THAME GREEN LIVING PLAN

A 10-year plan for a cleaner, greener Thame

Summer 2020

THAME Town Council

Thame Green Living

How to read this plan

The plan starts with a background section which explains the context, and the main reasons to take action.

After this background the Major Themes of the plan are set out to explain the broad approach. This is followed by a schedule of specific Recommended Actions across five colour-coded focus areas. Finally, there is a brief Actions Summary bringing the key recommendations together.

Who has produced the GLP?

The GLP has been developed over six years by the RSA Thame Group, working as honorary consultants to Thame Town Council and supported by many other individuals and community groups listed in the Acknowledgements.

This plan was formally approved by Thame Town Council on 14th July 2020 and will be taken forward with the support of a new community organisation, proposed to be called Thame Green Living (TGL).

For the sake of brevity this plan does not duplicate the detail of the previous 2018 plan, which set out the basis for the consultation which informed this 2020 plan. The 2018 plan remains an important reference and is available at the Thame Green Living Website.

THIS PLAN IS JUST THE START. WITHOUT YOU IT WILL REMAIN JUST A SET OF IDEAS, BY WORKING TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE THE CHANGES WE NEED. IF YOU LIKE THE IDEAS SET OUT IN THIS PLAN AND WOULD LIKE TO BE INVOLVED THEN DO GET IN TOUCH.

Visit the Thame Green Living website
www.thamegreenliving.org.uk

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CONTENTS

GREEN LIVING PLAN

A plan to protect and enhance our quality of life locally in the things that really matter – our air, our water, our overall well-being and the natural world that surrounds us.

Why do we need a Green Living Plan (GLP)?

The Green Living Plan (GLP) fills gaps that Neighbourhood Plans[1] can't fully cover. It does this by concentrating on our broader environment and by making connections. These include:

- Connections between short-term and longer-term effects
- Linkages between paths, routes and spaces
- Wildlife corridors that our natural world needs to survive and prosper
- Using renewable energy instead of fossil fuels for heating and transport
- Improving the quality of our air and helping reduce global warming

To help focus, the plan has five colour-coded main areas.

- **Green** for open spaces, biodiversity and walking/cycling routes;
- **Blue** for water – our streams and rivers – and protection from flooding;
- **Grey** for our air and atmosphere – and the effect on air quality and global warming;
- **Red** for alternative (non-fossil fuel) energy, including electric vehicles;
- **Orange** for waste avoidance, waste management and recycling.

"THE GLP FOR THAME IS BELIEVED TO BE AN ORIGINAL APPROACH WHICH, WE HOPE, WILL INSPIRE OTHER TOWNS AND VILLAGES TO ACT SIMILARLY"

Further, while concentrating on Thame the plan explicitly recognises the vital importance of the town's links with its surrounding communities and countryside.

The GLP and Climate Emergency

In 2018 a detailed initial GLP (the 2018 Plan) was published to assist broader consultation and survey, see www.thamegreenliving.org.uk

Since then working groups have examined many of the issues in more detail while increased national and international recognition of environmental and climate challenges has now come to the fore.

These aspects are reflected in this new 2020 Plan which is intended to sit alongside the future editions of the Thame Neighbourhood Plan, with the GLP recommendations incorporated where relevant.

What are the main proposals?

A major shift in our environmental thinking and planning

Tackling climate change by moving from fossil fuel to sustainable green energy

Limiting street-level pollution that damages our health

Stopping the collapse of our natural world from the destruction of habitats and species

Transforming our approach to waste, re-use and recycling

How and how soon will the recommendations be acted on?

Three main factors will affect how quickly the recommendations can be implemented:

Individual actions

What each of us can do right now. Examples include garden planting for biodiversity, changing home heating arrangements, and using our own cars less or sharing them more with others.

Community actions

These depend on groups coming together to work collaboratively on projects such as planting trees, creating communal green spaces or green walls, shared car clubs and community solar energy schemes.

Infrastructure changes

Greater structural changes, typically involving broader public consultation, local authority support and public funding. For example, anything involving roads or car parks will need clear backing from the community and our district and county councils. All this will make timescales more open-ended. But we need to start the process now. Policy initiatives[3] from government and other national bodies already align well with the infrastructure actions proposed in this Green Living Plan.

Some things will take time, but we need to get started **now** to achieve what is required.

How much do we want to change?

Much depends on how people who live or work in Thame react to this plan and their sense of urgency for change. In response to growing concerns, many local authorities have passed Climate Emergency resolutions; this plan provides a blueprint of how our local community will be able to respond in a coherent, practical way across its key focus areas.

The changes we need to make now for our communal longer-term well-being will involve some tough choices. If we believe these are the best way forward, individual and collective action will be required; we can't expect it all to be done for us.

Even if we can't change the politics of other countries directly, local personal and community efforts and success, well communicated, will inspire others. People often respond to cues from others before they change their behaviour: our actions can therefore shape wider opinions, while bringing us local benefits.

"WE BELIEVE THAT THE NEED FOR A GREEN LIVING PLAN – AND TO ACT ON IT – IS GREATER THAN EVER."

MAJOR THEMES

The major themes of the plan are set out in this section. They explain the broad approach to the Green Living Plan.

"IT IS CLEAR THAT WE ARE IN A STATE OF CLIMATE EMERGENCY. WE NEED TO TRANSFORM OUR WHOLE SOCIETY OVER THE NEXT COUPLE OF DECADES. BECAUSE THE SCIENCE IS VERY CLEAR. TIME IS RUNNING OUT."

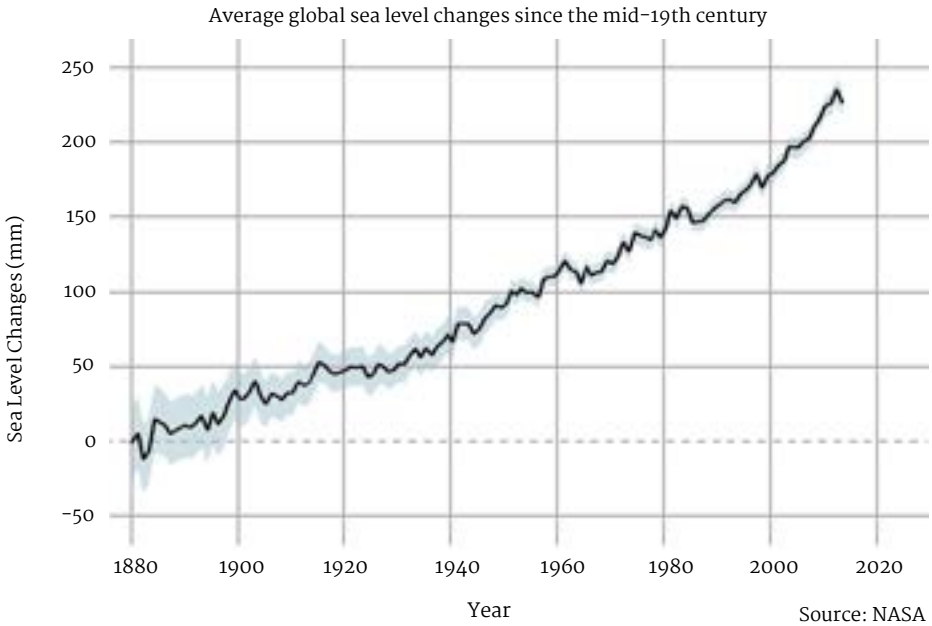
(Dr Emily Shuckborough[3] – Director of Cambridge Zero, University of Cambridge - Autumn 2019)

A new environment in 2020

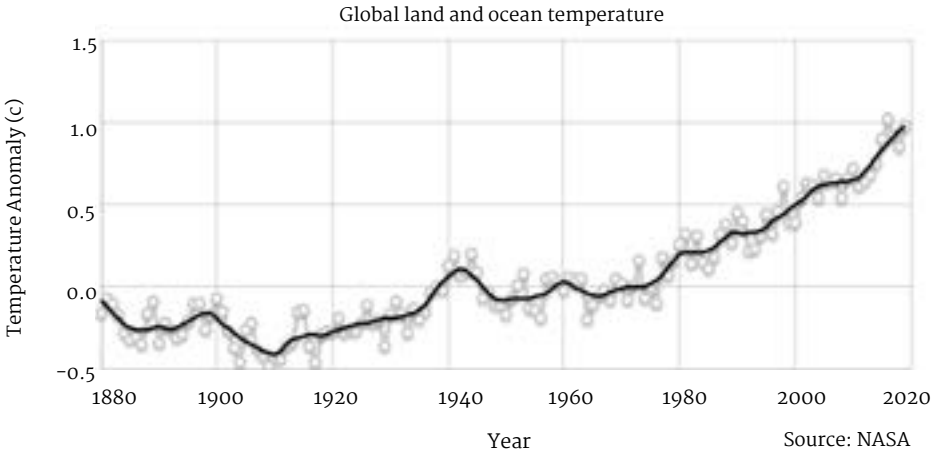
There is widely accepted evidence that human activities are prime contributors to the escalating rise in worldwide temperatures. We see disintegration of ice fields, a steady rise in overall sea levels, and dramatic new weather patterns.

The chart on the right, for example, is data from NASA[4] showing average global sea level changes since the mid-19th century, caused by water from melting ice sheets and glaciers and the expansion of seawater as it warms.

Global land and ocean temperature measurements are shown on the Chart on page 7. Trends in temperature changes are complex to measure, but the overall upward movement can be seen in this Mean Temperatures diagram[5]. Temperature measurements are compared daily to what is 'normal' for that location and time, typically an average over a 30-year period. The differences, plotted here, are termed 'anomalies'.



Source: NASA



This GLP is, however, not just about climate change. It's also about the quality of life in our streets, our homes and our communities. As things stand, we are not just clogging our upper atmosphere with greenhouse gases but harming ourselves at street level too.

INDIVIDUALLY WE WORRY ABOUT OUR FUTURE, BUT DO WE CARE ENOUGH TO ACT?

Polls suggest that, despite compelling scientific evidence, warnings and increasing levels of concern, most people remain uncertain as to what can and should be done. The result is that anxiety levels increase but behaviours remain largely unchanged.

Even so, it's not all bad news. For example, some species are making a comeback; green energy use is increasing, and technology is bringing down the cost of renewable power sources. Positive initiatives can also be seen from community groups and government bodies, including cleaner transport systems and new approaches to home heating.

Overall, however, the message is clear; we can't afford to go on as we are. We need to make major changes – and demonstrate our commitment with practical actions.

There are some things we can change locally, and others we can't. This plan identifies what we can do and how we can support one another to do so and make a real difference. Thame can contribute not only by helping tackle climate change locally but by leading the way in inspiring other communities too. Role models can be powerful at both town level and among individuals.

The need to act

We need to act, but first need an agreed plan to understand why and how, so that we act in a concerted way. That will require changes in thinking and behaviour.

CHANGE WILL NOT HAPPEN OVERNIGHT, BUT IF WE WAIT FOR EVERYONE ELSE OR UNTIL WE ARE COMPELLED TO CHANGE, IT MAY BE TOO LATE TO SAVE WHAT WE VALUE MOST.

There is much we can do now and much else that will take time. So, this plan takes both a short-term and longer-term approach, combining immediate projects with a ten-year action plan. We need to take steps now and also decide between some critical options before implementing the changes that will be required – well within that ten-year period.

Fossil fuels and renewable energy: An introduction

Before we can reduce our contributions to greenhouse gases that add to climate change, we need to understand what they are and where they come from. A major cause is use of fossil fuels.

The fossil fuels we use most are petroleum products (such as oil, petrol and diesel), coal and natural gas. We may use these directly, for example as fuel in our cars, or indirectly, for example through the use of electricity that's generated from these sources.

BP (British Petroleum) figures for 2018[6] suggest that about 85% of global energy used fossil fuels. The mix of global energy sources can be seen in the World Energy Consumption diagram below.

When fossil fuels are used they emit carbon dioxide (CO_2). This rises into the upper atmosphere as a 'greenhouse gas' and may remain there for 100 or more years. The consensus scientific view is that greenhouse gases are major contributors to global warming and climate change.

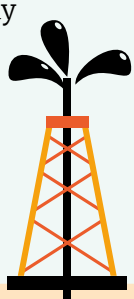
Renewable energy ('renewables' for short) by contrast refers to energy derived from natural resources that we regard as self-sustaining, such as solar, wind and hydro power. The term usually refers to energy used for electricity production. The graph[7] shows a steady rise in global electricity generation (energy[8]) over the last 30 years, with an increasing contribution of renewable energy (the green line in this case). Globally this is now some 25% of electrical energy while, encouragingly, in UK[9] it is nearer 37%.

UK's electricity production from all low carbon electrical energy sources, including nuclear power, is around 54%. There is much still to work for in regard to clean energy, but it is great to see that Britain has leading capabilities. (Technical note: There is a difference between energy and power – explained in endnote ([8]) – which is important for understanding these percentages and the issues to be resolved in moving to yet higher contributions of renewables. These are clean energy sources, but their power output inevitably varies with the conditions of sunshine and wind.)

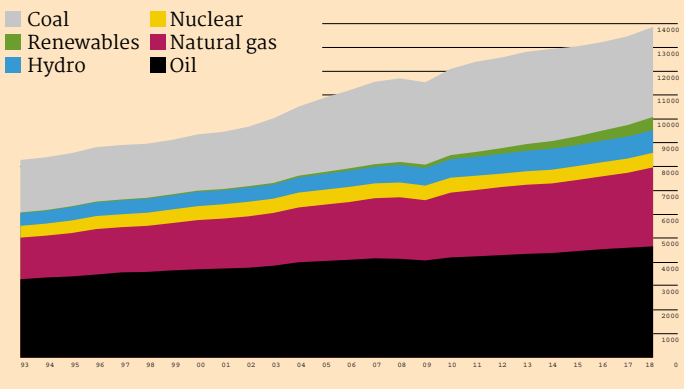
Carbon dioxide and black carbon

The CO_2 which rises as a greenhouse gas is often just called 'carbon.' But there is also so-called black carbon, which is different. This refers to fine particles in the lower atmosphere and at street level known as particulate matter or PM. PM is formed through the incomplete burning of fossil fuels (including oil, diesel and petrol), biofuel and biomass. We might think of it as tiny fragments of soot; but unlike the great dark clouds of the past, black carbon today is usually invisible to the naked eye.

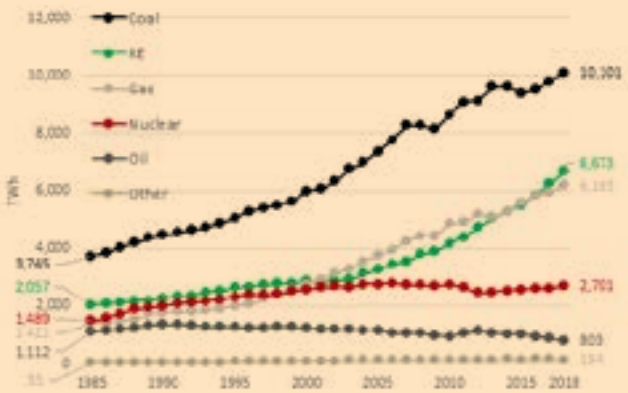
Black carbon also adds to the warming of the earth by absorbing sunlight and heating the atmosphere. The good news is that it dissipates over weeks; the bad news is that in that period it not only adds to global warming but can create air pollution that is toxic to humans and wildlife.



World Energy Consumption
Million Tonnes or equivalent 1993-2018



Trends in Global Electrical Energy Generation
1985 – 2018, as of June 2019



HIGH LEVEL POLLUTION: OUR CARBON FOOTPRINT[10]

Most CO_2 emissions in UK come from our production and use of energy and from our cars, food, household appliances, commercial transport and manufactured goods. Agriculture[11] is also a source of emissions. One of our biggest challenges is therefore to reduce what is called the carbon footprint in our communities.

What is our carbon footprint?

This is the combined weight of greenhouse gases, primarily (but not exclusively) CO_2, released into the upper atmosphere from the carbon-generating activities of individuals, businesses and communities. Various websites enable you to calculate your own carbon footprint.

This affects things that are close to our hearts – our food, our homes, our cars and our holidays. If we are to tackle pollution effectively, we have to address all of these to protect something even more precious, our own well-being and that of future generations.

How much carbon do we produce?

This depends on how the figure is calculated. If the (embodied) carbon from imported goods is excluded the UK average carbon emitted per person has been put at between 6 and 8 tonnes each year[13]. There will of course be considerable variations in individual levels of use. For example, the carbon per person from just *one* long haul return flight to Australia has been estimated at about 5.1. tonnes[14] – close to the *average* personal carbon consumption for a single person for a *whole year*!

For some, such flights are considered an essential to visit family. In other cases, it may be possible to make choices and recognise the real costs incurred by unnecessary travel.

What is carbon neutrality and when should we aim to achieve it?

Some carbon is released naturally, so we cannot eliminate all carbon. Many governmental and local plans therefore now seek to commit to achieving carbon neutrality (often known as net zero) by a specified date – typically anywhere between 2025 and 2050.

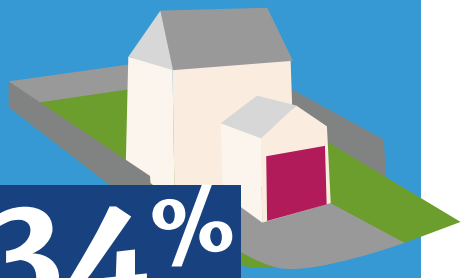
It follows that reaching net zero will mean not just emitting less carbon but also capturing and holding back the carbon which will inevitably continue to be produced. This is carbon capture. We will need to decide as a community when we aspire to reach carbon neutrality and exactly how we plan to do so.

Where does UK carbon come from?

Subject to local variations, estimates for South Oxfordshire (Oct 2019) were:

31%

Commercial and industrial operations



34%

Household

heating, lighting, cooking[12], tumble dryers & cleaning products

35%

Transport

planes, ships, trains, buses, coaches, lorries, vans, cars

WHAT WE CAN DO

It can be seen that there are broadly two ways to lessen carbon – **reduction** or **capture**. Given the urgency we need to pursue both, noting that carbon capture at commercial scale is still in its infancy. In addition, we can **offset** our carbon emissions, typically by making a financial contribution for the carbon we emit. These offsets do not directly reduce carbon emissions but can help fund carbon-capture elsewhere, such as by intensive tree planting.

Reducing our carbon footprint

This plan highlights three big things we can each do to reduce our carbon footprint

1

Change our travel and energy habits to greener options.

2

Change our home heating, such as by better insulation, lower temperature levels, switching to green electricity and/or installing ground or air-source heat pumps

3

Consume more thoughtfully by adapting our consumption and wasting less.

A number of online organisations offer carbon offset services.

Capturing carbon

We can plant trees, which capture carbon through their leaves. But there are limitations.

- We cannot plant enough trees to capture all the carbon we produce [15]
- We need to plant the right kinds of trees – and look after them
- We can't plant trees everywhere; roots can create structural problems, leaf canopies can block light, heavy leaf falls and even tree falls in high winds create other hazards
- We need to avoid over-intense lining of trees in otherwise open areas creating a 'canyon', restricting the dispersal of air pollution

Open spaces and fields around our town planted as woodland or copses can, however, overcome many of these drawbacks, and grants are available for such projects. Some trees are better at carbon capture than others, soil conditions vary, and the height of trees may also be a factor. So, we need to know what's best to plant where and when.

And it's not just trees. Hedges can be ideal both for capturing carbon and providing vital habitats for insects, birds and small mammals, a dual function.

There are also moss or plant-covered 'living walls', highly effective in limited locations. Shrubs can also play a major role, as can simple wildflower meadows.

This links to the issue of maintenance. Nature does need a helping hand at times, so that tree support, soil sustenance, pruning and replacement of any lost plants are essential parts of the overall mix. However, while hedges are best trimmed before nesting time, harsh cutting back can destroy valuable wildlife habitats. So, cutting back the cutting back can give a dual benefit.

MANY PEOPLE CARE DEEPLY ABOUT THE NATURAL WORLD BUT MAY BE DETERRED FROM ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT BY NOT FEELING EMPOWERED, NOT KNOWING ENOUGH, OR NOT WISHING TO INTERFERE

There is a social dimension here too. People care deeply about the natural world but may be deterred from active involvement by not feeling empowered, not knowing enough, or not wishing to interfere. If we can harness this potential energy, research has consistently shown the clear health and well-being benefits of closer links with nature and working together.

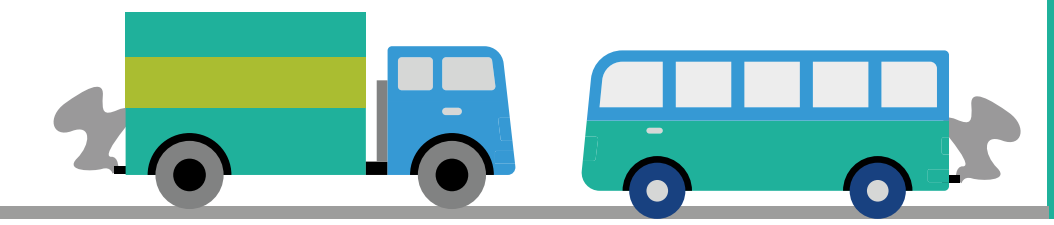
STREET LEVEL POLLUTION AND AIR QUALITY

Quite apart from the growing health hazard of traffic noise, much pollution in our streets and communities is caused by vehicle emissions, both from vehicle exhaust and shards from tyre and brake wear. Whereas petrol exhausts primarily emit CO_2, which contributes to global warming and climate change, diesels produce less CO_2 but emit nitrogen dioxide (NO_2) and particulate matter (PM) as black carbon. The particulates in PM themselves come in different sizes; the smallest are especially dangerous in terms of their ability to be absorbed by and attack our bodies and even our brains, with serious long-term implications.

This is not to demonise cars, but to understand their impact and seek their more responsible use. And it's not just the fact that we may own a petrol or diesel vehicle, but the capacity of its engine, the way we drive and how much we use it that all need to be taken into account. A powerful 4 x 4 can, for example, produce many multiples of the carbon output of a mid-engine car over the same distance. And 20,000 miles a year is obviously likely to produce close to twice as much pollution as 10,000 annual miles.

THIS IS NOT TO DEMONISE CARS, BUT TO UNDERSTAND THEIR IMPACT AND SEEK THEIR MORE RESPONSIBLE USE.

One approach is to call for air quality (AQ) monitors. But there are issues over what they measure and over what periods. In any event, there is no safe level for PM. In the meantime, medical science has produced ever more reports and analyses showing just what damage tiny street level PM particles are doing to so many people. Spending considerable time and resource measuring only part of the problem could therefore just put off implementing a solution.



The importance of clean air

Clean air lies at the heart of a green town – and other benefits of this plan. For example:

- vibrant green spaces give us c**leaner air plus well-being and better mental health**
- good walking and cycling routes give us **opportunities to exercise and keep healthy**
- green (alternative) energy sources **hugely reduce carbon and street-level pollution**
- **buying better, with less packaging and waste** will produce less carbon from the air miles in bringing food to our tables and goods to our homes

Other forms of pollution

There are other forms of pollution that need to be addressed, notably light and noise pollution. Both are factors that can progressively undermine not just human health but also the health of our natural world. Most of this pollution is unnecessary; it's another area where we can do much to improve on current norms with little extra effort.

THAME TOWN CENTRE: TRAVEL AND TRAFFIC

An effective Green Living Plan for Thame must address the environment of the town centre. To keep this attractive and vibrant means maintaining a range of shops and attractions that people wish to visit and can access easily. But vibrancy is also affected by the health of the local population

Alongside the growth of the town there has been a great increase in traffic and parking in and around the town centre over recent years. Many side streets are now lined with parked cars all day, causing increasing aggravation in many areas. At peak periods traffic sits bumper to bumper along the High Street with engines puffing out pollution and noise. Can we afford to let this continue, let alone get worse?

The more attractive a destination Thame is, the more visitors it will receive. While visitors are very welcome, more traffic creates more congestion and more pollution, and inevitable further development will only make things worse. A centre choked by queuing vehicles will become a deterrent to visitors and will become neither accessible nor healthy.

Electric vehicles (EVs) will help over time. But it's clear that to close the pollution gap and approach net zero carbon it will be essential to reduce car use substantially. Yet despite this, car use has been continuing to rise.

Those who need to drive into town (and ideally only those who need) already have access to car parks in or close to the town centre. The future use of the Cattle Market site is uncertain and may be critical here as regards future town centre traffic flows.

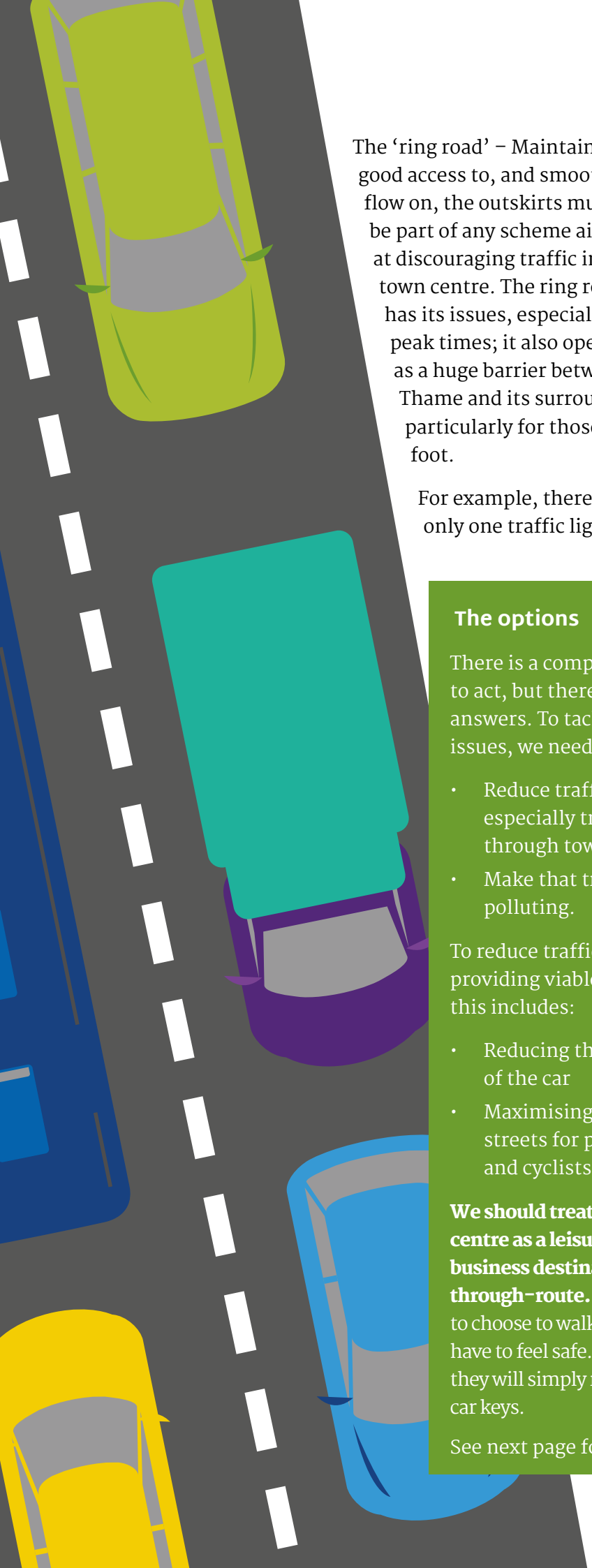
Even if it may be convenient to do so, there is no need for most people to drive *through* the town centre.

There are other benefits in reducing traffic. It will not only reduce CO_2, NO_2 and PM, but also noise, congestion, accidents and much general frustration. Co-benefits from a less car-dominated environment also include replacing commuting time (and cost) by more home or community working, supported by video and meeting hubs in the town with close access to café and similar facilities. This indeed may be the future of town centres as retail comes under increasing pressure from online shopping.

People do need to be able to get around, which means a major increase in journeys by public transport, cycling and walking. For short distances, such as from Lea Park, walking or cycling (for those able to do so) can even be quicker. It's estimated that some

MORE TRAFFIC CREATES MORE CONGESTION AND MORE POLLUTION, AND INEVITABLE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT WILL ONLY MAKE THINGS WORSE

30% of private car journeys cover less than five miles. Given the right infrastructure this is an easy distance to walk or cycle for those able to do so. That could take a substantial percentage of the cars off our local roads at a stroke.



The 'ring road' – Maintaining good access to, and smoother flow on, the outskirts must be part of any scheme aimed at discouraging traffic in the town centre. The ring road has its issues, especially at peak times; it also operates as a huge barrier between Thame and its surroundings, particularly for those on foot.

For example, there is only one traffic light-controlled pedestrian crossing (to the skateboard park) between the Oxford Road roundabout and the Phoenix Trail crossing on the diagonally opposite side of town. There is no safe crossing on the old Crendon Road and pedestrians and cyclists face a hazardous route to cross to Long Crendon or the Miller's Way route to Haddenham via Moorend Lane. It is little better by the Rugby Club and the potential health hub site. At present, the town is to some extent cut off from the countryside around it.

The options

There is a compelling need to act, but there are no easy answers. To tackle these issues, we need to:

- Reduce traffic in town, especially traffic passing through town
- Make that traffic less polluting.

To reduce traffic means providing viable alternatives, this includes:

- Reducing the dominance of the car
- Maximising the use of key streets for pedestrians and cyclists.

We should treat the town centre as a leisure and business destination and not a through-route. But for people to choose to walk or cycle they have to feel safe. If they don't, they will simply reach for their car keys.

This plan therefore recommends infrastructure improvements to deprioritise motor vehicle use and provide safety improvements to walking and cycle routes.

Other ideas include:

- **Car sharing** e.g. through private share, car clubs and shared workplace lifts;
- **Deliveries** – improving the efficiency of delivery and collection;
- **Mobility issues** – suitable provision for those less able to walk or cycle;
- **Community transport** – an electric hopper bus service around the main pick-up and drop-off points in town, especially valuable for the less mobile.

See next page for Traffic Management and Electric Vehicles >

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

20 mph limit Many people who responded to GLP consultations requested a lower speed limit through town and in selected other areas (such as Lea Park). There are others who have a contrary view. It is clear, however, that official opinion has changed, not least because the chances of being killed by a vehicle are put at five times greater at 30 mph than at 20 mph[16]. The lower limit is not only far safer, a paramount consideration, but also cleaner. Many civic authorities, including Transport for London, have therefore introduced mandatory 20 mph restrictions. To do so in Thame would require Highways Authority and police support, but could bring many benefits at limited inconvenience to drivers. Twenty is plenty.

Traffic calming measures This is an associated point. Road humps in the town centre, for example, create confusion and, by causing vehicles to brake, mount a hump and then accelerate, add further to pollution including brake and tyre wear.

Shared or segregated streets One possible approach to these issues would be to treat our central areas as shared space for all, whether on foot, on a bike or in a car, with all needing to look out for others and no one method having priority. This is a precedent used elsewhere, notably in central Oxford. An alternative is to have clearer pavements and separate, protected lanes for cycling. The impact of such arrangements on road crossings and personal safely would need careful consideration.

Safety Safe places to cross roads are seen as a key feature for encouraging walking and cycling. Feedback indicates that more crossings in the right places would make people feel safer out of their cars, an essential prelude to driving less.

ELECTRIC VEHICLES (EVS)

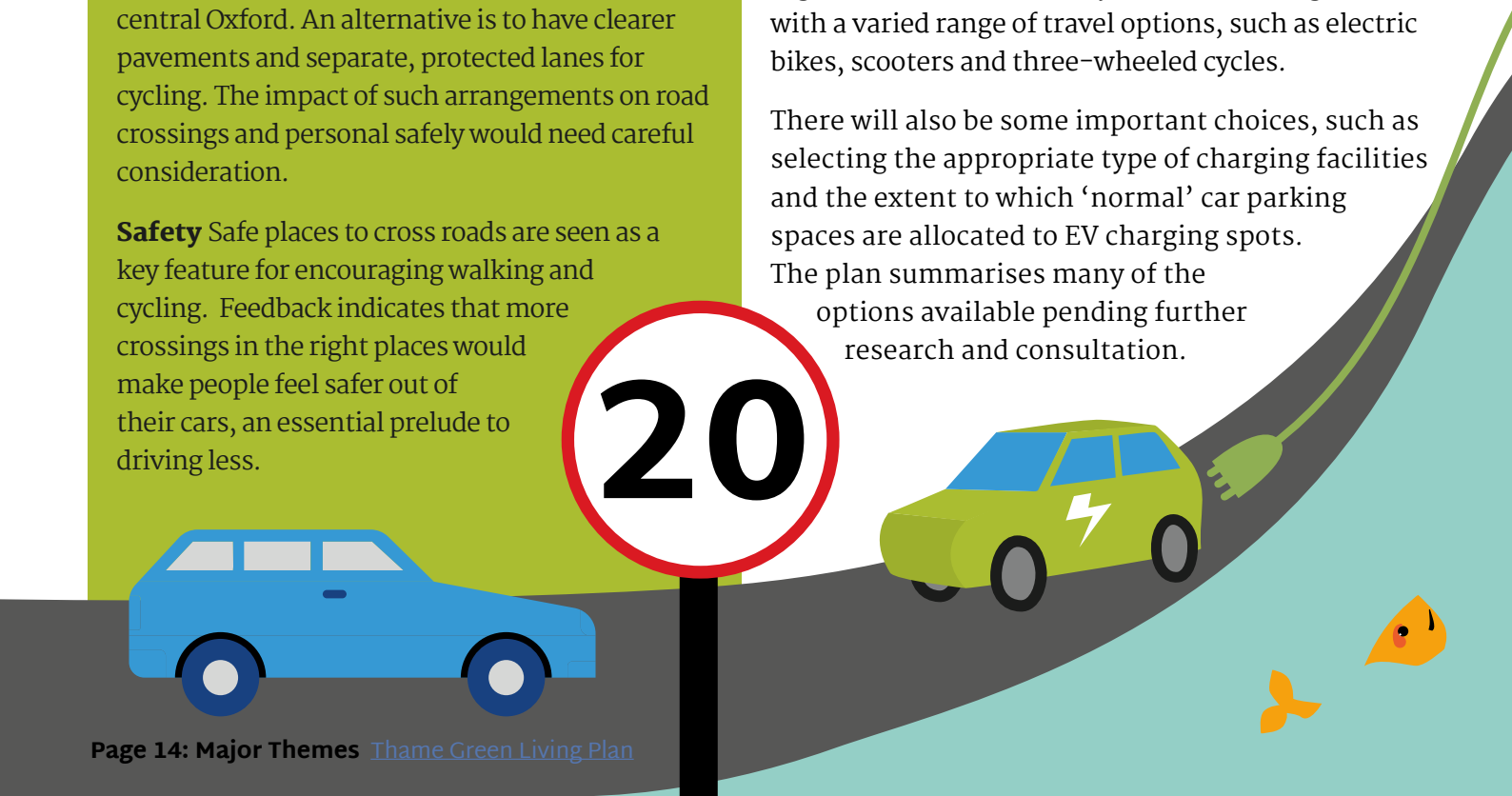
Little pollution Vehicles running on electricity have no exhaust emissions, so produce no exhaust particulates, CO_2 or NO_2. Many have 'regenerative' engine braking, further reducing dangerous particulates by minimising brake wear. But EVs, like other vehicles, produce particulates from tyre wear and some environmental concerns exist over the sourcing and manufacture of batteries and other components.

Financial Technology is moving forward rapidly, with a decreasing cost differential through a growing second-hand market and increased choice of new models. EVs will need to become generally affordable so that price is not a barrier to purchase, but government policies, such as salary sacrifice opportunities for EVs, will help this barrier to entry. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that some plug-in hybrids (PHEVs) are bought for tax benefits and used simply as petrol cars, negating the intended environmental benefits. We need to be responsible.

Charging facilities EVs need charging facilities that are convenient for their drivers, with spaces to park and recharge, ideally powered by 100% low carbon electricity.

Other electric transport Local students have suggested a form of electric tuk-tuk or auto-rickshaw as a possible low-cost ride option. We can also expect higher numbers of mobility scooters sharing routes with a varied range of travel options, such as electric bikes, scooters and three-wheeled cycles.

There will also be some important choices, such as selecting the appropriate type of charging facilities and the extent to which 'normal' car parking spaces are allocated to EV charging spots. The plan summarises many of the options available pending further research and consultation.



SUSTAINABLE ENERGY

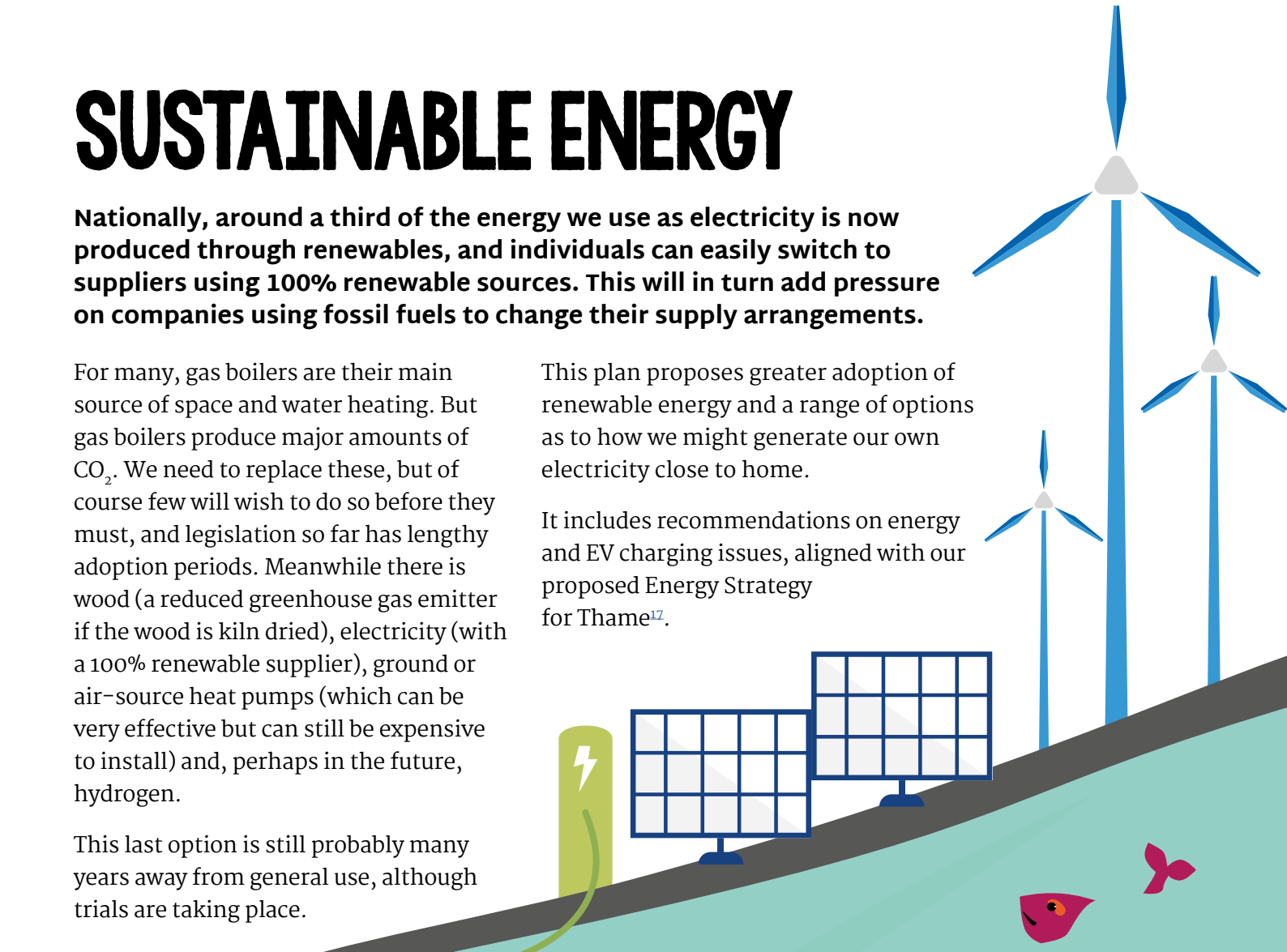
Nationally, around a third of the energy we use as electricity is now produced through renewables, and individuals can easily switch to suppliers using 100% renewable sources. This will in turn add pressure on companies using fossil fuels to change their supply arrangements.

For many, gas boilers are their main source of space and water heating. But gas boilers produce major amounts of CO_2. We need to replace these, but of course few will wish to do so before they must, and legislation so far has lengthy adoption periods. Meanwhile there is wood (a reduced greenhouse gas emitter if the wood is kiln dried), electricity (with a 100% renewable supplier), ground or air-source heat pumps (which can be very effective but can still be expensive to install) and, perhaps in the future, hydrogen.

This last option is still probably many years away from general use, although trials are taking place.

This plan proposes greater adoption of renewable energy and a range of options as to how we might generate our own electricity close to home.

It includes recommendations on energy and EV charging issues, aligned with our proposed Energy Strategy for Thame[17].



WATER

The principles and recommendations laid out in the 2018 Plan have been given new emphasis by variable weather and high winter rainfall resulting in renewed extensive flooding along the Thame valley.

This 2020 Plan reinforces the need for effective drainage, water and flood management while taking a more holistic view of the natural world by including aquatic and riverside life within green spaces and biodiversity. It's clear that with the River Thame Conservation Trust and the Cuttle Brook Conservation Volunteers (CBCV) the town has excellent support for its namesake river and its tributaries.

At the same time, we'd advocate a closer identity between these waterways and the town, with suitable opportunities taken to increase access to them. One example is the need to complete the so-called 'riverside walks' on the new estates to the south-east of the town, either side of Thame Park Road. We also wish to seek opportunities to extend these routes as part of an intermediate route just outside the main town periphery.

Associated with this, this plan supports the extension of the Cuttle Brook Local Nature Reserve to Moreton. In these plans it will be appropriate to seek to balance the needs of biodiversity in times of crisis against the objective of more healthy walking and other routes and the utility of the adjoining farmland.

GREEN SPACES AND LAND USE

Biodiversity is not just a 'nice to have' but an essential for our life as we know it. Without bees and other pollinators, we will lose our plants and flowers and ultimately the variety and resilience of our crops. For example, 70% of our fruit, vegetables and crops need pollination[18].

Insect, animal and bird life can all be given a helping hand by growing and nurturing the right type of plants, shrubs and trees, which will also help capture carbon and reduce greenhouse gas.

Many of us can start at home by making our gardens and even our patios more supportive of insect, bird and animal life. There are many ways to do this which this plan is keen to promote.

Beyond that, Thame has an acknowledged shortage of parks, woods and orchards. This both restricts residents in the variety of green spaces available, while placing increasing and sometimes unacceptable pressure on the limited public open space that does exist.

One aspect of this pressure can be seen in the number of dogs in the town and surrounding areas. These are essential companions to many people, most of whom take seriously their responsibilities. But large numbers of dogs do add to pressure on open spaces and especially to delicate habitats, which can be damaged by chemicals that help keep dogs healthy. It is hoped that future plans and uses will enable the interests of all parties to be fairly accommodated.

The main roads surrounding the town isolate it both from the nearby villages, which use the town's services, and also from its countryside setting. It is in the interests of both the town community and the adjoining landowners to seek ways in which our common interests might be pursued. For example, as the Thame Neighbourhood Plan noted, the town is desperately short of parks and public open space. We have seen a strong desire to create orchards and plant trees (for all the reasons given in the plan), and should look at areas outside but close to town where this could occur.

Likewise, there is much scope for more and better footpaths and cycle routes to help reduce car use and increase access to surrounding areas.

It is noticeable that many of the routes planned and even constructed through new residential estates do not join up with the main walking routes into town, or where they do, remain without signposts. This leaves residents more inclined to drive into town, adding to congestion and pollution. It is urgent that such active travel routes be provided for and completed, with new connections sought to encourage walking and cycling rather than car use.

THE MAIN ROADS SURROUNDING THE TOWN ISOLATE IT BOTH FROM THE NEARBY VILLAGES, WHICH USE THE TOWN'S SERVICES, AND ALSO FROM ITS COUNTRYSIDE SETTING

There are many areas where new footpaths could be introduced without detriment to farming or other land use, for example by following natural features such as ditches or streams. Such an approach, based on respect for landowners' rights, could immeasurably improve the environmental amenities of Thame. It might also help to regenerate a sense of community that is otherwise harder to sustain at the edges of towns under constant development pressure.

TOWARDS A CIRCULAR ECONOMY

The main themes set out in this part of the 2020 Plan concentrate around the issues of air and energy because these are the areas where:

a) **some of the greatest changes in thinking have taken place over recent years and**

b) **many of the key issues involve community and local authority action.**

This 2020 Plan does not cover issues relating to food and diet, subjects which also remain major concerns. This is partly because these are matters of personal choice, and partly because our group's limited resources have been directed elsewhere. There is therefre much else that could be added to this plan as and when time and resources are available to do so.

There is also the issue of internet shopping and its effect on our communities. Buying online has proved a great benefit to many, but in terms of our environment it comes at a cost. The complexity of the 'last mile' delivery means that far more traffic and thus pollution can be generated by individual deliveries than by purchases on broader shopping trips. It's worth noting that Amazon's composite carbon footprint in 2019 was stated to be 44.4 million tonnes, more than that of Denmark as a whole!

In broader terms, we endorse what is known as the Circular Economy, sometimes just called Circularity. The UK government says 'the circular economy (re-use, remanufacture, repair, recycle) will see us keeping resources in use for as long as possible. It will allow us to extract maximum value from them, then recover and regenerate products and materials at the end of their lifespan'. This regenerative approach is in contrast to the traditional linear economy, which has a 'take, make, dispose' model of production. Circularity certainly raises many questions; even if these may be beyond the scope of the present Green Living Plan, they are not beyond its future potential.

Here again, however, we need take care as cause and effect are complex. Recent reports, for example, suggest that, after an initial drop following the Blue Planet series, general plastic use actually increased again in 2019. One example is that instead of newly outlawed small plastic bags, people buy new supposed 'bags for life' (containing much more plastic) on a regular basis.

TIMING & APPROACH

A community company

To make the choices and take the actions we need will require a broad and deep community involvement that bolsters the work of councils – town, district and county. To enable this it is planned to develop a suitable form of community organisation, provisionally called Thame Green Living (TGL), to provide active local input into the work of Thame Town Council. This organisation will seek to work with other existing and future Thame voluntary organisations, together with Thame businesses, schools and churches. It will also look to develop good relations with landowners and farmers, building on the work of bodies such as the River Thame Conservation Trust.

Part of our approach is to improve knowledge and awareness of the challenges we face, which we propose to tackle through providing information and guidance on key aspects, with discussion groups and workshops on key green living issues. These will help heighten awareness of the choices we will need to make. All this will involve a recognition of the specific needs of young families, the less mobile, and those struggling to make ends meet. Different people are affected by different aspects; inevitably some proposals will be less convenient for some in the short term, but the aim is to achieve a future that is better for all in the long term.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

This section of the Green Living Plan summarises the Recommended Actions, divided by the plan's colour-coded focus areas.

Introduction to the Recommended Actions

This section of the Green Living Plan summarises the Recommended Actions divided by the plan's colour-coded focus areas and each action is given an icon to show which of group can do that action. See keys below:

GREEN
Open spaces, biodiversity and walking /cycling routes.

BLUE
Water – our streams and rivers – and protection from flooding.

GREY
Our air and atmosphere and the effect on air quality and global warming.

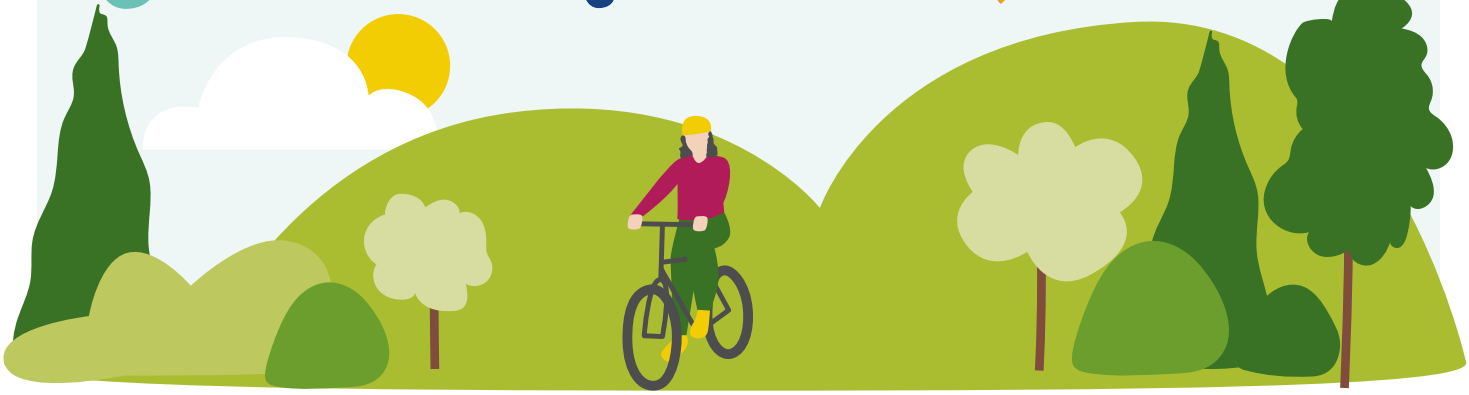
RED
Alternative (non-fossil fuel) energy including electric vehicles.

ORANGE
Waste avoidance, waste management and recycling.

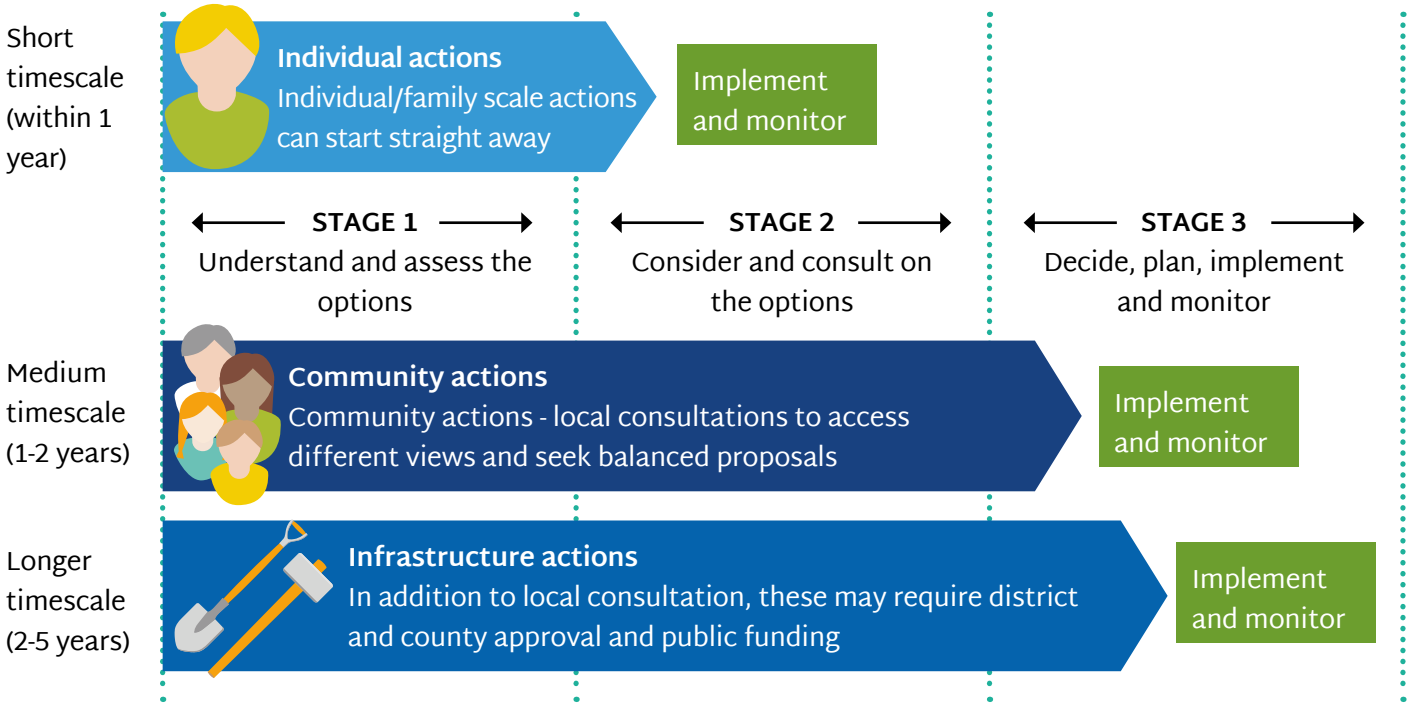
Individual Actions

Community Actions

Infrastructure Actions



Our staged approach



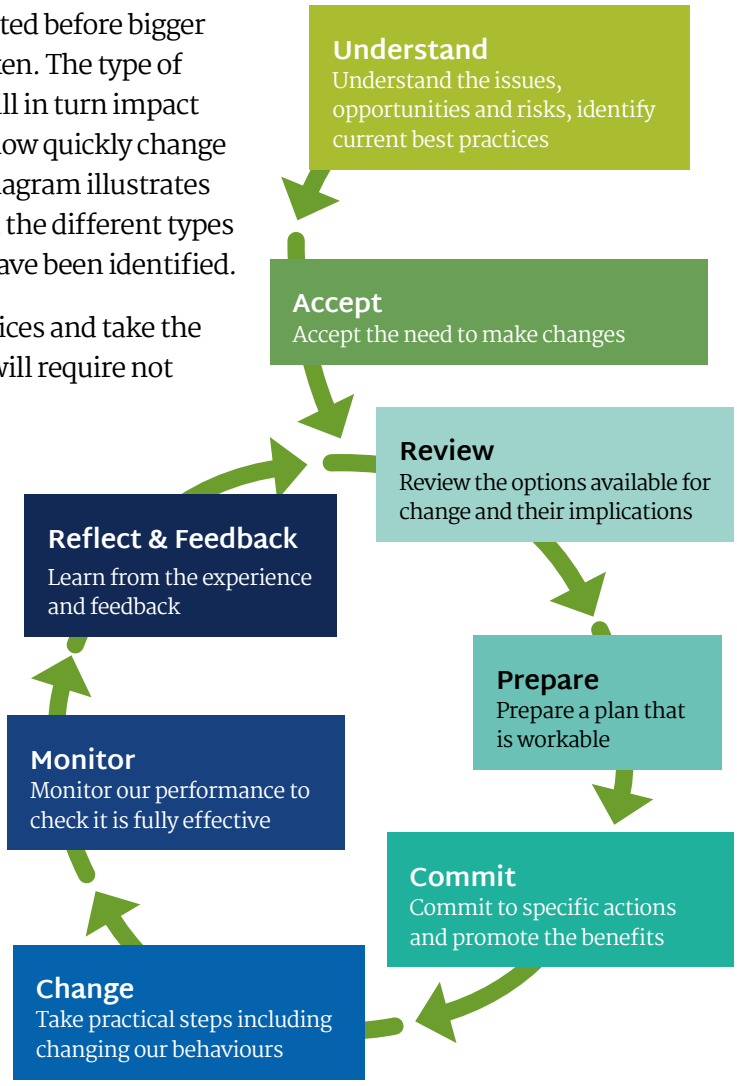
Managing Change

In recommending actions, this plan recognises that change comes in many forms and has a wide range of potential impacts and considerations.

It is not a simple decision or process. Opinion can vary from those who, on the one hand, see no need for change, to others who are keen to develop and implement plans immediately. The previous sections set out many reasons to change what we currently do. This section assumes that we will want to act but that there are options and choices as to how and when we do so – as individuals and communities.

On the more major issues, adequate public involvement and consultation will be essential to ensure that the views of the broader community are heard. The actions recommended over the following pages therefore take a staged approach to give the chance for issues and options to be understood and fairly evaluated before bigger decisions are taken. The type of action chosen will in turn impact how much and how quickly change can occur. The diagram illustrates these stages and the different types of actions that have been identified.

To make the choices and take the actions needed will require not just a broad and deeper community involvement, but also the active support of our councils – town, district and county. The Change Process diagram (right) shows the ongoing Green Living Plan approach to change.



I: OPEN SPACES, GREEN ROUTES AND BIODIVERSITY

Compared with many communities, Thame is under-provided with parks and public open space. There is also much scope for more and better footpaths and cycle routes. These will encourage walking and cycling for better health, reduced car use and increased access to surrounding areas. Changes could immeasurably improve the environmental amenities of Thame and help strengthen a sense of community, particularly where development pressures are apparent. The panel below identifies key issues, which are taken further in the schedules that follow.

Key Issues

Green Spaces & Biodiversity

- **Inform and involve**. Improve information, education and involvement in conservation
- **Identify new areas for biodiversity**. Create more nature-friendly areas
- **Improve biodiversity in existing open spaces**. Encourage wild flora and richer fauna
- **Enhance green corridors and waterways**. Let our natural world flourish
- **Support agricultural practices**. Encourage greater landowner focus on biodiversity
- **Check planning policy and decisions**. Scrutinise policy, decisions and outcomes

Cycling

- **Encourage and support cycling**. Improve options and help for cyclists and noncyclists
- **Create safe cycling routes**. Especially through Thame Town centre
- **Engage the Thame Town community**. Safer and more direct links for cycling
- **Revitalise connections.** Improve links with Thame's broader environment and our neighbours

Walking

- **Promote walking routes into and through town**, as a healthier non-car alternative
- **Improve walking routes**. By making them safe and pleasant
- **Improve footpath connections**, from key residential areas into town
- **Establish more walking routes**, and improve access to surrounding countryside
- **Support for the less mobile**, with more seating and viable transport alternatives

Note: It is implicit that what follows should be integrated into an overarching strategy, such as a Thame Travel Plan, to ensure that initiatives work together seamlessly. Timescales are initial suggestions only, subject to further discussion and agreement.

IMPROVE INFORMATION AND EDUCATION ON THE IMPORTANCE OF BIODIVERSITY AND NATURE CONSERVATION

OBJECTIVE: Seek greater understanding of our natural world and local biodiversity to our future wellbeing – and the benefits of taking action.

Action: Create more explanatory information panels in key sites in town centre and where biodiversity action is taking place.

Indicative timescale

Within 12 / 24 months

Action: Support the conservation and biodiversity work of local conservation bodies.

Indicative timescale

Within 12 months

Action: Explore funding possibilities with various bodies.

Indicative timescale

Within 12/18 months

OBJECTIVE: Encourage developers and businesses to take more responsibility for the future of the natural world

Action: Develop an information/ education programme, including success stories, via local conservation organisations

Indicative timescale

Within 12/18 months

Action: Encourage local companies to engage in conservation work, e.g. as part of their corporate social responsibility policies.

Indicative timescale

Within 12/18 months

INCREASE INVOLVEMENT IN CONSERVATION WORK

OBJECTIVE: Seek more community involvement and volunteers interested in improving local biodiversity

Action: Promote existing volunteer opportunities more widely (21CT, CBCV, RTCT, REG) and foster partnership working.

Indicative timescale

Ongoing

Action: Seek school and youth involvement with projects.

Indicative timescale

Involve heads, PTAs, governors

Action: Examine social engagement and consider innovative ways of developing this.

Indicative timescale

Ongoing

PRIVATE GARDENS AND ALLOTMENTS

OBJECTIVE: Promote more features to help biodiversity in our gardens

Action: Encourage actions such as:

- grass cutting – leave grass longer
- plant more shrubs and trees
- plant more natural pollinators
- leave room for hedgehogs and wildlife

Indicative timescale

Immediate and ongoing

SUPPORTING BEST ECOLOGICAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL PRACTICE

OBJECTIVE: Long-term sustainability in conservation and biodiversity improvement work

Action: Seek specialist help in planning green infrastructure improvements in Thame and its environs.

Indicative timescale

Within 6 months

OBJECTIVE: Measuring & monitoring progress

Action: Encourage clear procedures for approving new green infrastructure and commissioning relevant expertise.

Indicative timescale

Within 12 months

Action: Assess the value of existing metrics and how best to use them as a tool.

Indicative timescale

Within 12 months

OBJECTIVE: Closer involvement with local landowners and farmers beyond Thame's immediate boundaries for mutual benefit

Action: Consider new methodologies as proposed in new Environmental and Agricultural laws.

Indicative timescale

Within 12/24 months (for landowners and farmers)

Action: Support further engagement with the farming community and NFU and other landowners in developing and monitoring green infrastructure.

Indicative timescale

Within 12/24 months (for landowners and farmers)

Photo Credit: Sue Martin Downhill

CREATE MORE NATURE-FRIENDLY ZONES IN BUILT-UP AREAS

OBJECTIVE: Contribute enhanced quantity and variety of native plant and animal species

Action: Complete the Google Earth survey of potential biodiversity enhancement areas.

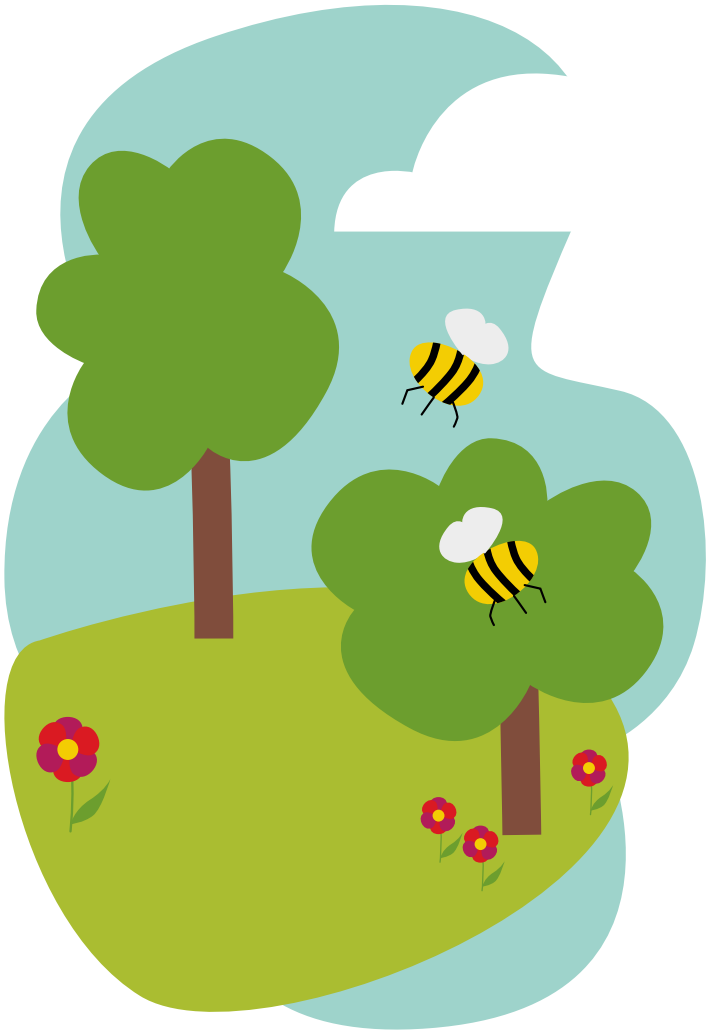
Indicative timescale

Within 12 months

Action: Seek Wild Oxfordshire involvement in a local biodiversity enhancement project.

Indicative timescale

Within 12 months



SUPPORT LOCAL INITIATIVES

OBJECTIVE: Seek community input into new proposals

Action: Develop community planting schemes.

Indicative timescale

Within 12 months

Action: Work on enhancement proposals with partners (e.g. Residents' Associations (RAs), District and County Councils, 21C Thame).

Indicative timescale

Within 12 months

Action: Help to identify suitable sites and species to support 21C Thame tree-planting initiative.

Indicative timescale

Within 12 months

Action: Organise public events on biodiversity enhancement in gardens etc. as part of education and awareness raising.

Indicative timescale

Within 12 months

Action: Explore a Mayoral commendation scheme (e.g. letter of thanks plus guidance on further sources of information).

Indicative timescale

Within 12 months with support of the Mayor and TTC.

1.3 Green Spaces & Biodiversity | Improve Biodiversity In Existing Public Spaces

IMPROVE EXISTING GREEN AREAS TO ENCOURAGE MORE BENEFICIAL WILD FLORA AND RICHER FAUNA

OBJECTIVE: Implement more sustainable working practices consistent with Thame Town Council's Environmental Policy

Action: Identify relevant areas and current approach for research and discussion, including more beneficial planting and mowing practices for wildlife and carbon capture.

Indicative timescale

Within 6/12 months

OBJECTIVE: Encourage biodiversity and greater carbon capture

Action: Promote links with biodiversity experts.

Indicative timescale

Within 6/12 months

1.4 Green Spaces & Biodiversity | Green Corridors & Waterways

CONSOLIDATE AND EXTEND THAME'S GREEN CORRIDORS AND WATERWAYS

OBJECTIVE: Enhance the role of the River Thame and its tributaries as valuable biodiversity reserves, recognising in some areas that biodiversity and local nature may need exclusive space

Action: Liaise with relevant parties including neighbours, CBCV and others to develop and implement a landscape, planting and public footpath plan for Rycote Meadow.

Indicative timescale

Within 12 months

Action: Seek to maximise the statutory role of the Local Nature Reserve in local biodiversity and flood control and harness the committee's expertise.

Indicative timescale

Ongoing

Action: Resist proposed use of former Moorend Lane site for long term waste processing.

Indicative timescale

Depends on future of site and OCC waste plans

OBJECTIVE: Promote the success of the Cuttle Brook Conservation Volunteers (CBCV)

Action: Continue dialogue to further joint aims of GLP with CBCV and River Thame Conservation Trust (RTCT)

Indicative timescale

Ongoing

Action: Progress Phoenix Trail links with Risborough Environment Group and Sustrans.

Indicative timescale

Ongoing

OBJECTIVE: Extend the Cuttle Brook Nature Reserve

Action: Liaise with CBCV on a planned extension south towards Moreton.

Indicative timescale

Within 12/24 months

1.5 **Green Spaces & Biodiversity | Support For Agricultural Practices**

LOCAL AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES

OBJECTIVE: Encourage increased landowner focus on biodiversity and conservation measures to improve soil fertility, reduce pollution and foster wildlife.

Action: In conjunction with RTCT and Wild Oxfordshire **explore potential for a loose-knit local landowners' network** to work with the community for mutual benefit.

Indicative timescale

Within 24 months

OBJECTIVE: Recognise importance of landscape scale conservation work

Action: Consider a "Nature-loving landowner" scheme as a forum for sharing best practice and celebrating success in association with appropriate bodies.

Indicative timescale

Within 24 months

OBJECTIVE: Maintain momentum, celebrate successes, share best practices and engage the public

Action:Identify opportunities under new legislation.

Indicative timescale

Ongoing

1.6 **Green Spaces & Biodiversity Ideas for the future**

ESTABLISH HAM WOOD TO PHOENIX TRAIL GREEN CORRIDOR

OBJECTIVE: A new biodiversity corridor to link up two sides of Thame.

Action: Identify areas of interest, expertise and funding and involve Woodlands Trust, Sustrans, CBCV as appropriate.

Indicative timescale

Within 6/12 months

Action: Develop and seek agreement for a composite plan between local conservation bodies and landowners.

Indicative timescale

Within 24 months

A NEW 'GREEN HALO' SPACE FOR THAME

OBJECTIVE: Create a major new 'Green Halo' space and corridor off Moorend Lane between Edge Hill/ skateboard park and Ham Wood as a green space/ nature reserve area

Action: Explore funding opportunities through TOE (Trust for Oxfordshire Environment) and others.

Indicative timescale

Depends on future of former waste site and OCC plans

Photo Credit: Amy Shayler (Competition winner)

CYCLING AWARENESS AND ENCOURAGEMENT AT INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

OBJECTIVE: Greater awareness of the value and benefits of cycling.

Action: Encourage responsible cycling in and around the town.

Indicative timescale

Within 6/12 months

Action: Provide information and raise awareness through printed and online materials, town signage and general promotion.

Indicative timescale

Within 12 months

OBJECTIVE: Sustained behavioural change.

Action: Discuss the creation of a Bicycle Mayor role for the town (https://bycs.org/).

Indicative timescale

Within 12/24 months

Action: Engage with businesses to promote 'bike to work' schemes and promote cycling to employees.

Indicative timescale

Within 12/24 months

OBJECTIVE: Higher standards and confidence in cycling as a safe means of travel.

Action: Build cycling skills by 1:1 or group Bike-ability training, family events, holiday club, and maintenance training.

Indicative timescale

Ongoing

Action: Help cycling to be more visible and a regular presence in the town centre.

Indicative timescale

Within 12/24 months

Action: Link to advice on cycling equipment and cycle maintenance (e.g. incl. pop-up maintenance workshops in town centre).

Indicative timescale

Within 12/24 months

OBJECTIVE: New ways of travelling for the next generation – and others – to benefit the wider community

Action: Promote school travel plans, cycle champions, Bicycle User Groups (BUGs), including the introduction of 'bike busses' to help increase safety of children until infrastructure is improved.

Indicative timescale

Within 12/24 months

CYCLING IN THAME TOWN CENTRE (See also Air Quality section)

OBJECTIVE: Make the town centre more pedestrian and cycle-friendly.

OBJECTIVE: Maintain and improve the safety and air quality of the town centre to keep Thame a desirable and vibrant place to visit, live and work

OBJECTIVE: Reduction of vehicle through-traffic in town centre to help towards wider objectives and reduce noise and impact/ vibration damage to roads and buildings

Action: Enhance cycling by dedicated or segregated cycle routes in key areas

Indicative timescale

Consultation within 24 months

Action: Examine options for infrastructure changes to the High Street to reduce car use and through-traffic generally.

Indicative timescale

Consultation within 24 months

Action: Establish principle of 'prioritising pedestrians over cyclists, over buses, over private vehicles' in the town.

Indicative timescale

Consultation within 24 months

Action: Take steps to discourage vehicles driving unnecessarily through the centre of town.

Indicative timescale

Consultation within 24 months

Action: Consider and consult on a 20mph speed limit across Thame town centre.

Indicative timescale

Consultation within 24 months

THAME CENTRE AS A HUB FOR THE TOWN

OBJECTIVE: More short-distance travel by cycle rather than by car (for those able to do so), for example from homes within Thame.

OBJECTIVE: Clearer connections and route signage into town centre, with cycle route continuity – without gaps.

OBJECTIVE: Good surfaces, without obstructions, with safe road crossings for all levels of mobility.

Action: Improve cycling connections from all residential parts of Thame.

Indicative timescale

Within 12/24 months

Action: Follow up direct cycle routes from new estates.

Indicative timescale

Within 12/24 months

Action: Improve bike access to and from Moreton.

Indicative timescale

Within 12/24 months

Action: Undertake a bike rack audit of potential locations to provide more racks and their spread around the town, including near social destinations, such as cafes and the library.

Indicative timescale

Within 12/24 months

Action: Consider provision of bike tool stations

Indicative timescale

Within 12/24 months

Action: Develop metrics for monitoring short journeys.

Indicative timescale

Within 12/24 months

OBJECTIVE: Safe routes to school and other key facilities and destinations

Action: Consider and consult on the following options to create safer and more direct links:

Set up a priority cycle route through Thame to link up between the Phoenix Trail (and points off it) on one side and the skateboard park/ Tythrop Way/ potential Haddenham Greenway access to Thame on the other

Indicative timescale

Within 2-4 years

Create advantages for walkers and cyclists e.g. priority, shortcuts, & designated crossings with clear signage.

Protect Windmill Road and Nelson Street as key cycling routes as part of a link between the Phoenix Trail and the town centre.

Notes

May depend on routes through Elms Park when developed

Prioritise cycling on North Street to connect with Lea Park, access to Barley Hill School and beyond.

Notes

Dependent on SODC plans

Development of the Cattle Market site to incorporate and prioritise cycle and foot access, both to and through the site.

Indicative timescale

18/24 months

Assess improvements to Oxford Road, to replace current road markings and create safer alternatives for access to Lord Williams's School and recent housing developments.

CONNECTIONS WITH THAME

OBJECTIVE: Enhance Thame as a hub for the surrounding towns/ villages to reduce reliance on cars to access Thame.

OBJECTIVE: Easier travel into Thame from nearby communities by foot or cycle, rather than car.

OBJECTIVE: Good surfaces, without obstructions, with safe road crossings for all levels of mobility.

Action: Develop a walkers/ cyclists welcome scheme.

Indicative timescale

Within 12/18 months

Action: Continue to press for construction of planned 'Greenway' between Haddenham and Thame, (including a safe crossing of Tythrop Way.)

Indicative timescale

Priority but dependent on Oxon/ Bucks County plans

Action: Provide a safe crossing of the ring road for the 'old road' route to Long Crendon and add cycle route where it meets B4011.

Indicative timescale

Within 24 months

A DEDICATED CYCLE ROUTE ALONG THE HIGH STREET

OBJECTIVE: A viable and safe route to encourage all to cycle more.

Action: Develop a suitable dedicated and protected cycle route though the town centre and beyond.

Indicative timescale

Link to new Neighbourhood Plan

IMPROVING THE AYLESBURY ROAD ROUNDABOUT

OBJECTIVE: Improve the roundabout to allow better vehicle traffic flow and to be safe for cyclists (if alternative cycling routes aren't available)

Action: Redevelop the A418/ Tythrop Way (Travelodge) roundabout to encourage traffic to use the ring road rather than travel through the town centre.

Indicative timescale

Dependent on Highway Authority action

EXTENSIONS TO THE PHOENIX TRAIL

OBJECTIVE: An extension of the Phoenix Trail that will connect with the Oxford cycle route. Other linkages that improve cycling options from Thame

Action: Promote extension of the Phoenix Trail to Wheatley and connect to Oxford.

Indicative timescale

Within 2-5 years

Action: Build on the success of the Phoenix trail - Consult with SUSTRANS.

Indicative timescale

Within 2-5 years

ENCOURAGEMENT FOR WALKING

OBJECTIVE: Improved non-polluting means of getting around to limit high-level and street pollution.

OBJECTIVE: Establish a strong walking culture in and around Thame, including children and young people, based on four principles:

1. **Viability**. Walking routes giving the most direct access to the town centre with suitable priority for pedestrians.
2. **Health**. Promoting awareness and use of the health benefits of walking and fresh air plus access to the countryside.
3. **Safety**. Making pedestrians feel safe.
4. **Signage**. Showing main routes and walking times.

Action: Improve signage for pedestrians through key town centre areas, including

- Signposts to key town locations
- Key link routes and the Phoenix Trail
- Lea Park and other major housing areas
- Walking times to key destinations

Indicative timescale

In hand with wayfinding project 6-24 months

Action: Inner Thame Circuit. A new inner circuit route connecting St Mary's, Lea Park, the Phoenix Trail and the Cuttle Brook area

- develop route and directions
- publish details in new town leaflet

Indicative timescale

Completed

Action: Establish priorities and protocols between pedestrians, cyclists, and other users on Phoenix Trail and other key routes.

Indicative timescale

Within 12/24 months

Action: Lea Park - Identify and prioritise key walking routes into town and elsewhere.

Indicative timescale

Completed in conjunction with LPRA

Action: Estate footpaths - take all reasonably practicable steps incl. with SODC to:

a) enforce proper completion and opening of footpaths through and around the three most recent major development sites (known as C, D and F) in accordance with terms of their respective planning consents,

b) develop more direct routes into town where possible,

c) have these adequately maintained.

Indicative timescale

Within 12/24 months

Action: Walkers' group – consider promoting a new group of walkers dedicated to walking in and immediately around Thame to pursue these ideas and encourage more, etc.

Indicative timescale

Within 12/24 months

Action: Safe routes to school – Seek volunteers to promote and organise walking buses and other forms of safe routes to school, including prioritising key routes for children to stay safe.

Indicative timescale

Within 12/24 months

Action: Encourage schools and sports clubs to encourage walking as part of an overall exercise and well-being plan.

Indicative timescale

Within 12 months

PRIORITISING THE SAFETY AND SECURITY OF PEDESTRIANS IN THE TOWN CENTRE AND OTHER AREAS OF THAME

OBJECTIVE: To encourage those walking in and around town to feel safe and secure in doing so
see also cycling 1.7 & 1.8

OBJECTIVE: To have Thame town centre seen as a relaxed and healthy environment and a good place in which to spend more quality time.

Action: Consider and consult on the following options:

- a policy for 'prioritising pedestrians over cyclists, over buses, over vehicles' in the town centre
- broader pavements (a green corridor) to and through the town centre town
- suitable road crossings at key points to ensure safe walking corridors
- a 20 mph limit through Thame and on selected roads to enhance safety
- level pavements/ surfaces to eliminate trip hazards (throughout and especially on access walkways through Lea Park)
- Cut back vegetation impinging on paths
- Survey and establish clear pavement and road markings to indicate pedestrian priorities
- Develop road signage at key junctions warning drivers of the new priorities
- Consider suitable low level lighting to encourage greater use of passageways etc.
- Review and replace as necessary over time pavement furniture acting as obstacles to pedestrians or sight lines
- Where dual use, establish priorities and protocols between pedestrians, cyclists, mobility scooters and other non-vehicle users.
- Ensure safe walking routes through redeveloped Cattle Market site

Indicative timescale

Within 12/24 months. Timescales for implementation will depend on local authority approvals and budgets

Action: Add new or improved footpaths (with suitable habitat protection where applicable) across Rycote Meadow and alongside or close to the proposed Cuttle Brook Nature Reserve extension towards Moreton

Indicative timescale

Within 12/24 months

Action: Integrate all these proposals within consultation on a proposed composite Thame Travel and Transport Plan

Indicative timescale

Within 12-24 months

Action: Develop links with Estate management companies once they have taken over communal grounds and facilities to encourage best practice and opening up of travel connections

Indicative timescale

Within 12/24 months

THAME TOWN'S CONNECTIONS WITH THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES

OBJECTIVE: Longer walks available from and around Thame to encourage more people to extend their range and enjoy the local countryside

Action: Outer Thame Circuit. A new 20-mile outer loop around Thame on existing public footpaths, connecting outlying villages and using public transport, with 7-9 miles 'segments' connecting into Thame

- develop route and directions
- publish route and directions as town leaflet and encourage use by all local communities

Indicative timescale

Completed. Publish within 12 months

OBJECTIVE: Good surfaces and safe road crossings for all levels of mobility.

Action: Tythrop Way and Moorend Lane. Re-align footpath adjacent to skateboard park to permit use of traffic lights to access Moorend Lane and routes beyond

Indicative timescale

Possible now – do within 6 months

Action: Access to Long Crendon. Urgently plan for new pedestrian crossing/ refuge over A418 by-pass at route of Old Crendon Road to facilitate safe access to/from Long Crendon

Indicative timescale

Issue to be taken up with OCC

OBJECTIVE: Thame as a stronger hub with improving connections to surrounding towns/villages and countryside (see cycling 1.9)

OBJECTIVE: Encourage those living outside but close to Thame to walk or cycle, rather than drive, into and out of town – enhancing Thame's air quality

Action: Haddenham and Thame 'Greenway' – continue to press for implementation of planned route, including access to and through Thame / links to both town centres and H&T train station, to include safe crossing of Tythrop Way.

Indicative timescale

Now under active planning priority but dependent on Oxon/Bucks county plans

1.15 Walking | Ideas for the Future

THE MID-THAME CIRCUIT

OBJECTIVE: Develop an aspirational mid-length riverside/ countryside circuit around Thame's immediate environs, using new estate riverside walks and natural features of the surrounding open land

Action: Plan and seek to protect a route:

- include within Neighbourhood Plan
- seek initial discussions with landowners
- assess and plan potential funding sources

Indicative timescale

2-5 years

2: WATER AND FLOOD PROTECTION

Water is essential for life and an increasingly precious resource. We must learn how to use it wisely, conserve it and take steps to ensure that there are adequate future supplies for all. We also need water to be clean, which means encouraging a clean water mind-set to assist long term health.

Part of this means doing what we can to discourage any kind of water pollution which can have disastrous effects in and around our rivers and on life itself.

At the same time, and with more extreme weather now a regular feature of life, we need to be vigilant in mitigating the worst effects of flooding, both in built-up areas and in preserving our floodplains as essential parts of overall flood management.

In all this we also want to support our local charitable organisations:

- the River Thame Conservation Trust (RTCT)
- the Cuttle Brook Conservation Volunteers (CBCV)

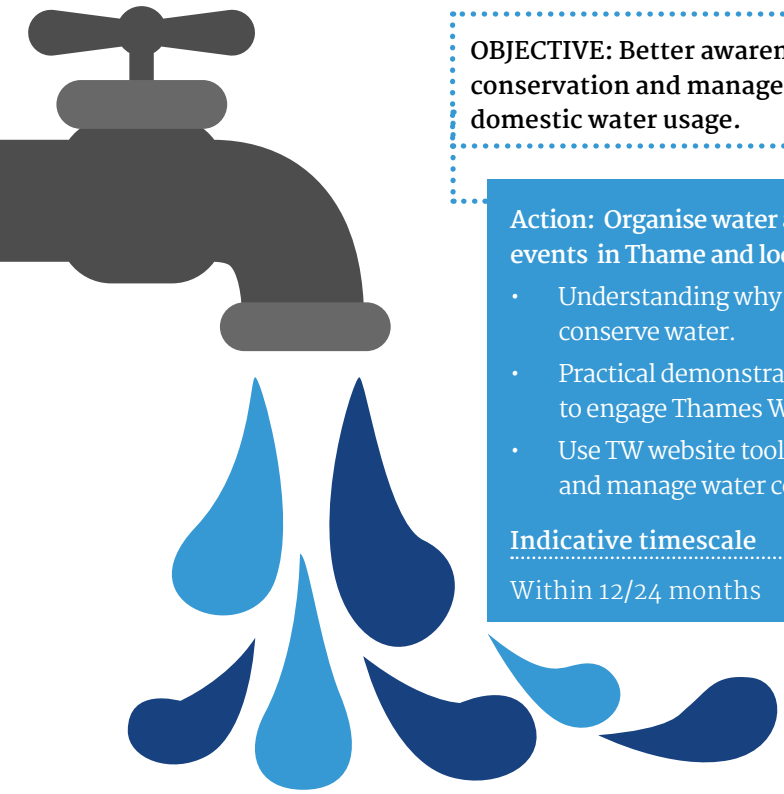
who are helping to ensure these principles apply to Thame's greatest natural water assets, The River Thame, the Cuttle Brook and Kingsey Cuttle Brook.

Key Issues

- **Water as a resource** – an essential but limited resource for all life forms
- **Clean Water** – ensure water in our taps and rivers is clean and safe for consumption
- **Flooding and Drainage** – effective flood management remains vital

Photo Credit: Richard Duckham

UNDERSTANDING THAT DOMESTIC WATER SUPPLIES ARE A PRECIOUS RESOURCE



OBJECTIVE: Better awareness, conservation and management of domestic water usage.

Action: Organise water awareness events in Thame and local schools

- Understanding why we need to conserve water.
- Practical demonstrations – seek to engage Thames Water (TW).
- Use TW website tool to calculate and manage water consumption.

Indicative timescale

Within 12/24 months

OBJECTIVE: Minimised risk of water rationing by effective home water management.

Action: Share successful methods for reduction of home water usage:

- Posts on TGL website or Facebook page 'watersavinghacks' etc
- Reader tips included in TTC newsletter.
- Setting targets for reduced water use.

Indicative timescale

Within 6/12 months

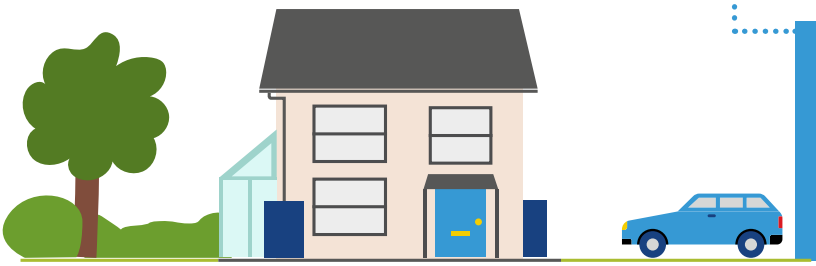
FLOOD CONTROL AND DRAINAGE

OBJECTIVE: Wider use of porous surfaces for driveways, paths and patios in private gardens to reduce rainwater run-off

Action: Awareness and information to help individuals make the right choices when making changes to driveways, paths and patios.

Indicative timescale

Within 18/24 months



AVOIDING WATER POLLUTION

OBJECTIVE: Increased rainfall storage and run-off capture in domestic gardens.

Action: Awareness and information to help individuals make good choices for patio and garden water storage.

Indicative timescale

Within 18/24 months

Action: Maintain campaigns that 'only rain goes down the drain' and promote responsible disposal of harmful products.

Indicative timescale

Within 18/24months

UNDERSTANDING WHY CLEAN RIVERS AND STREAMS ARE AN IMPORTANT NATURAL RESOURCE

OBJECTIVE: A heightened awareness by individuals and families of the River Thame as a valuable local amenity

OBJECTIVE: An increased awareness of the role of clean water in biodiversity, carbon capture and quality of life

Action: Elevate conservation profiles - of the River Thame Conservation Trust (RTCT) and Cuttle Brook Conservation Volunteers (CBCV) and general links with biodiversity parties by:

- Public Talks and Walks around the River Thame and Cuttle Brook - supported by RTCT and CBCV etc., especially at weekends and school holidays
- Encouraging more volunteers to engage with RTCT and CBCV and their work, to build understanding of the link between water as a shared resource for biodiversity and people.

Indicative timescale

Within 6/12 months

OBJECTIVE: Helping ensure that Thame continues to have an adequate and sustainable water supply

Action: Neighbourhood Plan to stress importance of clarity with Thame Water as to adequacy of water supplies and drainage services before further development is permitted.

Indicative timescale

Within 1-2 years

OBJECTIVE: Encourage all new developments to include water saving measures

Action: Liaise with SODC and others to seek obligations for new domestic and business properties to include water saving measures such as water storage tanks, water harvesting, and grey water use.

Indicative timescale

Within 2-5 years

CLEAN WATER

OBJECTIVE: Public Water Fountains to encourage use of refillable bottles.

Action: Discuss options with TTC and TW for installation of fountains in the centre of Thame, Thame parks and other public spaces.

Indicative timescale

Within 1/2 years

OBJECTIVE: Support the work of the River Thame Conservation Trust, RTCT.

Action: Help increase community awareness of the need for effective and ongoing flood management.

Indicative timescale

Within 1/2 years

OBJECTIVE: Reduced flooding and run-off pollution

Action: Encourage support from local landowners in cutting back on agricultural chemicals to reduce polluting run-off and improve water quality.

Indicative timescale

Within 1/2 years

Action: Press for scrutiny of planning applications and on-site follow up to ensure compliance

Indicative timescale

Within 1/2 years

Action: Support better construction methods to mitigate risks of run-off flooding from driveways, paths, patios etc.

Indicative timescale

Within 1/2 years

2.5 Water | Ideas for the Future

LINKS TO OUR NATURAL WATER SOURCES

OBJECTIVE:Establish a fuller understanding of water resources in Oxfordshire, the risks of future drought and the vital nature of available clean water to life.

Action: Ongoing reminders and awareness. Always consider water as an essential resource and seeing our town in the wider national and regional context

Indicative timescale

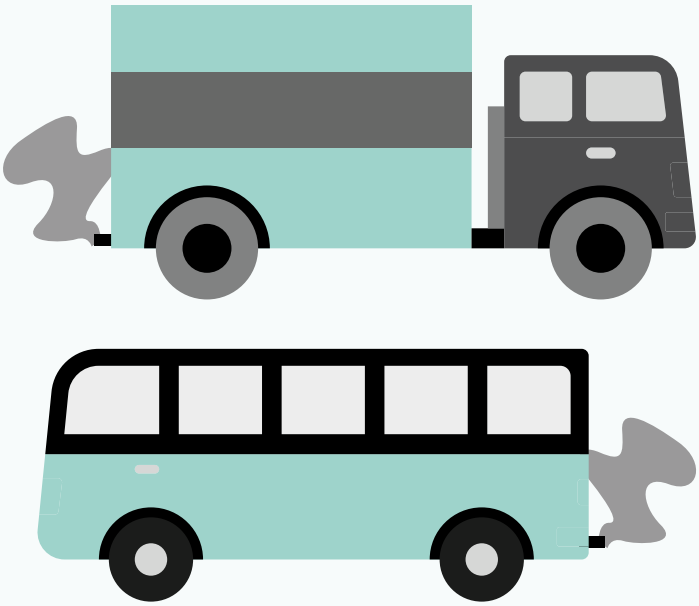
Ongoing

3: CLEAN AIR AND POLLUTION

Clean air should be the entitlement of all. We look out to blue skies or grey clouds and think there is clean air between us and them. But that's rarely the case. Our air is increasingly full of gases and particles that we can't see or even smell but which can harm us.

In view of the potential impact for making changes that will improve air quality, particular attention is given here to building support across the community, as outlined below.

Light and noise pollution are associated issues. 'Light blight' is increasingly recognised for its detrimental impact on wildlife and humans, with environmental and scientific organisations continuing to sound warnings about it. Disruption of sleep is a concern, as is the impact on creatures and eco-systems. Solutions are readily available.



Key Issues

- **Awareness and understanding –** understanding what we have to deal with
- **Individual actions –** practical things we can do now, which will also encourage others
- **Community and infrastructure projects –** what we need to think about communally and plan ahead for
- **Developing a widely supported movement for change –** with broad appeal

3.1 **Clean Air & Pollution | Initial steps**

AWARENESS & UNDERSTANDING

OBJECTIVE: Improve understanding of the key issues by producing authoritative reference sources, including leaflets and website posts, on key air quality (AQ) issues.

Action: Produce leaflets and website information on:

- CO_2 impact on global warming
- medical risks from black carbon
- household pollutants
- sources / dispersal of pollution
- practical carbon capture
- light pollution

Indicative timescale

Within 6 months

OBJECTIVE: Assess the extent of the problem by establishing metrics for tracking the level of pollution in Thame and its potential impact.

Action: Undertake the following

- Selective AQ monitoring in key areas as available at modest cost
- Traffic surveys at peak times
- Collect examples of personal experiences
- Seek medical advice & support
- Build a model of pollution levels and times

Indicative timescale

Within 12 months

OBJECTIVE: Create suitable events to encourage people to learn more and engage with others.

Action: One or more suitable public events such as a carbon cutting workshop along the lines led in Henley, possibly as part of Green Living Week.

Indicative timescale

Within 12 months

Action: Promote awareness of light pollution including the CPRE guidance relevant to planning decisions. https://www.cpre.org.uk/resources/light-pollution-as-a-statutory-nuisance-a-how-to-guide/

Indicative timescale

Within 12 months

3.2 **Clean Air & Pollution | Individual actions**

INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS WHICH CAN ENCOURAGE OTHERS TO MAKE CHANGES

CREATING A HEALTHIER TOWN CENTRE

OBJECTIVE: Reduce air pollution through better driving

Action: Promote the following

- Drive more smoothly and slowly
- Switch to a more efficient model
- Turn off engine – don't idle
- Use car parks away from the High Street
- Use ring road, not town centre

Indicative timescale

Can be done now

CLEANER 'OUTSIDE' AIR

OBJECTIVE: Create cleaner 'outside air' using more carbon capture or offset mechanisms

Action: Promote the following

- Plant trees, hedges, shrubs at home see also Green Spaces focus area
- Buy carbon offsets

Indicative timescale

Can be done now

NOISE POLLUTION

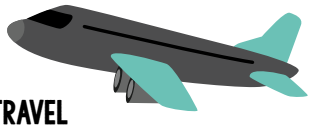
OBJECTIVE: Respect others and reduce all unnecessary or untimely noise

Action: Take precautions by

- not using noisy equipment unless necessary
- not using equipment at antisocial times
- shielding noise where possible
- warning neighbours where applicable

Indicative timescale

Can be done now



TRANSPORT AND TRAVEL

OBJECTIVE: Create greater awareness of and seek reduction of carbon emissions and greenhouse gases from holiday and business travel

Action: Promote the following

- Don't fly unless you must or take steps to reduce your flights
- Use Skype, Zoom or video conferencing more
- Don't drive if you don't need to – unless there are several of you
- Book trains early for better fares
- Adjust your mindset – change your mode of travel and take time to enjoy the journey
- If you can't avoid plane or car, cut back elsewhere and consider paying for carbon offsets through one of several providers

Indicative timescale

Can be done now

OBJECTIVE: More exercise for better health

OBJECTIVE: Less use of polluting vehicles.

Action: Promote the following

- Don't use the car unless essential
- Walk/cycle (allow time!)
- Use train/ bus (get more done)
- Go electric
- Car share

Indicative timescale

Can be done now

LIGHT POLLUTION

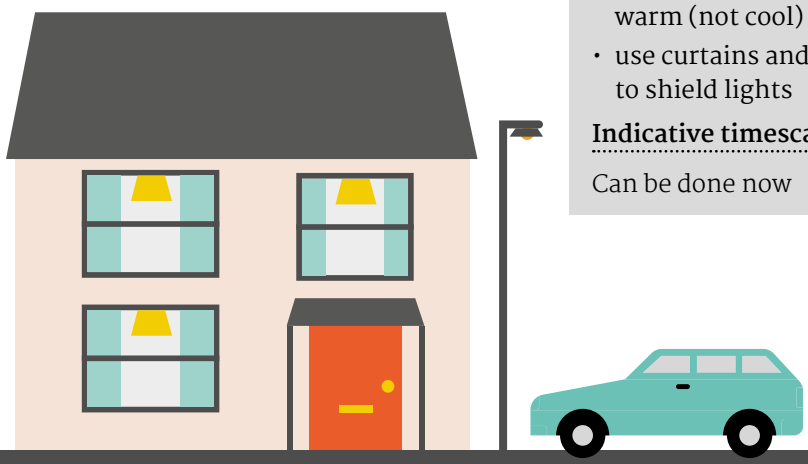
OBJECTIVE: Acknowledge and mitigate light pollution. Recognise serious effect on human sleep patterns and health and breeding patterns of insects and mammals.

Action: Take remedial measures

- reduce pollution from outside/ security lights
- avoid upwards-facing outside lights
- check positioning and control of street lights
- install light timers
- use less intense and warm (not cool) lights
- use curtains and blinds to shield lights

Indicative timescale

Can be done now



CLEANER AIR AT HOME

OBJECTIVE: Less agricultural carbon

OBJECTIVE: Healthier cooking

OBJECTIVE: Avoiding polluting home products

OBJECTIVE: Reduce home heat loss & exhaust gases from boilers

OBJECTIVE: Update boilers

Action: Promote the following

- Reduce open frying of food
- Reduce meat/ dairy consumption
- Reduce use of tumble dryers etc.
- Cut back harmful sprays
- Don't use log fires except with kiln-dried wood
- Install better home insulation
- Turn down heating

Indicative timescale

Can be done now

Action: Consider replacing gas-fired or oil-fired boilers, e.g. with 'Air Source' or 'Ground Source' Heat Pumps without polluting exhaust gases

Indicative timescale

With 2/5 years

DEVELOP A WIDELY SUPPORTED MOVEMENT FOR CHANGE ON AIR QUALITY

1 BUILD AWARENESS

OBJECTIVE: Establish a fuller local awareness and understanding of the dangers of air pollution and the options available to improve local air quality

Action: Progress the following

- Summarise the options available (see below) and their respective benefits/ drawbacks
- Hold a town hall Clean Air / carbon workshop event with discussion
- Plan a Thame Green Living Week – say, with a different emphasis each day (see below)

Indicative timescale

Within 12 months

Schools

OBJECTIVE: Improved understanding of the issues at teacher and student level

OBJECTIVE: Fresh thinking and ideas that appeal to a younger group.

OBJECTIVE: Agreement and volunteer support to effect change.

Action: Progress the following

- Approach headteachers and school governors for their active involvement
- Plan school projects to increase awareness of issues – including school gates pollution
- Encourage parents to walk children to school or seek practical solutions
- Promote a 'walking bus' and similar schemes

Indicative timescale

Within 12 months

Businesses & public transport vehicles

OBJECTIVE: Consider the needs of business and commercial vehicle users plus public transport owners

Action: Identify the main users / owners of petrol and diesel commercial vehicles and consider their likely needs and options. Contact Arriva and other bus/coach and taxi companies

Indicative timescale

Within 6 months

4 REFINE THE VISION & STRATEGY

OBJECTIVE: To refine the outline vision and draft strategy for Thame transport based on findings to date

Action: Progress the following

- Review all information received
- Consider other responses received to date
- Refine vision in light of findings

Indicative timescale

Within 24 months

5 CONSULTATION ON UPDATED THINKING

OBJECTIVE: To assess community readiness for change and preference for options available to inform new transport strategy for Thame

Action: Progress the following

- Set up consultation sessions/ surveys for views on vision, proposals and options
- Summarise responses for transport strategy
- Communicate findings to all

Indicative timescale

Within 24 months

2 CREATE VISION AND OUTLINE STRATEGY

OBJECTIVE: Put in place a shared and aspirational vision and framework to build a strategy for Thame as a fully clean, green town.

Action: Progress the following

- Agree parameters for vision
- Prepare outline ideas and options
- Engage interested parties
- Seek levels of agreement on possible actions
- Engage graphic designers to assist consultation and consider range of media

Indicative timescale

Within 12 months

3 TEST THE OPTIONS

OBJECTIVE: Observe and review the practical impact of the options available.

Action: Progress the following

- A trial no idling day for Thame
- A campaign involving volunteers and publicity and volunteers at school gates
- A trial week for changing the pattern of school runs, including walking buses and less use of cars
- An electric vehicle (EV) open day in the town with test drive opportunities
- An EV only day in town centre

Indicative timescale

Within 6/12 months

Work with stakeholders and partners to test the options

Local authorities

OBJECTIVE: Seek support (and clarify any limitations) from OCC, SODC and other competent bodies

Action: Progress the following

- Promote the 'cleaner, greener Thame' message and principles with all relevant authorities
- Engage at an early stage with SODC/OCC re parking/road/ highway strategies
- Identify councillors and others able to help

Indicative timescale

Within 12 months

6 NEW CLEAN AIR TRANSPORT STRATEGY

OBJECTIVE: Establish new 'green' transport strategy for Thame to cover designated key areas.

Action: Finalise the green transport strategy in light of all information and responses received

Indicative timescale

Within 24 months (by Dec 2022)

CONSIDERATION OF COMMUNITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

TRAFFIC CALMING

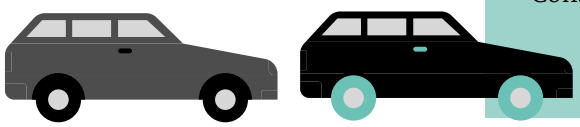
OBJECTIVE: Slower and smoother running traffic to improve safety, reduce vehicle pollution and enhance the amenities of the town centre.

Action: Consider the following options:

- 20 mph zone in central and other congested areas
- Remove speed humps in High Street
- Fewer turn-offs and pull-outs
- Better parking (see right)

Indicative timescale

Within 24 months



PARKING AND POLLUTION

OBJECTIVE: Reduce the High Street pollution caused by parking & waiting / manoeuvring to park

OBJECTIVE: Create a new cleaner and greener town centre without requiring major structural change

OBJECTIVE: Avoid growing frustration by strengthening illegal parking enforcement.

Action: Investigate the feasibility and support for following options for Lower High Street (by Town Hall):

- No queuing permitted for parking spaces
- Realign parking (perhaps centrally) to enable fewer movements (perhaps in conjunction with a High Street one-way system)
- Reduce number of parking spaces on the High Street itself
- Reduce parking time to 1 hr max to free spaces
- Prohibition on idling for cars, buses and trucks
- Limit parking to disabled and electric cars
- Consider steps needed to enforce effective control of the chosen options

Indicative timescale

Within 2/4 years.

TRAFFIC ZONE OPTIONS

OBJECTIVE: Restrict the number or type of vehicles allowed to travel into or through the town centre, while ensuring adequate parking close to shops and town centre facilities for those who need it.

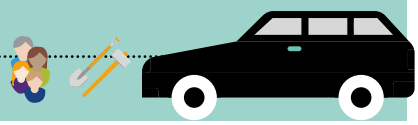
OBJECTIVE: Achieve less pollution, more pavement space, greater safety and add to town centre vitality

Action: Investigate the feasibility and support for following options (and similar):

- One-way system in all or part of Lower High Street and surrounding roads
- Access to town centre but restrict ability to drive through the centre
- Prohibit any vehicles except electric or mobility vehicles or disabled badge holders from accessing the town centre

Indicative timescale

Within 12/24 months



SHARED STREETS AND BROADER PAVEMENT OPTIONS

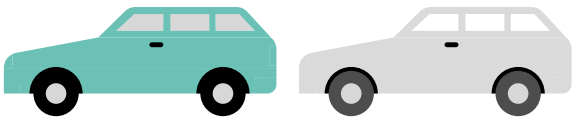
OBJECTIVE: Create safer, healthier and more pleasant conditions for walking/ cycling/ leisure in and around town centre.

Action: Investigate the feasibility and support for following options

- Priority for those on foot or bike
- Segregated cycle lane
- Wider pavements
- More space for meeting and outdoor seating

Indicative timescale

Within 12 months



(Note: this section sets out some of the options that might be considered in developing an Air Quality and Green Transport Plan as referred to in 3.3)

THE TOWN CENTRE WE WISH TO HAVE IN 2030

OBJECTIVE: Start the thinking early so that developments can take place in a timely and coordinated way.

Action: Review clean air and transport plan ideas with proposals for cleaner, safer walking and cycling, safe mobility scooter and electric vehicle use, more greenery and an open and vibrant town centre area for a broad range of uses and activities.

Indicative timescale

To be agreed

WORKING TOWARDS CARBON NEUTRALITY FOR THAME

OBJECTIVE: Establish a realistic target date for carbon neutrality and how this can be achieved

OBJECTIVE: Recognise that this will be a significant commitment which will need careful analysis and planning

Action: Pursue specific recommended actions in this plan to contribute to decarbonisation

Indicative timescale

To be agreed

Action: Set up

- a comprehensive carbon audit or similar exercise to establish the main local sources of carbon emissions
- suitable metrics to measure and monitor ongoing levels
- practical implementation steps & timelines
- suitable links with local authority and government policies and initiatives

Indicative timescale

To be agreed

4: ENERGY, ENERGY EFFICIENCY & ELECTRIC VEHICLES

There is potential for delivering many benefits regarding how we use energy, the types of technology and controls that we adopt, the sources of the energy we use, and the extent to which we 'flex' the timing of our use of energy, local generation and, in the future, energy storage.

The benefits include:

- Smarter use of energy resulting in better value for money
- Greater take-up of sustainable energy and electric vehicles with all their advantages
- Greener transport and home heating to support cleaner air and reduce global warming
- The opportunity for community investment in local clean energy sources

Key Issues

- **Energy awareness** – Improved understanding of energy uses and options
- **Energy efficiency and sustainability** – Exploring and implementing better energy choices
- **Clean transport** – Promoting steps to encourage electric vehicle use
- **Low carbon energy sources** – Practical guidance on clean energy for homes and businesses

Photo Credit: Richard Duckham

Note: AN ENERGY STRATEGY is now available on the Thame Green Living web site to ensure a joined-up approach to energy initiatives in Thame.

ENERGY AWARENESS

OBJECTIVE: Involve more people in using energy more efficiently

Action: Have a presence at town events such as the summer carnival and the Christmas lights.

Indicative timescale

Ongoing

Action: Provide printed and online materials that prompt ideas for individual actions.

Indicative timescale

Ongoing

OBJECTIVE: Establish easy access to relevant information and mechanisms for questions and follow up

Action: Encourage discussion and follow-up via TGL Facebook page and website.

Indicative timescale

Ongoing

Action: Organise an EV awareness event in Thame and publicise EV test drive opportunities. (see 4.4.)

Indicative timescale

Within 12 months

OBJECTIVE: Establish a green profile for Thame in energy, for all who live, work or visit here

Action: Make Thame energy initiatives visible, for example EV chargers signposted and with TTC & TGL 'branding'.

Indicative timescale

Within 6 months

Action: Establish a community energy company for Thame (by linking with established regional models or otherwise).

Indicative timescale

Within 12 months

OBJECTIVE: Publish an Energy Strategy for Thame to ensure a coherent longer-term approach

Action: Publish and circulate the draft energy strategy for information and comment, available on TGL website.

Indicative timescale

Available on TGL website

Action: Identify sources of expertise and possible future energy project partners.

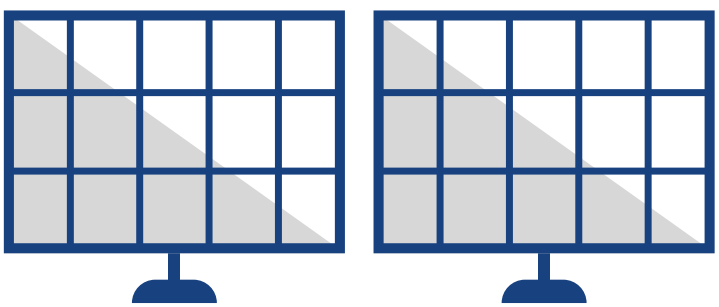
Indicative timescale

Within 12 months

Action: build on consultation feedback consistent with TTC and GLP strategy and lessons from practical projects.

Indicative timescale

Within 6/12 months



ENERGY EFFICIENCY & SUSTAINABILITY

OBJECTIVE: Promote personal actions that can improve energy efficiency

Action: Provide pamphlets and website information, including FB posts and promotion at events.

Indicative timescale

Ongoing

Action: Encourage use of Smart Meters to take advantage of new services and deals.

Indicative timescale

Ongoing

Action: Seek a link with Citizens Advice to assist their work in this area.

Indicative timescale

Within 6 months

OBJECTIVE: Improve the energy efficiency of existing homes

Action: Flag up government grants and programmes for individual homes (as part of the government Net Zero programme).

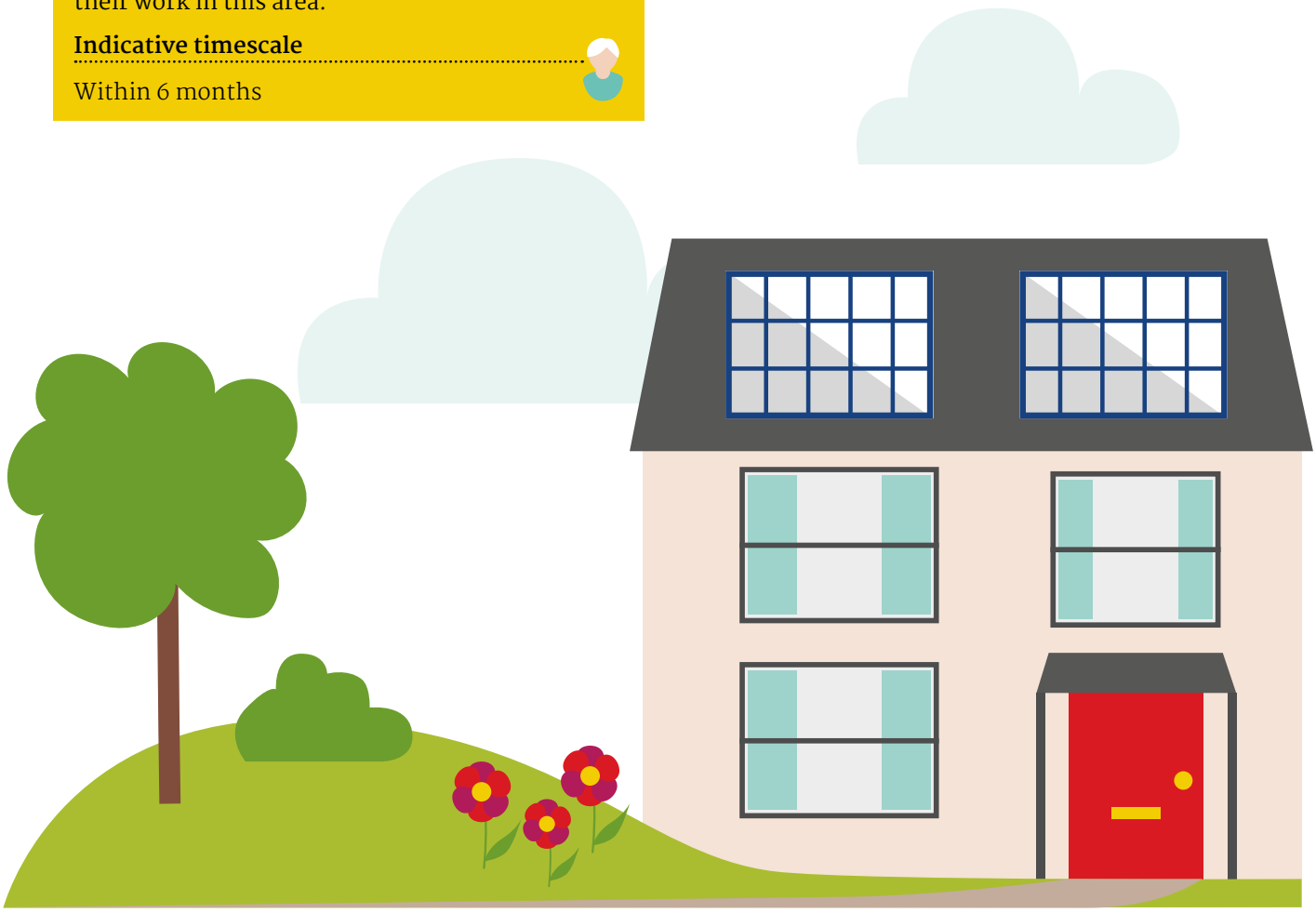
Indicative timescale

Within 6/12 months

Action: Identify Retrofit work programmes elsewhere that might be suitable for Thame. e.g. Better Homes Better Health and Cosy Homes.

Indicative timescale

Within 12 months



ENERGY EFFICIENCY & SUSTAINABILITY

OBJECTIVE: Encourage businesses to improve their energy efficiency

Action: Link with TTC Business Forum to raise awareness of free energy audits and grants for making energy improvements. e.g. at a Business Breakfast event.

Indicative timescale

Within 6 months

OBJECTIVE: Explore options that will enable TTC to improve the energy efficiency of their estate, vehicles and the town infrastructure

Action: Identify opportunities for free energy surveys and grants available to TTC. e.g. SALIX.

Indicative timescale

Within 3 months

Action: Look at best practices elsewhere (e.g. LEDs for street lighting, security lighting, and restricted hours for street lighting).

Indicative timescale

Within 6 months

OBJECTIVE: Achieve improvements to the energy efficiency of new homes and businesses

Action: Encourage developers to build-in PV on suitable roofs, provide EV charging, and consider solar roofs for walkways and awnings.

Indicative timescale

Within 18 months

Action: Encourage local contractors to support a 'connected homes' initiative through training and business partnering.

Indicative timescale

Within 12/18 months

Action: Support wider national moves to improve building standards.

Indicative timescale

Within 12/18 months

Action: Input to the revised Neighbourhood Plan to shape policy positions.

Indicative timescale

Within 3 months

4.4 Individual Actions

CLEAN PERSONAL TRANSPORT

OBJECTIVE: Establish greater awareness and uptake of green transport for personal and business use (including electric and hydrogen fuelled vehicles)

Action: Organise an EV awareness day and test drives for personal transport (e.g. MK's EV Experience Centre and local EV drivers and car clubs) .

Indicative timescale

Within 12 months

Action: Track developments in cleaner commercial transport (e.g. Battery and Hydrogen vehicles) and alert local businesses.

Indicative timescale

Within 18 months

CLEAN TRANSPORT IN THE COMMUNITY

OBJECTIVE: Establish if feasible a local EV car club as part of cleaner air and greener lifestyles

Action: Research EV car clubs (incl. Bucks and Oxon organisations).

Indicative timescale

Within 3 months

Action: Assess local interest in a Thame EV Car Club.

Indicative timescale

Within 6 months

OBJECTIVE: Establish if feasible an EV car-pooling/ sharing in Thame

Action: Find out more about EV car-pooling including local examples e.g. Co-wheels in Oxford, Zipcar, Enterprise car club, and Tuo (peer to peer).

Indicative timescale

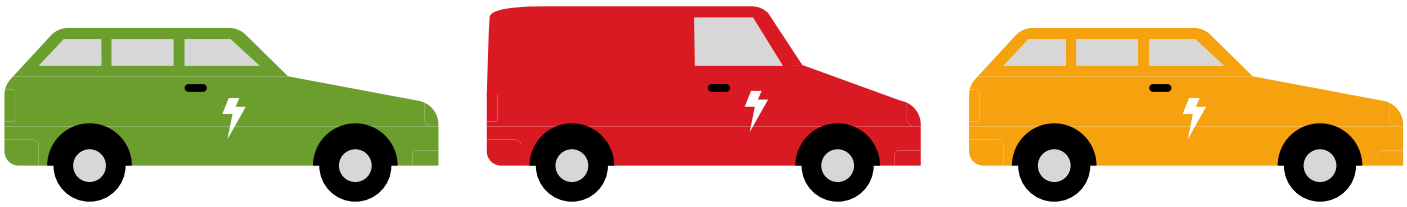
Within 3 months

OBJECTIVE: Encourage business Vehicle Fleet conversion to EVs

Action: Work through TTC Business Forum to present information and impartial advice.

Indicative timescale

Within 12 months



OBJECTIVE: Greater provision of business EV charging for their staff and visitors

Action: Work with TTC Business Forum to present information and impartial advice.

Indicative timescale

Within 6 months

Action: Set up a business breakfast meeting to introduce key concepts / link with specialists.

Indicative timescale

Within 6 months

OBJECTIVE: Make it easier for Thame's community organisations to make decisions about installing EV chargers

Action: Provide information on TGL website and FB.

Indicative timescale

Within 3 months

Action: Provide a simple check list of starting points for organisations to consider.

Indicative timescale

Within 3 months

Action: Link interested parties who are willing to share experience.

Indicative timescale

Within 3 months

OBJECTIVE: Press for 'smart ready' EV chargers, geared to the local power grid to minimise upgrades, that have simple (contactless) payment .

Action: Consider these requirements for TTC-initiated charging points.

Indicative timescale

Ongoing

Action: Consider adding these requirements to NP2 policy for car parks, homes and businesses.

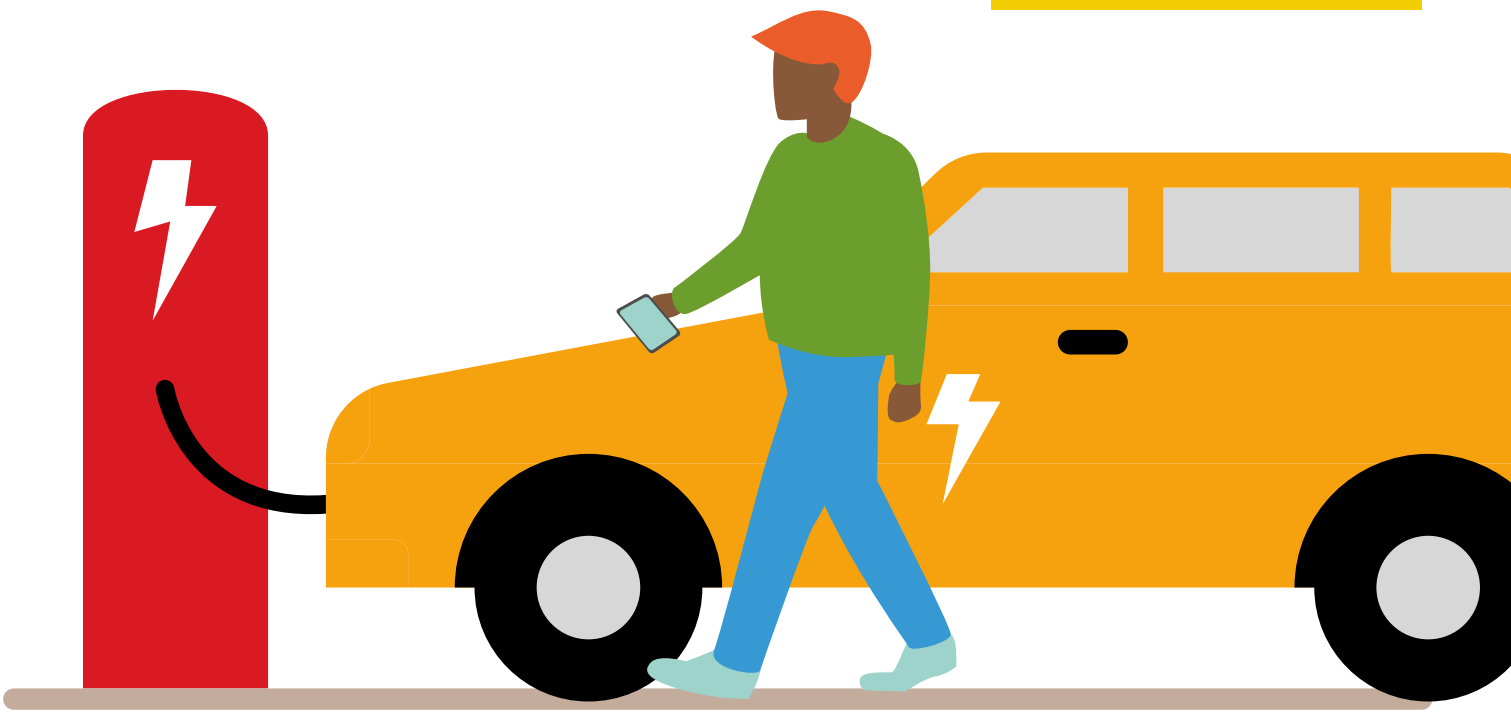
Indicative timescale

Within 3 months

Action: Recommend business conversion to EV Fleets or workplace charging for staff and visitors.

Indicative timescale

Within 3 months



LOW CARBON ENERGY SOURCES

OBJECTIVE: Establish relationships with local commercial-scale clean energy production in and around Thame

Action: Link up with the owners of the local PV arrays near Towersey and Ilmer villages.

Indicative timescale

Within 6 months

Action: Explore guided visits and real time information (e.g. with schools and others).

Indicative timescale

Within 6 months

OBJECTIVE: Make it easier for local domestic clean energy production to be installed in and around Thame

Action: Monitor costs of home solar PV and, when viable, **hold a PV awareness event** and link with providers and installers.

Indicative timescale

Ongoing

Action: Monitor 'whole street' PV discounts (incl. experience elsewhere (e.g. Green Group's Solar Streets).

Indicative timescale

Within 12 months

Action: Seek co-operation to produce 'case studies' of local domestic installations for practicalities and economics.

Indicative timescale

Within 6/12 months

OBJECTIVE: Speed up change to low-carbon fuels for domestic, business and other buildings

Action: Track developments and experience in heat pumps and other alternatives as low carbon alternatives to gas and oil for heating.

Indicative timescale

Ongoing

Action: Review government grants and installation trials and programmes and whether Thame might benefit from participating.

Indicative timescale

Ongoing

OBJECTIVE: Encourage other property owners to install clean energy (e.g. schools, offices, and sports and council buildings)

Action: Track economics of larger solar PV installations; where viable, **hold a PV awareness event** with links to providers and installers.

Indicative timescale

Ongoing

Action: Explore opportunities for solar roofs, for example car parks or shopping walkways.

Indicative timescale

Within 12 months

Action: Seek Neighbourhood Plan support for siting of new installations – including large solar roofs and community funded installations.

Indicative timescale

To be agreed

OBJECTIVE: Seek support for establishing a community-funded large-scale energy development in Thame.

Action: Check options for new commercial scale renewable energy: generation (solar or wind), energy storage, and ability to offer flexibility. Include opportunities for new building developments that could include large solar roofs, perhaps community funded installations.

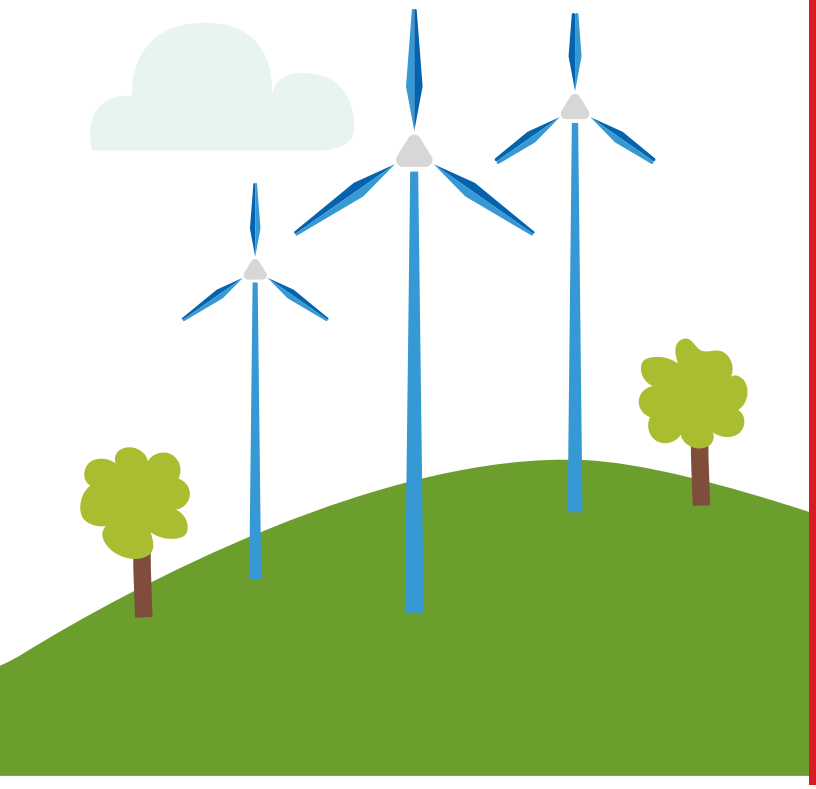
Indicative timescale

Within 24 months

Action: Work with an established organisation, such as the Low Carbon Hub in Oxford or the Community Energy Society being established in Henley, to gain access to professional expertise (technical, financial, and legal).

Indicative timescale

Ongoing



HIGH STREET POWER SUPPLIES

OBJECTIVE: Reduce the need for noisy and polluting diesel generators when a fairground is in the High Street

Action: Consider if power supplies can be made available in the High Street, perhaps linked to EV chargers, that could replace polluting diesel generators at Thame Fairs.

Indicative timescale

Within 24 months

Action: Consult via TTC with fairground operators as to viability and cost.

Indicative timescale

To be agreed

TRADING LOCAL ENERGY

OBJECTIVE: Create ways of surplus energy being traded locally to share the benefits of renewable sources

OBJECTIVE: Make surplus energy available to national energy markets to earn a return

Action: Look into trading energy locally, both within Thame and with national markets, to provide a financial return. This might include energy from solar panels, or energy in EVs or home batteries. This could form part of a 'community energy' initiative, a number of which are under way nationally.

Indicative timescale

Dependent on market and technological developments

5: WASTE AVOIDANCE, WASTE MANAGEMENT AND RECYCLING

We live in a consumer society that has increasingly come to produce more than we collectively need. The result is that many of us frequently buy more than we require, leading to an excess that is often thrown away. Alongside this are two related factors. One is the level of packaging, sometimes multiple layers, surrounding much of what we buy. The other is that we are often induced to buy more than we need by promotional offers or sometimes simply being unable to buy smaller quantities. Further, we have moved away from being a 'repair society' towards a 'throw-away society', with consequent effects.

Apart from the sheer waste, much packaging is plastic, and of the 360 million metric tonnes of plastic produced annually (Statista 2020), it's estimated that 40% is used once only ('single-use plastic'). Plastic degrades extremely slowly, if at all, and can cause immense damage to rivers and marine life. Increasingly, and as a direct result, animals are also ingesting tiny particles of plastic and so in consequence are we in what we eat and through the air that we breathe.

The huge volume of all waste and packaging currently generated threatens to overwhelm our communal ability to dispose of it effectively and safely. How we limit and deal with waste is therefore something that affects us all and is also something each of us can proactively remedy by applying the principles of the 'Circular Economy'.

Photo Credit: Stephen Fielding

Key Issues

Reducing Waste

- **Buying less** – only buy what we need, in the quantities we need
- **Buying better** – minimise carbon costs and reduce packaging
- **Using less** – throw away less, repair rather than replace
- **Minimising waste** – encourage the 'circular economy'

Increasing Recycling

- **Awareness** – individuals and businesses
- **Efficiency** – easy steps to improve what we do
- **Sustaining Efficiency** – challenge ourselves further and build on success

5.1 Individual Actions

REDUCE WASTE & MAKE INFORMED PURCHASING DECISIONS

OBJECTIVE: Increase awareness of how to create garden compost from 'food waste'

Action: Information campaigns on how to re-use unavoidable 'food waste' in a beneficial way – information programmes held at schools and public meetings supported by gardening/allotment groups.

Indicative timescale

Within 6 months

OBJECTIVE: Increase awareness of the benefits of better planning to buy only what we need

Action: Encourage campaigns to monitor how much waste we produce and aim to reduce it by:

- buying products with 'plastic free' packaging only.
- weighing the packaging we put in the bin daily and aiming to reduce by 50%.
- aiming to have a 'plastic free home' by joining and sharing ideas on Plastic-Free Thame FB and other relevant websites
- using the local market and specialist shops to help buy the right quantities of products and avoiding pre-packaged products.
- using local farm shops to obtain fresh and locally sourced products .
- cutting back on cooked food waste.

Indicative timescale

Within 6 months

Action: Only buy what we really need save money by seeing if you have something else that will do the same job.

Indicative timescale

Within 6 months

5.2 Community and infrastructure actions

REDUCE WASTE BY REPAIR AND BETTER USE OF PRODUCTS

OBJECTIVE: Reduce the volume of 'broken' items thrown away by greater use of repairs

Action: Repair or repurpose broken items

- encourage local focus groups to hold Saturday repair workshops for sewing, gadgets, wooden items etc in the Town Hall.
- encourage the use of online sites to find ways to repair and reuse items e.g. Pinterest, Buzzfeed YouTube etc by advertising these on TGL FB page, TTC newsletter and on LWS website.
- explore the setting up of a 'Mend Shed' group in Thame.

Indicative timescale

Within 6 months

OBJECTIVE: Encourage local businesses to replace all single-use plastics with reusable alternatives.

Action: Hold Business Breakfast briefings to share best practices for plastic waste reduction in local businesses

- develop a questionnaire/help-sheet to share with the wider business community for plastic and other waste reduction practices.
- open discussions with local supermarkets on how to minimise all product packaging.

Indicative timescale

Within 6 months

OBJECTIVE: Promote waste reduction by implementing the principles of the 'Circular Economy' into local businesses

Action: Launch awareness campaign to all local businesses on how to keep items in a perpetual loop of use and re-use

- TTC Business Website to support local businesses with informative briefings and useful links.
- Local businesses encouraged to share implementation and successes.

Indicative timescale

Within 1/2 years

RECYCLING AWARENESS

OBJECTIVE: Establish greater individual and community awareness of what and how to recycle and seek greater involvement of young people.

Action: Hold public awareness-raising events (e.g. outside major shops at a weekend) to stimulate involvement.

Indicative timescale

Within 6 months

Action: Develop an easy way to capture local recycling data, e.g. by a short on-line questionnaire via TTC newsletter.

Indicative timescale

Within 6 months

Action: Invite local school children to design the image for the on-line questionnaire.

Indicative timescale

Within 6 months

Action: Seek closer involvement of Lord Williams's School, possibly via a student questionnaire.

Indicative timescale

Within 6 months

OBJECTIVE: Establish a good level of recycling across all local businesses

Action: Work with TTC councillors and the Thame Business Forum and interested parties to **carry out a voluntary audit** of local business recycling practices.

Indicative timescale

Within 6/12 months

Action: Develop a simple questionnaire, based on the community version, for local businesses, including a means of following up.

Indicative timescale

Within 6/12 months

Action: Raise awareness of Supply Chain Audits and the specialists who can assist with this.

Indicative timescale

Within 6/12 months

OBJECTIVE: Research and review country-wide recycling approaches

Action: Undertake desktop research to develop a database of best practice country-wide.

Indicative timescale

Within 12 months

OBJECTIVE: Connect with local groups in Oxfordshire to learn from their experiences

Action: Connect with national bodies, such as WRAP in Banbury, BioRegional and local county CAG groups.

Indicative timescale

Within 12 months

Action: Liaise with 21C Thame and Plastic Free Thame to check alignment and offer support to relevant aspects of their initiatives.

Indicative timescale

Within 12 months

RECYCLING EFFICIENCY AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENTS

OBJECTIVE: Build meaningful recycling involvement across the community

Action: Raise awareness of Recycling as a major public opportunity by:

- Publishing questionnaire results to keep the community informed.
- Holding a competition for ideas and ways to improve recycling rates.

Indicative timescale

Within 6/12 months

OBJECTIVE: Encourage commercial recycling, household recycling, and school and community initiatives

Action: Implement greater spread and sharing of recycling information by:

- Devising a Thame Town Council Recycling Award for best local business practice and community involvement.
- Finding ways of publicly celebrating business benefits to the community.
- Promoting home recycling such as food composting and wormeries

Indicative timescale

Within 12 months

SUSTAINING RECYCLING EFFICIENCY AND BUILDING ON SUCCESS

OBJECTIVE: Use evidence from experience to develop long term plans

Action: Develop management, consultation, metrics and feedback structures to share success stories:

- Use interim progress to set longer-term goals.
- Develop metrics to monitor progress.
- Form a 'Recycling for Thame' team of interested parties in the town, to meet, discuss, disseminate and respond.
- Communications through, for example, involvement at community events (a float or stand at the Carnival?), public events – leafletting on weekends, music events etc.

Indicative timescale

Within 18/24 months

5.6 Ideas for the Future

EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES FOR WASTE MANAGEMENT

OBJECTIVE: Keep an eye to the future for emerging technologies that could have application in Thame

Action: Track new energy developments, e.g. small-scale local generation from waste, to provide electricity, heat or hydrogen.

Indicative timescale

Within 24/36 months

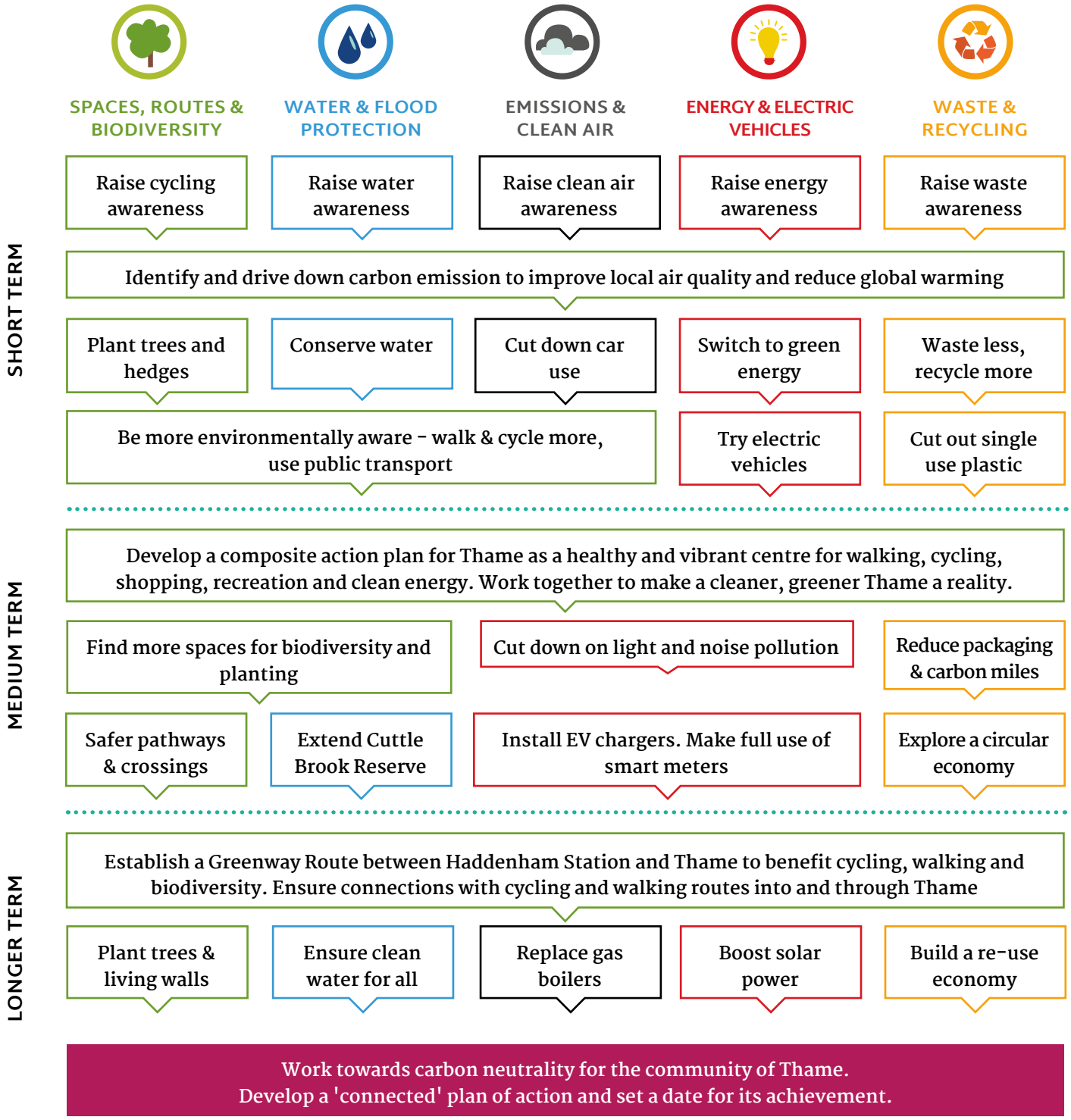
Action: Consider eligibility for Thame to be a trial location for new technologies; this may provide openings for funding through government innovation support and public grants.

Indicative timescale

Within 24/36 months

SUMMARY

This graphic illustrates key examples of recommended actions from the schedules in Section 3. It shows how they align with the five focus areas of the Green Living Plan, bringing out how the actions span the different areas. This "connectivity" is a key feature of the GLP.



This plan is just the start. There is a real need now to have the much broader public engagement that will be necessary to realise many of the objectives of this plan. This affects us all. There is no need to feel powerless as we can, by working together, make the changes we need.

WE'D URGE EVERYONE WHO FEELS THE SAME WAY TO GET IN TOUCH, THROUGH THE COUNCIL OR VIA THE TOWN INFORMATION OFFICE, THE THAME GREEN LIVING WEBSITE OR FACEBOOK PAGE, OR DIRECT CONTACT.

WITHOUT YOU THIS PLAN WILL REMAIN JUST ANOTHER SET OF IDEAS.

Rather than think of the inconvenience, we should concentrate on the benefits that adopting the recommendations of this plan will give us. We have much to gain by working together – and face an immeasurable loss if we do not.

We sincerely thank all who have worked with us to help produce this plan, which has been undertaken on behalf of Thame Town Council by a group of volunteers, initiated by members of the RSA Thame Group. Many of those involved are mentioned in the Acknowledgements.

Get in touch

Visit the Thame Green Living website
www.thamegreenliving.org.uk

Follow /thamegreenliving
/thamegreenliving

Pop in to the Thame Town Council Information Centre

WITH THANKS TO

RSA and RSA Thame Group[19]

The RSA (Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce) was founded in 1754. It is a registered charity committed to finding innovative, creative and practical solutions to today's social challenges with some 29,000 Fellows (members) worldwide (www.thersa.org).

RSA Thame Group (also known as Thame Green Living) was established and is run by locally-based RSA Fellows to contribute to local issues of environment and sustainability, offering support to Thame Town Council in creating and supporting a Green Living Plan for Thame. The recently active members of the RSA Thame Group are:

- Colin Bloxham*
- Charles Boundy* (Chairman)
- Anne Fisher
- Robert Friel
- Wendy Duckham*
- Rich Henderson
- Lisa Meaney
- John Scott*
- Mark Stockley
- We are pleased to welcome new members Jennifer Jones, Josie Richards and Harriet Woollard.
- We are also pleased to record the valuable contribution made by former members: Anna Comino-James, George Westropp, Emma May, Phil Evans, and Lin Wylie.

* RSA Fellows

Acknowledgements

Grateful thanks are due to all who have contributed to the discussions or research for this plan. Many of these are named in the 2018 Plan: others include (with apologies for any omissions)[20]:

- Cuttle Brook Conservation Volunteers (Mike Furness and colleagues)
- EV Carshop
- Greening Chinnor (Maureen Dyroff)
- Haddenham Safe Walking and Cycling Group (Cynthia Floud and others)
- Hazel Boundy (green spaces)
- Lea Park Residents' Association (with Steve Brandish acting as invaluable link)
- Len Davidson (walking routes)
- Lord Williams's School
- Ramblers Association (Tony Clark, Ruth Cornish)
- Risborough Environment Group (Stephen Jeanes)
- River Thame Conservation Trust (Nick Marriner)
- RSA Head Office (via Claire Doran)
- RSPB (Colin Wilkinson, Brian Fisher)
- South Oxfordshire Sustainability (SOS) - esp. Sue Roberts, Richard Harding, Patrick Fleming and Gill Bindoff
- Thame to Haddenham Commuter Cycling Group (Stuart Horsman, Oliver Graydon and others)
- TTC Continuity Committee and GLP Working Group
- TTC Mayor, Councillors and Officers
- Twenty-First Century Thame (Sue Martin-Downhill and others)
- Wild Oxfordshire (Roselle Chapman)
- Sam Osborne for design and illustration work

END NOTES

1 Neighbourhood Plans are not a legal requirement, but something that communities in England can choose to adopt, subject to strict rules. See https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2

2 Examples of relevant government policy initiatives that align with Thame's GLP are: i) the Climate Change Act 2008 that commits UK to Net Zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, ii) the national Transport Decarbonisation Plan, iii) English Nature's Species Recovery Programme, iv) Government proposals to end the sale of new diesel and petrol cars, including hybrid vehicles by the year 2035, v) the government's Clean Air Strategy, and vi) the influential and overarching work of the Committee on Climate Change, an independent non-departmental public body, that advises UK and devolved Governments on tackling and preparing for climate change.

3 https://www.cisl.cam.ac.uk/directory/emily-shuckburgh

4 Data source: https://sealevel.nasa.gov/understanding-sea-level/global-sea-level/ice-melt

5 From NASA Goddard Institute: https://data.giss.nasa.gov/gistemp/graphs_v4/

6 From BP: https://www.bp.com/content/dam/bp/business-sites/en/global/corporate/pdfs/energy-economics/statistical-review/bp-stats-review-2019-full-report.pdf

7 From Renewable Energy Institute, using BP data: https://www.renewable-ei.org/en/statistics/international/

8 Note: Power and Energy are not the same thing. Energy (kWh) is a measure of how much fuel is used by something over a specific period of time. Power (kW) is the rate at which energy is being used at any moment in time. The electricity system must deliver both the kWh we want over a period of time and meet the rate of consumption (kW) at every moment. This is particularly important when considering the electricity system which has virtually no energy storage within it, (unlike the gas grid), which means that the generation of electrical power must match the demand for electrical power at every moment in time. Electricity moves from a generator to our appliances at the speed of light (the ultimate just-in-time delivery system!). In UK, renewables are meeting 37% of our energy needs overall, but they can't be relied on for 37% of our power needs at each moment in time (after all, they will be contributing zero output at times when it's dark and there's no wind). This points to the growing importance of both demand 'flexibility' and the creation of more electricity storage by means of home batteries, grid-scale batteries, and finding ways to utilise EV batteries.

9 https://www.carbonbrief.org/analysis-uk-low-carbon-electricity-generation-stalls-in-2019

10 Unless stated otherwise the figures in this plan come from sources that include the government, scientific and medical reports, local authorities, Henley Climate Emergency Group, & Friends of the Earth.

11 https://www.forbes.com/sites/jeffmcmahon/2019/12/02/5-reasons-agricultures-greenhouse-gas-emissions-are-usually-underestimated/#3ea499eb6ac8 and https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/land-use-policies-for-a-net-zero-uk/

12 Also food consumption, e.g. mushroom production often uses peat with associated carbon emissions. Deforestation to produce meat and other food products, e.g. palm oil.

13 By contrast the town of Henley (which has a population broadly similar to that of Thame) with a last census population of around 11,000 people, has estimated that its population generates about 60,000 tonnes of carbon (CO_2) a year. This averages out at about 5.5 tonnes of carbon per person.

14 From www.calculator.carbonfootprint.com

15 Henley for example has calculated that it would take half a million trees to sequester (absorb) only 10% of its estimated carbon output. So, trees are very valuable – but on their own they will not be enough!

16 Transport for London announcement early 2020.

17 This strategy is available on the Thame Green Living website and provides further pointers to longer term potential actions.

18 'Bee Active' leaflet from Wild Oxfordshire.

19 See https://www.thersa.org/about-us The RSA (Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce)

20 Where individuals are named, we have accepted their contributions as personal views.

THAME GREEN LIVING PLAN

Summer 2020

THAME Town Council

www.thametowncouncil.gov.uk

Thame Green Living

www.thamegreenliving.org.uk