



CLIMATE EMERGENCY

RESOURCES PACK FOR TOWN AND PARISH COUNCILS – BUILT ENVIRONMENT & ENERGY ACTIONS

Author: Fuad Al-Tawil and the ACT Built Environment & Energy group

Contact: fuad@ActionClimateTeignbridge.org

Contents:

SECTION 1.	INTRODUCTION	2
SECTION 2.	WHAT CAN YOU DO?	2
2.1	Emissions from Existing Buildings	2
2.2	Primary Energy Generation.....	3
2.3	Emissions from New Development.....	3



Section 1. Introduction

This document forms part of the ACT Town and Parish Resource Pack. Please refer to the Overview document of the resource pack.

The document aims to explain to councils what they can do address the themed area for the Built Environment & Energy.

The following is a summary of what you can do in this themed area and how ACT can support you. It may be that you have declared a Climate Emergency, or you just want some guidance on what you can do to help reduce Carbon emissions in your 'patch'.

What does the Built Environment and Energy cover?

Housing/buildings, new development and existing stock, Infrastructure including all those associated with transport, services and utilities including primary energy generation.

Section 2. What can you do?

Rather than providing a list of generic actions, we've highlighted areas and types of actions that can be undertaken. It's sensible to start with something you feel able to tackle, one which brings 'quick' wins. This not only helps with embedding a process, but more importantly, motivates you and others to do more.

The ACT Built Environment group can help you with information, guidance and signposting, once you've chosen your first initiative. Just contact us.

2.1 Emissions from Existing Buildings

In 2017, residential building emissions in Teignbridge accounted for 22.5% of total emissions, public and commercial accounted for 23.7%. These are CO₂e emissions from heating fuels and electricity, with electricity accounting for 33.7% of the total emissions from residential, public and commercial buildings. This indicates that, after transport, heating our buildings is the second largest emitter of CO₂e.

Given it is likely that these buildings are largely owned/operated by local people and organisations, it should be much easier to reduce emissions primarily from heat energy, but also electricity.

1. Identifying someone to be a focal point on all matters related to energy and CO₂e emissions from buildings. Acting as a single point of contact as well as signposting and sharing information would be some of the benefits of having such a dedicated role.
2. Establish a register of CO₂e emissions for all buildings in the parish/ward and maintain/update this annually. Make this information publicly available. You can start with the information ACT has provided on [Parish/Ward level emissions](#).
3. Promote, encourage and signpost measures to reduce CO₂e emissions from existing buildings. A [bespoke assessment](#) approach is available from [TECs](#) or you can use other similar approaches.
4. Demonstrate commitment by ensuring that the council itself has set and is meeting objectives for its own estate. That's both community owned buildings, but also councillors' own properties.
5. Develop a Carbon Reduction Plan on how existing buildings in the different types could reach Zero Carbon over time. Some of this will rely on government and industry to decarbonise Primary Energy supplies, that is energy supplied from electricity, gas, oil and coal. However, you could encourage setting ambitious targets of at least 50% reduction in building Energy consumption. This will require a combination of more insulation, greater efficiencies in how primary energy is used and most significantly our behaviour to consume less energy.



2.2 Primary Energy Generation

Given current CO₂e emissions from local and other generation plant and the objective of Zero CO₂e emissions, every new source of primary energy should itself be emitting Zero CO₂. Clearly much of this falls outside the direct control and even influence of most councils, at least in practical terms. Still, a lot has and can be achieved through effective renewable energy initiatives.

Various technologies around renewables are already available at the small-medium scale, including energy storage. Larger scale generation and longer-term storage (i.e. seasonal) are evolving quickly, but remain costly and constrained by national Energy Policy.

How and where new Low Carbon generation can be developed is subject to several technological and regulatory considerations, some easier than others. It is clear, however, that decarbonising heat (i.e. from gas, oil and coal) through electrification, will require a step change in electricity supply. This can only be achieved if renewable generation is developed locally and Local Balancing mechanisms are established. This can already be done 'behind the meter' in residential and larger buildings/sites, provided they have the appropriate location and finances.

1. Consider sourcing your own energy needs from 100% renewable generation, either by generating it yourself or via a verifiable 'green' tariff. Beware of 'greenwash' claims!
2. Undertake an area electrical energy audit to establish existing energy demand and options for decarbonising this locally. The Town/Parish council is best placed to undertake such an audit. Ask ACT on doing this for your area.
3. Pro-actively explore and ultimately be part of, a community owned Energy Service Company (**ESCO**) to deliver on decarbonising through electrification.

Establishing an ESCO is more likely to be done at District or County level, but Town and Parish Councils can identify potential sites for solar installations, battery storage facilities and wind turbines which could be integrated into a Community ESCO, as well as less obvious energy sources which may become viable in the longer term such as hydrogen production, tidal, hydro and wave power.

2.3 Emissions from New Development

Any new development, under current building standards, represents additional embodied and ongoing CO₂e emissions. Given that the objective is to reach Zero Carbon throughout the district, the most cost effective and practical action is to make these Zero Carbon by design, rather than retrofitting them later.

1. Engagement in the Local Development Plan for the district, with the view of influencing this is an important first step. You should insist on achieving Net Zero emissions for all new development as soon as possible.
2. Mitigation measures associated with new development such as woodland planting and changes in agricultural practice may be best identified and evaluated at Town/Parish level. This is also true of detailed local knowledge which can lead to the best siting of footpaths, cycle/bus routes and shops.
3. If appropriate and you have the resources, develop a Neighbourhood Plan which can complement the district's Local Plan on new developments.
4. The identification of 'real demand', location, type and numbers of new buildings are matters for the Towns and Parishes as much as it is for the District. This could be the primary motivations for Parish engagement with Neighbourhood Plans.