

Zero Carbon and Doubling Nature Action Plan Annual Review 2022-23

Appendix 4 - Zero Carbon Communities Grant Scheme

The Zero Carbon Communities Grant scheme is in its fifth year. Over the course of the first four rounds a total of £415,959 of funding has been awarded to 61 projects as follows:

Round 1: £120, 959. 19 projects

- Categories were Nature, Cycling and Other
- 5 projects under the Nature category
- 8 under the Cycling category
- 6 under the Other category, including anti-vandal water dispensers to reduce single use plastic at Melbourne Village College, a plastic free pop-up shop at Gamlingay and several education/training schemes.
- Two projects received funding of £15,000, Cambridge Carbon Footprint for their Net Zero Now training scheme and Cambridge Sustainable Food for their 'Food our Future' campaign.

Round 2: £94, 660. 17 projects

- Categories were Nature, Cycling and Community Buildings
- 10 projects funded under the Nature category
- 5 cycling projects were funded
- 2 projects were funded for Community Buildings
- Two projects received grants of £15,000, St John the Evangelist Parish Church for the installation of solar panels and an air source heat pump, and Milton Cycling for the installation of secure bike shelters.

Round 3: £79, 796. 13 projects

- Categories were Community Buildings, Nature and Other
- 3 projects funded under Community Buildings
- 7 projects funded under nature, including Willingham wildflower meadow and hedgerow (see photos)

- 3 projects under Other, including website setup costs for Bassingbourn-based Zero Carbon Collective

Round 4: £120,544. 13 projects

- New categories: reducing carbon emissions/locking up carbon, and community engagement around climate change
- 8 projects funded under the first category – emphasis on community buildings retrofits and upgrades, see photos of Cottenham Village Hall Solar PV
- 5 under community engagement - Sheddit! mobile library of things, Sustainable Northstowe funded £1,551 to secure their projects, events and engagement with the community for the next 3 years

The Grant Scheme has now re-launched for a fifth round, with an increased pot of £125,000. Non-profit organisations and parish councils can bid for £1000-£15,000 for a project that reduces carbon emissions or locks up carbon, or a project that engages the community around climate change.

An application support workshop was held on 26 April, featuring advice from South Cambs officers, Cambridge Council for Voluntary Service and Harston Village Hall Trust (a previous awardee). The event was well-attended and will hopefully result in 7/8 further applications to the grant scheme. Applications close 2 June and the awards will be announced in July.

Photos of Previous Projects:



Round 3: Willingham wildflower meadow and hedgerow



Six Free Trees

In the 2022-23 Six Free Trees Scheme, 49 Parish Councils across the District applied and received either 1 large tree or 6 whips to plant in an area for general community benefit.

In the 2023-24 Scheme we hope to onboard at least 50 Parish Councils.

Online and In Person Events

We are keen to re-establish our Green Connect seminars as quarterly networking and knowledge-sharing events for Zero Carbon Communities. We have identified Cambridge County Council's Swaffham Prior Heat Network for an in-person visit – this would be to raise the profile of air and ground source heat pumps and scalable local energy solutions.

Newsletter

The Zero Carbon Communities newsletter is a digital newsletter with distribution list of over 600 individuals. The most recent edition (published in April) publicised the ZCC grant scheme and the Community Chest, celebrated the successes of the EVCP grant and the Six Free Trees scheme, and appealed for Repair Café volunteers. Feedback from the newsletter was excellent.

Social Media

We continue to use the Zero Carbon Communities Facebook page to publicise the grant scheme. In the week following the launch, daily posts profiled a previous project funded under the scheme, which saw the highest engagement in the page's history. We co-ordinate with Comms to disseminate ZCC news across the SCDC Facebook page, Instagram and twitter feeds.