

Climate Action Team Update

Mid Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands Area Community Planning Group – 31/01/24

Our Campbeltown-based Climate Action Team will reach the end of its funded 6 months at the end of February, with a celebratory Climate Action Activities Day on Feb 24th. The Kintyre Grows part of the project may have a small amount of funding to keep going, and we are still seeking other possible sources of funding as we would love to continue our work after such excellent beginnings.

Just to mention some highlights of the 6 months:

We co-ordinated a series of local events for Scottish Climate Week including the second Climate Action Towns workshop where local input collected was used to create a “climate/environment” addendum to add to the Campbeltown Community Action Plan 2022-2027

We initiated an Atlantic Rainforest educational project in response to the “local diversity protection” aspiration from the Climate Action Towns workshop. This began with an initial talk from a local and a visiting expert, and was followed with an open visit to Torrisdale Estate to explore both the estate’s regeneration/sustainability work and share rainforest markers that people can use to spot further remnants. It has then taken off in all directions, with the discovery by community members of rare species, visits from renowned rainforest specialists, scoping exercises regarding pilot projects for preservation and regeneration, and liaison commencing with landowners, forestry and windfarm bodies as part of this. We have bought in loupes (magnifying eyeglasses) and species guides to assist local discovery. As a result of all the above, the Kintyre Rainforest Alliance will be launched on Feb 24th and will continue as a project in its own right.

We are drafting a local Campbeltown “green map”, in both simplified paper format and using the online shareware GreenMap resource; at minimum, this will promote local circular economy resources, highlight the new community gardening sites, point to local foraging resources, and also show predicted flood risk lines for the town. The online map has the potential to expand to the larger Kintyre region, for example to include some of the Atlantic rainforest remnants which are the most appropriate to visit, as they are identified.

We researched other Scottish projects that have aimed to phase single use cups out, and reusable takeaway cups in, with a similar plan for Campbeltown, to support our cafes to encourage customer behaviour change before the single use surcharge arrives in 2025. The "Campbeltown EcoCup" will be launched in February (subsidised branded cups provided for sale at £5) and a possible future stage 2 would be adding in a cup borrowing scheme as per Yoyo cups.

In partnership with the local cinema, we launched the first Campbeltown Climate Action Film Festival, now planned to continue for the next 3 years

We supported local zero-waste/refill shop Kintyre Weigh to obtain Build-It funding from First Port for business development.

We helped run a school workshop at S3 level along with Climate Action Towns, which has led to scheduling meetings between a student representative and companies involved in distillery expansion, to find out what steps for sustainability are involved, and the opportunity to report back via the Campbeltown Courier.

We created a "Proud to be part of Campbeltown's Circular Economy" poster along with the plan of a Courier article highlighting the value of circular economy shops and resources, and the featuring of some of these at the Feb 24th event

Regarding the Kintyre Grows project specially, engagement commenced with inviting those interested to a meeting over local pumpkin soup, and a seasonable pumpkin picking day. The reclaiming of various different local sites followed, involving nurseries, schools and community groups, and the redesign of the Gateway Garden (rather an eyesore for sometime) has begun, with multiple groups signed up to grow food in raised beds. Hannah is visiting schools and community groups to support their own development of growing projects, whilst Ed has been specialising in fruit growing and composting support. The Kintyre Grows facebook group now exists for people to ask their own growing questions and receive support and advice.

We signed up "climate champions" early on to help with a two way flow of ideas and info, and generally there has been promotion of Climate Action in the community, including postering, fliering, one-to-one meetings, Climate Action stalls at local fairs, updating Kintyre Climate Action facebook page with inspiring/educational info/events from wider the climate networks and organisations, and creating a database of local contacts across several themes.

I am also just about to head off to the Flooding Resilience Conference in Glasgow next week, and wonder if anyone else from MAKI will be attending?

Best wishes
Sharyn