

Climate Action Working Group

Summary: To review the progress of the Climate Action Working Group, and associated activity.

Recommendation: That the Executive Committee notes the report.

Report by: Fred Constantine Smith, Climate Action Lead and Alice Whitehead, Climate Action Coordinator

MEMBERS OF THE GROUP

- Ben Dent
- Rosie Pearson
- Martin Brown
- Graham Hopkins
- Liz Reason

MEETINGS SINCE THE LAST EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- 22nd April – Discussion of corporate sustainability accreditation for CNL, update on the woodland element of our Action Plan.

MAIN ACTIVITY

Climate Mitigation Action Plan

- Work on the three land use priorities is underway, with CAPEX proposals being developed for the farming and forestry study and farm carbon assessments.

Climate Adaptation Plan

- Consultation with relevant team leads took place in April to finalise the draft climate risk assessment and adaptation plan.

Carbon Literacy Training

- In autumn 2025, CNL developed a bespoke Carbon Literacy training course outlining relevant policies, local emissions, and existing work to address climate change impacts through both adaptation and mitigation.
- Training has taken place across two cohorts, with a mixture of in-person and online sessions.
- Twenty-two staff members and three Board members from the Climate Action Working Group have taken part in the Carbon Literacy training sessions.

NEXT STEPS

Climate Mitigation Action Plan

- Commence projects relating to farming and land use and progress work on woodland guidance.

- Commence work on understanding our approach to reducing transport and food and drink associated emissions.

Climate Adaptation Plan

- Complete final version of Climate Adaptation Plan.

KEY POINTS FROM LAST WORKING GROUP MEETING

Corporate Sustainability Accreditation for CNL

- Benefits of accreditation – (i) the learning gained through the process (ii) an enhanced ability to influence and leverage stakeholders (iii) if the accreditation reflects what we have already done as an organisation, it strengthens our identity by reinforcing the credibility of our work.
- The key consideration is whether the benefits of accreditation justify the resources required.
- Of the accreditations listed, Race to Zero/SME Climate Hub received the strongest support.
 - Actions – (i) speak with National Parks and Local Authorities that have completed accreditation to understand the potential benefits for the organisation from completing Race to Zero (ii) provide the WKG with a list of what would be required to complete Race to Zero, compared with what we have already done as an organisation. (iii) the WKG will then make a decision which will be brought to the Executive.

Tree planting and woodland creation

- Discussion of the potential differences between our Woodland Sensitivity Mapping and LNRS mapping. A clear process is needed to distinguish between these approaches and explain how they should be interpreted by landowners and managers.
- Discussion of the CNL's process and data collection when responding to woodland creation proposals. As the Climate Action team is likely to be accountable for the woodland creation target, it is important that we understand this process.

June 2026 Meeting

- Mark Connelly will provide a presentation on CNL's process for responding to woodland creation proposals, and the Working Group will continue discussions on sustainability accreditation.

DECISIONS REQUIRED

- None

SUPPORTING PAPERS

- None

May 2026