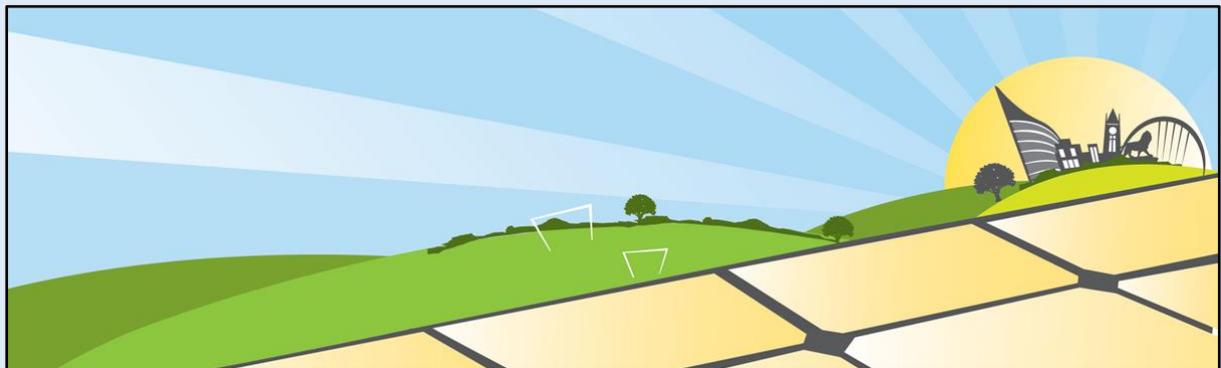


ENERGY AND HEAT

A Report to East Harptree Parish
Council by the Climate & Nature
Emergency Working Group (C&NEWG)



December 2020 (v2 March 2021)

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Non Technical Summary

This report considers how East Harptree Parish Council can help the community to use less energy and heat as part of its strategy to combat the Climate and Nature Emergency. It identifies a local transition to clean energy as an essential step to tackle the impacts of climate change.

The report sets the context for potential action within the existing powers of the parish council and identifies four areas for priority action:

- 1) Encourage and support improved household energy efficiency across the parish.
- 2) Use planning consultation powers to seek full compliance with clean energy policy and guidance.
- 3) Encourage culture change to avoid habits which promote export of GHG emissions to outside the UK.
- 4) Explore opportunities for community energy generation, storage and purchase.

Detailed recommendations are made within each priority area and set out with supporting evidence within the report. All of the recommendations are also listed at Appendix C.

The report recognises that opportunities for parish council action are constrained by lack of resources, including time and specialist expertise. It discusses the now extensive evidence of local groups acting to deliver effective clean energy to rural areas, involving parish councils, community groups and others, and provides links to examples of such initiatives. Given the technical and organisation complexities inherent in many of the recommended actions, the report strongly advises the Parish Council to seek independent and specialist advice to support its activities in this sector.

1.0 Introduction

Background

- 1.1 East Harptree Parish Council (EHPC) declared a Climate Emergency on 17 September 2019. The declaration was revised on 21 January 2020 to reflect Bath and North East Somerset (B&NES) Council's amended declaration of a Climate and Nature Emergency (C&NE). The Parish Council appointed a C&NE Working Group (C&NEWG) in October 2019.
- 1.2 The C&NEWG was set a remit to explore and report on parish wide inclusive initiatives to combat the C&NE that could be supported by the parish council. The first priority was to consider opportunities that could be taken forward by the parish council itself, followed by other initiatives which would be best delivered (for reasons of scale, location, or resources) in collaboration with other parishes and groups.
- 1.3 The C&NEWG focussed its efforts on information gathering and analysis of the key causal factors for the Climate and Nature Emergency, exploring topic areas that are particularly relevant to the parish of East Harptree. An interim report, including preliminary recommendations for action, was submitted to the Parish Council in June 2020. In its response the Parish Council identified a number of priority themes which it asked the Working Group to develop, with the aim of presenting a full C&NEWG report to the Parish Council later in 2020.
- 1.4 **This report is the final report of the C&NEWG on Energy and Heat. It summarises the key ways in which local energy use contributes to the C&NE; describes government policies to address the effects of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from such use; considers how the Parish Council can use its powers effectively to promote and encourage sustainable use of energy; reports progress on actions arising from the Interim Report; and recommends specific actions that the Parish Council can take, alone and in collaboration with others, to help to tackle the impacts of local energy use on the C&NE.**

Technical and Policy Context

Energy use

- 1.5 Use of energy represents by far the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions from human activities. Locally, energy use in buildings in Bath and North East Somerset constitutes 66% of the area's in-district carbon footprint, and the largest single portion of the household footprint¹ with the highest emissions from the wealthiest 10% of households. Reducing energy demand and increasing use of clean, non-carbon derived energy to deliver power, heat and cooling are therefore urgent priorities for tackling the C&NE.
- 1.6 It is well documented that reaching net zero in our use of energy will require reductions in emissions on a scale not previously seen; reductions that cannot be achieved without fundamental changes in personal behaviour and choices. Individual decisions and habits do not, however, operate in a vacuum. They are framed by external drivers, notably availability and cost of particular types of energy supply, personal circumstances and preferences, such as disposable income and convenience, and knowledge of alternative options.

¹ B&NES Council, Climate Emergency Study, Final Report, September 2019: Energy use in buildings: consisting of emissions from - Homes: 38% of the total, and Non-domestic buildings: 28% of the total.

- 1.7 The traditional organisation of the UK energy system also affects personal choices in energy use. Until very recently the overwhelming majority of energy was generated at regional power stations using fossil fuels (coal, then oil and gas) and distributed via a small number of big suppliers. This infrastructure distanced consumers from the environmental impacts of energy supply, and encouraged ignorance of the effects of personal energy choices. Changing energy use in any community is therefore not simply a question of rolling out clean technologies, but also of encouraging, enabling and supporting new ‘clean energy’ behaviours across society.
- 1.8 The principal ways in which rural communities generate GHG emissions from energy use are in the home and workplace. This report focuses on emissions from domestic energy use, which is fundamentally linked at a domestic scale with space heating and hot water demand. For example, heat currently accounts for some 37% of the UK’s total greenhouse gas emissions, with heat from buildings accounting for 19% of overall emissions. The Committee on Climate Change (CCC) made clear in its December 2020 report² that the most effective approach to decarbonise homes and drive down fuel bills is by encouraging behavioural changes and installing energy efficiency measures. The CCC also points out that, given the costs of replacing heating systems, and that their natural lifetime is of the order 15-20 years, all new heating systems need to be replaced by low carbon systems from the mid-2030s in order to achieve net zero by 2050.
- 1.9 These observations give a flavour of the urgency of action needed to make fundamental changes in our use of energy in order to avoid the worst effects of the C&NE³.

National Policy

- 1.10 The UK Government has previously committed to reduce overall energy consumption and dependence on fossil fuels to reach net zero carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions⁴ by 2050⁵. After a lengthy period of relative inaction, the Government has recently ramped up effort on new policy and strategies to transform the UK energy system to zero carbon. Major announcements were made in November and December 2020, including the Spending Review, Energy White Paper, National Infrastructure Strategy, the 10 Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution and the Green Homes Grant extension. These announcements are relevant to this report because they will affect how local communities and individuals are able to take action to reduce energy and heat demand. Further key policy statements, notably the long-awaited Heat and Buildings Strategy to phase out fossil-fuelled building heating during the 2020s, are still awaited.

² Development of trajectories for residential heat decarbonisation to inform the Sixth Carbon Budget; accessed at: <https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/development-of-trajectories-for-residential-heat-decarbonisation-to-inform-the-sixth-carbon-budget-element-energy/>

³ The Sixth Carbon Budget, The UK’s path to Net Zero, Committee on Climate Change December 2020: ‘Our recommended pathway requires a 78% reduction in UK territorial emissions between 1990 and 2035’. Accessed at: <https://www.theccc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/The-Sixth-Carbon-Budget-The-UKs-path-to-Net-Zero.pdf>

⁴ Greenhouse gases (CHG) expressed as the CO₂ equivalent.

⁵ The Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019, accessed at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2019/1056/made>

Local Policy

- 1.11 B&NES Council's declaration of a Climate and Nature Emergency commits to 'enable carbon neutral B&NES by 2030'⁶. Immediate Council priorities are to deliver energy efficiency improvement of the majority of existing buildings (domestic and non-domestic) and zero carbon new build; and a rapid and large-scale increase in local renewable energy generation.
- 1.12 The Council has since established a Climate Emergency, Environment and Place Partnership and, on its website, publishes simple messages for local and individual action by residents, businesses and organisations on how to save energy and be more energy efficient⁷.

Parish Council

- 1.13 Parish Councils are not energy authorities. They do not have specific powers in relation to the supply or use of energy and heat nor, other than in particular circumstances, do they have detailed knowledge to deliver energy projects. The National Association of Local Councils has, however, recently reviewed existing powers available to local councils to promote smart use of energy and heat as a driver to tackling the climate and nature emergency⁸ (**Table 1** refers).

TABLE 1 Local councils' existing powers to address or reduce climate change: Energy and Heat (source: NALC)	
Community energy (s20 of the Climate Change and Sustainable Energy Act 2006)	Councils can encourage or promote the local production and use of renewable energy, and also energy conservation, subject to the section 137 of the LG Act 1972 annual spending limit. However, restrictions currently on the ability to 'sell' the energy directly to local consumers. Also, the 's 137 expenditure limit' is a severe constraint on making capital investments in energy schemes.
Newsletters and websites (Local Government Act 1972, s.142)	Scope to use to promote good environmental practices, resource-sharing etc.
Community support and engagement (Local Government Act 1972 ss. 111, 140 etc)	Scope to encourage and support volunteers and the wider community with grants, loans, insurance protection, publicity, surveys, good-practice advice etc.
General powers (Local Government Act 1972, s 137; Localism Act 2011, ss 1–8);	Scope to spend money and/or undertake work on a wide range of beneficial activities which are not prescribed in other legislation. However, s 137 annual spending level is limited, and the General Power of Competence is exercisable by relatively few councils.

⁶ At 2017 CO₂ emission levels, Bath and North East Somerset will exceed the recommended budget available within 7 years from 2020. **To stay within the recommended carbon budget Bath and North East Somerset will, from 2020 onwards, need to achieve average mitigation rates of CO₂ from energy of around -13.1% per year.** This will require that Bath and North East Somerset rapidly transitions away from unabated fossil fuel use.

⁷ <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/climate-emergency>

⁸ For the full list of powers available to local councils to tackle climate change and NALC recommendations for changes in policies and services to enable local councils to be more effective in tackling the climate and nature emergency, accessed at <https://www.nalc.gov.uk/library/our-work/climate-change/3341-climate-change-lic-powers-sept-20/file>.

Subsidiary powers (LG Act 1972 s111);	A very useful enabling power, for a council to do anything (that are not constrained by other legislation) which is calculated to facilitate or is conducive or incidental to the discharge of any of its functions.
Permitted development rights (Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, part 12):	Councils may erect and operate, without the need to seek planning permission, a wide variety of small buildings, equipment and other structures on their land, for the purposes of any of their functions or public services. This can include a range of small 'green' developments.

- 1.14 Taken alongside the significantly intensified political investment by central government in late 2020 to make the transition from dependence on fossil fuels towards cleaner energy sources, the lead taken by B&NES Council to support action on the C&NE by local councils, and the existing powers of local councils to take action in this arena, there is a real opportunity for East Harptree parish council to promote smart use of energy and heat within the parish.

Recommendation

- 1) *As a first step, the Parish Council to dedicate a technical meeting to discussion of its aspirations for action on energy and heat use, and the best way to employ its resources to lead, encourage, support and guide the local community towards transition to a cleaner energy future.*

2.0 Progress since the C&NEWG interim report

- 2.1 The Interim Report identified potential actions to be taken forward by the Parish Council and/or investigated further. These were, in summary, to:

- transfer EHPC banking & accounts to a zero-carbon supplier;
- encourage and support improved household energy efficiency across the parish;
- use planning consultation powers to seek full compliance with clean energy policy and guidance;
- explore opportunities to secure local benefit from community clean energy generation/storage/purchase.

- 2.2 **Appendix A** records the Parish Council's response to the report's recommendations and progress on actions taken as follows:

- Parish Council accounts have been transferred to Triodos Bank, the leading global bank funding clean energy projects;
- Information to publicise energy advice services and to help consumers to use less energy is currently being prepared in draft for uploading to the new Parish Council website.

- The Parish Council identified some ideas to be taken forward in collaboration with the Chew Valley Area Forum (CVAF): it subsequently appointed two representatives of the parish to the CVAF C&NEWG.

2.3 Other Interim Report recommendations for action remain outstanding or require further detailed guidance to inform consideration by the Parish Council. These are discussed further below, or carried forward in this report as recommendations for action (see **Appendix 1**).

New and enhanced opportunities

2.4 2020 has seen fundamental and far-reaching developments in the clean energy policy environment, with a major government focus on action to tackle the C&NE as part of the economic recovery from *Covid19*. The Build Back Better approach has fast tracked unprecedented government economic stimulus packages to fund action on the C&NE. At the same time, investment, insurance and business sectors are adopting clean energy-based business models as a signal of commercial confidence that the market can, alongside government support, deliver the clean energy transition.

2.5 While the new government policies (paragraph 1.10) still lack essential details, hopefully to be added over coming months, these major changes offer direct opportunities for action at a local scale, consistent with the themes identified by the Interim Report. The following paragraphs consider how the policy changes have affected the priority themes identified by the Parish Council for further investigation by the working group, and how these issues can be addressed.

3.0 Priorities for Action

(Priority 1) Encourage and support improved household energy efficiency across the parish

3.1 There are a small number of new properties in the parish, and others consented and awaiting construction. The majority of the local housing stock is at least decades old and much of it is of traditional or historic construction. Few such properties are likely to be energy or heat efficient, and investment is needed in retrofitting measures to reduce carbon emissions and shape future domestic energy use. It must be recognised that retrofitting existing properties can be enormously expensive and highly disruptive to residents. No two properties are the same, even when of similar built fabric, and a joined-up 'whole-house' approach is needed to understand the most cost-effective priorities and actions to deal with heat and energy losses in any property.

Green Homes Grant

3.2 The Green Homes Grant (GHG), announced by the Government in August and rolled out since November 2020, represents an opportunity for the Parish Council to use its powers to encourage households to undertake works to cut domestic energy bills and reduce CO2 emissions. The GHG 'Main Scheme' offers owner occupiers and some landlords up to two thirds of the cost of specific home improvements, up to a value of £5000. For owner occupiers in receipt of benefits the GHG 'Low-income scheme' funds 100% of cost, up to £10,000. Funds are available for two types of works (primary and secondary), but the

applicant must complete the primary works before secondary works will be funded⁹. All work must be completed and signed off by 31 March 2022.

- 3.3 Although a huge step forward in providing financial incentives for whole house energy and heat management, the GHG scheme is not straightforward. Early evidence suggests that although the GHG Low Income Scheme is generous, the complexity of the application process, the short timescale for contractors to be found, and for work to be scoped and completed, means that GHG is likely to favour more affluent applicants, at least in the first instance. There are already logjams in the Main Scheme system due to shortage of accredited contractors/installers; there are reports that prices for works are inflating, and unscrupulous suppliers are targeting the unwary with offers that are not compliant with the scheme. These glitches are being worked on, but applicants will need time and knowledge to navigate the system. Some will also need support from accredited advisers on how to avoid pitfalls.

27 March 2021 UPDATE: Following review of the delivery problems described at 3.3, above, the Government has announced that the Green Homes Grant Voucher Scheme will close to new applications on 31 March 2021 at 5pm.

New funding to help lower income households to cut emissions and save money on bills will now be delivered through local authorities in England. As yet there is no update on sources of financial support for home energy retrofit for other income groups.

For further information contact:

- the Centre for Sustainable Energy [here](#) (or call 0800 082 2234), or
- Housing Services at Bath and North East Somerset Council [here](#) (or call 01225 396444).

Parish Council powers and risk

- 3.4 Local Councils have well established powers to encourage, and in some cases fund, local energy conservation projects, use of renewable energy, good environmental practices and resource-sharing. This can be done via a variety of different methods, such as using newsletters and house to house leaflet drops, the Parish Council website, convening and sponsoring meetings and training events (currently online only), and participating in promoting and even developing clean energy projects with other stakeholders.
- 3.5 As a public body the parish council has to approach any such activity with care, and ensure that actions taken and information imparted are objective, accountable and underpinned by accurate information. It would not, for example, be appropriate for the Parish Council to sponsor the promotion of any specific energy technology or incentive scheme unless it is prepared to be accountable for the information provided.

⁹ accessed at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-the-green-homes-grant-scheme#what-the-voucher-can-be-used-for>

- 3.6 Paragraphs 3.2 – 3.3 show that domestic energy refurbishment works can be complicated, even when generously funded, and incorrect advice can carry significant risk that wrong (and costly) choices are made by individuals and households. **Given the range of smart energy technologies coming forward to the domestic market, and the complexities of financial models, incentives and fuel poverty support packages already operating, the Parish Council is strongly advised to approach an independent and specialist advice service to support its activities in this sector.**

Support for Parish Councils

- 3.7 The Bristol based Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE), a national leader in this field, offers a comprehensive support package to local councils including, among other services, district wide advice and support services to parish councils^{10, 11}, bespoke parish-based events such as ‘Greening your Home’ (see Pill and Easton in Gordano Parish Council¹²) and a carbon foot-printing tool for Parish Councils¹³.

Support for householders and builders

- 3.8 CSE publishes extensive energy advice for householders, and manages the BEIS funded Futureproof service, which offers independent and impartial advice to homeowners in the West of England about how to tackle energy saving home improvements. CSE is also a partner organisation with the Cold Homes Energy Efficiency Survey Experts (C.H.E.E.S.E.) Project which, by surveying domestic heat losses, helps households to identify priorities for cost effective action to reduce energy consumption.

Recommendations

- 3.9 The Parish Council to use its powers (Table 1 refers) to:
- 2) *raise awareness by encouraging parishioners to check their energy footprint via an online carbon footprint calculator^{14,15}.*
 - 3) *encourage and support household energy and cost savings by publicising authoritative sources of information about energy and heat efficiency (from small measures to whole house retrofit), using the parish council website and other local media;*
 - 4) *seek CSE for advice on most effective ways to engage and inform the local community about opportunities for action to reduce energy demand and heat losses;*

¹⁰ B&NES Council Energy at Home Information Service, accessed at: <https://www.energyathome.org.uk/>

¹¹ CSE ran a Climate Change Action workshop for B&NES District parish councils in November 2020, details of which are available so are not repeated here. Courses are now booking for 2021: see: Local Council Climate Action days now booking for 2021: see <https://www.cse.org.uk/news/view/2516>

¹² accessed at, <https://pillandeastoningordano.org/2020/11/16/greening-your-home/>

¹³ accessed at:

<https://www.cse.org.uk/news/view/2476#:~:text=The%20tool%20will%20enable%20the,meaning%20but%20low%20impact%20activities>

¹⁴ Domestic: <https://footprint.wwf.org.uk/#/questionnaire>

¹⁵ Business: <https://www.carbontrust.com/resources/sme-carbon-footprint-calculator>

- 5) *sponsor/organise a CSE 'Greening your Home Event' tailored for East Harptree parish, to raise local awareness of, support for and encourage householder interest in whole house refurbishment;*
- 6) *subject to progress on the actions above, and as part of a coherent parish home energy/heat strategy, consider registering East Harptree interest with the CHEESE Project to participate in volunteer training to undertake thermal imaging surveys of village properties.*

(Priority 2) Use planning consultation powers to seek full compliance with clean energy policy and guidance

- 3.10 Local councils have a right to be notified of any planning applications and other development in the parish, including by statutory providers¹⁶. This right can be used to ensure that relevant local information is given to the determining authority before applications for development consents are decided. Local councils can use their representation powers to question and hold the local planning authority to account to ensure that development is permitted only if it is fully consistent with adopted clean energy policies in the Local Development Plan, including the Neighbourhood Plan. They can influence emerging Development Plan policy by reviewing and making representations on plan strategy and policy development, and use CIL funds for local infrastructure projects that benefit the community.
- 3.11 The B&NES Council partial review of the Local Plan consultation draft, issued in spring 2020, contained a raft of policies on development involving current and emerging clean energy technologies, including retrofitting existing buildings, renewable energy, solar PV and community renewable energy schemes. Even in the short time since the Parish Council commented on the draft partial revision of the Plan, government energy policy and guidance has developed, and newer technologies and business models for clean energy deployment have come to the market, with others in development. The next stage of the partial revision of the Plan is an Options consultation which is due to commence early in January 2021.
- 3.12 The Parish Council can make effective use of its representation role to interrogate the next and future consultation drafts of the Plan update and, if necessary, alert BANES Council to local opportunities in line with the increased ambition shown by national government and the business sector to support the transition to clean energy.
- 3.13 Meanwhile, until new policies are adopted, the parish council can be vigilant to press B&NES as the local planning authority to give considerable weight to the relevant adopted and emerging Local Plan policies, taking into account national policy on the clean energy transition and the government's legally binding zero carbon target by 2050.

Recommendations

- 3.14 The Parish Council to use its powers (Table 1 refers) to:

¹⁶ Including of water, sewerage, telecommunications and highways

- 7) *Using EHPC PSG planning policy checklist¹⁷, encourage B&NES Council to seek full compliance by applicants for planning permission in the parish with clean energy policy and guidance;*
- 8) *engage fully with the partial review (and future revision) of the Local Development Plan to press B&NES Council to incorporate a presumption in favour of smart energy in all relevant policy areas;*
- 9) *use the Parish Council website and other appropriate media to publicise future Development Plan consultation stages (including future Neighbourhood Plan update), with simple messages to encourage the local community to support clean energy policies¹⁸.*

(Priority 3) Encourage culture change to avoid habits which promote export of GHG emissions to outside the UK

- 3.14. Household energy usage extends beyond direct use of power and heat in the home. Energy is also expended in the manufacture of goods wherever they are produced. Increased imports of goods from countries that use high levels of fossil fuels to power manufacturing processes has balanced out the drop in UK-produced GHG emissions achieved by the transition out of fossil fuels to renewable energy sources¹⁹. Emissions produced in China, for example, contribute 8% of the UK's consumption footprint. Although major manufacturing economies, including China, are gradually moving from high-carbon fossil fuels to carbon neutral energy sources, the carbon footprint of goods produced in these regions and imported to the UK remains high and will do for the foreseeable future²⁰.
- 3.15 Although individual and householder action has little impact on global supply chains, culture change at a domestic level can mobilise significant community effort. Publicising simple and low-key messages are valid approaches for the parish council to prompt increasing awareness of the energy impacts of purchasing habits.

Recommendations

- 3.15 The Parish Council to use its powers (Table 1 refers) to:
- 10) *use the Parish Council website and other appropriate media to publicise and promote opportunities for energy saving by 'buying local' and choosing alternatives to goods made in countries that use high levels of fossil fuels to power manufacturing processes.*

¹⁷EHPC response to C&NEWG Interim report, July 2020: PSG action: compile schedule of Development Plan C&NE mitigation and adaptation policies against which planning applications to be reviewed.

¹⁸ Neighbourhood planning in a climate emergency, A guide to policy writing and community engagement January 2020 for low-carbon neighbourhood plans, 3rd Edn February 2020; accessed at <https://www.cse.org.uk/downloads/reports-and-publications/policy/planning/renewables/neighbourhood-planning-in-a-climate-emergency-feb-2020.pdf>

¹⁹ Office for National Statistics, October 2019; accessed at <https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/nationalaccounts/uksectoraccounts/compendium/economicreview/october2019/thedecouplingofeconomicgrowthfromcarbonemissionsukevidence#toc>

²⁰ Reducing UK emissions Progress Report to Parliament Committee on Climate Change June 2020: accessed at: <https://www.theccc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Reducing-UK-emissions-Progress-Report-to-Parliament-Committee-on-Cli...-002-1.pdf>

(Priority 4) Explore opportunities for community energy generation/ storage/purchase

- 3.16 Local councils have powers to encourage or promote local production and use of renewable energy. These powers are currently limited and the ability of parish councils to be active in this sector is also often constrained by lack of access to the detailed technical and professional skills needed to deliver a clean energy generating or storage project.
- 3.17 Locally to East Harptree, delivery of any renewable energy generating scheme at scale is constrained by planning policy. East Harptree lies within the Mendip Hills AONB, and the parish includes a number of Conservation Areas and designated heritage assets. Although B&NES Placemaking Plan, adopted in 2017, supports delivery of community led renewable energy projects (Policy SCR4), the policy is subject to safeguards, including there being no unacceptable impact on the significance of a designated and non- designated heritage asset. Similar safeguards are set out in the Chew Valley Neighbourhood Plan (Policy HDE6a, Sustainability – Renewable Energy). As such, other than in very special circumstances, it is unlikely that a large-scale renewable energy project in the parish, such as a wind turbine, solar PV park, or battery storage scheme would satisfy the current policy framework for development of large-scale community energy.
- 3.18 At the time of writing, and for the reasons outlined above, it seems very unlikely that there is a compelling opportunity to set up a community scale energy generating or storage project in East Harptree. The Parish Council’s effort would be better directed to working with other parishes, under the technical guidance and business administration of an established and experienced community energy group, to bring forward such a scheme.
- 3.19 There are, however, many examples of alternative approaches and new business models to secure clean community energy whereby parish councils can use existing powers to work with and support others to deliver projects that help to meet local energy and heat demand. Use of such powers ranges from simple but effective actions to encourage individual choice of clean energy, to more ambitious involvement by parish councils in the supply and purchase of power. The following points indicate how parish councils are already using such powers (see footnote links for more information):
- publicise information to encourage parishioners to switch to a clean energy supplier²¹;
 - support locally owned generating schemes (solar PV or wind turbines currently the most mature) located outside designated areas^{22,23};
 - collaborate with local authorities and groups of parishes working together to share clean energy power purchase arrangements²⁴;
 - support cooperative heat decarbonisation initiatives to help homes in rural areas to switch from burning heating oil to shared ground source heat pumps powered by solar PV with battery storage²⁵;

²¹ Various, see: <https://www.cse.org.uk/advice/advice-and-support/switching-tariffs>

²² BWCE, Marksbury Solar PV array; <http://transitionbath.org/23-mw-solar-farm-gains-planning-approval-marksbury/>

²³ Low Carbon Gordano, Moorhouse Lane Solar Array: <http://lowcarbongordano.co.uk/>

²⁴ Devon County Council & Devon Energy Collective, actions

E1.5.1.5: https://www.devonclimateemergency.org.uk/interimcarbonplan/?cat_id=2153&subsection=8_7

²⁵ Brighton and Hove Energy Services Co-operative (BHESCO); rural low carbon heat network: <https://bhesco.co.uk/firle>

- explore opportunities to deliver community funded free installation of solar panels on community buildings, businesses and schools²⁶;
- support and underwrite community energy group public engagement events²⁷.

3.20 Given the urgency of the climate crisis, and the easy proximity to proven expertise within B&NES district that would support local progress, there is considerable merit in the Parish Council exploring how it can be involved in a community energy/heat initiative. There are opportunities for meaningful action by the Parish Council now within the parish and, in partnership with others, scope for collaborative action to be taken forward via the B&NES parishes C&NEWG initiative.

3.21 **Given the technical and organisation complexities inherent in such activities, the Parish Council is strongly advised to approach an independent and specialist advice service to support its activities in this sector.** Bath and West Community Energy (BWCE) is a UK leading provider of such services, with extensive experience of supporting rural projects across SW England and beyond.

Recommendations

3.22 The Parish Council to use its powers (**Table 1** refers) to:

11) consider establishing a Parish Council community energy research group to research and advise on specific opportunities for community energy action within the parish;

12) seek authoritative guidance from BWCE on opportunities for community energy generation/ storage/purchase within East Harptree parish;

13) monitor and engage as appropriate with opportunities for collaborative action on clean energy generation, storage and purchase by other parishes and groups in the wider area.

4.0 Next steps

4.1 This report recommends actions by East Harptree Parish Council in support of its declaration of a C&NE. It deals with the imperative to address local consumption and generation of energy.

4.2 All of the actions recommended in this report are within the scope of existing parish council powers. While some are straightforward and relatively simple to deliver (via the new council website, for example), others are outside the previous experience and knowledge of the average local council. For a small rural council like East Harptree, there is a need to be inventive as well as ambitious in 'cutting its cloth' to be effective in delivering action.

²⁶ Bath and West Community Energy community funded solar: <https://www.bwce.coop/community-solar-2020/>

²⁷ Stithians Parish Council, <https://www.stithiansparishcouncil.org.uk/stithians-energy-group>

- 4.3 East Harptree Parish Council already has a challenging workload and cannot be expected to take on the tasks identified in this, and other reports by the WG, without appropriate and authoritative support
- 4.4 Taking action to reduce local energy demand and increase use of clean, non-carbon derived energy is, nonetheless, one of the most effective ways for the community to tackle the effects of the C&NE, and the parish council has a key role to play in leading, educating and promoting such action.
- 4.5 The parish council is invited to consider this report in detail; to interrogate its recommendations in the context of its ambition and resources; and (with guidance as required) to identify priorities for direct action by the parish council and for action with the support and collaboration of others.

APPENDIX A PROGRESS SINCE INTERIM REPORT – TO DEC 2020

TOPIC: Energy		East Harptree Parish Council Response (in mauve text) to Interim Report recommendations (July 2020)	
KEY TOPIC ISSUES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority: publicise & promote opportunities to improve energy efficiency of existing buildings in parish; • Hold B&NES Council and developers to account to deliver highest standards of energy efficiency and/or on-site generation in all new development; • Opportunity to reduce parish GHG emissions & harness community financial benefit by setting up renewable energy/storage schemes. 		
SUMMARY	<p>Domestic and non-domestic buildings' energy use represents 66% of B&NES carbon footprint. Tackling this will make a significant contribution to reduction of GHG emissions. Priorities are to educate community about the immediate benefits for households and climate impacts of energy saving/efficiency; alter shopping habits away from fossil fuel derived products; and explore how EH can participate in community energy generation and storage. There is already significant scope for EHPC to use its leadership role and representative powers to promote energy saving and generation in the parish and, with other parish councils, across the Chew Valley.</p>		
		SUGGESTED ACTION	
Timescale	Action	By Whom	Progress to 12/2020
Short term 0 – 6 months	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Publicise & promote energy advice services & 'top tips' to help use less energy. C&NEWG to provide information for EHPC website ASAP 2. Transfer EHPC banking & accounts to a zero-carbon supplier. In hand 3. Ensure EHPC planning consultation responses to B&NES Council demand full compliance with B&NES clean energy policy and guidance. Informal WG to be set up to inform and advise EHPC on planning issues (PSG) consisting of people with knowledge and expertise in this area 	<p>EHPC/C&NEWG</p> <p>EHPC</p> <p>EHPC/planning support working group</p>	<p>1. In hand</p> <p>2. EHPC accounts transferred to Triodos Bank</p> <p>3. Pending?</p>
Medium term 0 – 12 months	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Explore opportunities to establish a community energy strategy/group. CVAF and collaboration with other PCs *CVAF is open to anyone 5. Explore opportunities via BWCE 2020 for solar PV on community buildings and businesses. CVAF - valley wide issue 6. Explore opportunities for community purchase of smart meters. 	<p>EHPC/CNEWG/CVPCs</p> <p>EHPC/CNEWG/CVPCs</p>	<p>4. Awaiting CVAF C&NEWG progress</p> <p>5. Awaiting CVAF C&NEWG progress</p> <p>6. Undecided? See Recommendation 12</p>
Long term (> a year)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Explore opportunities for community energy generation/storage/purchase schemes with BWCE or similar partner. CVAF - valley wide issue 8. Subject to grid capacity, explore scope for EV charging as part of community transport strategy. 	<p>EHPC/CNEWG/CVPCs</p>	<p>7. Awaiting CVAF C&NEWG progress</p> <p>8. Undecided? See Recommendation 4</p>
FURTHER WORK REQUIRED			
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Consideration of best approach to communicating aims of community energy strategy, and interest in the local community. ii. Better understanding of technical options available to EH - research parish and CV opportunities with BWCE. iii. EHPC discussion with about how best to support bringing forward opportunities for parish energy transition. 	<p>EHPC/community energy group</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Final Report Recommendations 1, 4 & 12 ii. Final Report Recommendation 12 ii. Final Report Recommendation 1

Awaiting PC decision/action

PC response subject to action by others

Recommendation for EHPC action

APPENDIX B SUGGESTED AIMS OF A PARISH COMMUNITY ENERGY STRATEGY

There is ample evidence from across the UK that community-led action can create opportunities for local investment in energy and heat saving. Community action can influence individual behaviour, for example by providing accessible and up to date information about energy saving and efficiency measures, and alter perceptions of what is thought to be 'normal' energy use. Community action can also identify and bring forward local renewable energy generation, storage, purchasing and other initiatives.

Such action is most effective when properly planned, led and executed to deliver specific aims, such as:

- Reduced parish energy demand and reliance on carbon derived sources;
- United local community effort towards behaviour change by:
 - Encouraging and supporting domestic purchasing habits (eg household and clothes that avoid use in manufacture of fossil fuels);
 - Encouraging and supporting householders and businesses to switch to a green energy provider;
- Improved energy efficiency of homes and community buildings, to lower energy bills and give warmer homes;
- Incorporation of best possible low carbon energy design and infrastructure in all new build and restoration schemes;
- Generate income for community benefit.

The above aims are an indication of potential objectives that might be considered important and achievable by a parish energy group, but any community energy strategy must be founded on the ambitions, resources, and energies of the specific community, or group of communities.

For further information about how to set up and run an effective community energy group see:

<https://communityenergyengland.org/pages/what-is-community-energy>,
<https://www.regen.co.uk/area/local-and-community-energy-support/>, and
<https://www.bwce.coop/>

APPENDIX C LIST OF REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) *As a first step, the Parish Council to dedicate a technical meeting to discussion of its aspirations for action on energy and heat use, and the best way to employ its resources to lead, encourage, support and guide the local community towards transition to a cleaner energy future.*
- 2) *raise awareness by encouraging parishioners to check their energy footprint via an online carbon footprint calculator.*
- 3) *encourage and support household energy and cost savings by publicising authoritative sources of information about energy and heat efficiency (from small measures to whole house retrofit), using the parish council website and other local media, to;*
- 4) *seek CSE for advice on most effective ways to engage and inform the local community about opportunities for action to reduce energy demand and heat losses;*
- 5) *sponsor/organise a CSE 'Greening your Home Event' tailored for East Harptree parish, to raise local awareness of, support for and encourage householder interest in whole house refurbishment;*
- 6) *subject to progress on the actions above, and as part of a coherent parish home energy/heat strategy, consider registering East Harptree interest with the CHEESE Project to participate in volunteer training to undertake thermal imaging surveys of village properties;*
- 7) *Using EHPC PSG planning policy checklist, encourage B&NES Council to seek full compliance by applicants for planning permission in the parish with clean energy policy and guidance;*
- 8) *engage fully with the partial review (and future revision) of the Local Development Plan to press B&NES Council to incorporate a presumption in favour of smart energy in all relevant policy areas;*
- 9) *use the Parish Council website and other appropriate media to publicise future Development Plan consultation stages (including future Neighbourhood Plan update), with simple messages to encourage the local community to support clean energy policies.*
- 10) *use the Parish Council website and other appropriate media to publicise and promote opportunities for energy saving by 'buying local' and choosing alternatives to goods made in countries that use high levels of fossil fuels to power manufacturing processes.*
- 11) *Consider establishing a Parish Council community energy research group to research and advise on specific opportunities for community energy action within the parish;*
- 12) *Seek authoritative guidance from BWCE on opportunities for community energy generation/storage/purchase within East Harptree parish;*
- 13) *Monitor and engage as appropriate with opportunities for collaborative action on clean energy generation, storage and purchase by other parishes and groups in the wider area.*