

LOCAL CLIMATE

ENGAGEMENT

CASE STUDY



Local Community workshops in Fife to support communities to take action on climate change

Executive Summary

[Fife Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019](#) and approved its updated Climate Fife Strategy in March 2024. The Big Community Move is part of the wider [Climate Fife Strategy and Action Plan](#) which outlines key actions for the next four years. The council is working with communities to support them to take climate action. Local community workshops were held across 7 areas in Fife. The workshops asked the questions:

- What matters to you?
- What climate actions would you like to take?
- How can the local authority support you in taking these actions?

Challenges highlighted and community priorities for action from the workshops will be presented to the 7 local People and Place meetings intending to inform work to tackle barriers and facilitate more climate actions in each of those 7 places. The 7 People and Place Groups involve a mix of Council staff, representatives of partner organisations, and some include local tourism representatives, businesses and other organisations. Each People and Place Group will be asked what they can do to address the community feedback in their local area. Examples from the community include the need for local tool libraries and community gardens and community fridges to minimise food waste while addressing food poverty. Inside the Local Authority and with public and third sector colleagues, there is work underway to understand and

tackle barriers that communities face to taking climate actions, such as new policy development, changes to existing policies or improving processes to support communities in taking climate action.

Background

Location	7 areas across Fife
Project Timeline:	March 2024 – ongoing until review in 2027
Key Partners:	Fife Council
Challenge:	Supporting communities to take action on climate

No. participants	117 people got engaged across 7 workshops
Recruitment, in brief	Advertised via social media and through Climate Action Fife, Fife Climate Hub, and other community groups. The local authority partnered with the Coalfield Regeneration Trust engagement officer to develop the workshop materials as well as delivery of the workshops.
Days of dialogue/ deliberation	3-4 hour workshops in each of 7 areas

Objectives

[Fife Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019](#) and approved its first [Climate Fife: Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan 2020-2030](#) in February 2020. [The Climate Fife 2024 Strategy and Action Plan](#) updated and prioritised actions up to 2027 and reflects Fife Council's adaptive approach to the changing climate, outlining the actions Fife Council is committed to taking over the next four years, and addressing the need for more transformative changes through the three "Big Moves." The Big Community Move states: "we will transform our approach to supporting community climate action, empowering our communities to transform local food, waste, transport, and energy generation systems to create community wealth and wellbeing." This plan outlines key actions for the next four years, including creating greener spaces, adopting sustainable travel options, and reducing waste, acknowledging the need for systems change leading to delivery and transformation.

Fife Council wants to facilitate more community climate action by:

- Supporting local communities to identify challenges or barriers to them taking action on climate by asking the questions:
 - What matters to you?
 - What climate actions would you like to take?
 - How can the Local Authority support you in taking these actions?
- Engage community members to co-create climate solutions and develop local community projects
- Work with public and third sector partners to tackle the barriers and facilitate progress of the opportunities identified.

To further support community action, the council works closely with local groups to create climate-informed community plans. These are designed by communities, for communities. This support comes in many forms including 1:1 conversations, workshops, online training,

presentations to community councils and other interested groups. The goal is to help communities navigate the changing climate and make a difference at the local level, and to integrate that with regeneration or developments in their local place by creating and sharing their own plans.

Approach & Methodology

- **Engagement Methods:** 3-4 hour local community workshops across 7 areas were held in community spaces. These were held during the middle of day and food was provided. Earth Charter cards were used as an icebreaker and introduction, which were received positively and acted as a great starter for the workshops. Participants then received presentations on climate change and the background to the workshops. Participants brainstormed potential climate actions in their local area, which were then clustered into themes. They joined discussions about the themes that interested them most and worked through a climate and place toolkit designed in partnership with Coalfield Regeneration Trust, specifically for this series of workshops. The sessions actively facilitated broad discussions of local challenges and opportunities, using Earth Charter cards as prompts to identify more focused opportunities suited to the places they live and work.

There will be an event in November 2025 to feedback to participants and wider community.

- **Inclusive Practices:** All participants were asked when they registered if they needed support to attend. Venues all had disability access. Dietary requirements were also catered for. Translation was offered. Free food was provided although no payment for participation was offered. Earth cards have visuals as well as words to enable understanding. Maps were used to prompt ideas about the places being discussed.
- **Innovations:** A service design approach was introduced to the communities, utilising ideation and mapping techniques to initiate the conversation.

Key Outcomes

This section summarises the key results and impacts of the engagement effort, using data, where available, to highlight successes.

- **Community Reach:** Participants were diverse in terms of age, sexual orientation, caring responsibilities and disability, although less so on other categories, such as ethnic group. 15-20 participants attended most workshops, however, on one occasion only one person attended. Approximately 60% of participants worked with local communities and the remaining 40% were community members – although there is some overlap in these categories.
- **Climate Impact:** Challenges highlighted and community priorities for action from the workshops will be presented to the 7 local People and Place meetings who will be asked what they can do as a local leadership group to address the community asks and feedback. Examples include local tool libraries, community gardens and community fridges. Inside the Local Authority, a comprehensive process is underway to create new policies or amend existing ones to better support communities in taking climate action. This initiative is driven by the climate impacts proposed through recent workshops, which covered a broad range of topics. The goal is to inform efforts to tackle barriers and facilitate more climate actions in each of these seven areas. One example currently being examined is the barriers communities face when hoping to start community growing projects on education-owned land. The aim is to create an environment where communities are empowered and equipped to take meaningful climate actions.
- **Social Impact:** A Place Plan is being developed by the council and feedback from these sessions will be taken into consideration during the development. A number of community groups and the Council and NHS staff who participated in workshops are involved in informing formal local community plans and project development. These workshops highlighted the relevance of climate action to their priorities for area regeneration, tackling poverty, health and wellbeing and more, making climate actions with co-benefits much more appealing to their future community engagements. Internal to the authority these workshops are being seen as an example of good practice around community engagement, using a mix of presentations, discussions and visualisation to help people to participate and

feel an important part of solutions. The feedback day in November is being planned to continue that involvement and empowerment of local people to take climate actions.

- **Organisational impact:** A member of the leadership team from Fife Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) who attended one of the workshops, was impressed by what she learned about the relationship between climate and health. As a next step in the partnership between NHS Fife and Fife Council, the whole leadership team of Fife HSCP will receive a workshop to discuss climate action and promote carbon literacy training. This will inform their own Health and Social Care Climate Action Plan, integrating climate actions to improving health and wellbeing in Fife and how those services are delivered.

Challenges & Lessons Learned

A significant number of participants at the workshops were people who worked with local communities rather than local people themselves. In order to overcome this the local authority will look at how it communicates engagement events in future. They are planning to build more links into local communities and draw upon these to reach people with communications.

Lunch time sessions with food provided attracted significant numbers of people but may have excluded others. Offering multiple sessions with different timings would allow different sectors of local communities to be involved but would increase staff resource for delivery. For one workshop – only 1 person turned up out of 20 registered. Non-attendees were asked why they could not attend, however there was no common barrier identified, and each person had different issues preventing their participation.

Young people were under-represented at the workshops. The council are working with an organisation which hosts a youth group to develop an additional workshop specifically for young people.

Using the word climate in communications was not as effective as linking climate to issues which concern communities such as poverty or health or known flooding issues. Emphasising the co-benefits of taking climate action will interest a wider group of people, including those who may be sceptical of climate change. In future communications messages will take a more personal approach focusing on 'What is important to you and your place'.

Communicating for impact

Below are examples of the communications Fife Council and partners used to reach potential participants:

Fife Council 17 February · 🌐

Want to get involved and help shape your local area? The Climate Place Workshops are your opportunity to take action. We're hosting climate workshops to empower local communities. At the workshops, we:

- Explore what a climate-ready Fife looks like and tackle local challenges.
- Highlight inspiring success stories from other communities.
- Provide information on practical support, from climate literacy training to tree planting initiatives.

Workshops cover a range of key topics including greener spaces, waste reduction, active travel, health and wellbeing, local food systems and recovering from extreme weather events. Whether you're new to climate action or already involved, there's something for everyone. You can also read more in a blog in Tatiana Zorina, Public Sector Engagement Officer, on the [Climate Action Fife](https://www.climateactionfife.org.uk/empowering-climate...) website <https://www.climateactionfife.org.uk/empowering-climate...>

This is a chance to share ideas, shape priorities, and take steps toward positive change in your community.

Our final workshops are in Cowdenbeath on Thurs 20 Feb and Cupar on Thurs 27 Feb. If you'd like to take part, or find out about future workshops, please sign up through our online form that is in the comments.

CLIMATE PLACE WORKSHOP



Fife Communities Climate Action Network and Fife Climate Hub 26 December 2024 · 🌐

🌱 Fife Climate Place Workshops 🌱

We are joining **Fife Council** on their Climate Place Workshops to explore the unique relationship between climate and place. These workshops are your chance to contribute to the delivery of the Climate Fife Strategy and shape impactful community climate actions.

📅 Upcoming Dates and Locations:

- 📍 13 Jan – Leven, Balmaise Community Centre Hall
- 📍 20 Jan – Dunfermline, Abbeyview
- 📍 29 Jan – Tayport, Larick Centre
- 📍 4 Feb – Glenrothes, Collydean Community Centre
- 📍 11 Feb – Kirkcaldy, Templehall Community Centre
- 📍 20 Feb – Cowdenbeath, Leisure Centre
- 📍 27 Feb – Cupar, Cupar YMCA

👉 What to Expect:

- ✓ Learn about the climate emergency and place-based solutions
- ✓ Discover the Climate Tool to plan projects creatively
- ✓ Share ideas and insights to shape your community's climate action
- ✓ Hear how Fife Climate Hub supports communities

This is your chance to think creatively, connect with others, and spark real change in Fife. Let's make a difference together! 🌱

👉 Find out more: <https://fccan.org.uk/.../event-fc-fife-climate-place.../>

#ClimateAction #CommunityResilience #FifeClimateHub #FifeEvents



Fife Council 16,654 followers 2mo · 🌐

Help shape your local environment! Are you passionate about your local environment? Over the next few weeks, we're hosting climate workshops across Fife to create a more sustainable and resilient future. Join us to:

- Explore a climate ready Fife and tackle local climate challenges
- Identify opportunities for climate action
- Access practical support, from climate literacy training to tree planting!

We'll cover key topics like greener spaces, waste reduction, active travel, health and wellbeing, local food systems, and recovering from extreme weather events. Come along to share your ideas and shape priorities for change in your community. To Have your say and book in, please visit: <https://lnkd.in/eZQsqm5D>

CLIMATE PLACE WORKSHOP



Since the end of the engagement, work has begun to review the vast amount of feedback received from our communities. Meetings are being arranged with area-based People and Place Groups to discuss how some of the feedback can be addressed breaking down silos and focussing on impacts on a place, and to inform further area planning. On a council-wide level, we are looking to see what policy and process changes we

need to make to address the community feedback and to enable more climate action within our communities. An event is being organized for November this year to provide feedback to Fife communities on the actions already taken, the next steps of the Big Community Move, and the wider work around the Climate Fife Strategy. This event will be an opportunity to showcase the progress made, address any concerns, and outline future plans to ensure continued community involvement and empowerment for climate action initiatives.

Key Takeaways & Recommendations

- Ensure funding, skill and staff capacity is available for inclusive practices such as paying participants for travel or providing childcare.
- Think about how engagement is communicated. Communities are often more interested in the co-benefits of taking climate action rather than the issue of climate change. Explain the relevance of issues like poverty or health when communicating with communities.
- Offer multiple ways to engage and enable people to share their thoughts, for example, presentations with questions and answers, small group discussions, visual hints such as pictures and maps.
- Plan ahead on the timing (season, day of week, time of day) to give options on when is suitable for community members to engage.
- Be prepared to act on inputs, to tackle any barriers identified, and to give communities ways they can stay engaged for longer term build-up of empowerment and community capacity to take climate action.

Additional Resources & References

[Earth Charter in Action - Powering a global movement](#)

[Overcoming the World's Challenges - The Global Goals](#)

[Place Standard tool | Our Place](#)

[Climate and Place Toolkit](#)

[Climate Action Fife | Empowering climate action in Fife](#)

Contact Information

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