

CLIMATE CRISIS COMMITMENT

Summary: To present 'Our Climate Crisis Commitment: A Net Zero Carbon Landscape' for Board discussion.

Recommendation: That the Board supports the commitment and the process.

Report by: Ben Dent – Board Member
Mark Connelly – Land Management Lead

INTRODUCTION

1. In 2020 a Climate Change Working Group was established to update the Climate Change Strategy, written in 2012.
2. The group included Board Members, Officers and external support/ expertise.
3. The strategy should have been completed and presented to the Board for adoption at this meeting. However, with Mark Connelly's time being dominated by launching the new Farming in Protected Landscapes programme and getting a completely new team in place, there hasn't been time to conduct any consultation on the draft strategy. This will now be completed in late autumn, ahead of seeking formal Board adoption at the February 2022 Board meeting.

OUR COMMITMENT

4. With the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference, known as COP26, being held in Glasgow in November the focus on the global climate crisis will become even sharper and more urgent.
5. Opposing all climate mitigation activities is unrealistic and, to attempt to, risks us being marginalised.
6. A multi-national joint statement of protected and conserved areas is currently being drafted and will be signed on our behalf by the National Association of AONBs.
7. At our recent Forward Planning Day the climate crisis was identified as one of the top priorities for our organisation and for the future of our landscape. A need to become more 'carbon literate' was unanimously agreed, e.g. what is the current GHG emissions within the CNL? What are the optimal ways of reducing emissions and storing/ capturing carbon while respecting our statutory duties of conserving and enhancing? How can we influence and work with partners to achieve the desired outcomes?
8. Our draft commitment, shown in Appendix A, proposes that we seek the required resources and funding, including the recruitment of a Net-Zero Landscape Officer for a fixed term, to undertake this process and facilitate trialling some initial concepts.
9. This would lead to achievable 'net zero' goals being set and reflected in the next Management Plan (2023-28); as we committed to doing in the 2019 Colchester Declaration of AONBs.

SUPPORTING PAPERS

- Appendix A – Our Climate Crisis Commitment: A Net Zero Carbon Landscape

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