



Climate & Ecological Change Newsletter

Nantglyn wildflower meadow



Welcome to the second instalment of the Climate and Ecological Change Newsletter to update on Denbighshire County Council's actions to respond to the climate change and ecological emergency.

Denbighshire County Council declared a [Climate Change and Ecological Emergency](#) in July 2019. In response, by 31 March 2030, the Council aims to become a:

- Net Carbon Zero Council
- Ecologically Positive Council
- Reduce supply chain emissions by 35%

The [Climate and Ecological Change Strategy 2021-22 to 2029-30](#) tells you more about those two aims and the tasks we are going to seek to deliver to achieve our 2030 goals. This strategy was formally adopted by Council in February 2021.

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Projects and activities to meet the aims are being delivered across Denbighshire County Council. This newsletter showcases some of the excellent work, projects and interventions to reduce the Council's carbon emissions, increase council's carbon sequestration and improve biodiversity as part of Year 1 of strategy delivery and achieving our 2030 goals. Not every project is mentioned and there is some excellent and progressive work taking place in active travel and decarbonisation of our retained council housing not included here.

Carbon reduction in buildings

At **Ysgol Dinas Bran, Llangollen**, solar PV panels and LED lighting has been installed, together with upgrading heating controls to enable better zoning of temperature in classrooms. This will decrease the carbon emissions at the site by approximately 18% (72.6 tonnes per year) and bring the emissions of Ysgol Dinas Bran to a similar level as the modern Rhyl High School. The Ysgol Dinas Bran project was mentioned by MPs in Westminster at PM questions.



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At **Pavilion Theatre, Rhyl**, there is now a 19.6 kW PV array on the roof. LED lighting is being installed in the auditorium and the project includes the upgrading of the boiler and heating and ventilation system. These will decrease the carbon emissions at the site by approximately 30% (173.2 tonnes per year).



The project underway at **Betws Gwerfil Goch primary school** will show what can be achieved at sites not connected to the gas network. The oil boiler is being replaced with an Air Source Heat Pump. This is complemented by a solar PV array on roof and battery storage. The project will decrease the carbon emissions at the site by 7 tonnes per year.



Carbon reduction in transport

The pilot **Electric Taxi Scheme** gives licensed taxi drivers in Denbighshire the chance to trial a fully electric, wheelchair-accessible taxi for 30 days and view the financial and environmental benefits of zero-emission vehicles. The pilot runs until the end of March 2022 in Prestatyn and Rhyl. It was featured on the 6.30pm BBC Wales News in the lead up to COP26 in November 2021.



Electric Vehicle (EV) charge points for use by the public are going to be installed in eight council run public car parks in Denbigh, St Asaph, Llangollen, Ruthin, Prestatyn and Rhyl. They are due to be available for use in Spring 2022.



This spring we are also installing **charging points at several of our offices** and depots to support the transition of fleet vehicles to electric. The transition of 30 cars/small vans has a predicted reduction in carbon emissions of 30.74 tonnes CO₂e per year.



Carbon reduction in waste

In summer 2021 the **Reuse Hub Shop at Rhyl** waste and recycling park was opened. This helps to prevent textiles, bric a brac, furniture and small electrical items from otherwise entering the waste stream and increases the number of items being re-used instead.



Carbon reduction in supply chain

This year we have been testing approaches and running a pilot to **evaluate carbon data as part of procurement** of goods and services. This includes standard wording in tender documents about the Council's declared climate and ecological emergency and asking suppliers to submit carbon performance data at tender and annually thereafter.

Carbon sequestration

The **County Tree Nursery** created at St Asaph will providing up to 5,000 tree saplings of local provenance a year to plant across the county. This will reduce supply chain emissions by not buying trees from other part of the UK as well as contributing to carbon sequestration. Growing and planting locally sourced trees will increase biosecurity by dramatically reducing the risk of spreading disease eg ash dieback. It will also lead to ecological improvement through the tree nursery producing local provenance native trees including species such as the black poplar, which is rarer than the giant panda. There is also wildflower seed cultivation being carried out.

The County Tree Nursery site itself has been designed as a demonstration for learning, eg a sustainable drainage system (SuDS). The photo shows two polytunnels with an oak sapling in the foreground. We think this natural regeneration was assisted by a jay seen in the area.



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The Council is progressing **woodland creation** at four sites in our ownership at Rhyl, Dyserth and Ruthin. Over 14 hectares of broadleaf woodland will be created with at least 20% tree canopy coverage to be achieved, and with much of the remaining land to be put to neutral or calcareous grassland. The woodland will incorporate ponds, outdoor classrooms, seating and aspects for ecology such as bird/bat boxes and owl posts. They are forecast to sequester around 76 tonnes of carbon after 20 years.



Ecologically positive

There are now 58 managed **wildflower meadow sites** that contribute to our improved species richness ambitions. These sites, along with our 11 roadside nature reserves, contribute to approximately 20 hectares (equivalent to 30 football pitches) of native wildflower habitat in Denbighshire. After just one year of changing management at these sites, we have recorded common spotted orchids in Stryd y Brython, Ruthin, as well as hound's-tongue and toothed medick at two of our Prestatyn sites. Toothed medick had never had a confirmed record in Wales and hound's-tongue is a near-threatened plant on the GB red list and has only been recorded 18 times in Denbighshire in the last 116 years.

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This project also contributes to the Council's **Bee Friendly status**, signed up to in 2018, aimed at supporting the recovery of bees and other pollinators. The signage artwork was designed by a Denbighshire pupil.

The wildflower meadow project now includes sites in Prestatyn, Rhyl, Meliden, Rhuddlan, Dyserth, Rhewl, Denbigh, Henllan, Nantglyn, Llanferres, Llanrhaeadr, Pwllglas, Ruthin, Corwen, Cynwyd and Llangollen.



Behaviour Change

Behaviour Change underpins all our work to reduce carbon, increase carbon sequestration and improve biodiversity to reach Net Carbon Zero and Ecologically Positive Council by 2030.

We have invested in **Carbon Literacy** Training as an organisation. In total, 206 learners completed a 1-day accredited Carbon Literacy Training, including Councillors, CEO, Senior & Middle Managers and Project Managers. We also have an Introduction to Climate Change e-learn. By the end of September 2021, 252 officers had completed this e-learn module from across the council, including staff/teachers based in schools. Our commitment to staff training on this topic has been recognised by the Carbon Literacy Project. In September 2021 the Council was awarded Carbon Literate Organisation Bronze status.



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Part of the work on Behaviour Change has been regular **internal communication**. This includes intranet pages, a link on front page of intranet and corporate website, regularly featuring in daily staff emails and appearing in IT system sign in banners. Staff pledges were publicised during COP26 including this one from our CEO, providing a role model in behaviour change contributing to reaching Net Carbon Zero and Ecologically Positive Council by 2030.

**ADDEWID
STAFF
PLEDGE**

Yr wyf yn mantelcio i'r eithaf ar y cyfle o weithio o bell, dysgu'r gwersi o Covid, i leihau fy allyriadau'n sylweddol a achosir gan faint o deithio mewn car i'r swyddfa a gyrru o amgylch y Sir a thu hwnt ar gyfer cyfarfodydd.

I am maximising upon the benefits of remote working, learning the lessons from Covid, to significantly reduce my emissions caused by the amount of car travel to the office and driving around the County and beyond for meetings.

COP26
Cynhadledd Newid Hinsawdd y Cenhedloedd Unedig
United Nations Climate Change Conference

GRAHAM BOASE
Prif Weithredwr / Chief Executive

The Climate Change team offered two-hour **workshops** for Service Away Days. This is a deep dive into linking the climate and ecological emergency to service areas and discovering where staff/teams can contribute. Practical changes coming from these include Working Denbighshire Team idea: reusing reprocessed bikes from the Police to give to individuals to get to job interviews and work.

We ran an intensive **COP26 engagement campaign** during the fortnight COP26 UN Conference on Climate Change was hosted in Glasgow in November 2021, including public webinars, social Media Campaign and providing COP26 Resource.



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CHANGE
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Our online **Business Breakfast** convened speakers from North Wales Mersey Dee Business Council, The Rhug Estate, Anglesey Sea Zoo and Celtic Financial Planning Ltd.



“Good to see local authorities being proactive with businesses.”

We hosted a public webinar on Becoming a Carbon Zero Community. We were delighted to host speakers from Centre for Alternative Technology, Friends of the Earth and St Asaph Eco Churches to hear about their activities.

“..very interesting and well organised.”

“I found the overall atmosphere of the event (despite it being online), the exchange of ideas, and reports of actions in combination very uplifting and also quite reassuring - in the sense that there is a shared interest to move towards zero carbon.”

Our COP26 **social media campaign** shared information and promoted the council’s climate and ecological change work each day based on the COP26 themes. Posts included information about East Rhyl Coastal Flood Defence Scheme, Denbigh’s Passivhaus project, our EV fleet and Eco taxi trial, Ysgol Dinas Bran greening project, wildflower meadow biodiversity project, Ysgol Bro Cinmeirch COP26 video. Engagement was high and most posts reached over 1,000 viewers.

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A bilingual PDF resource with COP26 information and **educational activity ideas** was provided to schools. Schools have been sharing their work via social media and by emailing the Climate Change team. Activities included climate change posters at Ysgol Cefn Meiriadog, COP26 class discussions at Ysgol Pen Barras, and work on food miles by Ysgol Y Faenol at their local Co-op. This was picked up and shared by Co-op supermarket on Twitter.



For more information, see <https://www.denbighshire.gov.uk/en/environmental-health/climate-and-ecological-change/climate-and-ecological-change.aspx>

How to get involved: Log in or register for [Y Panel](#) on County Conversation to get involved and receive climate and ecological change updates and consultation information.