

Climate comms (November 2023)

Monthly updates/news:

Council Climate Action Scorecards result published: Climate Emergency UK, a not for profit co-operative have now undertaken an exercise to rate all local authority **climate action** implemented between 1st January 2019-31st March 2023. Colchester City Council received a score of 34% (above the 29% average for district councils). There is plenty of good stuff we are doing, but the criteria set by Climate Emergency UK was very ambitious and difficult for us to get high marks. All of the actions in their methodology have been implemented by **at least one local authority** at the time of their assessment. There are plenty of things we are working on but have not been marked as are not in the public domain/have been completed at the time of the assessment. Our press release is available [here](#), full results [here](#), and methodology [here](#). A full internal analysis of the scores with comments on ways we can improve can be shared upon request; a similar report will go to the next Environment and Sustainability Panel on 6th December 2023 too.

Energy Grants launched! – The Council has been working hard to enable ways for residents to access grant funding for energy efficiency/decarbonisation improvements for their homes (e.g. variety of insulation types, air source heat pumps) and will be launching these in the next month. There are 3 main grant schemes; Home Upgrade Grant, Energy Company Obligation and Great British Insulation Scheme, all of which are explained at www.colchester.gov.uk/energy-grants. Residents can also email their queries to EnergyEfficientHomes@colchester.gov.uk or call 01206 636956. Please let us know if you would like any flyers/promotional materials or have ideas of where we could promote these grants and energy advice – We're keen to get round to events and hold pop-ups throughout Colchester. Also see the energy saving pullout with further support information.

New walking and cycling route beginning – Works to make Improvements to walking and cycling route from City Centre (East Hill) to University with links onwards to Greenstead are to begin in Autumn 2023, starting at the city centre. More information can be found on the scheme [here](#), or email Jane.Thompson@colchester.gov.uk.

City Centre ebike hire open now! – The Colchester City Centre bike hub opened on Saturday 21st October. The bike hub is located in Portal Precinct in the same building as the Secure Cycle Park. Residents will be able to use the facility to borrow a range of ebikes and eCargo bikes on a pay as you go basis for a few hours to a full day. For information on how to start using the hub, please go to the [Cycle Colchester website](#). The first step though is to ensure that the person wanting to use bikes in the hub has completed their [adult advanced cycle training](#) that is available for free from ECC.

Essex Forest Initiative Tree planting days – Essex Forest Initiative has opened up several tree planting days in Ardleigh near Colchester for residents in late November/December 2023 to help plant trees to meet the target of planting over £1m worth of trees between 2019-2024. **This is not as part of the CCC Woodland and Biodiversity Project.** Residents can see the times and dates for these events by registering their interest in volunteering at this [link](#).

New Climate Advice pack for Early Years and childcare providers – In addition to the climate advice packs produced by ECC for business, schools and residents (see page 4 for links), a new pack for early years and childcare providers has been produced to give advice on ways they can make their provision greener. The link to this pack is [here](#).

Bike Security – Perhaps you're thinking about getting someone a bike for Christmas? Ensure you take the right measures to help keep the bike secure. This includes getting the [right lock](#) – see more information here (say no to cable locks!), registering your bike on the [bike register](#) so if it's stolen it can be returned to you if recovered by police (we have some bike security stickers we can provide free of charge – please get in contact!). Also consider using the [Secure Bike Park](#) in the city centre for locking your bike up! See other tips from the Police [here](#).

Event dates for the diary:

Tiptree Energy Grant promotion and Energy Saving Event, 18th November (10:30am-2pm): We will be promoting energy efficiency grants and opportunities for energy saving at **Tiptree Leisure World**. This support will help people make their application and answer any queries about the different stages of the application. This will be mainly aimed at those homes **off the gas grid** for their heating. Please promote to people who you think would be interested, posters are also available that we can send if needed.

Highwoods Energy Grant Promotion and Energy Saving event, 21st November (6:30pm-8:15pm): We will be promoting energy efficiency grants and opportunities for energy saving at **St John's & Highwoods Community Centre**. This support will help people make their application and answer any queries about the different stages of the application. This will be mainly aimed at those homes **off the gas grid** for their heating. Please promote to people who you think would be interested, posters are also available that we can send if needed to help promote.

Other general energy pop-ups are occurring throughout Colchester in November/December in a variety of locations. Please email Keith.Parker-Larkin@colchester.gov.uk for further details.

[EA Sustain Festival, Firstsite, 13th-14th January 2024:](#) This 2 day festival aims to raise environmental awareness across a range of disciplines, focusing on arts, culture, entrepreneurship and more. There are a range of talks with expert speakers taking place over the weekend including education, recycling, farming, food, fashion and more. See the full [programme here](#).

Funding:

Community/Parish

Community energy saving event funding – National Energy Action are providing up to £250 for community groups, local authorities and other organisations to run an event in their community to raise awareness of ways to save energy, support available to save energy including grants or discounts and more. No clear deadline for applying but funding must be spent by 29th February 2024 – More details [here](#).

Big Bike Revival Funding - Big Bike Revival funding provides grants of up to £2500 for organisations running events to help people maintain or fix their bikes, as well as organising led bike rides for people to participate in. It is also particularly focussed on providing funding for projects that encourage beginner cyclists or people looking to get back into cycling more. See more information about the grant scheme [here](#). Application deadline is 15th December 2023 for any event(s) taking place between 4th November – 26th February 2024.

Aviva Community Fund – [Aviva](#) provide matched funding for donations to community projects, with 'climate action' one of the eligible causes they will provide funding to. Just upload your project for approval and featuring on their website. For every donation to your project, Aviva will match the donation amount (up to £250). A temporary extension of this fund is the 'Save our wild isles' fund which will double donations made up to £250 (i.e. if £250 donated, they will give £500). See more details of the fund [here](#).

Enovert Community Trust funding – Regular rounds of grants (next deadline 1st December) for not for profit organisations to do community environmental projects (e.g. decarbonising a Village Hall, creating or enhancing a habitat, playground improvements etc). Project locations must be within 10 miles of Bellhouse landfill site (CO3 0NN). See more details of the fund [here](#).

International Tree Foundation grants – Grant funding is available for planting trees in publicly accessible spaces including schools and sites managed by community groups. The foundation can also provide guidance on project design and species selection. Deadline for

applications is 1st December 2023. Please see full eligibility criteria and guidance [here](#).

Sport England Small grants programme – This programme provides funding between £300-£15,000 for projects that aim to increase physical activity across a 12-month period. They are particularly keen to see projects consider environmental sustainability this year, for example in terms of purchasing locally made equipment or reducing energy use. Applications can come from charities, CICs, amateur sports clubs, local authority bodies (including town, parish and community councils). Applications close on 31st March 2024. See the full list of what can and can't be funded [here](#).

I dig trees TCV Programme – This programme from The Conservation Volunteers funds tree planting in communities. You can order packs of trees depending on the size of area you have, type of tree you would like to plant etc. They also have a fruit tree pack for primary schools! Find out more [here](#). A similar programme, for bigger tree planting packs is being offered through [The Woodland Trust](#) (deadline of January 2024, or earlier if supply runs out)

ECC Public Health Accelerator Bid Programme – This 3 year programme offers small grants (£500-£15,000) and major grants (from £15,000) for projects that aim to boost mental and physical health at an individual or community level. Projects must complete by 31st March 2026. See more [here](#)

Matthew Good Foundation 'Grants for Good' – This scheme gives out funding to small charities, enterprises and community groups who want to deliver projects for social good, community and the environment. They offer funding throughout the year in 4 cycles, offering 5 projects funding each time of between £2,000-£5,000. See case studies of previously funded projects and find out more at this [website](#)

Funding for outdoor schools equipment – Up to £500 for equipment or training through 'Learning through landscapes' – See [website](#) for further information. New round not yet open

NatureSave Trust – [NatureSave Trust](#) provide funding for community environmental projects - £500-£5000 provided – Three grant windows per year with different themes. The next window opens in January (theme to be announced). Previous funded project examples [here](#).

Personal

Boiler Upgrade Scheme - The Government is providing £7,500 in grants off the cost and installation of air source heat pumps and biomass boilers (in rural off gas grid areas only), and £6000 off the cost and installation of ground source heat pumps. For more information see the [Government website](#).

Love Essex discounts - [Love Essex](#) have several schemes where residents can access discounts/refunds on purchasing [reusable nappies](#) and [compost bins](#). They also have lots of useful information on recycling in Colchester.

Electric Vehicle Chargepoint grants: There are different grants available for installing electric vehicle chargepoints. The scheme is currently focussed on providing grants for landlords, owners/renters of flats and workplaces. See further details on the Government's [website](#).

Essex Energy Switch: The Essex Energy Switch aims to get people a better rate on their energy, by using collective buying power. The programme works by collecting people together who want to get a better deal on their energy bills (plus those interested in environment, as suppliers must provide 100% renewable electricity). A 'reverse auction' is then held between energy suppliers who compete to offer the lowest energy tariff to

residents. Residents can then choose whether to accept the offer or not. Find out more [here](#).

Useful information/resources/websites (updated periodically)

Colchester City Council sustainability webpages – For information about the Council's climate and environmental actions, including advice and resources for residents. These can be navigated from the main [sustainability homepage](#).

Colchester City Council 'what you can do' document – Contains details of useful resources and websites to help residents understand their environmental impact, and activities they can do to reduce their environmental impact.

Clean Air Colchester toolkit resources – Resources that support Colchester's air quality campaigns to encourage vehicles to switch their engines off when stationary for long periods. Available from this [website](#)

Colchester eCargo bike library – For information about the Council's electric cargo bike project, providing free short term loans of ecargo bikes to interested organisations, business and communities/charities. For more information, visit [the eCargo bike library webpage](#).

Free Adult Cycle training provided by Essex County Council - These courses are ideal for gaining confidence in cycling on the roads, and 'adult advanced cycling 1-2-1' must be completed before anyone can use electric cargo (eCargo) bikes available from the secure bike park - <https://www.essexhighways.org/safer-greener-healthier/safer-greener-healthier-cycling>

Love Essex website - For information, tips and guidance on reducing waste and recycling more - <https://www.loveessex.org/>

ECC TravelEssex app - ECC have produced a TravelEssex app, for navigating around Essex, with a variety of different modes of travel shown for journeys. It can provide real times updates of bus/train times and track journeys in real time. Find out more [here](#).

Colchester BID Travel Planner - InColchester have created an online travel planner to help with navigating in and around the city centre. The map was specifically made to help promote more sustainable modes of travel before using private modes of travel (e.g. cars), and notifies individuals of the carbon emissions associated with their journey. Find out more [here](#).

Essex County Council Climate Advice Packs - ECC have produced climate advice packs to provide detailed advice packs for residents, schools and businesses to understand and lower their environmental impact. Please share these with any who may find them of use.

Links to the advice packs from the Essex Climate Commission website: [Residents'](#), [Businesses'](#) and [Schools'](#) Advice Packs – **NEW** [early years pack](#)

Eco Colchester - The [Eco Colchester website](#) and [Facebook page](#) are also great resources for education and learning about environmental issues, as well as keeping up to date on environmental news and events, both locally and further afield.

Carbon Cutting Essex App - ECC have launched an app developed by [GreenRedeem](#) to help residents understand more about their carbon footprint and what actions they can take to lower it in their lifestyles. The app provides quizzes, blogs, videos and other activities on a weekly basis on a variety of different topics including food, waste, energy and transport. In return for completing activities, residents get 'points' which can be redeemed for rewards or donated to charities. The app can be downloaded from the App Store, Google Play or the [Green Redeem website](#).

Colchester Institute Sustainability courses: Colchester Institute are offering 2 courses for organisations to understand how their activities contribute to carbon emissions. The ['Introduction to carbon literacy'](#) course is a half day commitment, focussing on measuring

and reducing carbon footprints, at a cost of £49. The '[Sustainability, Carbon Literacy and how to plan for Net Zero](#)' is a 12 session course, with more in-depth coverage of different thematic environmental areas and helping organisations/businesses form sustainability and net zero action plans. This course is already in train, but organisations can register interest for full rollout of the training.

UK Business Climate Hub – The Government has launched a climate hub full of resources for businesses to help increase their environmental awareness and reduce their carbon footprint. Access to training, webinars, carbon calculator, funding opportunities and more will be hosted on the hub. Access the hub [here](#).

For Parishes:

Community Energy Colchester – For information on securing installation of electric vehicle chargepoints for free, reach out to [Community Energy Colchester](#) who are working with [ChargemyStreet](#) to provide parish Councils with access to charge points for their car parks. Chris can also provide support for installing simple energy efficiency measures like draught proofing and radiator reflector panels.

Friends of the Earth 20 actions for parishes – [Friends of the Earth](#) have produced information on 20 actions town and parish councils can take to respond to the climate emergency.

Impact tool – This [tool](#) produced by the Centre for Sustainable Energy gives you a breakdown for your town/parish emissions produced from different datasets. It also gives a really useful guide on activities you could think about doing in your town/parish based on the breakdown of your carbon footprint. The [website](#) also provides case studies of others who have used the tool.

Neighbourhood Plan guidance – See information and guidance document produced by the [Centre for Sustainable Energy](#) on writing a sustainable neighbourhood plan.

National Association of Local Councils (NALC) website – The [NALC website](#) contains information on case studies from local parish and town councils taking climate and environmental action.