Climate Change Programme

Communication and Engagement Plan 2023-2025

Contents

This is a live document that will be revised periodically to outline communication and engagement activity, key messages, and stakeholder analysis.

Revision No.	Date	Changes
0.1	15/05/2023	Draft document
0.2	11/07/2023	Amends made to draft following Climate Change Committee feedback

Introduction

This plan has been created to set a framework for how Flintshire County Council's Climate Change Programme will communicate and engage with both internal and external stakeholders, informing them of the council's activities and progress, and driving behaviour change to support the reduction of its own and the wider county's greenhouse gas emissions.

This Communication and Engagement Plan will be relevant for the 2023-2025 period aligning with the Climate Change Strategy's review date. At this point it will be reviewed for effectiveness and improved for the following years leading up to the Council's net zero target of 2030 (2025-2030).

This Communication and Engagement Plan will be supported by annual action plans which will record the following:

- Stakeholder analysis
- Calendar of External Events
- Plan of Communication activities
- Plan of Engagement activities

Setting the scene

Flintshire County Council has set the 2018/19 period as its carbon footprint baseline year with emissions of 46.4 kt CO_2e (excluding land sequestration) and has a net zero carbon target of 2030 as required for the public sector under the Welsh Government.

According to the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, in the same period (2018) the carbon footprint of the county of Flintshire stood at 1,877.2 kt CO_2, meaning the Council was responsible for approximately 3% of the total county's greenhouse gas emissions.

Welsh Government have set a net zero carbon target of 2050 for Wales as a nation.

Why do we need a Communication and Engagement Plan?

Climate change's significance, broadness and basis in science presents many barriers to individuals, including complex and often mis-used terminology, fear, and feelings of powerlessness. This plan will work to make climate change more accessible for more people, breaking down barriers for action.

Carbon reduction activities within the Council will only have limited effect without significant behavioural change from internal stakeholders. Motivation, knowledge, and skills are all key to increasing participation, with leadership sustaining such activities that become routine and the norm.

Finally, "around a third of the UK's emissions are dependent on sectors that are directly shaped or influenced by local authority, practice, policy or partnerships" (UK Climate Change Committee, 2020), putting the Council in a particularly unique position to support Welsh Government's net zero carbon target of 2050.

Through well-planned, thorough, and appropriate communication and engagement activities, stakeholders will have the motivation, knowledge, and tools to take ownership for climate action and collaborate with the council influencing its own programme.

Definitions

For the purpose of this plan, the following definitions have been given.

Communication
To inform others of activities and progress relating to the council's climate change programme and improve the knowledge base of stakeholders.

Engagement
Provision of activities for the Council to motivate, improve the knowledge of and upskill all stakeholders while providing opportunities for residents to influence and shape the Council's own Climate Change programme.

Consultation
A formal process prescribed to receive stakeholder feedback on planning and documentation.

The Council
Refers to Flintshire County Council and its collective departments such as planning, housing, transport, and countryside services.

Key Messages

The below points detail key items relating to the council's position on climate change and its Climate Change Strategy which are relevant for this communication and engagement plan.

- In December 2019, the Council committed to the resource and support of a carbon reduction strategy to realise the ambition to become net zero carbon by 2030.
- In February 2022, Flintshire County Council adopted and published its first Climate Change Strategy which details how the council will decarbonise its own assets and services, and commits to actions to decarbonise beyond its own assets and services within the wider county.
- Behaviour change is key to the council and wider county meeting net zero targets of 2030 and 2050 respectively and it must be made desirable to do so.
- All key emission sources across the council of buildings, fleet, business travel, staff commuting, waste and procurement are subjected to behaviour change improvements.
- Behaviour change applies to policy and decision makers as well as what individuals do on a day-to-day basis.
- Council departments will all play a role in reducing carbon emissions internally and providing an external influence. Departmental collaboration will be a key internal focus as part of behaviour change.
- Members of the public have a variety of barriers limiting action on climate change of which the council recognises and accepts. The council will encourage and support public advocacy where possible to influence policy makers to remove such barriers.

- To meet net zero carbon, the programme will require an increase in the amount of carbon absorbed by the Council's owned and operated land. This could include creation of new planting schemes as well as restoration and management of existing woodlands, peatlands, and other habitats.

- *Emissions in Wales reduced by 40% in 2020, exceeding the target of a 27% reduction on a 1990 baseline. This is an important step on our journey towards a cleaner, greener Wales. While we must continue shouldering our global responsibility to protect our precious planet for future generations, the Welsh Government cannot work in silo to confront the climate and nature emergencies. Everybody in Wales has started to realise the benefits of change, and now is not the time to rest.*
  The 2020s must be the decade of action. Reducing emissions more in this decade than in any previous ten-year period will be an uphill challenge and we may need to take difficult choices. But, if we are to see a cleaner, stronger, and more prosperous Wales, it is a challenge we can only face together. (Julie James MS, June 2022)

Objectives

The following objectives have been set for this communication and engagement plan to achieve behaviour change from stakeholders.

- Establish the need for urgent climate action
- Identify the key behaviour changes that are required
- Identify and address stakeholder barriers such as knowledge and policy
- Provide the public a platform to engage with the programme at their convenience
- Outline communication and engagement activity for the purposes of 'keeping informed' so stakeholders understand why and how progress is being made
- Outline communication and engagement activity for the purposes of 'behaviour change' by influencing and encouraging carbon reduction behaviours while providing a platform for residents and other stakeholders to shape council strategy and action.

Guiding Principles

This section details the principles the plan will follow to ensure compliance and best practice to achieve the objectives set out in Section 3.

Core Principles

The core principles below show how the Council will take the lead in climate and carbon reduction action and inspire and support stakeholders to do the same. These effectively mirror the 4 E's (Exemplify, Engage, Enable and Encourage) as introduced in the Welsh Government's consultation document "Climate Change - A Strategy for Public Engagement & Action (2022-2026)".

Image 1 Core Principles graphic taken from FCC's Climate Change Strategy

Equality and Inclusivity

In order to comply with the Equality Act 2010, the Council will ensure communication and engagement opportunities are inclusive to all and that people with protected characteristics (age, disability, gender, reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation) do not experience any barriers to engage. This will involve utilising the FCC's Integrated Impact Assessment, inclusive images and language, as well as using different methods to reach and engage with people who are seldom heard.

Additionally, all engagement activities, including meetings, events and publicity will be available in Welsh and comply with the Welsh language standards. Links should be made with relevant Welsh medium organisations to ensure Welsh speakers are involved.

Appendix 2 further details Equality and Inclusivity methods.

Public Engagement Principles

Third Sector Support Wales has introduced "The National Principles for Public Engagement in Wales" which are a set of ten principles for engaging with the public and service users. The principles aim to guide the way engagement is carried out to make sure it is good quality, open and consistent and will be followed for all communication and engagement activities conducted by the climate change programme.

- Design your engagement to make a difference
- Invite people to get involved if they choose to
- Plan and deliver your engagement in a timely and appropriate way
- Work with relevant partner organisations
- Provide jargon free, appropriate, and understandable information
- Make it easy for people to take part
- Ensure people benefit from the experience
- Ensure the right resources and time are in place for your engagement to be effective
- Let people know the impact of their contribution
- Learn and share to improve your engagement

Governance

Plan Ownership

The individuals and groups below have been involved in the development of the communication and engagement plan to ensure it is effective and compliant to the set guiding principles as described in Section 4.

Plan Role	Name	Council Position
Advocate at Cabinet Level	Cllr David Healey	Cabinet Member for Climate Change
Review Ownership and Plan Delivery	Climate Change Committee	Climate Change Committee
Plan Author and Delivery	Climate Change Team	Climate Change Team
Policy Compliance	Fiona Mocko	Policy and Partnerships
Communication Support	Gillian Watkins	Communications Officer

Role of the Climate Change Committee

- Advocate the Climate Change Programme
- Engage with internal and external stakeholders
- Add value to the communication and engagement plan

Action Plan Monitoring

Progress of the action plan will be continuously monitored during weekly Climate Change Team meetings, informing the team of activities ahead, successes, feedback, proposed improvements, and barriers.

Communication and Engagement Plan Review

Review of this communication and engagement plan will start in April 2025 at the earliest by the Climate Change Programme Team and Climate Change Committee.

Action Plan Review

An annual review of the action plan will take place in line with the annual programme progress report. This will include a review of completed activities which will help to build an action plan for the upcoming year, working in collaboration with schools, relevant Council teams and external partners.

Stakeholders

Key Stakeholders

- Elected members
- Climate Change Committee
- Chief Officer Team
- Climate Change Officer Themed Working groups
- FCC Education & Youth (School Improvement, School Place Planning & Provision)
- FCC Housing & Communities (housing programme)
- FCC Planning, Environment and Economy (Climate Change, Countryside & Access, Biodiversity, Planning Strategy, Enterprise & Regeneration)
- FCC Streetscene & Transportation (Regulatory Services, Highway Network, Streetscene Service)
- FCC Agricultural Tenants
- FCC Partners (Aura, Newydd, Clwyd Pension Fund, etc.)
- Town & Community Councils
- Schools / Young People
- Flintshire Residents
- Flintshire Businesses
- Flintshire Landowners
- Environmental Organisations and Third Sector groups (E.g., NRW, NWWT)
- Other Public Sector organisations
- Welsh Government

Stakeholder Analysis

To enable the Council to be efficient and effective in its communication and engagement activities, a stakeholder analysis must be undertaken for each new annual action plan to understand ever-changing stakeholder interests, influences, motivators, barriers and support. This activity is recorded in the communication and engagement action plans.

The **image below** shows how stakeholders can be categorised based on their perceived Interest and Influence relating to climate change action, giving direction in how they should be addressed within this plan.

Image 3 Analysis method for determining how stakeholders should be managed based on interest and influence. Where possible, stakeholders can be encouraged to increase their interest to become Key Players or Defenders.

Such considerations to take from this analysis are;
- Frequency of activities
- Methods of communication and engagement
- Level of current knowledge and involvement (those with greater interest may well already have a strong knowledge base)

Communication, Engagement and Consultation Tools and Resources

Communication Methods		
Type	**Existing resource**	**Resource required**
Web sources	Council news webpage Infonet Council Climate Change Webpage Dedicated programme email Local Climate Adaptation Tool (LCAT)	Internal webpages for the Council employees Online public engagement page
Electronic sources	Stock imagery on Pexels.com Project photos maintained within Climate Change team	Investigate additional graphics for promotion (e.g. mascot)
Email groups	Climate Change Committee group Themed Officer Working Groups Councillor email group Various SMT email groups All staff email group Local press Periodic electronic newsletter to circa. 1k readership	Promotion of subscription to e-newsletter to keep readership updated and informed on progress and events and opportunities to engage and shape the programme.
Social media / hashtags	Corporate Twitter Countryside and Coast Twitter, Facebook & Instagram accounts Nationally recognised hashtags - #spacefornature #saynomow #climatechange #togetherforourplanet #copXX #plantmoretrees #netzero	Corporate Facebook Page Flintshire Hashtags - #greenerflintshire #decarbflints
Posters & Infographics	Noticeboards Bathroom Cubicles School Noticeboards Community Centre Noticeboards	Recycling bins Computer Lock Screen
Collaborative / Regional Authorities	Welsh Government Energy Service Public Services Board Flintshire Local Voluntary Council (FLVC) Regional and Pan-Wales Climate Officer Groups LAEP Groups	
Internal Teams	All internal team meetings including:	FCC Youth Council,

and Forums	Countryside & Access Regeneration Planning Streetscene Communications	
Routine Council Activities	Annual Council Tax Letters Streetscene Recycling Collections Payslips	

Engagement Methods		
Type	**Existing Resource**	**Resource Required**
Online Tools	WWF My Footprint iNaturalist Seek What3Words	
Existing Events, Teams and Forums	Countryside & Access Events (Wepre & Greenfield Valley) Friends Group Events School Pupil Committees (requires identifying) Regeneration Team Local Business Forums School Eco-councils Deeside Decarbonisation Forum Deeside Business Forum Community Council Events	FCC Youth Council Local Business Forums (town-based)
Routine Council Activities	E.g Kerbside recycling Collections, tree planting, litter picks, etc.	

Consultation Methods		
Type	**Existing Resource**	**Resource Required**
Online	Survey applications Events Booking Microsoft Teams / Zoom	Microsoft Forms (surveys and questionnaires)
In-person Climate Change Team	Dedicated Meetings Focus Groups	Tablets

Table 1 Breakdown of resources which FCC can use or require to enable varied and effective methods of communication, engagement, and consultation

Monitoring and Measuring Success

Measurement of greenhouse gas emissions both in the council and across the county can be used as an indicator of success for communication and engagement; however, exact baselines for county-

wide emissions do not exist, and impacts of behavioural engagement are often seen over a longer time period. More detailed and immediate methods to measure success are shown below and will be recorded in the Communication and Engagement Action Plan for each year.

- Social Media Interaction: Number of likes, comments, sharing, retweets, timeline views
- Link clicks: More active engagement usually forms part of a call to action.
- Webpages: Number of visitors to the Climate Change webpages and time retained within the pages.
- Subscription: Number of subscribers to the e-newsletter and number of opens of the newsletter.
- Surveys and Questionnaires: Number or percentage of respondents, types of responses received
- Press coverage: Where the press release has been picked up by the local newspapers for coverage. Whether the press release has been adapted, and overall tone of the newspaper's coverage (negative, neutral, positive).
- Events and Webinars: Numbers of people attending and feeling or 'vibe' of the event (negative, neutral, positive).

Resources

https://www.gov.wales/net-zero-wales
https://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/PDFFiles/Climate-Change/Climate-Change-Strategy-2022-2030.pdf
https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance
https://www.welshlanguagecommissioner.wales/public-organisations/welsh-language-standards
https://www.gov.wales/written-statement-climate-change
https://www.kotterinc.com/methodology/8-steps/
https://infonet.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Document-Repository/Chief-Executives/Communications/National-Principles-for-Public-Engagement-in-Wales.pdf
https://twitter.com/FlintshireCC?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor
https://www.facebook.com/people/Flintshire-Countryside-and-Coast/100063265507690/
https://twitter.com/FCCcountryside?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor
https://www.instagram.com/flintshirecountrysideandcoast/?hl=en
https://www.theccc.org.uk/
https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/land-use-policies-for-a-net-zero-uk/
https://www.theccc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Behaviour-change-public-engagement-and-Net-Zero-Imperial-College-London.pdf
https://lcat.uk/

Appendix 1 – Communication & Engagement Activity Plan

Month	Date	Event	Link
April		Earth Day	www.earthday.org
May	1 May > 30 May	No Mow May	
		Plantlife Every Flower Counts Survey	https://www.plantlife.org.uk/everyflowercounts/
		International Compost Awareness Week	https://www.compostfoundation.org/ICAW/ICAW-Home
		Walk to School Week	https://www.livingstreets.org.uk/products-and-services/projects/walk-to-school-week
	20-May	World Bee Day	https://www.worldbeeday.org/en/
June	29 May - 6 June	National Children's Gardening Week	https://www.childrensgardeningweek.co.uk/
	30 May - 5 June	Bike Week	https://www.cyclinguk.org/bikeweek
	05-Jun	World Environment Day	http://www.worldenvironmentday.global/
	17-Jun	Clean Air Day	https://www.cleanairday.org.uk/
		Let It Bloom	
		30 Days Wild - Wildlife Trusts	https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/30DaysWildStayWild
July	03-Jul	International Plastic Bag Free Day	https://zerowasteeurope.eu/products/plastic-bag-free-day/
	28-Jul	World Nature Conservation Day	
August	9 - 15 August	National Allotments Week	https://www.nsalg.org.uk/news-events-campaigns/national-allotments-week/
	9 - 13 August	Shop Local Week	https://www.gov.uk/government/news/eight-reasons-to-shop-local-this-week-to-help-the-high-street-bounce-back
September	22-Sep	World Car Free Day	https://www.livingstreets.org.uk/about-us/our-work-in-action/world-car-free-day
	20 - 27 Sep	Recycle Week	https://www.recyclenow.com/recycle-week-2020
October		International Walk to School Month	https://www.livingstreets.org.uk/get-involved/campaign-with-us/international-walk-to-school-month
November		Wales Climate Week	https://gov.wales/wales-climate-week
December			
January		RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch	https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/birdwatch/
February			
		Earth Hour	https://www.earthhour.org/

1.   Notable national dates to engage with

Engagement Details											
Title	Topic	Stakeholder	Stakeholder	Stakeholder	Owner/s	Objective	Details, Targets & Monitoring	Review	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
Earth Day	Engagement on various topics	Flintshire residents			MS	Promote Earth Day and activities which can help build public knowledge	Bug hunt, recycling and carbon footprint (WWF) activities with the public at both Greenfield and Wepre No targets	L:\FCC_Fileshare_02\SC HMON\Climate Change Programme\Molly\Event Reviews\Earth Day Event Review..docx	22			
World Bee Day at Wepre Park	Bees and Climate Change	Flintshire residents			MS / BT	Raise awareness of climate risks to bees	Planting activity, creating pots from newspaper and planting sunflower seeds, promoting the need for more pollinating plants. Also inform public of key climate impacts affecting bees No. public individuals engaged with	Events\Events Reviews\Bee Day Event Review. .docx		20		
Hawarden High Youth Engagement	Promotion and Knowledge Building	Schools / young people	Elected members		BT/ AE	Promote FCC's Climate work and engage with students to build knowledge on climate change and impacts on LGBT+ community	Hawarden high school students are holding an LGBT+ event and will be inviting students from other Flintshire High schools. Part of the day they are planning a market place for around 290 students aged 11-17. Engage with the students with activities, discussion sessions, questionnaires, expectations No. students engaged with (activities)	Events\Events Reviews\Hawarden High Pride.docx			5 & 27	
Denbigh and Flint Show	Promotion and Knowledge Building	Flintshire residents	Flintshire Landowners	Schools / Young People	AE / BT	Promote FCC's Climate work and engage with public to build knowledge on climate change	No. public engaged with each activity				5 &19	
Carbon Literacy	Education	Elected members			AE / BT	Devliver FCC's Carbon Literacy course to Councillors. FCC target of 80% councillors attended course.	% Councillors Trained (2023-2024 target is 80%)					
Wales Nature Week	Waiting on Theme	Flintshire Residents	Flintshire Businesses	Waiting on Theme	Waiting on Theme	Waiting on Theme	Meeting with FCC environment teams to discuss engagement					24 to 25

2.	Example spreadsheet for planning and delivery of communication and engagement activities. Coloured columns to the right indicate the dates which an activity is held. Green is allocated for completed activities (which are supported by a review document) and Red is allocated for activities yet to happen.

Appendix 2 – Ensuring Inclusion during Engagement and Consultation

Publicity - Effective publicity is needed to ensure as many people are reached as possible, including those considered 'who are seldom heard', for example, older people, younger people, people who do not speak English or Welsh, Gypsies and Travellers, people who are Deaf. Consider different communication methods to reach a wider audience.

Images and language - Use inclusive images that reflect diverse communities, and the language used will not be a barrier for people with limited understanding of English/Welsh or who have limited literacy levels. Information should be jargon free, appropriate and understandable and in different formats and languages if needed. Formats like Easy Read, British Sign Language (BSL) should be considered. Provide translations if a particular group is to be engaged (e.g. Eastern European languages).

Techniques and methods – Consider the techniques and methods used for engagement such as the location, timing and accessibility of the venue. Using only digital methods will create barriers for people who do not have access to the internet.

Events – If providing food/refreshments, consider what food and drink to provide for different diets and cultures, including seating/ tables, comfort, crockery and cutlery and drinking straws.

Equality monitoring – Including equality monitoring will help identify any issues/concerns/ feedback from specific groups, and also help identify groups that have not been involved or have not responded. Additional activities may be needed to ensure excluded groups are reached. The 2021 Census results reflect the profile of the local community. A list of useful contacts is available on the Infonet.

Welsh language – Welsh must be equal to English in everything that is done. Full details of how to comply with the Welsh language standards are available on the Infonet
Some of the relevant standards include Events and Consultation:

Events:

If more than one person is invited to a meeting, all individuals must be asked whether they would like to use the Welsh Language in the meeting. If least 10% of those invited say they wish to contribute in Welsh, a simultaneous translator must be provided.

If a meeting is arranged that is open to the public, ensure a simultaneous translation service from Welsh to English is available at the meeting and verbally inform those present (in Welsh) that they are welcome to use the Welsh Language and that a simultaneous translation service is available.

Publicity material, letters, invitations and notices for meetings open to the public should be bilingual and include the following wording 'You are welcome to contribute to the meeting in English or Welsh / 'Bydd croeso i chi gyfrannu i'r cyfarfod yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg.' The agenda and any accompanying papers or documents should also be bilingual.

If simultaneous or consecutive translation facilities are used at meetings, inform attendees (in Welsh) that translation facilities are available 'You are welcome to contribute to the meeting in English or Welsh /   'Bydd croeso i chi gyfrannu i'r cyfarfod yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg. 'An interpretation service is available/ Mae gwasanaeth cyfieithu ar gael.

Written material at a meeting that is open to the public, ensure that the material is displayed in Welsh and that Welsh language is not treated text less favourably than the English language text.

Consultation

When carrying out consultation activities relating to policy decisions, seek views on the effects that the policy decision would have on :

(a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and

(b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

Consider and seek views on, how the policy under consideration could be formulated or revised so that it would:

have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on

(a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and

(b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

not have adverse effects, or so that it would have decreased adverse effects, on

(a) opportunities for persons to use the Welsh language, and

(b) treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language..