



Wins For The Climate

Summary report of Winchester District Climate Assembly 2022

Foreword

Bringing people together from across our community to discuss innovative ways we can all contribute to cutting harmful greenhouse gas emissions is a vital part of our local response to climate change.

On behalf of the Mayor of Winchester, I convened the Winchester District Young People's Climate Assembly in November 2021, following COP26 in Glasgow. Our purpose was to hear the views of young people on how Winchester District should accelerate the transition to net zero emissions¹. This Assembly of 25 passionate young individuals became the pilot for a full Winchester District Climate Assembly ahead of COP27, in which residents of all ages and backgrounds from across the District were able to take part.



The deliberative process followed at Winchester District Climate Assembly has shown again that sharing experience and working together on new and sometimes controversial ideas builds strong consensus for change.

All the Climate Assembly participants want action. They're ready to make changes in how they live. So they need our Councils, businesses and others in authority to make these changes possible. And they want change straight away so we can meet the target of net zero by 2030.

Anne Weir - Convenor, Winchester District Young People's Climate Assembly

Winchester District Climate Assembly

On 22nd October 2022, people from communities across Winchester District came together to discuss shared solutions to the joint crises of climate change and the cost of living. This is what they said.

They wanted to replace energy from fossil fuels with **renewable energy**, generated locally.

They were clear about the need for many more people to **leave their cars at home and use other ways to travel**. Above all they wanted to see better infrastructure for safe, connected walking and cycling.

There was a strong call to **shift from a throwaway to a circular economy** with shops and hubs where people can get their belongings repaired, things can

¹ Net zero emissions means achieving a balance between the greenhouse gases released into the atmosphere and those taken out.

be borrowed instead of bought, and where retailers offer refills of day-to-day consumer products.



The Assembly also wanted people to have much more **opportunity to grow their own food locally**.

The **cost of living crisis** and fairness was threaded throughout the discussions. Supporting people most affected by soaring costs and prices and tackling climate change can, and must, go hand-in-hand.

The Assembly was of one voice: everyone needs to play their part; there is no time to lose.

Francesca Singer Ince - Winchester Together For Our Planet

Introduction

What is a Climate Assembly?

Climate Assemblies engage people through a process called deliberative democracy. They hear expert evidence and, through facilitated discussions, agree on what needs to be done. The national Government commissioned [Climate Assembly UK](#) in 2020.

Why is this so important?

Annual greenhouse gas emissions in Winchester District are high: just below six tonnes per person, which is the fifth highest emissions per person of the 64 local authorities in the South East.² Winchester City Council declared a Climate Emergency in June 2019 and committed to the ambitious targets of making the Council carbon neutral by 2024, and reaching carbon neutrality across the District by 2030. Successfully achieving this target by reducing emissions to net zero will change the way every one of us lives our lives.

The Winchester District Climate Assembly was organised by Winchester Together For Our Planet³ to understand levels of local support for the different ways to reach net zero. In light of the emerging cost of living crisis, it was decided to



² For a detailed briefing of Winchester District emissions, see [here](#).

³ Members of Winchester Together For Our Planet include [Winchester Climate and Ecology Bill Alliance](#); [Environmental Alliance Project](#); [Extinction Rebellion Winchester](#); [Friends of the Earth Winchester](#); [Winchester Action on the Climate Crisis](#); and [Winchester Green Week](#).

also address the issue of a fair and affordable transition, with the aim of attracting a wider range of participants and perspectives.

Around 70 local people came to be involved and shape the vision for a net zero Winchester District. Participants were asked: what changes would they support to enable a fair transition to a cleaner, greener, more affordable District?

Overall, the participants of Winchester District Climate Assembly were clear that success in reaching net zero by 2030 can only be achieved by working together.

They identified key partners as Winchester City Council, Hampshire County Council, local businesses and community groups.

They emphasised that community buy-in is essential, and recommended promoting climate-friendly living through education.

Finally, and crucially, the participants all conveyed a real sense of urgency, and public appetite for change.

What next?

The "Wins for the Climate" described below demonstrate the changes the participants are willing to make in their own lives. It is hoped that the strong support for the Wins will empower decision-makers to take action. The Climate Assembly Steering Group from Winchester Together For Our Planet will continue to promote this positive vision for the future and work collaboratively with others to make these Wins a reality. To get involved, please email win4theclimate@gmail.com.

Wins for the Climate

The Climate Assembly participants discussed issues relating to three key topics:

- **Energy**
- **Transport**
- **Reversing our throwaway culture**

Each topic was introduced by a brief presentation from an expert speaker. In order to capture all views, participants were also invited to raise any other issues which were important to them. This generated the additional topic of:

- **Food/other**

At the end of the day, the actions were prioritised. Every participant was given seven votes to allocate as they saw fit. The votes shaped the six key 'Wins For the Climate' below. The exact vote count can be accessed [here](#).

Following the event, participants were sent an evaluation form to share their feedback with the Steering Group.

1. Increasing local supply of renewable energy (76 votes)

Energy

Participants identified the importance of significantly increasing the amount of renewable energy generated locally as we transition away from fossil fuels. Solar panels on all commercial and industrial buildings, and car parks, won the most votes for a single idea (42). The participants had a vision for “Winchester Energy” - a council-backed, community non-profit scheme.

There was also support for: partnerships for large-scale renewable energy projects; compulsory training on renewable energy systems for policy-makers; using energy from commercial sources to heat homes (eg. capturing heat from sewage wastewater); and default planning approval for renewable energy projects.

2. Enabling active travel: less vehicle traffic (75 votes)

Transport

Participants described the urgent need to bring down harmful transport emissions in the District, by having stronger action to enable walking and cycling. They welcomed road markings to slow down traffic; and envisioned green urban space with safe, connected walking and cycling routes, inspired by European cities.

They asked for: congestion charging; clean air zones; electric car clubs; low traffic neighbourhoods; e-cargo bikes for 'last mile' freight deliveries; and a pedestrianised Winchester city with “park-and-walk”.

3. Encouraging a circular economy (55 votes)

Throwaway culture Food/other

Participants were keen for business incentives (including lower rents) to support eco-conscious facilities such as zero-waste/refill shops, libraries of things, repair shops, eco-hubs, and shops selling locally produced goods.

They felt it was important to reduce reliance on individual ownership, through these and other community sharing projects. Infrastructure support such as insurance, governance, and knowledge hubs would help the sharing economy to grow. They also suggested a web-based District database for local businesses, to share information and skills.

4. Eating local seasonal food and cutting food waste (45 votes)

Food/other Throwaway culture

Participants were enthusiastic about increasing the land available for local food production, such as allotments and shared gardens.

As well as climate-friendly diets (with less meat, and less waste) they also suggested waste streams should be transformed to contribute to the circular economy. They favoured food waste collection, hot composting, re-use of animal waste, and more recycling bins in town; more free water refill sites; more information about waste reduction including a QR code on annual bin leaflets; and schemes for reusable takeaway packages or cups.

5. Greener homes and buildings (42 votes)

Energy Food/other

Participants wanted a planning requirement for all new homes to be free from fossil fuel and powered by 100% renewable energy.

They flagged that better enforcement of environmental planning was required, with easier ways for the community to raise issues. Plus, they wanted more incentives for retrofitting homes with insulation and renewable energy sources.

6. Enabling active travel: better buses (41 votes)

Transport

Participants made the point that to leave their cars at home, people need viable public transport alternatives. This means better bus services: reliability; frequency; interconnected routes; a review of fare structure; integrated ticketing; and user-friendly apps.

Other ideas were electric buses, and well-regulated services run for public benefit.

Acknowledgements and thanks

Winchester District Climate Assembly gratefully received financial support from the National Lottery Community Fund and Winchester City Council.

The Assembly was made possible thanks to the generous time, effort and support given by members of the local community. Our heartfelt thanks go to the representatives of Winchester Together For Our Planet; the speakers, facilitators and volunteers; Winchester City Council; Marwell Wildlife; the staff at Winchester Guildhall; Munch CIC for the delicious vegan catering; Party Kits CIC for reducing waste from the event; and all the participants who helped create their shared vision for Winchester District in 2030.

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Published by Winchester Action on Climate Change Ltd on behalf of Winchester Together for Our Planet
Winchester Action on Climate Change Ltd is a registered charity number 1150754 and a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales with company registration number 08013043.
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Appendices

For more about the Winchester District Climate Assembly, please click on the appropriate link below.

[Appendix 1](#)

Programme and speakers

[Appendix 2](#)

Transcript of original flipcharts, with breakdown of votes on each topic

[Appendix 3](#)

Participant diversity monitoring data

[Appendix 4](#)

Comments from residents who were unable to attend on the day

[Appendix 5](#)

Report from Winchester District Young People's Climate Assembly 2021