



Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership

Event update from 3 November – launch of Strategic Actions Plans

Questions and responses

Water

Q: In the same way that there are initiatives to look at air, ground, solar and electric heating are there similar initiatives around to encourage or develop technology for grey water storage and use?

A: There are systems available for people to investigate and install and individuals would need to look at this for existing private properties. In terms of new, residential build, this is a D/BC planning issue. Individual Local Planning Authorities can adopt policies which support such systems and they could be installed on a large scale via new build and master planning. Some Local Plans may already request this.

Q: There are no numbers in the water action plan, surely there needs to be some view of predictions and a means of quantifying the scale of reductions needed and a view on how much each of the actions will contribute?

A: The numbers in terms of predictions for supply and demand would need to come from the water companies. In terms of targets for reduction – that could be something to look at but would also need a steer from the water companies. This could be considered, however, is unlikely to identify how the actions in the plan were directly responsible for water savings.

Q: What about engaging with residents?

A: HCCSP were keen to get the action plans prepared and they were written via engagement with key stakeholders with expertise in the areas (for example, the water companies for the water action plan.) All action plans will need to be regularly reviewed and kept as live documents and now that they have been launched HCCSP are exploring options for further engagement with a much wider audience.

There is also a resource issue, which needs to be considered by HCCSP. The partnership is trying to engage with residents by promoting public campaigns from water companies and other relevant groups as appropriate.

Q: I am disappointed not to see engagement with chalk stream groups and mention of these rare and precious water courses as a priority. Currently over abstraction and pollution is destroying these rivers and we should be doing more to protect them.

A: HCCSP engaged with local groups on the topic of chalk streams; catchment partnerships, rivers groups and the Chilterns Chalk Streams Project.

In addition, the Strategic Action Plan for Water references chalk streams as a rare habitat: 'Chalk streams are a finite global resource, 85% of which are found in



England, but only a quarter of these are classified as being in good condition by the EA’.

Biodiversity

Q: Parks and open spaces will become increasingly important as habitat and sustainable environments for our wild species and as reservoirs for those species most at risk as a result of climate change. Yet the sub group only spoke to the Lea Valley RP.

A: Neither the Lea or the Colne Valley were invited to contribute directly, however, the Lea Valley team were forwarded the email about engagement from the greenspace managers. As a result, they were emailed about meeting HCCSP at the very end of the engagement window. All subgroups invited a wide range of stakeholders to engage but in some cases invitees either declined or chose not to comment.

The intention and priority was to prepare the plans with key expertise and input from specific organisations. All of the Strategic Action Plans are living documents and HCCSP are open to receiving comments on the content.

Q: I noticed that the draft Biodiversity Action plan included a priority to create a nature reserve in each of the county’s 10 areas however, this has been lost and is now a much weaker point to create at least 5 ponds per year – HCC own land which should be turned to reserves and would be a win win situation with the public and create new Biodiversity economy and related jobs

A: The action in the draft version of the Biodiversity Strategic Action Plan around creating ten new nature reserves (one in each of the districts) wasn’t positively received by the stakeholders/experts we spoke to. One key point of concern was that a focus on creation of nature reserves could reinforce the sense that nature/biodiversity is something that exists and should be engaged with within the boundaries of specific locations. There was some preference for instead presenting biodiversity as something that should be integrated into all settings.

The other key point of concern was around the management. The point was made very clearly by stakeholders that declaration of new nature reserves doesn’t enhance biodiversity unless those sites are well-managed. Unless funding could be committed to properly managing ten new sites (which would be difficult given greenspace management’s status as a non-statutory function of local government, and the increasing budgetary pressures that local authorities face), the preference of stakeholders was to maintain focus on the proper management of the existing nature sites, and on the creation/support of habitats beyond the boundaries of nature reserves.

Some of the districts already have quite a number of nature reserves, while others have significantly fewer, thus it was felt any action indicating number and spread wasn’t suitable in this context. The action regarding ponds is in response to



comments HCCSP received around looking to protect certain specific species – in this instance, greater-crested newts.

Q: 3000 trees sounds as though it is a drop in the ocean. What else are you doing?

A: The trees referred to in the presentation are as a result of money that was won from just [one pot of funding](#). The treescape fund was loosely capped at £50k which is what was applied for and funding was allocated successfully. In future years the intention would be to apply for more but c. 3,000 trees was affordable based on what was available through the fund.

Under the Queen's Green Canopy planting, the current number of trees that have been 'pledged' in draft planting plans across Hertfordshire is about 36,000, ten times our initial target and this figure is expected to increase.

Both of these initiatives are examples of tree planting projects which HCCSP members are exploring and many more trees will be planted in the coming years through other projects.

Q: Has there been any progress with establishing habitat banks to deliver secure habitat units generated by the use of the Natural England biodiversity metric in planning? We need at least one in each LPA so that compensation is delivered close to the impact and provide a resource for people and for wildlife.

A: This fits in to the countywide approach to Biodiversity Net Gain, which is currently being finalised. HCCSP agree this is an important piece of work and one which will be informed by the Biodiversity Baseline and the Local Nature Recovery Strategy to help ensure that offset sites are strategically located in places where they will offer greatest value for nature.

Q: Have the councils committed to protecting areas of their own land which are important for biodiversity and have they committed to increasing the % of their land for natures recovery?

A: HCCSP has an action around engaging with the development of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and making sure this links to the green infrastructure strategy. Councils are already carrying out management on their greenspace portfolios which will enhance habitats and support local biodiversity. The greenspace audits will further support this by expanding areas for wildlife in Council's smaller greenspaces.

The County Council (HCC) are conducting a strategic review of its own rural estate to identify sites which would be most suitable for delivering the Sustainable Hertfordshire Strategy (including biodiversity). HCC are also conducting a review of their highway verge network to identify alternative opportunities for management which will support biodiversity. The Sustainable Hertfordshire Strategy sets a target to improve biodiversity by 20%, both on HCC's own land and across the county.

Carbon

Q: Are emissions from business and commerce in scope e.g. the rapid increase in popularity of businesses such as Deliveroo, Amazon etc., to residents

A: No, they won't. HCCSP are not including emissions from consumption. These emissions will be captured in emission reporting of the producers and distributors.

However, if this comment was in reference to transport emissions, in theory emissions (such as delivery mileage within Hertfordshire for example) that are transport related and within the UK, will be "captured" within the national data set. Thus they will be included within the Hertfordshire countywide transport total as calculated by the Government statisticians and included within the Hertfordshire-wide figure given.

Transport

Q: How will HCC and the boroughs ensure sufficient EV charging network for those householders who only have on street parking and hence cannot charge at home and have to rely on availability of nearby EV charging

A: The Districts are currently working with the County Council to input into the County's "electric vehicle charging infrastructure strategy". We are aiming to work together to facilitate an appropriate electric vehicle charging network across the county. More information on the County Council's position relating to charging infrastructure may be found [on the Hertfordshire County Council website](#).

Q: So often we see road / pavement works at locations that need cycle or walking improvements and the opportunity is missed and we see the same poor road and pavement design left at the end of repairs. When we have LCWIPs in each district can any planned road / path network improvement plans be required to conform to the LCWIP improvements that will be implemented during the repair? It is time to make transport funds maximise their sustainable transport benefits.

A: One of the key aspects of the Partnership is its opportunity to enable increased coordination between the member authorities of the Partnership. This is certainly true with regards to initiatives within the transport action plan. One of the priority themes within the transport plan relates to active travel and actions are included within that Plan that specially relate to LCWIP coordination.

Q: The EV infrastructure project is great for meeting future requirements but until the entry price of EV is reduced to make them more accessible, it's an infrastructure that can only be used by a few. How can HCCSP facilitate a widening accessibility in EV use?

A: It is true to say that the price of electric vehicles is currently relatively high although as time progresses and EV is further mainstreamed it is expected that prices may adjust downwards. As local authorities clearly we do not have great



control over the prices set by manufacturers operating in an international market. However, by working to develop joint strategies to facilitate the uptake of electric vehicles across Hertfordshire, it is hoped this will further increase their popularity and indirectly assist with economies of scale as EV becomes the vehicle of choice.

As a Partnership we are keen to see an appropriate expansion of electric vehicle charging infrastructure across the County. Hertfordshire authorities have also been working to support a private sector managed ERDF funding bid which enables taxi drivers to trial electric vehicles for up to 11 months in order to experience the benefits of an electric vehicle and thereby assist the taxi driver with determining whether or not they wish to switch to EV permanently. Some authorities such as East Herts operate/have operated electric car share clubs in their local areas. These allow people to potentially experience an EV before they purchase and to enable residents to hire an electric vehicle on an hourly basis, thereby avoiding the need to own their own car.

Some authorities have held electric vehicle car demonstrator days in order to showcase the potential of electric vehicles. These initiatives, while not directly undertaken by the Partnership itself, are being implemented by its constituent councils as part of their own climate change activities within their local areas and will assist with the desire to see an accelerated take up of electric vehicle in Hertfordshire.

Miscellaneous

Q: What does HCCSP think the role of Town and Parish Councils should be in helping to address the challenges presented by climate change?

A: Most of the partners are already actively working in their own districts with their town and parish councils. By necessity, much of the work will need to take place at a local level and the purpose of HCCSP is to have a view across Hertfordshire. The Strategic Action Plans will be implemented through actions via the individual districts and boroughs in the main and HCCSP will endeavor to engage with town and parish councils as well as the other relevant stakeholders.

Q: Councils talk about changing residents behaviour. Climate groups often talk about how they can change council behaviour change... have your group considered resistance to change in the councils.

A: Change is fundamentally what has been happening for years throughout local authorities and staff are very much attuned to a changing environment.

Authorities are organising training on sustainability for some of their staff and for others they have been able to roll out to all staff. For those who have not been able to offer to all staff they are filtering and cascading the information in order to get all staff on the same level of understanding. One of the aims is for colleagues to recognise how to make a difference in their own work area.