
FOOD

East Harptree Climate Emergency Working Group

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Scope

Given the breadth and scope of this project, it was necessary to decide which one aspect was the most likely to return a result that would:

- ❖ Be immediately accessible by the greatest number of the residents in East Harptree
- ❖ To both reduce carbon footprint and improve ecological diversity
- ❖ Most likely to achieve a “quick win” for individuals and the community

Having looked at various aspects, we hit on WASTE as the means by which we would explore this topic.

Context

We believe that it is important to acknowledge that the move to zero net carbon is a journey, albeit one that we need now to travel more swiftly. It is also worth acknowledging that the self selected Working Group members are likely to be more advanced on this journey than some in the wider community. Some may not even accept that there is a climate emergency. That being so, anything we recommend should enable as many people as possible to change their behaviour positively without creating a negative push back. For instance, “preaching” or expecting people to stop eating meat is likely to be counterproductive.

What’s more, the argument for and against an entirely plant-based diet on purely carbon grounds as opposed to animal welfare grounds is not clear cut (for instance, almond milk and imported beans) Wilding was felt to be outside our remit. We therefore did not try to resolve this conundrum but instead concentrated on what could be done by any individual, irrespective of their diet.

Finally, the context for the work we have done is the advice to be given to the Parish Council. However, some of our proposed solutions are those which could be implemented by the community more broadly. We are conscious that the Parish Council has no powers with regard to food specifically.



Food Waste

Food

Over the last 5 years, food waste collections in BANES have increased (figures in tonnes).

| Waste & Recycling in Bath & North East Somerset | | | | | | |
|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Kerbside Collections | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 |
| Food Waste | 3902 | 3800 | 3811 | 3904 | 4282 | 5461 |

The fact that food waste figures have increased is both good (diverts waste from landfill) and bad (if food waste is increasing). WRAP's report for 2019 shows that whilst food waste overall has decreased by 7% since 2007, domestic waste has increased by 4%. This is significant because of the 9.5m tonnes of food wasted in the UK, over 7m tonnes of that is domestic food waste. Of this over 2m is perfectly good, edible food.

Globally, food accounts for 30% of all emissions and 70% of water usage. By addressing the issue of food waste within our community, we can assume that we can address 30% of our emissions. What's more, the ability to affect the outcome lies squarely within the hands of the community rather than being reliant on politicians or big business.

Food packaging

The amount of food waste (9.5 million tonnes) is slightly exceeded by the amount of food packaging waste (10 million tonnes).

It is very difficult to find data on how much food packaging is wasted every year as it forms part of the total 28million tonnes of household waste collected every year and is not

separately calculated. In the US, the estimate is that 30% of all household waste is food packaging. If replicated in the UK, this would suggest approximately 10million tonnes.

Whilst the UK is currently exceeding its EU targets for recycling (70% v 60%), there can be no doubt but that reducing the production of the waste packaging in the first place would be positive. This is because recycling packaging deals with the “problem”, but does not address the “waste” of the energy and raw materials invested in the packaging in the first place or the environmental damage involved in producing the packaging.

Again, the community has the power to achieve a reduction in food packaging waste within its hands, simply through making positive choices in how it buys and what it buys and how much it buys. In doing so, it will be making changes against the background of the Governments’ own “producer pays” strategy which aims to make manufacturers responsible for the packaging they use. We can expect there to be awareness campaigns funded by food manufacturers and supermarkets and these will provide support for any campaigns that we run locally.

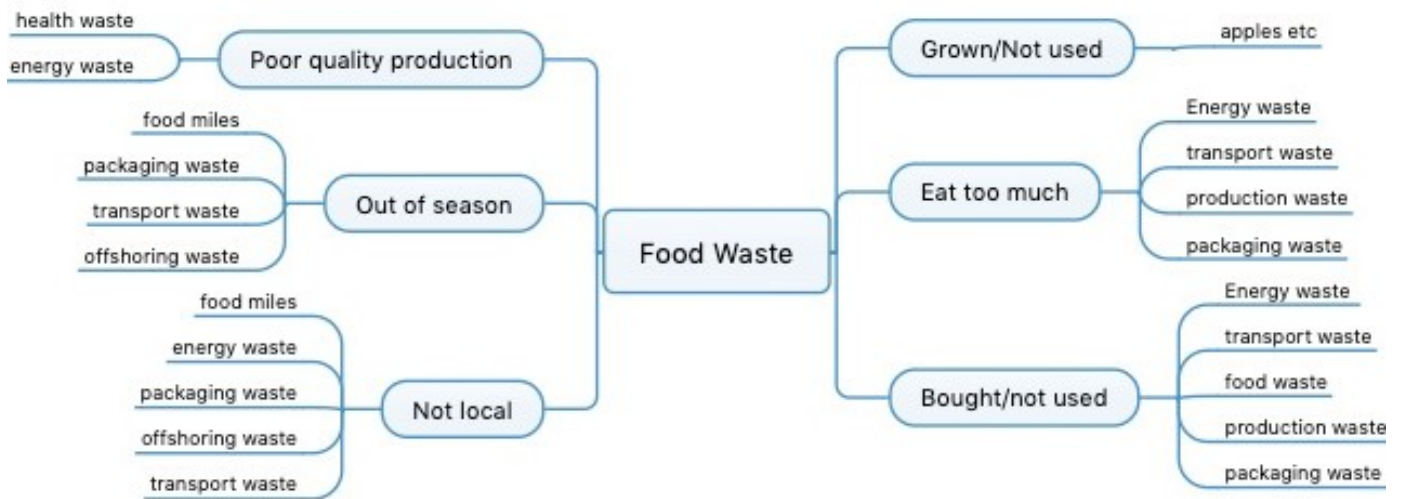
Food as a contributor to health

We have also considered the “waste” associated with overeating as a part of our holistic approach to food waste. In the UK in the 21st century, food is thrown away unused and food is eaten that is not required - both of these are equally “wasted”.

Obesity undoubtedly has many causes, only one of which is eating more food than is required. However, obesity rates in BANES are higher than the national average - 55.7% of adults over 17 in BANES are either overweight or obese. Despite the national average age being significantly lower due to the high student population in Bath, diabetes levels are only slightly lower than the national average of 5% at 4.6%. Obesity has strong links to poorer health outcomes as well as lower life expectancy (8 years for men in BANES and 3.8 years for men).

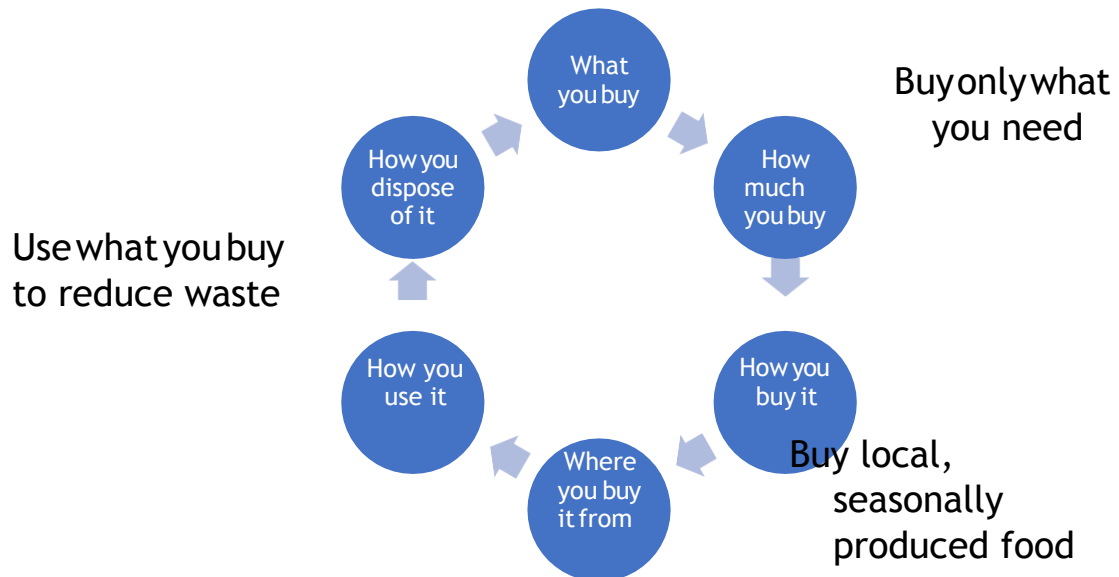
Summary

There is an opportunity to encourage the community to think of tackling food waste as positive action to enrich their lives rather than simply a response to climate change. If successful, we could expect a significant impact on carbon emissions but that is likely to be difficult to measure. Instead, we’d suggest looking at the total amount of waste collected from households in the parish and in particular food waste. The Courtauld target is the reduce food waste by 30% by 2025: this is accepted as challenging but not impossible.



Waste Types

How to address food waste



Our approach to reducing food waste

Proposed Targets for Food Waste project

We have chosen the following as the quantifiable objective measures of success:

1. Little to no food waste - at least 30% reduction within 3 years
Balance against total overall reduction in waste collection
2. Little to no packaging waste - at least 30% reduction within 3 years
Balance against total overall reduction in waste collection
3. Reduced obesity rates within local GP practice
per 1000s
4. Local food businesses report increase in turnover
Requires voluntary reporting
5. Surrounding countryside improved diversity
Environment Group surveys

Communicating Positives

We are not the first to try to persuade people to reduce food waste! Nor will we have a massive budget to create an attractive campaign. so this will need to be achieved in peer:peer conversations between residents, with some leadership roles for other organisations within the parish (e.g. Parish Council, Village Shop, GPs, Pub).

The communication is thought to be most effective when focused on “pull” criteria such as:

- ◆ Better health
- ◆ Supporting local, British producers post Brex era
- ◆ Better relationships with neighbours
- ◆ Save money to spend on something else
- ◆ Save money that council can spend on something else
- ◆ Less land required for landfill
- ◆ More biodiversity

The difficulties in communicating about food waste that we have identified are:

- ◆ Perceptions around the cost of buying locally
- ◆ Cheap food is cheap only because the waste is “off balance sheet”
- ◆ Idea that “sterile” is good e.g. reasons for not recycling food waste inc “smelliness”
- ◆ Habits - changing habits is hard

We would seek to overcome this through a multiagency approach, so that individuals see and hear the same message in a number of different ways from different organisations.

e.g. GP surgery focusing on healthy eating, shop on local produce, pub on grow your own etc.

The organisations we see as having a role to play are:

Parish Council - through Sports Pavilion , Village Hall and Social Club committees

GP Surgery - raise profile of their work in healthy eating strategy

Flower/produce show - highlighting local, seasonal produce and “grow your own” Shop

Pub

WI?

Local food supplier directory Community

Farm

The idea would be to NUDGE people towards making the right decisions, to influence on a person:person basis and answer Qs rather than “preach”.

Quick wins

- ✦ Waste Not Want Not campaign at Village Meeting/other opportunities
- ✦ Grow food locally - grow your own club, trips to local growers eg Priddy, Pony and Trap, garden swap scheme
- ✦ List of local suppliers/ local food exhibition?

Future Projects

We believe that to do this properly we need to have budget and capital to fund new ideas. If this is not to come from the Parish Council (and there is considerable local resistance to raising the Precept), then we need to consider ways of doing so without the Parish Council’s input.

Some ideas that we have considered but which require budget are:

- ✦ Microfarming - encouraging planning applications that increase production of local food production
- ✦ Workshops from experts/skills sharing - local community
- ✦ Foraging - making the most of what grows around us/raising awareness
- ✦ Village bee hives, village apple press?
- ✦ Buying cooperative
- ✦ Food swap
- ✦ Using Village Shop as a hub

Others will no doubt become obvious as we travel further down this route and as money becomes available.

Additional Comments from Paul Cullen January 2021

This idea of this report is to examine the initial ideas that were presented to the parish council Climate by the Nature Emergency Working Group (C&NEWG) initiative.

Due to the changes that we have all had to face mainly due to the Lockdown. We have all witnessed peoples behavioural change within our own community and wider society.

Examples include:-

Growing more in their gardens.

Spending more time within the local communities.

Utilizing local suppliers.

Sharing ideas and products.

Using outdoor space for exercise.

Our initial report had amongst background information and statistics, a number of headings which included, 5 proposed targets for food waste, future projects, some quick wins and communicating positives.

The interim report recognized that the PC had no specific powers with regard to food but set out some short/medium and long term aims that could be realized by a Parish Food Group.

With that in mind and the changes that have occurred to society. The report is a summary of those changes in our community and how this could be developed further to support the declaration of the climate and nature emergency.

Here are some of the propositions included in the original report and changes that have been observed since it was written.

Local food business increase in turnover.

Having spoken to local food suppliers in our area. Some of them have reported a 100% increase over lockdown and they have also told me that they have managed to keep most of this increase post Lockdown. Some of this has happened due to the introduction of refillable milk bottles. Which not only reduces plastic waste but encourages the idea of local.

Grow food locally.

There has been a big interest in growing food in gardens. Amongst other things this has been supported by the lock down gardeners and the swap/share/borrow on Facebook. Whilst the village is mostly a very cooperative community. The sharing of gardening knowledge and products has increased during the last year due to some of these initiatives.

Changing habits.

There is an increasing thought amongst some of the population how the choices we all make when consuming and purchasing food has a direct effect on the environment. For example, according to the future of food 2040, published by the NFU, 25% of the population will be vegan or vegetarian by 2025.

Possible ways forward

As mentioned above the PC does not have any specific powers to support the declaration of its climate emergency through food.

However, within the village there are a number of organizations that could help support people who want to change their behaviour in the fight against climate change through food consumption and waste.

These included the Parish Council, Village Shop, Pub and School.

Moving forward

I have had informal conversations with Guy about joining the shop committee as we both recognize it could be a very useful way to communicate and support the C&NEWG and the Shop.

I have also had an exploratory meeting with Jane Bailey from East Harptree School to discuss ideas of how they can support our efforts.

Steve Thomas has had a discussion with Emma from the Waldegrave Arms with regards to planting the borders around the carpark and her values reflect this of our own.

Bibliography

Estimates of Food Surplus and Waste Arisings in the UK

[https://www.wrap.org.uk/sites/files/wrap/Estimates %20in the UK Jan17.pdf](https://www.wrap.org.uk/sites/files/wrap/Estimates%20in%20the%20UK%20Jan17.pdf)

Courtauld Commitment 2025 Milestone Progress Report

<https://wrap.org.uk/sites/files/wrap/>

[Courtauld Commitment 2025 Milestone Progress Report.pdf](#)

Ideas for reducing food waste/ projects elsewhere

[https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2017/mar/13/waste-plastic-food- packaging- recycling-throwaway-culture-dave-hall](https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2017/mar/13/waste-plastic-food-packaging-recycling-throwaway-culture-dave-hall) [https://www.which.co.uk/news/2019/06/three- food-waste-facts-everyone-needs-to- know/](https://www.which.co.uk/news/2019/06/three-food-waste-facts-everyone-needs-to-know/)

Producer responsibilities

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/packaging-producer-responsibilities>

Waste

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-waste-data>

[https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/services/bins-rubbish-and-recycling/waste-strategy- statistics-and-health-safety/waste-statistics-and](https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/services/bins-rubbish-and-recycling/waste-strategy-statistics-and-health-safety/waste-statistics-and)

[https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2019-10/ waste strategy review 2014.pdf](https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2019-10/waste_strategy_review_2014.pdf)

Health and Obesity

<https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/>

[banes draft healthy weight strategy document.pdf](#)