

How to

Declare a Climate & Ecological Emergency



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Why declare a Climate and Ecological emergency?

Declaring a climate and ecological emergency shows that your Local Council acknowledges the need to act on the causes and impacts of the climate change and biodiversity crises.

For the declaration to be meaningful, it needs to be accompanied by determined action.

Many Town & Parish Councils across Cumbria have already declared a climate emergency.

At a local level, councils can deliver a noticeable difference to people in the community.

This How To Guide provides information and resources on how to declare a climate and ecological emergency and some ideas on taking action following this.

Declaring a Climate and Ecological Emergency

One of the first steps to taking climate action is declaring a climate and ecological emergency.

In a formal meeting, the Parish/Town Council should put forward a climate and ecological emergency motion and do the following:

Use the phrasing 'declare a climate emergency' and 'declare an ecological emergency'.

Set target dates for reducing your own emissions and local climate impacts.

Set up a working group to work on climate issues and provide regular reports to the Parish/Town Council.

Work out what the Council and the community are most interested in working on.

Think about what might have the most impact, but also what the local community will want to support.

Acting on your Declaration

Once you have declared a climate and ecological emergency there are some actions that you can take to make a difference.

You might be able to do some of these straight away, others might require some planning, the key is to keep up the momentum from the word go.

CALC have a range of resources to support you to take Climate Action [here](#).

Local Council Emissions

Calculate your carbon emissions

An important **first step** is to calculate your carbon emissions to establish a baseline of where you are and where you need to go.

You can find out more and measure your carbon footprint, on the Cumbria Action for Sustainability website [here](#).

Once you have worked out your carbon footprint, there are a number of ways that you can reduce your carbon emissions.

Energy Saving

Improving the energy efficiency of your community buildings is one of the most effective ways of reducing your carbon emissions and energy costs. An energy survey can tell you the best ways to improve your energy efficiency. You could also review community building energy use, change to a green electricity tariff, or upgrade your lighting to LEDs.

If you are due a boiler replacement you can think about changing the way you heat your building, such as using infra-red heating panels or heat pumps.

Renewable Energy

Do you have a space suitable for solar PV panels? Support is available through CAfS [Solar Made Easy project](#).

For more information on what Local Councils can do to in relation to Community Energy see CALC's [Community Renewable Energy Presentation](#) and [Community Energy Support Pack](#).

Protecting Biodiversity through Land Management

A **Nature Recovery Plan** can help you to prioritise the best actions for your community.

You could change your verge mowing routine to enhance biodiversity in your local area, or you can designate sites for tree planting.

NATURE RECOVERY TOOLKIT – AIMS AND AMBITIONS

A Nature Recovery Plan should set out a medium-term plan for the provision of nature-rich habitats in our towns, villages, cities and the surrounding countryside. Residents play an important role in the vision and delivery – both as individuals through garden management (Inc. landholdings) and as communities through the creation and delivery of Nature Recovery Plans.



Recycling & Waste

Make sure that your Council is minimising waste where it can and recycling properly. If you are holding an event – consider reducing the amount of plastic used, for example, by using re-usable cups.

Within the Community

Manage Land to Enhance Nature

Encourage members of the community to think more about **nature and biodiversity**, set up bird boxes and bat boxes around the area. How about setting up a nature trail or a local wildlife safari trail for children?

Food

Have you thought about how people can grow their own food?

Make sure that those in the area know about opportunities in the community such as allotments and community growing initiatives.

Have you thought about setting up a community fridge.

Encourage people to buy seasonally or local to support businesses nearby.

Find out more about sustainable food [here](#).

Sustainable Travel

Raise awareness about sustainable travel choices.

Share information on cycle routes or community car schemes.

See [here](#) for more information on sustainable travel & tourism.

Home Energy Efficiency

FREE Energy Saving Advice is available from [Cold to Cosy Homes Cumbria](#).

Minimise Waste

Repair cafes are a great way to encourage people to mend their items rather than throw them away. There are a number of repair cafes around Cumbria. Look at [Simply Repair South Lakes](#) for what's going on in the South Lakes area.

Collaboration

Remember that there are other Local Councils who are in the same position as you, who have declared climate and ecological emergencies, or have done similar projects as you.

Connect with others to find out more about doing similar projects

CALC can support you to do this. Contact calc@cumbria.gov.uk.

Join the [Cumbria Sustainability Network](#).

Look at [NALC Climate Change Case Studies](#) for ideas and best practice.