

Call to environmentalists - authors needed for one page advice sheets for local councils

As you know, a group of us decided last year that it was time to create a free and easily accessible resource for town and parish councils to use when considering climate and biodiversity action, especially now that councils have a legal duty to consider biodiversity in their actions. The 10,000 town and parish councils represent around 30 million people so the impact on carbon and sustainability is potentially huge.

The project, now called The Great Collaboration, is coming along apace and we are at the stage where we are writing content for the website. One manifestation of this is a series of one-pagers on topics we think are most likely to be of interest to local councils and voluntary groups just putting their toe into climate and biodiversity action. We have a list of 30 actions which we think councils and community groups are most likely to be interested in, and a further list of 25 which is for the advanced guard, who are already active and looking further afield or more ambitiously.

What I am hoping you won't mind me asking is - would you write a one-pager for us on any of the topics in the attached lists you might have some expertise in? It won't take too long, and it would help us immensely to populate our resource library with accurate, informed, readable and accessible information. I have also attached a blank template to give you an idea what the format is, and an example for allotments.

Just for interest, as well as the website we now also have a network of informal Zoom sessions, and are developing an online Forum, webinars on critical subjects and a team of county advisers, to let people know what is available and how to get in touch with each other. The underlying idea is for people to learn from each other, and from existing examples of what they are trying to do, as well from the central resource, so if you have any examples of where your topic is working, it would be really helpful if you could include that too.

Any questions please do get in touch with me (grindleparish@gmail.com) or Andrew our chairman (andrew.maliphant@greatcollaboration.uk).

Thank you in advance for your help

Sarah Battarbee
Content and Access Group, The Great Collaboration Project

Top 30

BUILDINGS

Community heat leak/thermal imaging detector for local loan Sarah

Bat boxes / swift boxes / hedgehogs Sarah ?

ENERGY

Energy audits

Support and information about air source heat pumps

Support for switching to renewable energy supplier

Support for domestic solar panels and for Council buildings

FOOD & WASTE

Community Fridge Sarah

Community orchards Sarah

Creating new allotments Done

Repair café

Being half a vegan or vegetarian Sarah

LAND USE & BIODIVERSITY

Composting in the community

Creating a community woodland

Tree planting Sarah

Wilded gardens Sarah

Managing verges Sarah

No mow May Sarah

Hedge laying / plant a hedge Sarah

habitats for biodiversity net gain Andrew

Wildflower meadow management Sarah?

Monitoring water courses to preserve water species Sarah

MONEY & FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Change to green banking

TRANSPORT / HOW WE GET ABOUT

How to and why you should buy an EV – Sarah

Domestic electric vehicle charging points for residents without off road parking Sarah (but still working on it)

EV car fleets for councils

Car clubs Sarah

Work to align train and bus timetables Sarah

EV bike trials Sarah

Active travel Sarah

USE YOUR VOICE

Work with neighbouring parishes – share advice / support / projects Sarah

Next 25

BUILDINGS

Eliminate paper waste Kirstin

Replace non-renewables heating systems

Passive & active cooling Kirstin

ENERGY

Ground source heat pumps

Community wind farms

River turbines

FOOD AND WASTE

Water bottle refill / water fountain Kirstin

Grey water recycling

Community shop selling local produce

Plastic free community

LAND USE AND BIODIVERSITY

Bee Squares

Electric power tools

Species monitoring/habitats for biodiversity net gain

Liaison with farmers

Bee friendly status

MONEY AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Change to green investments

Change to green insurer

Change to green web hosting

Funding

Contracting / purchasing

TRANSPORT/HOW WE GET ABOUT

Clear/promote rights of way.

Community element at railway stations

USE YOUR VOICE

Work with the district council.

Liaison with local businesses – energy generation / planting / waste

Influence on waste reduction from shops and takeaways

Template for GC one page guide

PROJECT	
LEADER / PARTNERS	
COUNCIL POWERS	
FUNDING SOURCES	
ADVICE / USEFUL CONTACTS	
Requirements:	
SKILLS	
RESOURCES	
MATERIALS	
PERMISSION	
CONTRACTORS	
Steps to Success:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. First step.. 2.
Greenhouse gas reduction/ Net Zero outcomes	
Adaptation and Resilience outcomes	
Biodiversity/ Nature Recovery/ Ecosystem outcomes	
Community/social outcomes	
Economic implications	
MAINTENANCE	

Example template

PROJECT	CREATING NEW ALLOTMENTS
LEADER / PARTNERS	Parish or town council (This example from Mitcheldean, Gamlingay and Frampton-on-Severn parish councils)
COUNCIL POWERS	Local Government Act 1972 s.124(1) (acquire land) Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908 s.26 (make
FUNDING SOURCES	Awards For All and other Big Lottery funds
ADVICE / USEFUL CONTACTS	National Allotment Society www.nsalg.org.uk Nearby council with allotments
Requirements:	
SKILLS	Negotiation, administration, cultivation
RESOURCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well-drained land with good soil. Funds to buy or lease it. • Water supply (one tap may not be sufficient for an allotment site, another option is a dip tank per about 8 plots). • Depending on location, a toilet may be essential on site – perhaps a composting toilet. <p>Need parking and access to plots for deliveries by</p>
MATERIALS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fencing • Notice board(s). • A decision needs to be made early on about whether to provide sheds on each allotment/not permit any sheds/allow people to bring their own (size/colour etc?). If the site is near to residential properties, some residents can complain that it looks an eyesore with
PERMISSION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May need planning authority approval for change of use. Permission may also be required for any hardstanding car park or communal sheds that might be seen as permanent structures. Also need to address whether livestock permitted e.g.: • chickens/pigs/bees
CONTRACTORS (or skilled volunteers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any necessary site clearance. • Erect fencing (may need rabbit/deer fence if location is • Erect access gate(s). • Contractor may be needed for mapping out and staking out the allotment site. <p>Also digging trenches to lay water pipes.</p>