



**WARRINGTON**  
CLIMATE EMERGENCY COMMISSION

# Warrington Climate Emergency Commission

Teams meeting – Monday 13<sup>th</sup> May, 14:00 – 16:00

## Organisations present

- Culture Warrington
- Independent Chair (Dr David Ellis)
- University of Chester
- Warrington Borough Council
- Natural England
- Cheshire Wildlife Trust
- Warrington Chamber of Commerce
- Cheshire Wildlife Trust
- Business Declares
- Pure Leapfrog (external)
- Warrington Community Energy

## Items discussed on the agenda:

1. **Notes of previous meeting and action points not covered elsewhere on the agenda**
  - Notes were approved from the previous meeting.
2. **Retrofit for Lets – Presentation from retrofit lead for Pure Leapfrog**
  - The [Retrofit for Lets](#) scheme launched by Pure Leapfrog was presented.
  - The scheme is funded by the Northwest Net Zero Hub and will run until April 2025.
  - The commission's strategy documents were used to support Pure Leapfrog's bid for the project as the need for retrofit support for landlords in Warrington was identified.
  - Pure Leapfrog will be providing retrofit advice and assessments for landlords to help them to create a retrofit plan. 150 virtual consultations and 50 home energy assessments are on offer for free.
  - To keep the UK on track to reach net zero by 2050 it is likely that homes will be expected to achieve higher Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) ratings (C or above).
  - Landlords are facing a split incentive as the benefits of reduced energy costs generally benefit the tenant.
  - Research has shown that a retrofitted home increases property value, improves tenant loyalty, reduces energy bills (where included in the rental) and makes the property more attractive to tenants. The Retrofit for Lets scheme aims to communicate these benefits to landlords.
  - Pure Leapfrog presented the scheme at the Warrington Landlord Forum in March.
  - So far one landlord, who has connections with a letting agent, has expressed interest.
  - Some landlords did not understand the term retrofit but more understood EPC ratings. Pure Leapfrog are working to review their resourcing and marketing approach to take this into account.
  - The retrofit lead will be offering free bookable consultations at the Gateway in Warrington on Friday afternoons.
  - All members of the group were encouraged to get involved and share details of the scheme within their wider network.

- The Parity Projects housing retrofit report, investigating the opportunity for retrofit across the sub region should provide insight into the cost of the retrofit challenge locally.
- It was agreed that a representative from Enterprise Cheshire and Warrington be invited to a future meeting to present the findings of the report.
- The report will be shared once available.
- A Skills deficit for retrofitting was raised. There are currently not enough people trained within the workforce to deal with the substantial number of retrofit completions required. Supply and demand will therefore be a barrier to progress.
- Developers must also begin to design homes which will meet future retrofit requirements.
- An update on the Retrofit for Lets project was requested for 6 months' time.

### **3. Communications and engagement update**

#### **a. Newsletter**

- Commissioners were thanked for their contributions to [May's newsletter](#). The newsletter contained a more diverse locally focused content than earlier editions.
- A lead generation advert is currently live on the commission's Facebook page, promoting newsletter signups.
- The newsletter features a section asking readers to share any climate related news, stories, or opportunities via the commission's email address. Commissioners were reminded to share any content over the next few months to feature in the next issue (due out in August).
- It was agreed that the sign-up form for the newsletter be shared with Lymm Environment Action Forum (LEAF) and members with volunteers at Birchwood repair café.

#### **b. Commission's website**

- A meeting is to be organised to progress the development of the commission's website.
- To help streamline the process, the communications team have recommended that content is created before a website is created.

#### **c. Events**

- Attending events is an effective way of raising the commission's profile and encouraging sign ups.
- The 3<sup>rd</sup> leg of the women's Tour of Britain race is taking place in Warrington on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> June.
- Various stalls linked to cycling and health will be situated on the town hall lawn, with the opportunity for the commission to have a presence.
- A couple of group members confirmed that they were available to take part.
- All commissioners to share details of events where a commission presence would fit.
- It was highlighted that Culture Warrington's Green Garden Festival is taking place on the 27<sup>th</sup> August in the sky garden.
- A march 'Restore Nature Now' is taking place on the 22<sup>nd</sup> June in London. Cheshire Wildlife Trust is organising a coach for participants.
- The commission's annual Climate Emergency Forum will coincide with the UN COP. It was agreed that a working group was needed to begin planning the event programme. All to consider potential events and activities in the run up to and during the COP in November.

#### **4. Youth and schools engagement update**

- There had been progress towards developing a Warrington Public Sector Engagement Network.
- A response has been received from Bridgewater and Warrington and Halton NHS Trusts. This will be followed up by partners.
- Involvement in the public sector network will depend on the steer and focus of the group.
- On youth engagement, the planned task group meeting took place in early April to discuss how youth engagement can be improved.
- The meeting focused on developing an understanding of what youth groups existed and what schools are already involved with Eco Schools. It was determined that currently 4 schools in Warrington are involved.
- Limited budget for travel was raised as a barrier to involvement for schools in a conference, it may be more feasible for the commission to visit schools.
- The commission is keen to have a youth representative on the commission.
- 16 people have expressed interest in joining a potential sustainability network for schools so far via a communication from Culture Warrington. Education services at the council are in the process of sending a newsletter including the sign up form link to enable other schools to register their interest.
- Further discussion is needed to agree on the scope and focus of the schools' network. This was best determined by those signing up.

#### **5. Council / commission partners updates**

- Letters of support from Cheshire local authorities have been submitted for the Local Area Retrofit Accelerator (LARA) opportunity.
- As part of the council's Carbon Culture project three communities of net zero practice have been established. These are buildings and infrastructure, transport and procurement, and procurement and commissioning.
- Pure Leapfrog now have a Carbon Literacy trainer in post who will be delivering training to SME's and Parish Councils in Warrington.
- Work on the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) is progressing well. The LNRS lead for Cheshire is to be invited back in September to report progress.
- There has been continued work to progress the council's climate emergency action plan.
- At the last council climate emergency corporate group meeting there was a focus on building decarbonisation.
- An application to the Low Carbon Skills Fund for building audits has been submitted.
- Three Salix bids for the PSDS were made for the decarbonisation of leisure centres. However, progressing these schemes is reliant on match funding which is challenging.
- The scope for emissions reporting of the council will change as Livewire properties will now be included.

#### **6. Any other business**

- The commission's Terms of Reference require a review and update to include arrangements for changing the chair.
- The Warrington Race to Zero project business support programme being delivered by Groundwork was shared with commissioners.

- Commissioners discussed the links between climate adaptation and food security including potential opportunities for community gardens and vertical farming.
- The Climate Action Fund – Our Shared Future aims to involve more people in climate action. The opportunity to submit a bid is being investigated.

**Next meeting:** Our next meeting is Monday 8<sup>th</sup> July 2-4pm