

Carbon Reduction

An Action Plan for Kingsbridge

June 2011

Contents

Carbon reduction - an action plan for Kingsbridge

Transport

- 1.0 Overview
- 1.1 Integrated transport plan for Kingsbridge
- 1.2 Local car share club
- 1.3 Local minibus service
- 1.4 Raising awareness of alternatives

Local Food

- 2.0 Overview
- 2.1 Local food group
- 2.2 Local food surveys
- 2.3 Love food - hate waste
- 2.4 A plastic bag free Kingsbridge
- 2.5 A chance to grow your own
- 2.6 Putting local food in the hands of local people

Renewable Energy

- 3.0 Overview
- 3.1 Bringing the community together
- 3.2 Establishing a community-led coordinating body
- 3.3 Delivering a pilot project
- 3.4 Renewable energy feasibility study
- 3.5 Local services directory

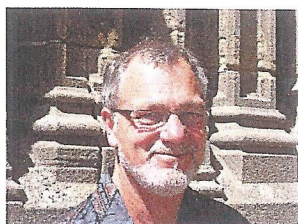
- Sustainable Buildings 4.0 Overview
 - 4.1 A community forum - have your say
 - 4.2 Local standards framework
 - 4.3 Design and planning advisory group
 - 4.4 Promotion of energy efficiency in new & existing homes
 - 4.5 Local services directory

Appendix 1 Record of consultation with KCC students

Appendix 2 Recommended reading & weblinks

.....

Compiled by:



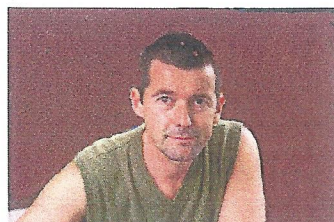
Bob Willars
Chairman: Kingsbridge Agenda 21



Peter Sandover
Architect & Sustainable Building Consultant



Johns Binns
Mayor: Kingsbridge Town Council



Tom Sylger Jones
Planning Consultant

Carbon Reduction - An Action Plan for Kingsbridge

The background

Every day brings increasingly grim news about the speed and scale of climate change. Weather patterns have changed within our lifetimes, and every season brings a new record for rainfall or temperature. After one of the coldest winters for many decades, April temperatures were 5°C above the seasonal average, and spring has passed with hardly a drop of rain. Underneath these massive fluctuations is a continuing and worrying trend. The average temperature in Devon has increased 1.5°C since 1960, and is predicted to rise by the same again between now and 2030. The melting of the polar icecaps is clearly evident, and contributing to concerning rises in sea level.

Whether or not you believe that man's activities are the key causal factor in climate change, there is no escaping the fact that our carbon emissions are currently exacerbating an already dire situation. Governments are now responding, but have set targets for emissions which exceed the limits proposed by our scientists. The time for postponing action has long passed.

The only way forward now is for immediate action to be taken at all levels - by individuals, communities, and businesses as well as by every strand of government.

Taking responsibility for action

By producing its own carbon reduction action plan, the town of Kingsbridge has recognised it has responsibilities to seek a more sustainable future for itself and its community. This plan will act as the initial blueprint for action at all levels - by individuals and families seeking to improve their carbon footprint, by local groups and streets that wish to work together to commit to change, and by the community as a whole. For the purposes of this process the focus is on Kingsbridge - including those neighbouring villages and parishes for which Kingsbridge is the natural centre. The plan is only a starting point - it will develop and expand as things progress.

It's not all bad news

The message about carbon emissions and climate change may be stark, but that doesn't mean to say that this should be a downbeat process. We can see already that, through working together on such an important issue, it enables us to:

- Feel part of a strong and healthy community
- Demonstrate our ability to be forward-looking and innovative
- Be in contact with, and be able to celebrate, our unique environment
- Take less for granted, and be less dependent on others
- Be more secure now about our future

TASK

TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE KINGSBRIDGE

Let us use it to show that Kingsbridge has a special spirit, and to bring out the best in the community. Let us be innovative, and pull together. We should make sure we celebrate our successes, and enjoy becoming more in control of our own future.

What other communities are doing

Kingsbridge is not the first town or city to start to explore the practicalities of reducing its carbon emissions. Like others before it, our neighbouring town Totnes has become a Transition Town and is following an Energy Descent Action Plan to reduce its dependence on fossil fuels and reduce its carbon footprint over the next 20 years. Some local villages such as South Brent have already embarked on carbon reduction/renewable energy schemes. Their aim is to involve as many people as possible in taking positive action to combat climate change and declining energy resources. Likewise, the Dartmoor Circle network consists of thirteen climate change groups, working together to tackle climate change and promote sustainability across the moor and surrounding areas, giving a single voice to its 2000 members.

Achieving our aims

The success of this action plan will be largely dependent on a number of factors, many of which are nothing to do with jargon and technical solutions. They are about people.

They include:

- the ease with which members of the community can engage with this process
- the extent to which the focus for action remains on our own locality, and the process continues to be community driven
- the access people have to the information they need to make sensible decisions for themselves
- the engagement of our young people in this process
- the recognition by everyone in the community that they can contribute hugely to this process by simply changing aspects of their everyday behaviour

The success of this action plan will also be dependent on the extent to which members of the community buy into it, and are prepared to take responsibility for aspects of the plan.

The process so far

The process for producing this action plan started with the formation of a Carbon Reduction Working Group, made up of individuals with the commitment and experience to take the project forward. The group included representation from Kingsbridge Town Council, and one of its first actions was to present the intended process to the Town Council for their support and approval.

TASK

TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE KINGSBRIDGE

There were then a series of public consultation activities, leading to the generation of an outline action plan - which has been reviewed and further developed by a series of action groups.

Based on feedback from the local community, the actions in this plan fall into four sections or themes. These are:

- Transport
- Local food (including recycling)
- Renewable Energy
- Sustainable & energy-efficient buildings

The body of this action plan is based upon these four sections, each with an introduction and list of proposed actions. The appendices contain a report on the series of discussions and workshops held with students of Kingsbridge Community College, together with a list of suggested reading.

Finally, a note of caution about the measurability of the outcomes we achieve. This is no academic exercise. We have no-one to whom we must prove the extent of our successes. If we undertake an action we firmly believe will contribute either directly or indirectly to carbon reduction, we should not be put off by any difficulties we might have in measuring by how much. On the other hand, whenever we can readily build useful measures into our actions we should do so. Our efforts may well be useful to other communities that follow in our footsteps.

TRANSPORT

1.0 Overview

Transportation is one of the fastest moving subjects within the Carbon Reduction agenda. Driven by both the rising costs of oil and the need to reduce emissions, technology is being exploited in every conceivable direction in order to investigate more efficient and effective alternatives.

For the passenger car market, electric vehicles are being developed with fuel cells, alternative power-packs, and replaceable batteries. Retuning at the touch of a switch from 'performance mode' to 'optimum efficiency mode' is already available on some models. Hydrogen powered vehicles are now an option. Similarly, the aviation industry is constantly improving the efficiency of its aero-engines, and has to comply with the EU emissions trading scheme.

The rapidity of change is not only affecting land and air transport. A recent edition of the journal of the Institute of Marine Engineers contained proposals for a nuclear powered merchant ship, after many years in which this solution was very much out of favour - and the first, fully-electric, large-scale power boat is now in commercial production in Sweden.

The industry's search for technological solutions has to be set against the government's Local Transport whitepaper published in January 2011. This sets out the government's vision for a local transport system that supports the economy and reduces carbon emissions. Importantly it recognises that it is 'the short distance local trip' that gives the greatest opportunity for carbon saving. It refers to studies which show that two thirds of journeys are less than 5 miles in duration, and could be completed by walking, cycling or public transport. It also firmly believes that the electrification of the passenger car fleet will play an important role in decarbonising transport.

However, in the short term, the government's view is that 'sustainable transport is delivered through solutions developed for the places they serve, tailored for the specific needs & behaviour patterns of the communities they serve'. The likelihood of a single solution is recognised as unlikely. A 'nudge approach' is recommended, where choice is enhanced by the provision of better options - which encourage, but do not enforce use. Importantly, few national initiatives will emerge, but local authorities will be helped in their search for local solutions.

Faced with this backdrop, this section of the Carbon Reduction Action Plan contains a number of initiatives which are feasible for the individual or the community to implement. Following community consultation, the actions selected also attempt to reflect the diversity and reality of the issues facing Kingsbridge and its local environment. In addition, they are in line with our view that the most effective local solutions will be based on people changing their behaviour with respect to transport, rather than adopting new technologies.

TASK

TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE KINGSBRIDGE

Our proposals include:

- A holistic traffic management plan, or integrated travel plan, should be developed for the Town. This should incorporate carbon reduction as one of its key features.
- A multi-dimensional initiative is required to promote a reduction in car usage. This should have a number of elements including car sharing, the use of alternatives power sources for our vehicles, and alternatives to conventional car ownership - such as improved bus availability.
- Use of the Estuary involves the burning of carbon fuels for recreational purposes, and initiatives are required to promote alternatives where they are appropriate, or to improve efficiency where there is no viable or affordable alternative.
- The plethora of information on this overall subject, coupled with the rate of change of improvements, demands a signposting and information facility that is easily understood and accessible by members of the community.

1.1 Integrated transport plan for Kingsbridge

Project description:

To develop a holistic, integrated transport/travel plan for Kingsbridge, which has the minimisation of carbon emissions as a principal objective.

Objectives:

To minimise carbon emissions in all modes of transport operating in Kingsbridge, by optimising traffic flow, managing roadworks effectively, deterring single occupancy car use, developing alternative modes of transport and optimising public transport routes and links.

Key actions:

- Work with DCC Highways in their formulation of a Transport Management Plan (TMP) for Kingsbridge.
- Engage expert advice in producing proposals that are credible, costed and affordable within the fund-raising powers of the group and partners.

Progress to date:

- Information has been gained from previous work in Totnes, and possible methodologies explored.
- DCC Highways has been made aware of the request that members of Kingsbridge Agenda 21 and Kingsbridge Town Council should be involved in the formulation of the TMP.
- Attempts have been made to preview the DCH methodology, without success.
- KTC has developed a register of issues from around the town that can be used to produce a master register of carbon reduction issues.

Potential impact on Carbon Reduction:

The possible impact on carbon reduction could be significant, but will be evaluated as part of the investment appraisal associated with each proposal.

Suggested ownership:

Kingsbridge Agenda 21, KTC, DCC, SHDC

Possible sources of funding & support:

DCC, SHDC, KTC

1.2 Local car share club

Project description:

The provision of vehicles for a car share club - which might include electric vehicles (cars, scooters or bikes).

Objectives:

To reduce carbon consumption from current levels by reducing the number of vehicles per family - by enabling people to own one small car, using the car club when a larger vehicle is required (e.g. monthly shop, visits to DIY centres and holidays).

Key actions:

- Liaise with MoorCar (the existing Ashburton-based car club).
- Investigate local interest.
- Determine whether a local person is willing to run the franchise/donate the starter vehicle.
- Look for support from a local car dealer.

Note: The MoorCar franchise does produce a small annual profit. It started up with a loan car from a Vauxhall agent who carried out the servicing.

Progress to date:

Contact has been made with MoorCar, who are very interested in establishing a franchise in Kingsbridge. We have established that the franchise would cover use of a website for bookings and vehicle insurance, and information and support from MoorCar personnel.

Potential impact on Carbon Reduction:

A reduction in carbon emission would result from a more considered use of the family car, with greater savings being made if the scheme was used to provide electric vehicles.

Suggested ownership:

A local individual or group looking to set up a small business.

Possible sources of funding & support:

Kingsbridge Town Council
South Hams District Council
Local car dealership

10/4/20

1.3 Local minibus service

Project description:

The provision of a low carbon minibus service to connect the main centres of population within the immediate Kingsbridge area with the principal areas for shopping, health provision and recreation.

Objectives:

To reduce current carbon emissions through short journey car usage by offering a convenient, low carbon public transport alternative.

Key actions:

- Study existing operations of this kind to generate a project outline.
- Evaluate the carbon cost benefit from the provision of such a service.
- Determine the current travel profile of the town community.
- Propose a bus timetable that might meet demand, and test public reaction to the service and its probable costs.
- Produce a business plan for the project, including sources of funding.

Progress to date:

An initial review has been undertaken of such a provision in Salcombe.

Potential impact on Carbon Reduction:

To be reviewed.

Suggested ownership:

KTC, CRWG, Local or regional bus operator

Possible sources of funding & support:

Bus operator

11/49

TASK

TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE KINGSBRIDGE

1.4 Raising awareness of alternatives

Project description:

To hold exhibitions of low carbon vehicles within in Kingsbridge - particularly at Kingsbridge Community College and on the Town Square.

Objectives:

To bring to the attention of as wide a range of people as possible the latest low carbon forms of transport.

Key actions:

- Hold two events displaying the latest electric bikes and scooters.
- Contact Honda and Toyota dealers to demonstrate their hybrid vehicles.
- Contact Renault with regard to their latest electric urban vehicles.
- Give all other dealerships the opportunity of showing their latest carbon reduction technology.
- Investigate options for the provision of charging points within the town and surrounding area.

Progress to date:

Sherpa Management are currently raising funding (from the Department for Transport - Local Sustainable Transport Fund) for an electric bicycle display unit to be exhibited at Kingsbridge Community College and on the Town Square.

Potential impact on Carbon Reduction:

Carbon savings would be made resulting from a switch from people using cars for short journeys to electric scooters or bicycles.

Suggested ownership:

Kingsbridge Information Centre, local dealership, KCC

Possible sources of funding & support:

Department of Transport

12/49

CONTACT

For further information on any of the actions in the Transport section of this action plan, or to express an interest in getting involved, please contact:

John Binns

Tel: 01548 856363

Email: binnsbinns45@aol.com

13/49

LOCAL FOOD

2.0 Overview

As we move towards a more resource-limited world, each community needs to ask 'can we feed ourselves'?

Underlying this question are two global issues - the first being our dependence on oil. As we slide down the slope from its peak in world oil production, more and more people realise that we must free ourselves from a food production system that is highly dependent on fossil fuels - to the extent that it takes 10 calories of fossil fuel for every 1 calorie that ends up on our plate.

Climate change is the second issue underpinning our need to change our perceptions and practices relating to how we feed ourselves. A 2008 Cabinet Office paper stated 'existing patterns of food production are not fit for a low-carbon, more resource-constrained future'. Current farming practices are adding to the levels of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere - rather than helping to achieve the aim of carbon reduction.

Intrinsically we all know that it cannot be good to transport huge quantities of food from one end of the earth to the other; to buy our vegetables in 'best before' shrink-wrapped packaging from a supermarket, when the same food is being grown a couple of miles down the road; to expect to eat unseasonal food, regardless of the cost of getting hold of it; to eat bland euro apple varieties, while we lose touch with the superb range of West Country fruit we used to grow; and to bin 25% of the food we buy.

There have been many studies across the country (including a survey by Kingsbridge Agenda 21) which show that, while some people have a preference for organically-grown food, the real preference within the community is for 'local food'. When individuals can access locally-grown food, they know that food miles will be limited; they recognise that the turn-round time from field to plate will be reduced, and the food so much fresher as a result; they understand that fresh food means healthier food; and they trust that local food producers here in Devon are using ethical, environmentally-friendly practices.

In responding to the community's wishes, we have identified a number of goals which need addressing if we in Kingsbridge and its surrounding area are to a) maximise our use of locally-grown food, b) move significantly towards being able to feed ourselves in the future, and thereby c) reduce our town's carbon impact on the environment. These are:

- To continue to raise the level of understanding within the community of the value and benefits of local food, and of the importance of reducing food-related waste (both food and its packaging)

TASK

TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE KINGSBRIDGE

- To increase the contribution of food produced from back gardens, allotments and other shared urban spaces.
- To improve the linkage between local food producers and the local community - through creating better links to market for producers, and better access to nutritious, affordable, local food sources for the public.
- To take action on the above based on the findings of local food surveys held with members of the public, local producers, and retailers (including restaurants).
- To reduce the levels of food waste and food packaging waste generated by our community, while improving our ability to recycle our waste in the most environmentally friendly ways.

Also, over the long term there needs to be an on-going dialogue with farmers and other food producers. The aim should be to achieve the above goals while maximising biodiversity, looking for ways to increase local employment opportunities linked to the land, and reducing farming's dependence on fossil fuel-based fertilisers, pesticides and other agrochemicals.

15/49

2.1 Local food group

Project description:

To establish an active 'local food group' in Kingsbridge.

Objectives:

1. To form an on-going 'local food group', based on a continuation of the group which has helped establish the local food element of the Carbon Reduction Action Plan.
2. For the group to become a source of ideas, initiatives and campaigns to increase appreciation of the benefits of local food within the Kingsbridge community, and to continue supporting the implementation of this action plan.

Key actions:

- Research the factors contributing to the success of similar groups elsewhere.
- Actively promote the group and its objectives within the wider community to establish a thriving membership.

Progress to date:

Have established a local food group for the purposes of the action plan, and contact details of a nucleus of people in the community with an interest in aspects of local food.

Potential impact on Carbon Reduction:

The local food group will be the facilitating and enabling force through which a number of the actions in this plan will be implemented - leading to their impact on carbon reduction & other environmental and health benefits.

Suggested ownership:

Establish a constituted body in due course, with a rolling chair.

Possible sources of funding & support:

Kingsbridge Town Council
South Hams District Council

2.2 Local food surveys

Project description:

To design and administer a survey, in order to gain feedback on attitudes and practices in the Kingsbridge community relating to local food. Specific versions of the questionnaire will be used to research the views of consumers, producers, retailers and hotels/restaurants.

Objectives:

To gain sufficient feedback from a well-balanced sample in each category for the survey to be used as a sound basis for decision-making e.g. in relation to possible 'food hub' options.

Key actions:

- Research equivalent surveys undertaken elsewhere.
- Design the questionnaires as user-friendly documents.
- Undertake initial research into the location of local producers, retailers and hotels/restaurants.
- Administer the questionnaires to a sufficient, balanced sample in each category.
- Collate and analyse the feedback.
- Summarise as a report, and present findings to the community.

Progress to date:

- Have researched similar surveys on-line, and designed consumer and producer versions.
- Have begun to administer consumer and producer surveys.

Potential impact on Carbon Reduction:

The survey and its report will not in itself have any impact on carbon reduction. However, it should pave the way for the community to make some valuable decisions about how we can best get locally produced food in the hands of local people - in ways that reduce transport, packaging and other factors that impact on our carbon environment.

Suggested ownership:

Kingsbridge Agenda 21, in association with others

Possible sources of funding & support:

Big Lottery - Local Food Fund (if it becomes reinstated)
Esmee Fairbairn Foundation

17/49

TASK

TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE KINGSBRIDGE

2.3 Love Food - Hate Waste

Project description:

To work with the public and local retailers to reduce food & food packaging waste, and with local authorities and their contractors serving the Kingsbridge community to improve the collection, disposal & recycling of food waste & its associated packaging.

Objectives:

1. To reduce the food waste generated by the Kingsbridge community.
2. To raise the efficiency and effectiveness of recycling processes to the level of the highest standards in the UK and elsewhere.

Key actions:

- Raise public awareness of the personal and environmental costs of waste food.
- Investigate best practice nationwide with respect to waste food reduction/disposal & packaging reduction/recycling.
- Set up a liaison body between the community, the local authorities and their contractors.

Progress to date:

- Have held discussions with SHDC's environmental team.
- Held a recycling display entitled 'Love Food Hate Waste' on the Town Square in June, and have plans to hold further events during the summer.

Potential impact on Carbon Reduction:

The greatest component of the carbon emissions associated with food is from its production (not transport or recycling) - therefore any reduction in waste food, before and after purchase, will have maximum impact.

Suggested ownership:

Proposed liaison group to include community (users and producers), local authority and contractor representatives.

Possible sources of funding & support:

Big Lottery - Local Food Fund (if it becomes reinstated)