

CLIMATE ACTION

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 (Technical)

BOARD MEMBERS REPRESENTED ON THE GROUP

- Ben Dent
- Rosie Pearson
- Martin Brown
- Graham Hopkins
- Isabel Ross
- Katherine Chesson

RECORD OF MEETINGS

Working Group meetings this FY:

- 29 August 2024 – online (Reviewing climate action priorities and update on National Lottery bids)

Relevant meetings this FY:

- 1 August 2024 – Climate Action Working Group Management Plan feedback

OTHER ACTIVITY

1. Woodland Opportunity Mapping

The 3Keel report identified land use and land management as the priority area for the period 2024-28. Within this, commissioning a woodland and hedgerow opportunity mapping exercise for the area of CNL was highlighted as the highest priority action. Consequently, getting this work underway has been a focus of the previous three months.

Over the summer, a series of meetings with LUC Consultants have taken place, alongside a detailed data request from local authorities within CNL. An inception meeting was held with LUC Consultants on 22 August, and the project officially begun on 2 September. The aim is to complete the project in time to contribute to the 2025-30 Management Plan and create an opportunity map that reflects the special qualities of CNL. This map will help establish a more feasible woodland creation target compared to that presented by the SWC pathway to Net Zero. It will be funded by a grant from Gloucestershire CC (£28k) and the Defra Uplift Funding.

This work will be a key component of a future land use strategy, alongside regenerative agriculture and broader nature recovery initiatives. The strategy will seek to understand what the potential of these elements are, and how they can contribute to both the journey to Net Zero and climate adaptation in CNL.

2. Getting to know the landscape, people and stakeholders

As I am new to the role and the landscape, meeting and developing relationships with climate leaders across the CNL has been a significant focus since May. I have met with various climate leads, building new relationships and gaining an understanding of the work already taking place on climate action throughout the landscape. These meetings have been instrumental in developing a list of climate action areas, with relevant stakeholders identified for each.

3. Climate Action Co-Ordinator (Graduate)

Alice Whitehead will be joining us on 7 October as the new Climate Action Co-Ordinator. Alice will focus on creating a CNL Carbon Footprint and work alongside Fred on engaging stakeholders across the transport and food and drink sectors. Alice's addition to the team will bring new energy and knowledge, having recently completed an MSc in Climate Change Science and Management.

4. Management Plan and Climate Adaptation Plan

Fred has contributed draft text to the initial versions of the 2025-30 iteration of the CNL Management Plan and will continue refining the policies in upcoming drafts. A priority leading up to Christmas will be to begin scoping out the best approach to applying the National Landscape Association's Climate Adaptation Framework to the CNL. The ambition is to create a new climate adaption plan to form part of the overall Management Plan.

DECISIONS REQUIRED

- None

NEXT STEPS

- Develop a Cotswolds Climate Adaptation Plan
- On board Alice Whitehead

SUPPORTING PAPERS

- None

SEPTEMBER 2024