

MINUTES OF CLIMATE EMERGENCY WORKING GROUP

10 DECEMBER 2020

PRESENT:

Members of the Working Group: Councillors Roberts (Chair), Brader, Mrs Crane, Picker and Roodhouse

Officers: Dan Green (Deputy Executive Director), Chris Worman (Parks and Grounds Manager) and Veronika Beckova (Democratic Services Officer)

In attendance: Representative from Transition Town Rugby

16. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 November 2020 were approved.

17. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the meeting were received from Councillors Mrs Brown and McQueen.

18. TRANSITION TOWN RUGBY – COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The working group received a presentation from Transition Town Rugby on the results of the 2020 Rugby Climate Change Survey. The presentation is annexed to the minutes.

Following the presentation, an in-depth discussion took place where members and officers shared their views. The working group agreed that it was key for the council to engage with respective community groups, provide community leadership and work collaborative moving forward.

The working group thanked the representative for attendance and informative report.

The Deputy Executive Director informed the working group that the council was in the process of consulting on its priorities and budget allocations. The findings would be presented at a future meeting.

19. POLLINATOR FRIENDLY POLICY AND TREE POLICY UPDATE

The working group considered the briefing note presented by the Parks and Grounds Manager providing an update on the Pollinator Friendly Policy and the Tree Policy and highlighting changes made following consultation with members.

The working group resolved that the Pollinator Friendly Policy and the Tree Policy be submitted for adoption to Cabinet and Full Council.

20. FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME

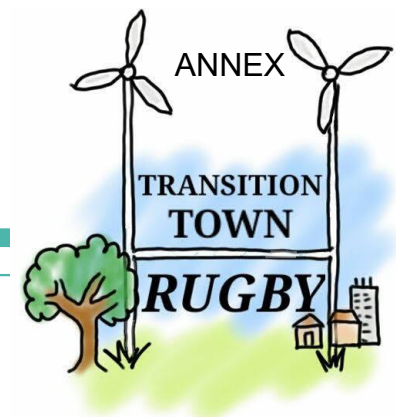
The working group considered a plan of work for future meetings. During the discussion, the following areas of focus were identified:

- Transport
- Housing
- Planning
- Land use and biodiversity
- Climate alignment in all of the council's policies
- Public engagement in relation to climate change

The next meeting of the working group was scheduled for January 2021 where the group would discuss the wider transport agenda including the electric vehicle charging project and the cycling plan.

The Deputy Executive Director provided a verbal update on the progress of the procurement of the external support. With the working group's agreement, Cllr Emma Crane was appointed to sit on the interview panel with Cllr Howard Roberts acting as a deputy.

CHAIR



Rugby Climate Survey 2020

— Transition Town Rugby —

Overview

1. Transition Town Rugby - who we are
2. Outcomes for this meeting
3. Key findings of our Climate Change Survey for Rugby
4. Potential benefits of change
5. Survey data

What is a Transition Town?

- Socials @ //transitiontownrugby.org
www.facebook.com/transitiontownrugby
- Local is key - taking the the world's huge challenges (climate change, social inequality, economic decline and so on) feel more manageable if addressed at the local scale (as one person put it, "Transition changed my relationship to the problems")
- Creating a new story for Rugby and Warwickshire
- A catalyse for all manner of new projects, enterprises and investment opportunities
- A voice for Rugby an umbrella for organisations, a facilitator of projects

Transition Town best practice & case studies

- Leicester - <https://transitionleicester.org.uk/>
 - <https://www.leicestershirehealthyschools.org.uk/food-for-life>
- St Albans <https://sustainablestalbans.org/>
 - award-winning annual Sustainability Festival
 - Solar Streets is a community solar project
 - Sustainable Market
 - Community - thermal imaging camera
- <https://warwickshireclimatealliance.org/>
- <https://districteating.com/projects/>
- Power Up North London <https://powerupnorthlondon.org/>
- Chipping Norton <https://transitionchippingnorton.org/>

Key Findings

Our Climate Change Survey was shared publicly on Facebook in Summer 2020.

It asked people about what the challenges in Rugby are, and what they would like to see happen to help our town face these challenges.

Key Findings

These findings were identified by looking at the issues that were repeatedly highlighted by respondents:

1. **Cycling**
2. **Green spaces and food growing**
3. **Sustainable housing**
4. **Public awareness of climate change issues**
5. **Community energy**



Key Findings - 1

These findings were identified by looking at the issues that were repeatedly highlighted by respondents:

1. **Cycling**

2. Green spaces and food growing
3. Sustainable housing
4. Public awareness of climate change issues
5. Community energy

- A fully joined up and properly planned network of cycle paths linking all major areas of Rugby
- Cycle lanes fully separate from road traffic, with signage and traffic controls specific to bicycles
- Much better facility for safe storage of bikes in town centre and other public areas

Key Findings - 2

These findings were identified by looking at the issues that were repeatedly highlighted by respondents:

1. Cycling
2. **Green spaces and food growing**
3. Sustainable housing
4. Public awareness of climate change issues
5. Community energy

- Provide more land for community and sustainable growing projects, including allotments
- More space given over to improving biodiversity and wildlife, use roadsides to plant trees and wildflowers
- Schemes to promote collection and distribution of locally grown, seasonal fruit and vegetables from small scale growers as well as farmers

Key Findings - 3

These findings were identified by looking at the issues that were repeatedly highlighted by respondents:

1. Cycling
2. Green spaces and food growing
- 3. Sustainable housing**
4. Public awareness of climate change issues
5. Community energy

- Stop building on greenfield sites
- Incentivise/promote/subsidise energy efficiency improvements in existing housing stock, such as insulation, draft-proofing, solar water heating, grey-water reuse, etc
- If new housing must be built, mandate that these should be carbon-neutral, low energy, with plenty of green community spaces

Key Findings - 4

These findings were identified by looking at the issues that were repeatedly highlighted by respondents:

1. Cycling
2. Green spaces and food growing
3. Sustainable housing
- 4. Public awareness of climate change issues**
5. Community energy

- Awareness campaign throughout Rugby on existing and future facilities and incentives specific to tackling climate change issues
- Greater encouragement and involvement of community groups

Key Findings - 5

These findings were identified by looking at the issues that were repeatedly highlighted by respondents:

1. Cycling
2. Green spaces and food growing
3. Sustainable housing
4. Public awareness of climate change issues
5. **Community energy**

- Form a Renewable Energy Co-op to raise money through community shares to install solar on medical, social, sports and community buildings
- District heating via community heat pumps or from Cemex works, getting the economies of scale benefit

Benefits to Rugby

Besides tackling the major issue of Climate Change, introducing these changes could bring major benefits for the people of Rugby, and the town itself:

- ❖ Reduce traffic congestion, and therefore carbon emissions
- ❖ Improve public access to town centre, helping local businesses there
- ❖ Encourage better physical and mental health of people in Rugby
- ❖ Efficient housing saves people money
- ❖ Make Rugby a more attractive place to live
- ❖ More green areas acts as a carbon dioxide sink, reducing air pollution
- ❖ Increased biodiversity and organic growing practises improves the natural resilience of the area, as climate change becomes more widely felt
- ❖ Centralised selling of locally grown produce keeps money local rather than going to big chain supermarkets

Survey Data

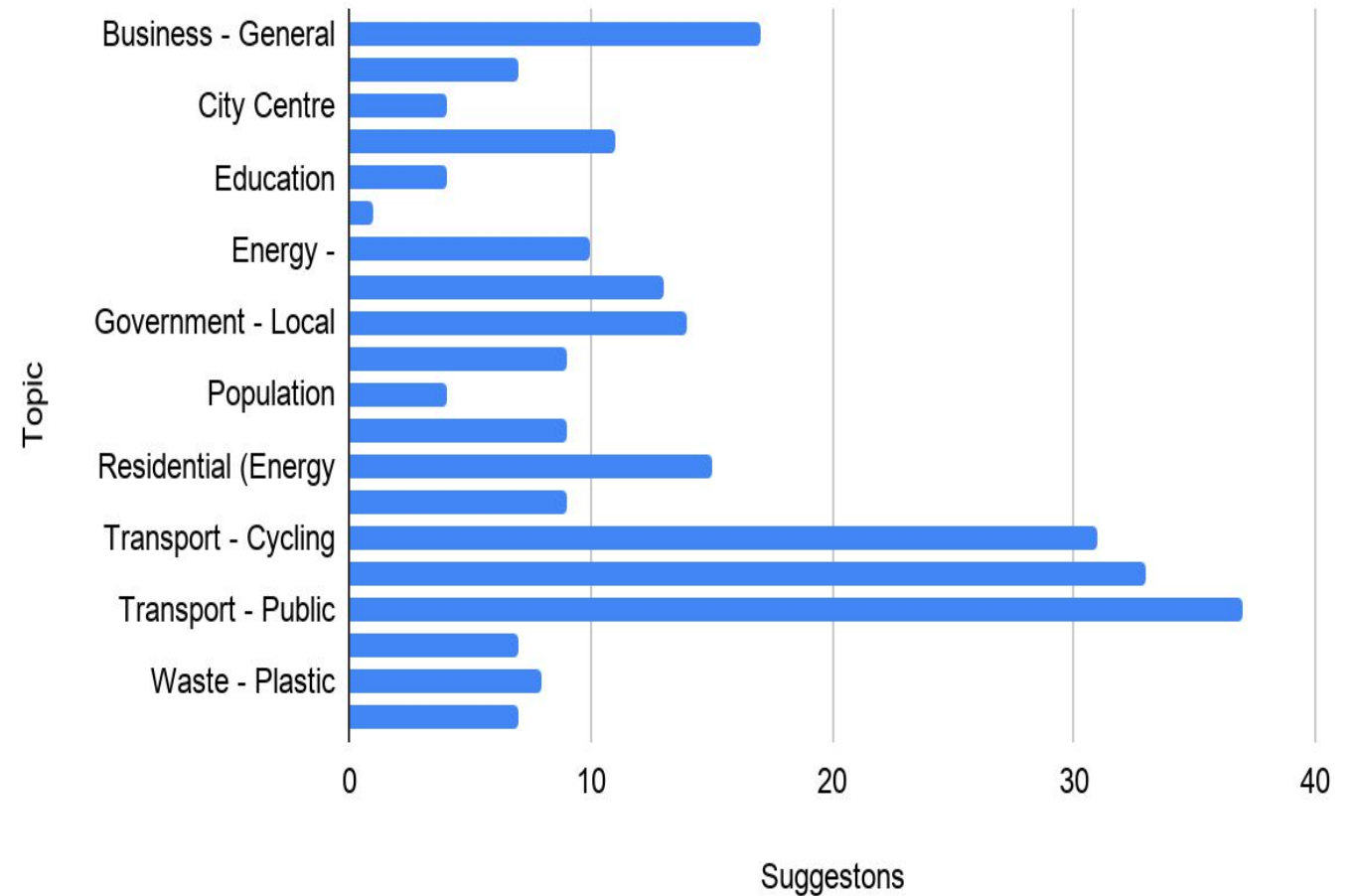
1. Current views on Rugby
 2. Transportation
 3. Food & Farming
 4. Built Environment
 5. Natural Environment
 6. Health
 7. Energy
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Current Views

What are the three key sustainability challenges in Rugby?



Key Sustainability Challenges



Current Views - summary

Overwhelming issue is transportation

- Huge potential to improve cycle infrastructure
- Bold steps to reduce car use
- Support for greener forms of public transport

In the future we want to see serious conservation and expansion of green spaces

Reduce new buildings and invest in improving existing housing.

These steps could lead to a revitalisation of the town centre

Transport

Transport

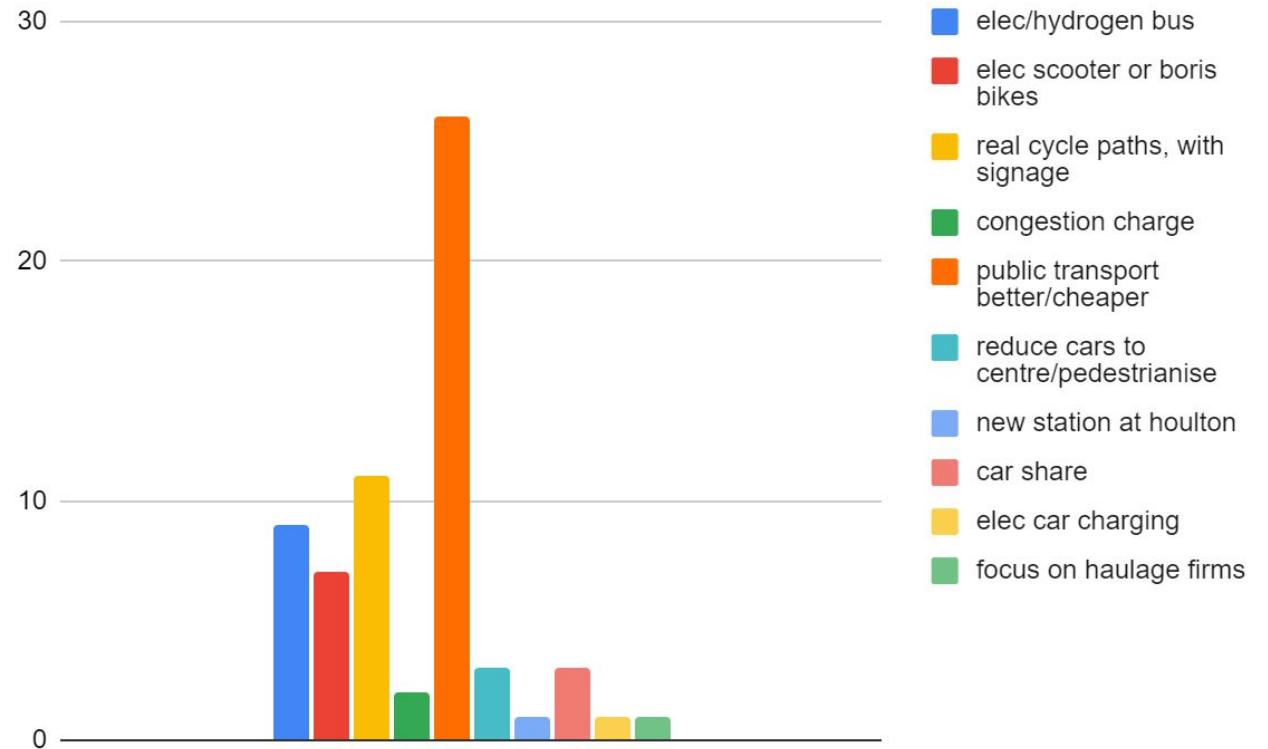
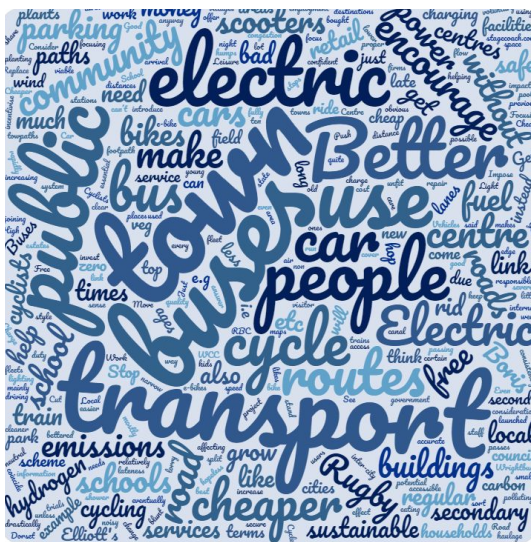
Transition Town Rugby have focused on the following transport priorities for Rugby - please tick your top 3 priority areas

Top 3:

1. More cycle lanes, designed with input from cyclists - 76%
 2. Encouraging and supporting - cycle and walk to school work schemes - 70%
 3. Electric charging points for cars - town centre and Eliot's field - 39%
-

Transport

What other Transport solutions should be considered in addressing the climate emergency?



Transport - summary

More and better cycle lanes are the number one concern

- Joined up and properly planned
- Signage
- Safe

There is also strong demand for improved, greener public transport and less car usage.

This could work with reductions in traffic through the town centre

Food & Farming

Food & Farming

Transition Town Rugby have focused on the following Food and Farming priorities for Rugby - please tick your top 3 priority areas

Top 3:

1. Provide land for community and sustainable growing projects to establish and expand - 68%
2. Provide better access to food wastage schemes for business, charities and households - 65%
3. Council to procure locally and organic food where possible - through the Food for Life programme where school / social / HMPS / council / care home food is locally sourced. - 58%

Food & Farming - summary

The data highlight two main areas of concern:

- Greater support for community growing projects, small farms and allotments. Create schemes to make local seasonal produce much more available
- Food wastage from supermarkets and restaurants needs addressing

Additionally:


- Stop building new houses on good farming land
 - Looking to the future - education for all on how to grow food and the benefits it brings
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Buildings & Economy

Buildings & Economy

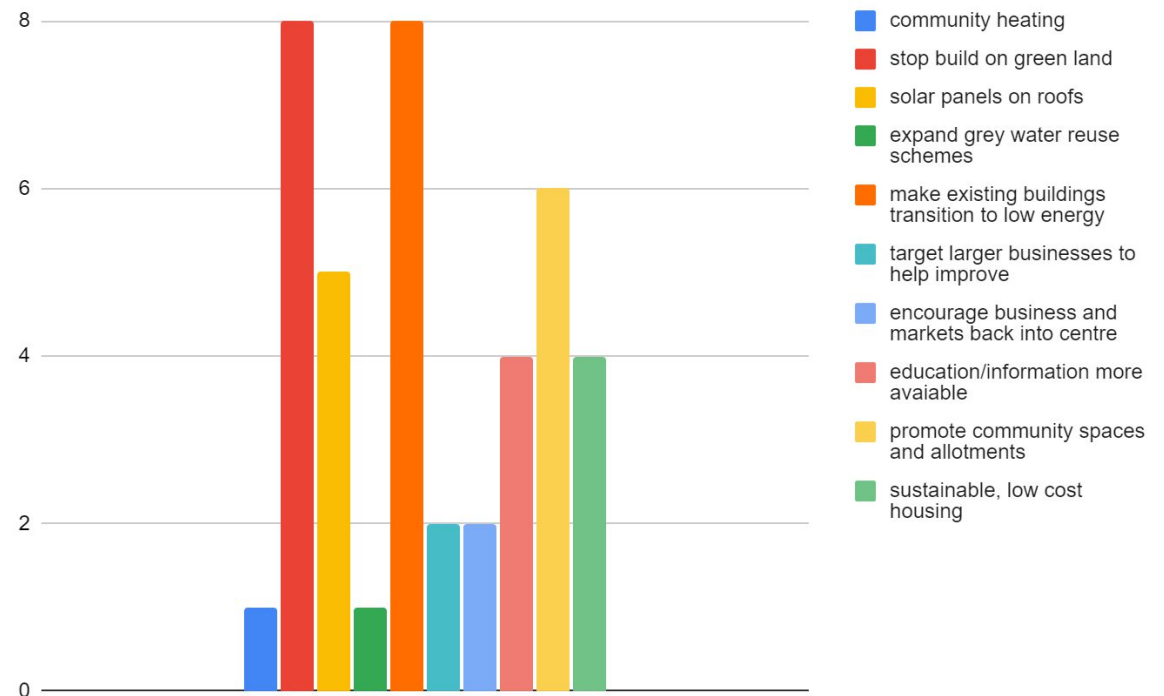
Transition Town Rugby have focused on the following Built Environment & Economy priorities for Rugby - please tick your top 3 priority areas

Top 3:

1. All new homes to be carbon neutral - 67%
 2. Retrofitting houses and businesses with better insulation to reduce energy costs - 50%
 3. All new development to include ample space for food growing, recreation and play space infrastructure - 50%
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Buildings & Economy

What other Built Environment and Economy based issues should be addressed in the climate emergency?




Built Environment & Economy - summary

Again, two issues are dominating opinion:

- New developments must be environmentally sustainable and with plenty of community spaces planned in. Not built on green fields!
- Existing housing and buildings to be properly supported in transitioning to low energy/low waste

Additionally:

- Encourage solar panels on roofs where possible
 - Promote education and information on making low energy improvements to buildings
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Health care

Healthcare

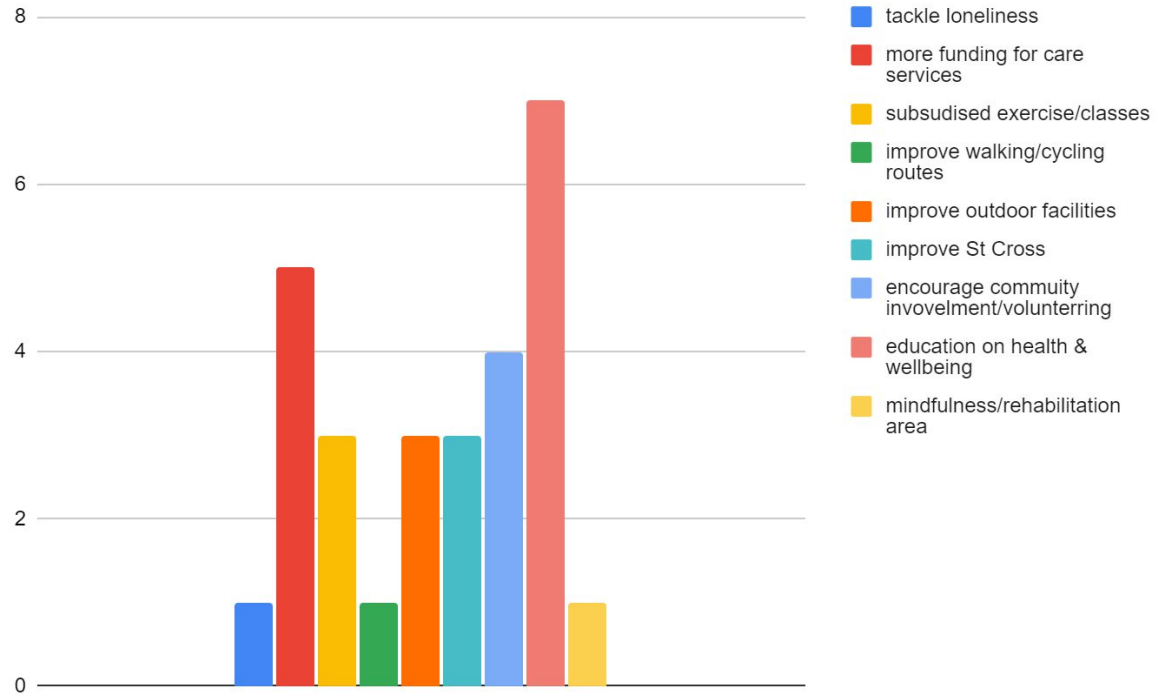
Transition Town Rugby have focused on the following Healthcare priorities for Rugby - please tick your top 3 priority areas

Top 3:

1. Campaign for reformed social care which is far more people-focussed - 70%
 2. Campaign for fair wage for professional carers - 61%
 3. Work with social care and school providers to lower their carbon emissions - 56%
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Healthcare

What other Healthcare issues should be addressed in the climate emergency?



Healthcare - summary

This question received less response, but the major theme is EDUCATION, this includes diet, exercise, mental wellbeing. This could be in support of a number of other climate initiatives presented in this report.

Natural Environment

Natural Environment

Transition Town Rugby have focused on the following Natural Environment priorities for Rugby - please tick your top 3 priority areas

Top 3:

1. A commitment to Urban Tree planting - 76%
2. Increase wildlife habitat eg urban meadows - 71%
3. Manage grasslands and hedgerows to increase biodiversity and protect wildlife - 71%

Energy

Energy

Transition Town Rugby have focused on the following Energy priorities for Rugby - please tick your top 3 priority areas

Top 3:

1. Support the creation of community energy projects. - 50%
 2. RBC to carry out a full audit of energy use and engage a consultant about where they can make the most impact on energy reduction. - 46%
 3. Council to use sustainable energy supplier eg Good Energy / Bulb etc - 46%
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