

Management Committee

Date: 30 June 2021



Addressing the Climate Emergency in Argyll and Bute

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide the CPP Management Committee with an update of the Climate Change Working Group, which includes a recommended route for creating a strategic Climate Change Action Plan for Argyll and Bute.

2.0 Recommendations

The CPP Management Committee are asked to:

- Discuss the approach outlined in the report.
- Consider endorsing the approach contained in the report, or
- Recommend alternative approaches.

3.0 Background

Towards the end of 2019 a CPP Short Life Working Group on Climate Change was set up, and met in February 2020. The purpose of this meeting was to understand “what Community Planning partners are doing around the Climate Change agenda, and, whether there are things that we can be doing together or supporting each other to make a bigger impact?” A small number of actions were agreed upon, but were not enacted due to the advent of the Covid crisis.

Recently, the Climate Change Short Life Working Group has been revived as a CPP sub-group. It has taken a fresh look at it’s remit and potential outputs, including what actions that we could reasonably carry out, given the groups’ current lack of resources.

4.0 Detail

In the meantime, the climate crisis has worsened. In particular, two recent, and major, reports have emphasised the severity of the crisis (“Code Red for Humanity”, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change’s 6th Assessment Report <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/sixth-assessment-report-working-group-i/>) and warned that we are less well-prepared for the impacts of climate change than we were 5 years ago (The Climate Change Committee’s Independent Assessment of UK

Climate Risk sets out the priority climate change risks and opportunities for the UK <https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/independent-assessment-of-uk-climate-risk/>)

Due the nature of the climate crisis described above, the Climate Change Working Group did attempt to come up with some ideas for actions that we could reasonably carry out. Some excellent ideas were put forward, but what quickly became clear was that any programme of work developed in this way would be limited in scope and, essentially, *ad hoc*. Plucking a few projects out of the chaos of climate change was, itself, a chaotic approach when what is needed is a systematic, strategic action plan to tackle all areas of climate action, across the whole of Argyll and Bute.

As the two organisations linked above have recognised, we can cherry pick the low-hanging fruit, but sooner or later we need to tackle everything in order to meet the 1.5 degrees target.

In conclusion, the Climate Change Working Group advises that

- rather than being a short-life working group, this is actually a substantial area of work that requires a significant focus in the longer term.
- Whilst each member organisation of the CPP will have their own decarbonisation plans, etc, a more strategic approach needs to be taken to fully deliver on action to address the climate emergency in the Argyll and Bute area, across all sectors.
- With the member organisations and community input around the table, the Community Planning Partnership is, perhaps, the best vehicle to take this forward.
- Argyll and Bute lags behind other areas of the country in initiating this work, in some cases, significantly so.

It is daunting, depressing even, to recognise the scale of the project here. So, it's at least a little comforting to know that there are already areas of work that are taking place in Argyll and Bute, as the CPP Climate Change web page shows (<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/cpp-climate-change>). There is an appetite from people in Argyll and Bute for this work. Very many of these initiatives are community grass roots projects. In addition, most, if not all organisations around this table will have climate change actions plans and / or decarbonisation plans. And businesses will already be thinking about how society's transformational changes will affect their sustainability. In addition, there are many areas of research being carried out to explore the best ways to manage, and take advantage of, this change.

It is proposed that these existing work streams be included in an over-arching, strategic climate change plan for Argyll and Bute which:

- Identifies the main issues for climate change action in Argyll and Bute.
- Identifies the work already taking place in the area.

- Creates an Action Plan to tackle the identified issues.

It's likely that such an approach would consider three overarching themes:

1. Mitigation, which addresses the causes of Climate Change and is concerned with actions to reduce the emissions of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere and sequestering carbon in our natural systems.
2. Adaptation, which addresses the effects of climate change and is concerned with promoting actions to ameliorate the unavoidable impacts of extreme weather events caused by this changing climate.
3. Awareness raising of Climate Change issues and actions that we can all take to help.

This is a big piece of work. We need to think carefully about how we resource it. Because Argyll and Bute is behind other areas of Scotland in planning this work, we can use that to our advantage and look at how they have approached it. Some are addressing it through project officers (Comhairle nan Eilean Siar area), others are using new partnership arrangements (Highland Council area) and some are using consultants (Climate Ready Clyde area).

Templates for this kind of work already exist, then, with a number of areas already having been through similar processes. They are quite easy to find on the internet. Because climate change affects everyone, all the projects have undertaken extensive community consultation in order to both inform the issues and to bring everyone on board.

The process is likely to be relatively expensive, and funding, both from partner contributions and external sources, will need to be sought. Action Plans will likely feature many projects requiring their own funding sources.

5.0 Conclusions

1. We propose undertaking a strategic Action Plan process as the best, and most thorough, way to address the climate emergency in Argyll and Bute.
2. This will be a big, but vital, project.
3. There are various potential methods of delivery.
4. Funding will need to be secured, both from partner contributions and external sources.
5. The Climate Change Working Group seek the CPP Management Committee's advice and approval for proceeding.

6.0 Implications

Strategic Implications	
Consultations, Previous considerations	
Resources	
Prevention	
Equalities	

Stan Phillips, Chair, CPP Climate Change Working Group

For more information, please contact:

Stan Phillips, Operations Manager, NatureScot

stan.phillips@nature.scot

Nicola Reaney, Administrative Officer, Community Planning

Nicola.Reaney@argyll-bute.gov.uk

References

Appendices