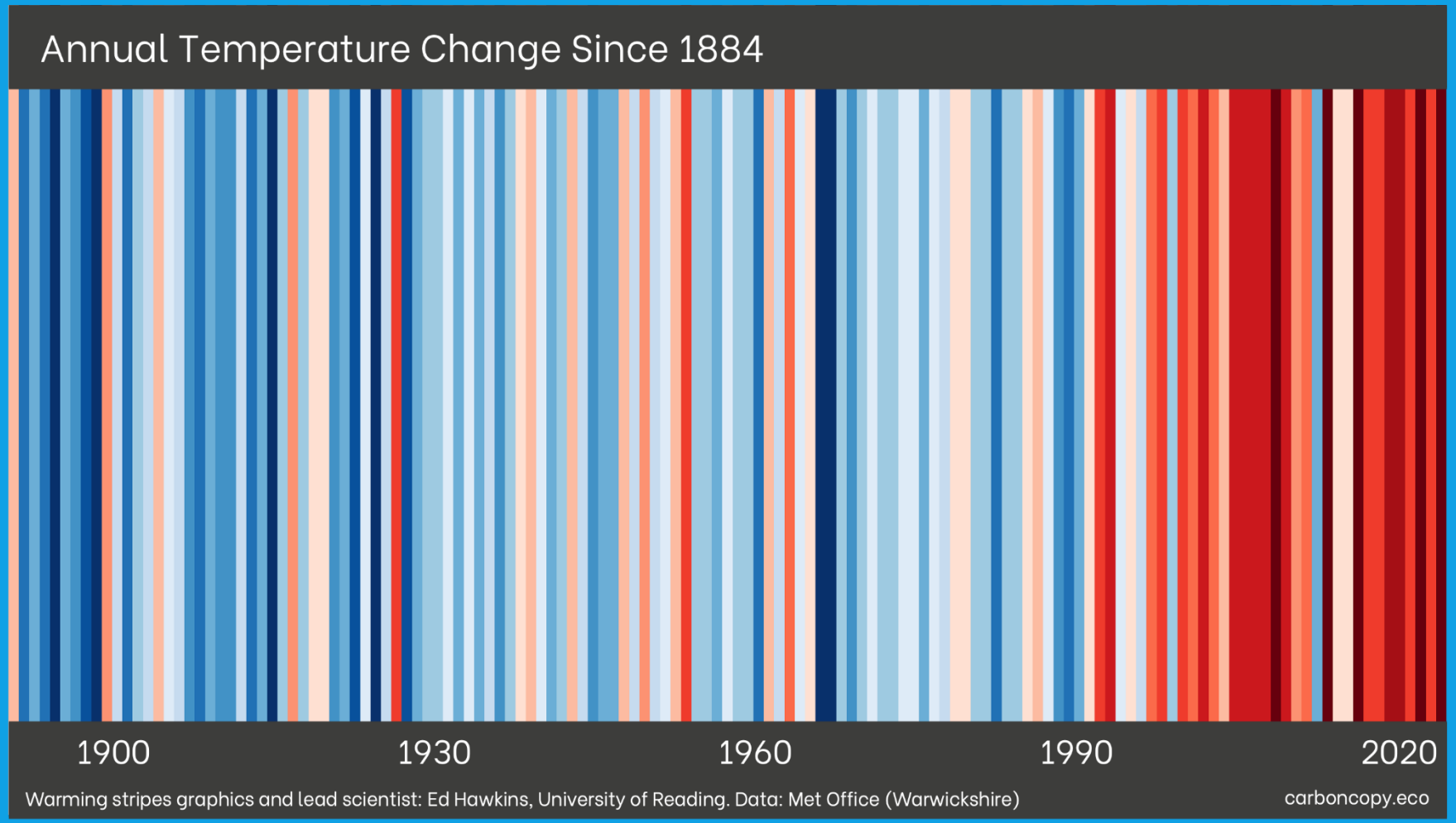
Warwickshire County Council

Working to Deliver a Sustainable Warwickshire

Working to deliver a Sustainable Warwickshire

Warwickshire County Council

The Warwickshire picture



1 stripe =average temperature for 1yr

Blue = cooler-than-average years

Red = hotter than average

Darker shades, further from average

Great, I love warmer weather! But wait...

My farming business is affected

My food is more expensive / not available

It's harder to get around

Water is not available to....

My service is spending more money adapting to environmental changes

My home / parkland / fields are destroyed

My home is flooded

My business can't open

My council is having to spend money responding to emergencies

Cllr Heather Timms, Portfolio Holder for Environment, Climate and Culture

In 2019 our Councillors recognised the challenge and declared a Climate Emergency in Warwickshire

"Climate change is one of the most critical issues facing humankind. The continued burning of fossil fuels is affecting weather patterns around the world as well as causing devastating extreme weather events more locally, leading to flooding, heatwaves, drought and wildfires. These events pose a direct risk to the people that live, work and study in Warwickshire and threaten our infrastructure, assets and economy."

Our Council Plan has 3 Strategic Priorities, including this one:

"We want to be a County with a sustainable future which means adapting to and mitigating climate change and meeting net zero commitments, so that our generations can live well and reap the benefits of a sustainable and thriving Warwickshire."

WARWICKSHIRE

SUSTAINABLE FUTURES STRATEGY

2023

Warwickshire County Council

What we need to do:

Adapt services
so that we can continue deliver despite climate changes

and

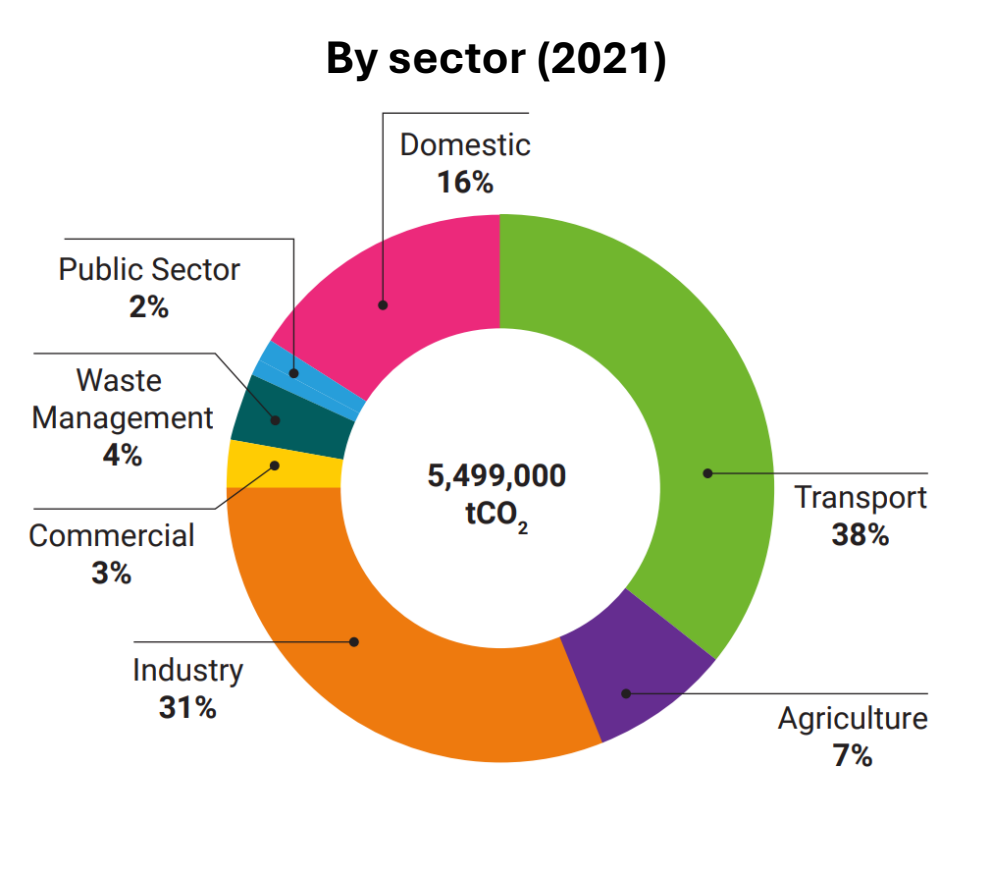
Reduce carbon emissions to net zero by 2030 for Council activities &
by 2050 for the whole of Warwickshire

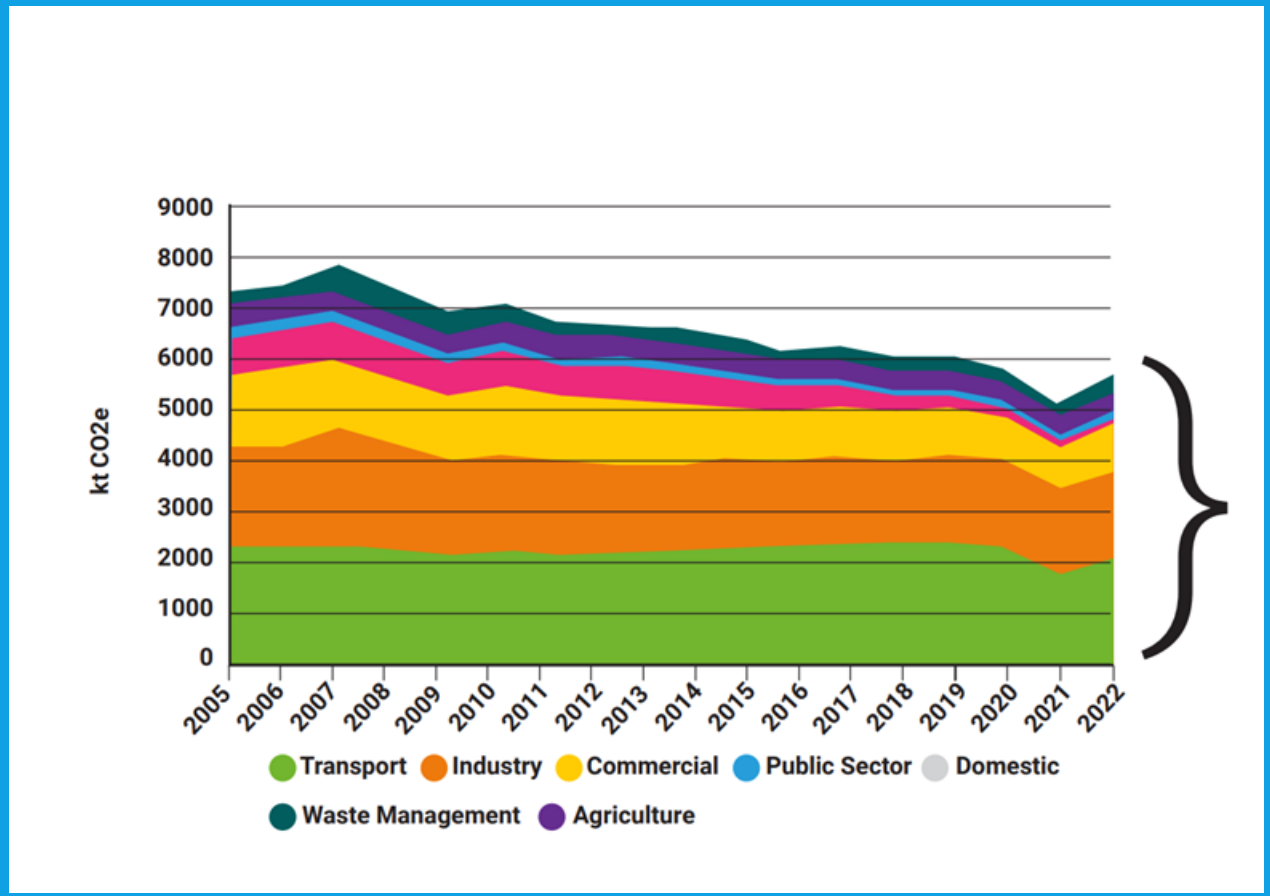
To read the full Strategy and delivery plans, visit:
www.sustainablewarwickshire.co.uk

SFS Delivery Plan

Carbon Emissions

Warwickshire





Co-benefits of climate action...

Health

Equity & community

Jobs & economy

Resilience

Resources & capacity

Green space

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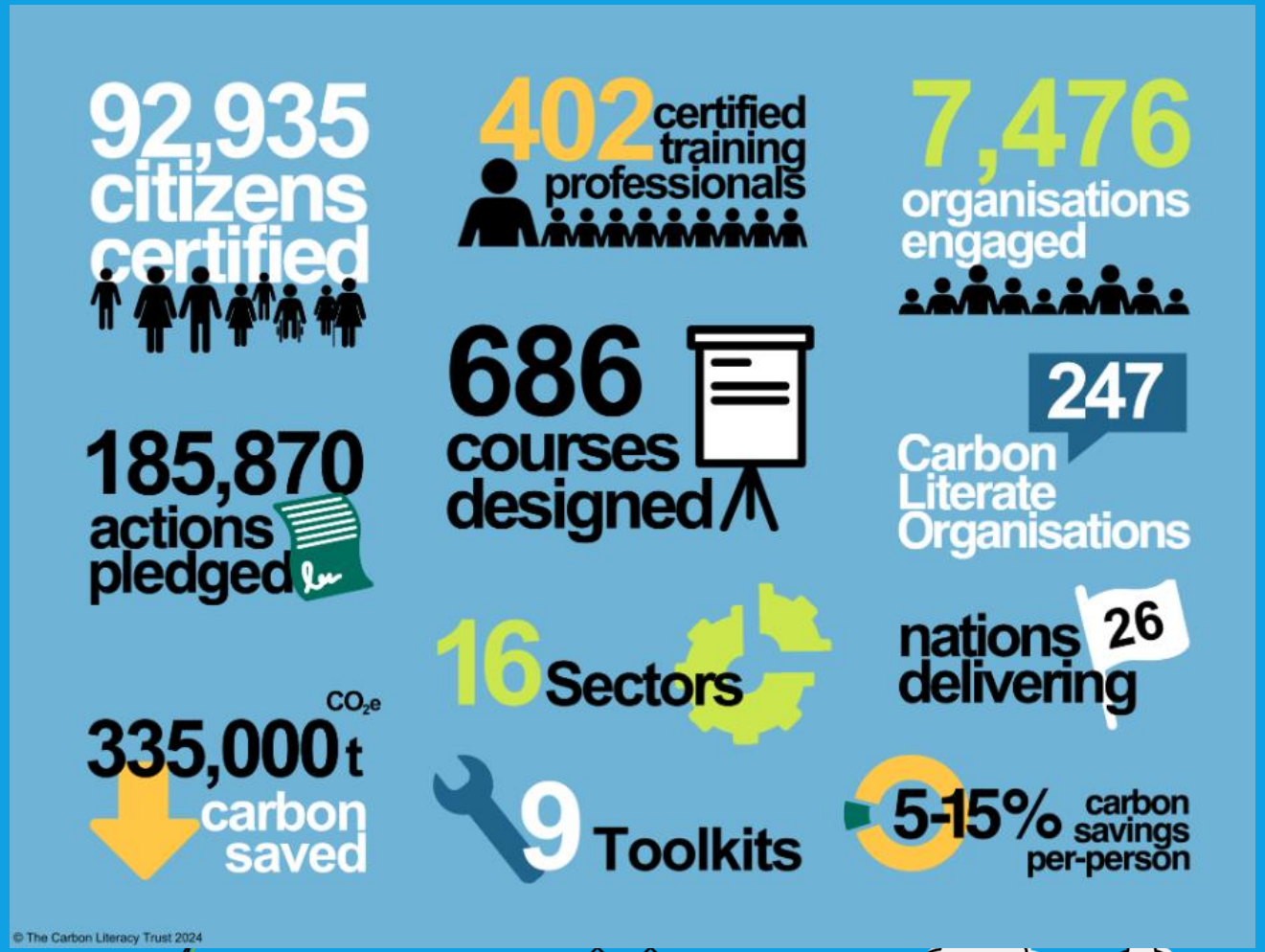
The role of Town & Parish Councils

- Optimistically we have over 568k residents who can help deliver a more sustainable Warwickshire.
- There is a role for local councils to act and inspire communities.
- To help support local councils, WALC and WCC are working together to deliver a Carbon Literacy training programme for town and parish councils.
- The programme is part of the Carbon Literacy Project (CLT), a globally recognised programme recognised at COP21 in Paris as a Transformative Action Program.

Certified Carbon Literate

- 4 modules (between 1-2hrs each module)
- Subjects covered include climate change, carbon footprints, how you can do your bit and is tailored to the relevant audience.



- Participants are required to make an individual and a group pledge appropriate to the influence the individual levers within a particular organisation or community and these are assessed by the CLT project.
- Organisations can demonstrate their commitment to sustainability by becoming Carbon Literate Organisations.

Do you want to know more or get more involved

Certified Carbon Literate

SUSTAINABLE WARWICKSHIRE

WWF | FOOTPRINT CALCULATOR

CLAUDINE PEARSON

Climate Officer

Warwickshire & West Midlands Association of Local Councils (WALC)

South Warwickshire Local Climate Engagement Programme

WALC

- WALC represents 180+ parish and town councils
- Climate Officer: South Warwickshire
- Access to national and county best practice: NALC Climate Emergency Network & SLCC

WALC x LCEP

- Local Climate Engagement (LCE): uses training, mentoring, peer learning and hands-on support to assist local authorities in engaging communities on climate decision-making.
- 2022: Warwick , Stratford-on-Avon and WALC bid secured funding, one of 21 LA's out of 76
- Warwick/Stratford ambition: develop and deliver a rural community engagement programme
- Phase 1: training programme by Involve with Climate Outreach District Councillors, Officers, Parish and Town Clerks and Councillors, WALC and community action groups.
- Phase 2: pilot with rural communities public engagement in Alcester, Henley-in-Arden and Marston Sicca.

WALC x LCEP
Council and Community Action

Climate (and Nature) Officer

- Two days/week with communities in South Warwickshire to develop action plans or projects
- Signpost expertise, case studies, funding: building trust and local connections to navigate the “information jungle” and overcome barriers
- Working with Local Nature Partnership: workshop on Local Nature Action Plans to feed into Warwickshire’s Nature Recovery Strategy
- **Developing a Carbon Literacy Training Programme with Warwickshire County Council specifically for Town and Parish Councils**

Why should Local Councils engage on Climate Change?

Three-quarters of adults in Great Britain worry about climate change

In the survey, people were also asked to describe in their own words how they feel about the future of the environment.

Some common themes were identified in the responses, such as:

- people's concern for their family and future generations
- anxiety and helplessness
- the expense of making eco-friendly changes.

Source: **Office for National Statistics**, October 2021 - Data on public attitudes to the environment and the impact of climate change, Great Britain

Why should Local Councils engage on Climate Change?

Britain Talks Climate asked participants

‘Which of the following impacts of climate change are you most worried about over the next 10 years?’

The top 5 most frequently cited climate impacts were:

- Harm nature and wildlife
- Cause my bills and other costs to rise
- Increase the risk of floods
- Have a negative impact on my children/grandchildren’s future
- Increase the risk of heatwaves

(Only 13% chose ‘not worried about climate change affecting my life in the next 10 years’ when answering this question.)

Source: Britain Talks Climate, The big picture: How people are relating to climate change in 2024

Why should Local Councils engage on Climate Change?

Climate change can feel overwhelming as a topic.

At a time when public concern about the environment, and climate change in particular, is at a record high, it is vitally important to retain a positive narrative to engage people and communities, and demonstrate how they can take part in this journey of climate (and nature) action.

Source: Sustainable Towns & Cities. Ashden's mission is to accelerate transformative climate solutions and build a more just world.

Why should Local Councils engage on Climate Change?

Talking about solutions also helps us reach those who would normally be disengaged from climate issues. “Climate change” can be a polarising term, but clean energy, lower pollution, less waste, energy security, or lower bills are not.

Almost everyone likes clean energy, and no one likes pollution. Let’s talk about them more.

Source: Dr Hannah Ritchie, ***Not The End of the World: Surprising facts, dangerous myths and hopeful solutions for our future on planet Earth*****.**

What can Parish and Town Councils do to tackle climate change?

Where is your Council positioned on climate or nature action?

- Just beginning
- Already doing some climate and/or nature action (even if not so labelled)
- Co-operating with local residents around climate and/or nature action – or sustainable villages
- Already declared a climate or ecological emergency
- Agreed an action plan

What can Parish and Town Councils do to tackle climate change?

What is the current consensus?

- Is the council in agreement to do something for the future of their community?
- Is there already a climate / nature recovery / sustainability champion?
- Are you more focused on traditional council activity and responsibilities?

- Do you think there is not enough time to take on more tasks?
- But even the smallest council has to respond to planning applications...
- And you have a Duty to Biodiversity

Parish and Town Councils – have a Duty to Biodiversity

Parish and Town Councils: wide range of powers, even on climate, but few duties – **except biodiversity**

Government guidance May 2023: Parish and Town Councils must:

- consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
- agree policies and specific objectives based on their consideration.
- act to deliver their policies and achieve their objectives.

All public authorities to complete first consideration of what action to take for biodiversity by 1 Jan 2024.

Climate and Nature Action for Local Councils

- Do you know what will motivate or mobilise your community?
- Do you want to create solutions...

  with co-benefits?
- Does your Council?

Why should you become a Carbon Literate Council?

- Training provides common ground, a baseline for why action is needed
- Training provides a framework for positive discussion
- Training provides an external view of local and national action
- Training delivered by trusted organisation who understands the constraints and the potential of parish and town councils
- Training provides a tangible outcome and contributes to a county-wide strategy

Why should you become a Carbon Literate Council?

- “Carbon Literacy is about understanding what I actually need to do, where I can get help to do it, actually doing it and seeing that I’ve done it”
- One day’s worth of learning, emphasising the relevance of learning about climate change to the Council’s context
- Emphasis on the things that can be done rather than things that cannot

Why should you become a Carbon Literate Council?

- Each learner is invited to complete a short assignment and action plan at the conclusion of the training. This is submitted to The Carbon Literacy Project for certification as “Carbon Literate”.
- Part 1: Explain in your own words what we need to do to reduce carbon emissions
- Part 2: Two actions, one individual, one group (Council), with an estimate of the carbon reduction for each action

Why should you become a Carbon Literate Council?

Activity: Your best idea for community engagement

- What low carbon initiatives would be popular with local people?
- How do we actively engage the community in supporting/taking climate action?
- Does your best idea align with local concerns?
- How does it benefit the local community?
- Who do we need to get involved to make this work?

Carbon Literacy Project

Why should you become a Carbon Literate Council?

- You will have engagement tools and language to motivate or mobilise your community
- You will rethink solutions... and the co-benefits
- You will consider actions: both individual and Council
- And your Council can agree (an) action

What can Parish and Town Councils do to tackle climate change?

- Review the council's own property, landholding and operations to see if carbon emissions could be reduced.
- Consider how nature recovery might be supported on green spaces you control
- Adopt an Environmental / Procurement Policy
- Approach your local partners in the community: school, pub, shop, village hall, sports club, church and can you collaborate?

Support for Parish and Town Councils

- New NALC Climate Change resources
- NALC's Climate Emergency Network
- Warwickshire County Council: Sustainable Futures
- WALC Climate & Nature news: resources, funding, case studies
- Local Nature Partnership: Action Plans and Guidance
- SLCC: Climate Action page

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BBC vox pop
from The Carbon Literacy Project