

SOUTH WONSTON PARISH COUNCIL

COMMUNITY CLIMATE ACTION PLAN

South Wonston Parish Council has acknowledged that there is a global crisis with regard to climate and, along with many other local authorities, has declared a Climate Emergency. It also realises that we must act and put forward an action plan and, with that in mind, now is the time to take action. To put this in context our community's carbon footprint is of some concern. This can be accessed at: <https://impact-tool.org.uk/> This shows that on most levels we are above both the national and district levels. There are many factors that determine these readings but hopefully we can address some of these and in turn reduce our carbon footprint.

Having declared a climate emergency, the Parish Council decided to set up a working party and to this end have passed this task to **South Wonston Sustainability** and with them will collate information from our community, strive to show commitment to our community and take meaningful action. This is in support of Winchester City Council, which declared a climate emergency in 2019, and our neighbouring parishes.

Looking forward, all the decisions that South Wonston Parish Council makes will take into account the impact those decisions will have on Climate Change.

South Wonston Sustainability.

In the past two years, one of our residents, Nickey Turner, has set up and run South Wonston Recycling and attended the Council meetings. Once the Council had appointed a Councillor to take the Climate lead, he along with Nickey and a few other likeminded people met with Stu Mills who works for Winchester Action on Climate Change (WinACC). From this meeting in April 2022 South Wonston Sustainability was formed. This group has now been recognised as the lead for the Parish Council regarding its plans and Climate Change related actions.

Everyone in the group gives their time voluntarily. They meet on a regular basis and are learning about the enormous changes we are facing. It has set up 5 smaller action groups to cover – Energy, Biodiversity, The Circular Economy, Travel and Food. They also organise events and information for our community. Anyone resident in the Parish is welcome to join.

Energy

South Wonston Sustainability's mission is for South Wonston to be fully aligned with Winchester City Council's goal of net zero carbon emissions by 2030 and to encourage our community's resilience to climate change, particularly in relation to energy use.

We will do this by motivating and supporting residents to use energy as sustainably as possible by promoting understanding of the climate crisis, connecting them with useful resources and facilitating community actions.

To break this down into the three sections:

Actions:

1. Promote understanding of the climate crisis and the changes that need to happen to reach net zero by 2030
 - By screening films that inform and help to motivate change, for example ‘2040’ and ‘Kiss the Ground’.
 - By holding talks and other events in local venues and groups.
 - By regularly monitoring South Wonston’s carbon footprint, perhaps illustrated with a large graphic in the village and/or online.
2. Connect residents with the right resources
 - There are already so many excellent resources available that it is easy to feel overwhelmed and confused about where to start; we hope to be a local point of contact to make it easier to find the right information.
 - We plan to provide information sheets on saving energy (and money!) and on renewable energy on our website SWsustainability.co.uk, South Wonston Facebook groups and where possible, in local outlets.
3. Facilitating community actions

We intend to work with the community to develop an action plan to become far more resilient to climate shocks, with the support of the many existing climate-action networks and organizations. For example

 - It may be sensible to connect homes with PV (photo-voltaic) panels in South Wonston to form ‘micro-grids’, so individual surpluses and deficiencies are balanced out for more efficient use.
 - It may be appropriate to develop community-owned renewable energy generators e.g. the village of Swaffham Prior in Cambridgeshire has about 130 homes on a shared ground source heat pump. A community-owned solar farm would also seem very feasible.
 - It may be worth facilitating community purchasing schemes for expensive items such as heat pumps and PV panels.

As the climate crisis, technology and our group’s capacity evolve; we will develop and adapt to best meet the needs of our community and our planet.

Biodiversity

Our mission is to promote a better understanding of biodiversity in all its forms in the village and wider environment of South Wonston so that the village and all who live in it can create and support a more biodiverse environment.

We will do this by explaining what it is and why it matters; supported by practical activities, information talks and publications using a “common sense” set of examples and headings.

What is biodiversity?

Biodiversity is concerned with all the different kinds of life you find in one place. Often, these work together to support each other. We can see this in our daily lives. For example:

- Places rich in different kinds of living things, for example, gardens, lawns, woods, the air, the sea
- Places such as pavements, carpets or walls which will still have several different kinds of life in them
- Soil which is incredibly rich in living material

- We know that plants grow better when they live in “rich” biodiverse soil, important for food and farming
- We grow and feel better when we have other living things around us: our pets, other people, plants
- But we also need helpful bacteria, in and on our bodies, our gut and our skin

Actions:

We will offer suggestions and examples of where we can help make a more biodiverse world; In our village by promoting the introduction and development of things which increase local biodiversity; for example

- Bug hotels
- Swift and bat boxes
- Wildlife and wildflower verges
- Better protection for hedgehogs
- More biodiverse gardens
- More “wild areas”
- Planting more trees in our recreational areas

More generally by promoting a wider understanding of factors which affect biodiversity; for example

- Recognising that climate change can significantly reduce biodiversity
- How we can help in the garden – for example creating more biodiverse lawns, flowers and ponds
- How we can attract birds, insects, mammals in our garden and community
- Giving examples of Biodiversity in the wider world - flower verges, rivers, the sea and shoreline, the air we breathe
- Looking at how our farmers are helping - ploughing methods, crop rotation, set aside and wildlife areas, trust the tractor
- Offering support to organisations which promote biodiversity
- Looking for web sites, books and organisations which help us learn and understand
- Encourage discussions about it

Circular Economy

What is Circular Economy?

The circular economy is a model of production and consumption, which involves sharing, leasing, reusing, repairing, refurbishing and recycling existing materials and products as long as possible. In this way, the life cycle of products is extended.

Actions:

- We aim to set up a **Repair Café**, a number of swap item availability and sharing options and a way for people to “whisk” their unwanted items on maybe an active website or physical destination.
- Long term the vision is for South Wonston to have a thriving **Circular Economy** where it actively reduces, repairs and reuses. With the aforementioned being a regular occurrence and the norm for the village.

Travel

We are a rural community with limited public transport, only one local shop, one Primary School, a Social Club and no discernable employment. This therefore has the impact of being a commuter community with most people relying on their own cars for all essential requirements.

Our goal is to significantly increase the proportion of people that travel by walking, cycling and where possible use public transport.

The benefits of this include improving local health and wellbeing and improving and making a cleaner environment.

Actions:

- We recognize the need for an improved public transport system, and the improvement and provision of safe cycle routes and walkways. To reduce pollution from conventional cars and encourage and promote electric vehicles and to enable this look to install communal electric car charging points.
- Ensure that the existing footpaths and walkways in the parish are safe for pedestrians.
- Support the work of the Winchester City Council Carbon Neutral Plan.
- Try and work towards encouraging and promoting a car share scheme.

Food

Different food sources vary vastly in their environmental impact; the choices we make around what we eat are powerful.

It is important that the Parish Council lead by example to raise awareness in the community of the connection between food production/waste and climate change. The global food system is responsible for over a third of all greenhouse gas emissions.

If we all stop wasting food, we could cut greenhouse gas emissions by around 8 to 10 percent.

Policy:

- Ensuring that all Parish Council events and sponsored/funded events follow a climate friendly diet:
- Prioritising plant-based food, less meat and dairy and where meat or dairy is used it is sustainable, high welfare and locally produced.
- All food should be sustainable, seasonal and, where possible, local.
- Promote the reduction of food waste and redistribution of surplus food.

How can reducing food waste help fight climate change?

- Plan ahead and buy only what you need.
- Use your freezer.
- Be creative with leftovers i.e. peelings can be kept and fried to make crisps.
- Take an inventory. Take stock of your pantry, refrigerator and freezer before going to the store to prevent overbuying.
- Create a meal plan.
- Save and eat leftovers safely.
- Store food appropriately.
- Compost.

Ensure long term availability of community growing spaces e.g. Allotments.

To not use single use items /plastic.

Actions:

- Find out whether there is a desire in the village for a community fridge or community composting.
- Investigate the possibility of holding a small market and inviting local producers.
- Sign up to the Planet Pledge - <https://www.foodfortheplanet.org.uk/faqs/> 3 UNEP Food Waste Index Report 2021 2 <https://ourworldindata.org/greenhouse-gas-emissions-food> 1 <https://ourworldindata.org/environmental-impacts-of-food>.

In Conclusion:

South Wonston Parish Council is committed to reducing our Carbon Footprint and also achieving the district's aim to be Carbon Neutral by 2030. We will continue to educate inform and guide our parish to this end. Any new homes that seek our approval must meet the minimum requirements with regard to both construction and the final energy efficient guidelines. We would also like to draw attention to our Pavilion that has its own Ground Source Heat Pump resource and also Solar Panels which, while reducing our carbon footprint, is also giving feed back to the national grid and has been doing so since its construction.

South Wonston Parish Council accepts its responsibility and will offer leadership and lead by example.

Monday, March13, 2023