

## Agenda Item 6

For information - Update on Climate Emergency work programme.

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### Summary

This report introduces our 2024/25 work programme to address the Climate Emergency. Our new Climate Action Lead – Matt Mellen (MM) – has now been in role for over 2 months and this report sets out new thinking and the steps being taken towards the town's new Climate Action Plan (CAP) as well as a summary of progress against the objectives set at the beginning of the financial year. A presentation will be made at the meeting to cover the key points.

Progress review of currently active parts of the work programme to address the Climate Emergency (note that work to address the Ecological Emergency is being led by Rob Holden)

Work programme area	Summary
Research and understand the impacts of climate breakdown on Frome	MM is staying up to date with climate news and research and can provide updates to Council as required.
Kickstart a new process of townwide community engagement around the climate emergency	A new database of individuals and organisations working on climate issues is in development mapping and cataloguing who is doing what in the town. Meetings are being held regularly with key stakeholders.
	Establishing and coordinating a Climate Action Working Group (CAWG) to FTC’s work in this area.
	A series of climate-themed events is planned in for the coming year ( <a href="#">see Appendix 6.1, on the website here</a> ). These events will form the backbone of the engagement with the town.
	Working with the Engagement team to develop a “Vision the Future” work programme - a plan to engage communities around the town with a special focus on young people, creatives and harder to reach groups to imagine what Frome will be like in 5, 10, 50 and 100 years. This will make use of current scientific projections made available to all and become a key part of our climate engagement and shape the new Climate Action Plan (CAP).
	Involving schools in climate action and planning to capture concerns of young people. Meetings held with Earth House, Frome Families for Future and internally with the Community Engagement Team. Plan in development to enable young people to input into the Town's CAP via Vision the Future.

<p>Work with Green and Healthy Frome to ramp up activities and ensure continuation of positive impacts</p>	<p>Workshops, meetings, and planning sessions are underway to ensure Frome Town Council is supporting Green and Healthy Frome to grow, have more impact and, where possible, continue beyond the end of the Lottery funding.</p>
	<p>Retrofit coordination - developing a new approach to retrofit that shifts focus from assessing homes to also supporting homes to action home energy upgrades. Plan to increase capacity on retrofit making use of the underspend based on Sally Richards leaving. Providing support to homeowners looking to upgrade their homes and facilitate their relationships with the town's tradespeople.</p>
<p>Engaging business</p>	<p>Working with key suppliers, tradespeople, architects, estate agents, energy companies and others to help facilitate new transparent ways for retrofit works be carried out. Will monitor and document the process and work with Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE), Centre for Energy Equality (CEE), Somerset Council and Retrofit Council to trouble shoot and support growth. Retrofit event planned for January 28<sup>th</sup> 2025.</p>
	<p>Reconnecting with Frome businesses and looking for opportunities to support environmental actions. Negotiations under way for a business-led event looking at how businesses can have positive actions in Frome and beyond.</p>
	<p>Planning to promote and support circular economy initiatives developed in partnerships with local organisations and businesses. Keep It Frome page on FTC website - directory for organisations supporting circular economy. Work to find a location for a reuse centre is being progressed through our Asset &amp; Service Devolution project.</p>
	<p>Liaising with renewable energy companies to get the best deal for individuals and businesses in Frome. Database of energy companies and key players in development. Beginning the process of cataloguing and assessing the best deals.</p>
<p>Rolling out renewables</p>	<p>Business - mapping and documenting businesses in Frome – noting those with the best roofs for solar. Will manage the spreadsheet of businesses and contact them – identifying the person responsible for energy. Plan to identify 3 – 10 energy companies</p>

	that offer solar installation deals, negotiate the best possible deal, and put together a dossier of offers.
Provide (subject to funding) through the Green & Healthy Frome Partnership, Healthy Homes, Evaluation, Cycle Together & Fair Frome projects	As below –
Develop the ability for residents and communities to save on energy bills and retrofit their homes through the Healthy Homes programme, and creating a street level retrofit project (subject to CAF funding)	Joanna Morris (Resilience Officer), Matt Mellen in partnership with CSE and others are working together to engage the community in insulating and retrofitting their homes to enable people to save money on their energy bills.
Cycle Together	In 2023/24, FTC entered into an agreement with Frome Community Bike Project to deliver Cycle Together and the hire of e-bikes and other services are now delivered by them. 8 new e-bikes have been purchased with Lottery funding considerably expanding the resource. See below for further details of Cycle Together.
Evaluation	The Climate Action Researcher (Owen King) has put in place a process for evaluating all the partners’ work and is supporting other FTC strands that require evaluation. See below for further details.
GHF partnership	FTC and partners, Edventure and Frome Medical Practice succeeded in securing £1.7m for the period up to 2026 to deliver Green & Healthy Frome project. In 2023/24, the team at FTC has been expanded and now includes a 4 day per week evaluation role and Home Energy Advice Volunteer Coordinator.
Develop a new and ambitious town-wide adaptation and mitigation strategy	The process of evaluating and extending GHF, engaging Frome with a series of events (including an adaptation workshop), running the Vision the Future Process, developing a Climate Action Working Group and a Climate Action Fund are all steps towards the development of the new Climate Action Plan. These processes aim to include diverse communities in the town and ensure the actions taken are decided upon with a consensus. A plan is being developed to engage harder to reach groups.

## Green & Healthy Frome (GHF) Programme delivery update

The evaluation update (Q5 – June 2024) prepared for the Climate Action Fund of the Lottery is appended to this update. Below is a summary of key developments.

### Healthy Homes - Community Retrofit

Resilience Officer Jo is working alongside volunteer co-ordinator Caroline. Since Caroline has been working with the team, the reach of the project has increased, and we have successfully piloted new energy advice ‘pop-ups’ around Frome. The plan is to extend Caroline’s role to March 2026 which will be entirely funded by the Lottery. Demand for energy advice tends to drop during the warmer months, however this has provided an opportunity for the team to develop an engagement plan which enables staff and volunteers to educate other organisations about Healthy Homes (to increase signposting and referrals) alongside satellite working in partner agencies and outreach to communities. Our partner, CSE continues to provide a helpline service, volunteer training and advice sessions.

### Retrofit - Frome Town Council

Sally Richards, Community Retrofit Lead, has now left Frome Town Council. The assessments she was carrying out have now been shortened and simplified (from 70 pages to 20) and will now be carried out by CSE. We are repurposing the budget for Sally’s salary to offer new kinds of support to homeowners – shifting attention from getting assessments done to helping ensure work is carried out on homes.

### Cycle Together - Frome Community Bike Project (sub-contract with Frome Town Council)

During the summer months Emma and the team at Frome Community Bike Project have seen high seasonal demand and feedback for the project has been very positive (see Evaluation Report)- with participants reporting that social connection in group activity is important to them. As the project progresses it has been possible to track uptake of the offer (free e-bike loans, social rides, maintenance workshop and cycle confidence classes) so that the programme can be adjusted to meet demand in the future. The Bike Project is often found at community venues and events promoting their work - and they continue to develop their business model as a CIC towards a sustainable business model beyond the CAF grant.

### Choosing Wisely (Frome Medical Practice)

Choosing Wisely continues to pilot multiple innovative projects with Frome Medical Practice Sustainability and Evaluation Lead Richard leading on design and delivery. Evaluation of the pain clinic and ‘show me your meds’ has been positive and already changes have been made at practice level, e.g. ensuring that repeat prescriptions are clinically reviewed rather than automatic via pharmacies. Following taster sessions in green social prescribing for staff, a pilot is being rolled out for patients. Frome Medical Practice achieved a PMA award this autumn for Sustainability in General Practice and remains a pathfinder for other practices - currently focused on Somerset Integrated Care Board but with plans for a national learning platform - a key element of our Beyond Frome work package.

### Green Connectors (Frome Medical Practice)

In July, our CAF portfolio officer Nichola attended the Green Impact for Health Conference, organised by GHF's Charlotte Carson. The conference attracted 60 attendees with speakers from Frome, across Somerset and the UK - a great boost to our Beyond Frome work package. Attendees praised the event for its inspirational content: "The event gave a real sense of momentum, with professionals from across the country linking up to amplify climate action in healthcare." The focus of Charlotte's work during this six-month period has been on developing awareness of the links between health and climate in Frome Medical Practice and amongst wider health professionals - part of our learning from Y1 is that the Green Connector programme now has a greater impact in health than community settings. Charlotte has delivered Green Connector workshops in primary care across Somerset and online, co-ordination of the Frome Nature Prescribing Group and promoting community and GHF activities via internal comms and the Community Development meeting at the Practice. Charlotte is a key contributor to the Somerset Greener Practice Network and is setting up a Mighty Networks platform for future shared learning.

### Storytelling (Edventure)

Comms Lead Annabel has been leading on a brand refresh which means that we now have a more engaging and animated 'look and feel' for Green and Healthy Frome. We are relaunching our website this autumn so have been working hard to think about how to communicate with our public and professional audiences with clear user journeys based on co-benefits and motivations. Our film making partner Alex Doe has produced a wide range of engaging short films and trained up our staff and community members in film making. Regular comms are ongoing including newsletters, blogs, press and socials where we are mapping activity to understand our impact. Co-ordination of comms across the partnership is strengthening. We are very excited about Edventure's Comms for Change course which started at Edventure in October 2024. 12 participants signed up and will be working with us to develop and pilot comms campaigns until March 2025.

### Beyond Frome (Project Wide)

See above for the Green Impact for Health conference at Frome Medical Practice. Other Beyond Frome highlights in the last six months include an invitation to present GHF to South Gloucestershire Local Authority Climate and Nature Emergency Community Engagement event, two hours with our local MP Anna Sabine who has since followed up with an offer to support Plastic Free. Period during environmental week and a visit to neighbouring LA Bath and Northeast Somerset to showcase our Healthy Homes programme and learning.

### Future Shed Residencies (Edventure)

Future Shed's Y2 residencies have been incredibly successful to date. Everyone Needs Pockets (textile reuse network) has completed their Sustainable Fashion Week programme, Back to Nature has both completed a series of successful workshops and the Seed Library continues with a year-round programme of engagement. Frome Food Network's Canteen project launches this autumn and Superroots green and healthy play programme is in the development

phase. Future Shed funded a smaller flax growing project with Sewing the Seeds which included workshops which were sold out.

#### Evaluation (Frome Town Council)

Project Evaluation Lead Owen continues to work on regular monitoring and survey work across work strands - please see accompanying Evaluation Report to end June 2024. This financial year Owen's focus has been on formative feedback to the work strands, using data from Year 1 and ongoing to identify learning and recommendations. Due to the diverse nature of our project, Owen is moving towards a more organic and narrative approach to collecting qualitative data alongside analysis of survey outcomes. Owen has also been writing brilliant blogs which connect our project to the wider world and tackle key issues around climate and health.