



ACE Monmouth Action Plan:

16/10/22

ACE Partnership Aims:

ACE and Monmouth Town Council to work together to reduce the impact the town has on the climate and nature emergencies. This is the direction Wales is moving, as outlined in the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act and the Environment (Wales) Act. Together, we can help educate our community and change attitudes and behaviour.

Themes:

Throughout ACE's existence, 6 themes have rippled through its work. These formed the structure of the 2021 festival, and have since structured permanent displays, social media posts and are also fundamental to future plans. The table below illustrates how the proposed action plan falls under these themes.

The 'For Residents' column in the table below contains actions that would fall to the ACE volunteers and the 'Monmouth Town Council' column contains ACE's recommendations for the Town Council. Some of the council activities are direct actions it can take, others are lobbying and influencing activities which councillors can perform in their role as elected representatives, role models and leaders.

Assessing Progress:

One of the earliest activities for the partnership would be to take stock and benchmark where the town residents and Town Council are along the spectrum of behaving in a manner that minimises the impact on the climate and nature emergencies. For residents, this will involve market research; for the Town Council, this will involve various audits to see where improvements can be made (e.g. products used, energy efficiency, suppliers used, investment types etc). These are included in the table below, but also summarised at the end of the document. Such benchmarking activities will help refine and develop this plan further.

Timeline information is included in square brackets [] where known.

Theme	For Residents	Monmouth Town Council (MTC)
1. Energy (use and sources)	A) ACE can help residents understand their energy use and carbon emissions associated with their homes	A) As part of the overall audit, MTC should conduct energy audits of its assets and buildings it manages and uses with a view to

	<p>and lifestyles. This will include 'energy surgeries', resulting in a list of recommendations for individuals. This would be in collaboration with organisations such as NEST, insulation suppliers, low carbon energy suppliers and others to provide advice and information to residents.</p> <p>[This will start in Winter 2022.]</p> <p>B) In addition, sound-bite advice on energy efficiency issues will be drip-fed via social media and included in the next festival, highlighting local business providers as appropriate.</p> <p>[Social media activity is on-going. Festival will be in Autumn 2023.]</p> <p>C) In collaboration with Bridges, ACE will help with the 'Warm Welcome' scheme which provides a warm space for those struggling with energy bills. At these events, ACE can informally share knowledge and information</p>	<p>improving energy efficiency and moving to low emissions energy supplies and appliances.</p> <p>[See summary of audits at the end of this document]</p> <p>B) In addition, through its existing relationships and memberships it should lobby Monmouthshire County Council (MCC) and public bodies with sites in town (including Heddlu Gwent Police, Welsh Ambulance Service, South Wales Fire and Rescue Service) to do the same.</p> <p>[This work should commence immediately.]</p>
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	<p>about reducing energy usage and insulation in the home.</p> <p>[Bridges has not set a date yet, but a document is already being prepared by reviewing what other groups around the country have produced and building on that.]</p>	
<p>2. Food (local, seasonal, sustainable and healthy)</p>	<p>A) Through events, social media posts and the next festival¹, ACE will help Monmouth residents learn how to grow their own food organically, shop responsibly, eat locally and in a way that supports local farmers and the planet.</p> <p>[Social media activity is on-going]</p> <p>B) The MCC 'Sustainable Food Partnership' scheme is being developed to create food security and a sustainable food network in Monmouthshire. ACE is now part of the steering group, giving it a say in the strategic planning of the project, as well as involvement in local food projects that emerge. This could also provide access to</p>	<p>A) MTC should make use of its membership among local organisations, such as school governors, Monmouth and District Chamber of Commerce and MCC Area Committee to lobby decision making on local and sustainable food sourcing.</p> <p>[ACE will provide clearer guidelines on timings and how this could be achieved following the MCC Sustainable Food Partnership meeting on 18/10/22]</p> <p>B) MTC should promote links with "Our Food 1200" to increase the amount of suitable land around Monmouth being used for sustainable food production.</p> <p>[ACE will provide clearer guidelines on timings and how this</p>

¹ More details on events, social media posts and the next festival are provided in the last row of the table entitled 'over-arching activities'.

	<p>additional, external sources of funding.</p> <p>[First Steering Group meeting is on 18/10/22. The aim for this MCC initiative is to have projects underway by April 2023.]</p> <p>C) ACE will strengthen links with the Community Fridge, with a view to hosting joint workshops of cooking food, making use of the Kymin Kitchen which is being modified specifically to accommodate teaching. Organic food growing can be included in such activities.</p> <p>[Work will begin on this in winter 2022.]</p>	<p>could be achieved following the MCC Sustainable Food Partnership meeting.]</p>
<p>3. Waste (reuse, repair and recycle)</p>	<p>A) ACE's Repair Cafe already runs monthly out of Rockfield Community Centre. It aims to encourage people to repair and reuse items, thus reducing landfill.</p> <p>[The Repair Cafe will be relaunched in November 2022 with new marketing material to raise its profile. This will coincide with a Christmas</p>	<p>A) MTC to lobby MCC to accelerate the progress on moving from plastic recycling bags to reusable ones.</p> <p>[ACE has been notified that the recycling bags are in stock; it is just a case of rolling them out to households. MTC to contact MCC to find out when this will be.]</p>

	<p>Repair Theme tied in with a Sustainable Christmas Social Media Campaign starting on 1/11/22. It will loop in to the Bridges Toy Swap on 26/11/22]</p> <p>B) Through events, social media posts and the next festival, ACE will help Monmouth residents learn how to embrace a circular economy.</p> <p>[Social media activity is on-going]</p> <p>C) ACE will expand on the good work being done by Bridges and Monmouth Comprehensive School (MCS) around the sale of second hand uniforms. ACE would extend this to the sale or exchange of all pre-loved children's clothing.</p> <p>[ACE will work with Bridges to promote and support its Toy Swap on the 24th November. This will tie in with the Christmas Repair Cafe and Sustainable Christmas Campaign.]</p>	
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<p>4. Transport (infrastructure, journies, multi-errand, cycle, walk)</p>	<p>A) ACE's Beictown has run for 2 years, with its primary goal being to promote cycling in the local community. It has resulted in a spin off project with Osbaston School and MCC for cycling proficiency. An event for 2023 is planned.</p> <p>[Date for next Beictown to be confirmed at ACE's November meeting.]</p> <p>B) Through events, social media posts and the next festival, ACE will help Monmouth residents explore alternative options to burning fossil fuels in a car.</p> <p>[Ongoing]</p> <p>C) As part of an anti-idling campaign (see E in MTC column) volunteers from ACE, Transition and other community groups, as well as Town Councillors would conduct 'citizen science' analysis of air quality to assess progress. A baseline assessment of emissions would be made at target sites using portable air quality monitors and the process repeated periodically to</p>	<p>A) MTC should lobby MCC and the relevant bus companies in order to undertake a baseline assessment of current bus usage both for local Monmouth Town hopper buses and commuter routes to the wider area (Newport, Abergavenny, Gloucester, Bristol, Hereford etc).</p> <p>[This could start in 2023]</p> <p>B) It should consult local residents on existing transport choices and which routes might be more widely promoted and supported.</p> <p>[To follow or run in parallel with A above]</p> <p>C) Following this, it should lobby MCC to explore expanding bus routes where necessary (e.g. to ensure students can get to and from college sites in Hereford and Newport by public transport).</p> <p>[To follow A & B above]</p> <p>D) It should also explore subsidising a trial of free hopper bus transport locally in order to reduce the number of short car journeys</p>
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	<p>assess the impact of the campaign.</p> <p>[Children from a local primary school have started an anti-idling initiative. ACE will coordinate a larger project in 2023/24].</p>	<p>taken into Monmouth.</p> <p>[As part of the above work in 2023]</p> <p>E) MTC should use its links and membership of other bodies to establish an anti-idling campaign in the town, reducing vehicle emissions, particularly at sensitive sites such as schools, but also at idling hotspots such as Wonastow Industrial Estate and Monnow Street. MCC, MCS and Heddlu Gwent Police, should be included in such discussions. Subsequent enforcement by the relevant authorities (police / MCC) would reduce carbon emissions and wider air pollution with positive knock-on effects for respiratory health.</p> <p>[ACE will coordinate the project in late 2023/24]</p> <p>F) MTC should develop an appropriate car free initiative. One proposal is a Car Free day / morning / hour , possibly on a Sunday making the centre of Monmouth pedestrian. As part of this, the high street could host a farmers' market with local suppliers, or hold some other ACE</p>
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		<p>related event.</p> <p>[This should be assessed as part of MTC's plans for 2023.]</p>
<p>5. Buying (green choices)</p>	<p>A) Through events, social media posts and the next festival, ACE will help Monmouth residents examine their buying and investment behaviour, to spot green washing, and to identify companies in Monmouth with the best green credentials and also those nationally.</p> <p>[This will also tie in with the Deforestation Free Campaign and Sustainable Food Partnership.]</p>	<p>A) MTC's Finance and Policy Committee (F&PC) to review the council's existing approach to procurement and tendering in its sustainable procurement policy where weighting is given to local suppliers, and those performing well on a circular economy and low deforestation status. MCC is currently looking into where its money is held. This is a great opportunity for MTC to liaise with MCC on the process and its findings.</p> <p>[To be reviewed in January 2023.]</p> <p>B) The F&PC should extend this to its financial regulations with a view to adding such considerations to all non-tendered procurement decisions above a certain financial threshold to be discussed by the committee and proper officers.</p> <p>[This could start in 2022]</p> <p>C) The F&PC should also produce a</p>

		<p>sustainable investment policy aimed at ensuring council monies are invested not just safely, but with funds that are not engaged in fossil fuel extraction, unsustainable agricultural practices and deforestation. One step further would be to invest in funds engaged in positive environmental action including the development of sustainable energy and food production, for example.</p> <p>[This could start in 2022]</p>
<p>6. Nature (gardens, allotments & green space)</p>	<p>A) Through events, social media posts and the next festival, ACE will help Monmouth residents appreciate our existing green spaces and engage with nature, with the aim being to reduce habitat destruction and the use of pesticides.</p> <p>[Ongoing]</p> <p>B) ACE, with Transition Monmouth and MCS are planning a sustainability/nature project aimed at educating students.</p>	<p>A) MTC F&PC should review with ACE the council's existing published plans around biodiversity, pollinators and wellbeing to ensure all opportunities have been considered.</p> <p>[By April 2023].</p> <p>B) MTC should review the current management of the Town Field and adjacent hardstanding area formerly used as a skate park. This review should consider the potential for any additional planting of trees and widening of hedgerows in the field in order to improve wildlife corridors and</p>

	<p>[Timeframes tbc]</p> <p>C) ACE will partner with a Welsh charity, Size of Wales, to establish Monmouth as the first 'Deforestation Free Town', where our actions as a community do not contribute to the further destruction of the rain forests. They can provide support, resources and additional funding to community groups like ACE. Indeed, they have already successfully helped Osbaston School become deforestation free.</p> <p>[Work to start in November 2022.]</p> <p>D) ACE will work to make Monmouth a Pesticide Free Town following the example of many other towns and cities in the UK, and a model established by Pesticide Action Network (PAN).</p> <p>[To start in 2024]</p>	<p>connectivity.</p> <p>[To be concluded by August 2023 ready for planning in Autumn 2023]</p> <p>C) MTC to review the layout of the Drybridge Playground, particularly giving consideration to installing either planters or hedgerows on the Rockfield Road and Overmonnow School drive side of the playground in order to capture carbon and shield families in the playground from the effect of vehicle emissions.</p> <p>[To be concluded by August 2023 ready for planning in Autumn 2023]</p> <p>D) MTC should lobby MCC to promote the planting of 1000 trees and shrubs at suitably selected sites within Monmouth, including Vauxhall Fields and the Monnow riverside area to slow flood waters, capture carbon and enhance biodiversity.</p> <p>[To be concluded by August 2023 ready for planning in Autumn 2023]</p>
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		<p>E) In addition, it should promote pollinator friendly policies and practices in town.</p> <p>[To start now]</p>
<p>Over-arching activities</p>	<p>A) ACE plans an events program with each one focussing on different aspects of the 6 core themes. These will include film screenings, speakers, workshops, as dedicated ACE events or in partnership with other groups in the region.</p> <p>[Rolling out from February 2023, starting with the Heritage Seed Library Seed Swap.]</p> <p>B) ACE plans regular engagement events with the public at on-street town locations to talk about what they can do to change their own behaviour, each one focussing on a particular theme.</p> <p>[Rolling out from March 2023.]</p>	<p>A) MTC should perform an environmental impact assessment study, similar to MCC’s own Carbon Audit, to set a benchmark from which it can build on over the next 5 years to monitor its own success in this area.</p> <p>[To be undertaken at the earliest opportunity]</p> <p>B) Similarly, MTC should commission a carbon reduction study in order to identify areas where additional projects could be supported to reduce carbon emissions in the town.</p> <p>[At the earliest opportunity]</p> <p>C) MTC should work with local businesses and voluntary organisations including ACE, Plastic Free and Transition to implement an annual sustainable</p>

	<p>C) ACE plans a 2023 festival to cover the 6 themes.</p> <p>[Planning for this will commence in Nov 2022]</p> <p>D) ACE will post on social media regularly about issues tied into its 6 core themes, and share relevant national, county-level and local-level information and opportunities.</p> <p>[Ongoing. It will also relaunch the Facebook Group to make it more accessible as a public one, rather than a private one, as it is now.]</p> <p>E) ACE will set up an ACE Youth Group, bringing together local schools and their eco committees working on projects that are important to them.</p> <p>[This has already begun]</p> <p>F) The success of this plan and the partnership will depend on drawing in people from the wider community. We aim to do this by working closely</p>	<p>business award scheme, promoting good practice within both small and large businesses in the town. This could include categories for independent traders, food premises, manufacturing and would need to assess sustainability across a range of areas including plastic free status, energy use, circular economy etc.</p> <p>[Start planning in 2023 with rollout in 2024]</p> <p>D) MTC should lobby MCC to promote the use of the former Nelson Museum as a space for local small sustainable businesses to showcase their products.</p> <p>[To start now]</p> <p>E) Finally, to undertake the work required to enable the council to fulfil its legal obligations under the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act and the Environment (Wales) Act, it might look to create a part time role of a Community Liaison and Sustainability Officer to support it. This has worked well for other nearby councils (e.g. Chepstow and the Forest of Dean).</p>
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	<p>with other local community groups, schools, businesses and organisations. This will involve going to these groups and giving talks about ACE, plus having meetings to see where there is potential overlap.</p> <p>[This work is already underway.]</p> <p>G) To build further momentum ACE has created a Project Officer role to oversee the development of these numerous projects.</p> <p>[This is seen as an interim arrangement.]</p>	<p>[At the earliest possible date]</p>
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List of Audits for the Town Council:

The audits are an essential part of creating a baseline from which to improve. ACE suggests MTC employs one or more outside bodies to undertake the various audits. This will improve efficiency and add credibility to the process.

Energy (use and sources) - As part of the overall audit, MTC should conduct **energy audits** of its assets and buildings it manages and uses with a view to improving energy efficiency and moving to low emissions energy supplies and appliances.

Transport (infrastructure, journeys, multi-errand, cycle, walk) - MTC should lobby MCC and the relevant bus companies in order to undertake a baseline assessment

of **current bus usage** both for local Monmouth Town hopper buses and commuter routes to the wider area (Newport, Abergavenny, Gloucester, Bristol, Hereford etc).

Buying (green choices) - MTC's Finance and Policy Committee (F&PC) to review the council's existing approach to procurement and tendering in its **sustainable procurement policy** where weighting is given to local suppliers, and those performing well on a circular economy and low deforestation status.

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