



# Devizes Community Green Pledge

The Community's Response to the Climate Emergency

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Distribution:

Wiltshire Council  
Devizes Town Council  
Devizes School Climate Network  
CUDS  
The Healthy Living Co  
Wiltshire Wildlife Trust  
Devizes and Marlborough XR

This paper is being sent out to a limited audience to test interest and support. However, feel free to pass it on to others who may be interested.

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## The Community's Response to the Climate Emergency

### 1. Introduction

#### 1.1. Background

At the Devizes Area Board in January '20 the planned agenda item on Wiltshire Council (WC) declaration of the Climate Emergency was cut short. The Area Board proposes that the agenda at the next Area Board on 16 March ' 20 will be devoted largely to the climate emergency. This paper is an attempt to put forward a coherent community proposal into the next Devizes Area Board.

The assessment of the [Wiltshire Climate Alliance](#) is that the WC response to the climate emergency is insufficient. Notwithstanding this assessment the leverage that WC can exert on organisations and individuals through their [Green Pledge](#) is limited. The limitation of the Green Pledge is that individuals are asked to sign up online to one or more items on a list. While the list is a legitimate set of climate emergency actions it has limited visibility, there is no measure of its success thus limiting its effectiveness.

This paper contends that as much action must come from local communities as from local government.

#### 1.2. Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to propose a community based green pledge for Devizes to provoke debate and community based action to tackle the challenges of climate change, over consumption, waste and the impact of humans on the environment and ecology.

### 2. The Pledge

#### 2.1. Concept

Rather than individuals and organisations selecting from a list of actions which have no monitoring for effectiveness and may be hard to sustain, they are asked to support one or more community sponsored initiatives.

## 2.2. Initiatives

The initiatives would tackle specific themes, have targets and be managed by a community group. Individuals and organisations will be asked to pledge their support through volunteering time, donations or taking actions that contribute to the initiative's target. The communication and celebration of the success of meeting the targets will foster community spirit to get behind climate emergency action and raise awareness and change attitudes.

## 2.3. Principles

It is proposed that the pledge be guided by a number of principles:

- Pledge is owned by the whole community [get as many organisations, groups, and individuals to sign up]
- The individual items on the pledge must be achievable.
- The pledge must be monitored so that it can be understood what works, what doesn't work and success can be celebrated. Key to the pledge is sustaining and generating additional support through celebrating success as a community.
- The pledge is not static and it will be an evolutionary process.
- The pledge is not a method of judging/condemning - it must be inclusive.
- The pledge is not a protest organisation nor is it partisan. However that does not exclude it from campaigning for local government action.
- The initiatives underpinning the pledge must be sustainable [is there a place for short campaign to highlight particular items of the pledge].

# 3. Setting Up The Pledge

## 3.1. Community Ownership

This proposal is put forward by the group [Sustainable Devizes](#) but other groups may have equally valid ideas. The first step is to canvas local groups and formulate the Devizes Green Pledge and then launch it. This will require a meeting/workshop ideally prior to the next Area Board which [Sustainable Devizes](#) will organise.

One way of gaining momentum within the community will be to develop a joint vision for the pledge.

## 3.2. Start Small

There are already some initiatives or proposed initiatives which can be promoted under a banner of the Devizes Green Pledge which provide a starting point:

- The [Clean Up Devizes Squad](#) (CUDS) work to keep Devizes clean and the planting of wildflowers.
- The [Sustainable Devizes](#) proposed Repair Cafe.
- The [Devizes Clothing Exchange](#)
- [Sustainable Devizes](#) Seed Swap
- Devizes Transport Plan to improve air quality by making key road junctions work better. Eg Windsor Drive scheme in 2018 and the next scheme: Shanes Castle
- [The Healthy Living Co](#) health food shop initiative: Sustainable Development Action Plan (SDAP) for the High Street and Business Community.
- Use the [Devizes Outdoor and Celebratory Arts](#) (DOCA) commitment to phase out plastics at their events and participate in their events to promote the Devizes Green Pledge.

## 3.3. Extending The Initiatives

Once the first initiatives have proved successful the aim will be to extend these and start up new initiatives. Depending on the scale and ambition of new initiatives they could be run as limited pilots to assess their viability.

To manage this, maintaining and extending support will require some form of organisation and governance. This will need agreement and support of the sponsoring groups which needs to be explored at the initial workshop.

## 4. Summary

- This paper proposes a community based Devizes Green Pledge.
- The document is intended to provoke discussion amongst interested parties.
- It is proposed:
  - That individuals and organisations commit to supporting community based initiatives

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- The initiatives have targets and are managed so that the community can measure and celebrate success.
- There are a number of initiatives that can be used as the start point.
- There will need to be some form of organisation and governance to manage the Pledge.
- Provided there is support for this proposal a workshop will be organised to develop the concept and plan the implementation.