



CLIMATE AND NATURE CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMME

An opportunity for
community organisations
in the West of England

The Capacity Building Programme is an opportunity for community organisations across the West of England to receive £30,000 and a tailored programme of support to co-produce community climate and nature action plans and start putting their priorities into action.



CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

The Capacity Building Programme is an opportunity for community organisations across the West of England to benefit from **£30,000** funding and a tailored programme of support to co-produce community climate and nature action plans and start putting their plan priorities into action.

OUTPUT

Community climate and nature action plan developed through community engagement and opportunities to champion plan through regional partnerships and events

OFFER

£30,000 funding support (£25,000 bursary for community organisations and £5,000 for creative commission to support community engagement), a series of free workshops, peer mentoring and resources

COMMITMENT

Participation in 10 monthly workshops and a series of events as part of the wider project, development of an engagement programme including using creativity, development of the written plan

TIMESCALE

- Learning and mentoring programme: February 2026 – February 2027
- Activation phase: March 2027 – March 2028

DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS

Wednesday 8 January



INTRODUCTION

Our region is leading the way on climate and nature. All four local councils in the West of England have declared climate and nature emergencies and are progressing ambitious plans and projects to deliver the change required, and the same goes for our communities. Over the last five years, 17 communities in Bristol have co-developed community climate and nature action plans outlining their priorities and are now progressing action across the city to make these a reality.

Now, Bristol Climate & Nature Partnership's Community Climate & Nature Action (CCNA) Project has been awarded funding from the National Lottery's Climate Action Fund to scale this effective model for community-led climate and nature action across the region.

A community climate and nature action plan is a document that outlines community priorities in relation to climate and nature, identified through a process of community engagement.

The Capacity Building Programme will support and encourage community organisations to co-develop their own community climate and nature action plans which will also include social priorities.

Community partners will be recruited via an open, collaborative and inclusive expression of interest and selection process, with strategic input from core project partners.

The overall programme consists of five different elements and will last from February 2026 to March 2028.

 **Participation**
taking part in the learning and mentoring programme, a series of free workshops, peer mentoring and resources

 **Community engagement**
with local residents, groups and networks

 **Plan development**
developing CCNA plan and priorities

 **Plan activation**
beginning to deliver plan priorities

 **Wider CCNA project involvement**
in other project elements such as the new Community Leadership panel and policy roundtables

WHY TAKE PART IN THE PROGRAMME?

The aim of the programme is to enable communities across the West of England to develop their own climate and nature action plans, which can then be used to influence policy and attract funding. It will support deep and inclusive community engagement and action on local issues that matter.

The programme is built on extensive insights gained from developing, testing and refining models with three cohorts of diverse communities within Bristol.

Participants will receive a **£25,000** bursary over two years to cover time attending monthly workshops for 18-months, undertaking community engagement, and writing up the community climate and nature action plan and priorities. An additional **£5,000** will be provided for commissioning a local creative to help you engage more community members in this process. You will have the opportunity to influence and interact with people working on strategic issues across the region and with your local authorities. Participating in the programme could help raise the profile of your community's priorities, attract additional funding, and influence strategic change to happen.



“Our climate action plan in Lockleaze demonstrates that by working together and making even small changes, we can make a big difference for our community and our planet. Together we can and you can too!”

MARIA
Lockleaze Neighbourhood Trust

WHO IS THIS OPPORTUNITY FOR?

This opportunity is open to any type of community organisation in the West of England – you don’t need to be a climate or nature focused organisation to apply. By community, we mean organisations like sports clubs, women’s institutes, young farmers’ groups, equalities groups, arts and heritage organisations, wellbeing groups, carers’ groups and education institutions.

This opportunity is designed to support communities who may not have had the chance, capacity or resource to work on climate, nature and resilience before. We are interested in community groups who would like to work with their communities to identify key priorities that relate to climate and nature in ways which help improve the lives of local people.

Our West of England community partners will reflect the region’s geographic, cultural and demographic diversity and we are keen to support communities experiencing socio-economic disadvantage and who aren’t currently represented in regional climate conversations. We especially encourage groups that represent people from specific ethnic, refugee or migrant backgrounds, different age groups, identifying as LGBTQIA+, Disabled people or people experiencing inequality in other ways.

Climate and nature action comes in many different forms. It is happening in every community, but it’s not always labelled as ‘climate and nature action’. Community activity to support people with the cost-of-living crisis and health and wellbeing also come with climate benefits, for example: men in sheds, community allotment groups, school/sports uniform swaps, repair cafés, community walking groups, tree planting and surplus food community meals.

“It’s been exciting to start putting Easton and Lawrence Hill’s climate action plan into action, and even better working together with other communities in our city. As part of the Community Climate & Nature Action Project cohort, we feel able to tackle bigger challenges and raise our collective voice on climate in Bristol.”

EMILY
Eastside Community Trust



IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

Community partners will be recruited as a cohort of six which includes organisations from different contexts, with a weighting towards those with experience of community engagement, as well as lived and learned experience of their communities.

TO TAKE PART IN THE PROGRAMME YOU NEED TO:

- Be a West of England (excluding Bristol) based not-for-profit organisation with a management committee, board or trustees, a bank account and constitution / charter / articles of association.
- Be a community-based organisation which is embedded within a specific community (of place, interest or demography), with the ability to authentically represent your community's views and needs.
- Have a paid /dedicated staff member who is available to attend monthly workshops on dates listed (ideally the same person throughout the 18-month programme).
- Have regular communications channels with your community and organise regular events / activities to engage your community.
- As the project aims to test and learn whether CCNA can effectively engage a broad range of audiences / organisations, the selection panel will give increased weighting to communities not yet represented within Cohorts 1, 2 and 3 of the project in Bristol.

Organisations that represent communities based in rural, agricultural, ex-industrial, former mining or coastal areas as well as organisations that are Global Majority-led or LGBTQIA+ led are encouraged to apply

Groups that are “equalities-led” (at least two thirds of trustees / board / committee are from disadvantaged groups) will be given an additional weighting in the scoring process.

If you are unclear whether you are eligible, we would recommend contacting us to discuss this ahead of submitting an application, at: contact@bristolclimatenature.org



WHAT WILL THE PROGRAMME CONSIST OF?

The Capacity Building Programme is hosted by Bristol Climate & Nature Partnership and supported by a range of experienced community climate and nature experts. Training and resources from climate and equalities partners and peer support from Community Advocates (experienced in plan development and delivery in Bristol) will enable community partners to inspire, connect and involve new members of their community in the climate and nature conversation. It will consist of:

- **A series of monthly learning and mentoring workshops (10am – 3pm, February 2026 – February 2027)** to explore how to engage with your local community on climate and with a range of supportive thematic experts on issues such as food, energy, nature, transport etc. This will also include a session from a climate and disability expert to support plans /engagement being accessible and inclusive. We anticipate most sessions being in person and at accessible locations across the region to be agreed in collaboration with the six selected organisations. If you have specific accessibility needs, please make us aware when applying.
- **4 (optional) 1 hour online “coffee mornings” for informal catch ups and peer support.**
- **A plan development surgery day in April 2027** with previous cohorts of community organisations to help develop your climate and nature action plan.
- **A peer review roundtable event in May 2027** with supportive regional experts to help refine your plan.
- **A joint launch and celebration event in July 2027** raising awareness of your community climate and nature action plans, coordinated by Bristol Climate & Nature Partnership in collaboration with local authority partners.
- Ongoing **connection and dialogue** with peers and project partners in between sessions via a dedicated Microsoft Teams channel.
- **A Community Advocate** from the Bristol CCNA project to support the planning of your community engagement and plan development.
- Involvement in the development of a West of England **Community Leadership Panel** and participation in initial panel sessions.
- Participation in **policy roundtable and evaluation workshops** taking place as part of the wider project.
- **Resources** to support the development of your community climate and nature action plan.
- Being part of a **supportive collective of regional organisations** pioneering community-led climate and nature action.

OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMME DATES AND ACTIVITY

PARTICIPATION PHASE: FEB 2026 – FEB 2027 (10 DAYS)

- * Participation in a series of 10 monthly learning and mentoring workshops on Wednesdays from 10am – 3pm supported by peer mentoring from Bristol Advocates on the following dates: 25 February, 1 April, 6 May, 10 June, 15 July, 16 September, 14 October and 11 November 2026 and 13 January and 10 February 2027

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PHASE: JUL 2026 – FEB 2027 (17 DAYS)

- * Development and sharing of engagement survey with community
- * Planning and delivery of series of engagement events and activities with community members and groups
- * Recruitment and liaison with artist to support community engagement
- * 1-2-1 development meeting with Bristol Climate & Nature Partnership and Advocate peer mentoring

PLAN DEVELOPMENT PHASE: FEB – JUL 2027 (19 DAYS)

- * Development of plan priorities following community engagement (including internal organisational prioritisation, attendance at one whole cohort plan development surgery event and one strategic roundtable event with wider stakeholders)
- * Development of CCNA plan content (using template)
- * Development of community summary of plan (for direct communications with community)
- * Involvement of communications staff and organisational lead / board in sign-off of plan and priorities and time to contribute to community summary and plan launch comms
- * 1-2-1 development meeting with Partnership and Advocate peer mentoring
- * West of England launch event in July 2027 for new community climate and nature action plans



PLAN ACTIVATION PHASE: SEP 2027 – MAR 2028 (10 DAYS)

- * Participation in a series of three plan activation events post plan launch to support strategic implementation of plans
- * Ongoing local and regional comms to raise awareness of new plans and priorities
- * Workshop and mentoring from a social enterprise expert to develop a selected plan priority into a project plan for inclusion on regional community investment prospectus

HOLISTIC CCNA INVOLVEMENT THROUGHOUT PROJECT (14 DAYS)

- * Participation in one community leadership panel induction session, one panel development session, one panel capacity building session (masterclass)
- * Preparation, participation in and contribution to recommendations report writing for two regional panel sessions
- * Participation in reflection sessions, completion of evaluation surveys and reflective logs
- * Contribution to meetings with strategic partners (roundtables) and wider project comms / dissemination

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST:

BURSARY INFORMATION

Community partners will receive a bursary of £25,000, in staged payments over the course of the project to directly support the staff time and engagement necessary for the development of their community climate and nature action plan.

THE BURSARY INCLUDES:

- **£21,000** core staff time for all project phases/activities listed above (70 days of staff time @ £300/day)
- **£4,000** contribution to direct delivery costs for developing a plan including: travel costs to workshops, venue hire/refreshments for engagement events, accessibility, printing costs, participant vouchers etc.

IN ADDITION, EACH COMMUNITY ORGANISATION WILL BENEFIT FROM:

- **£5,000** creative commission to support with community engagement
- access to wider holistic project accessibility budget if required.

The bursary aims to ‘pump prime’ community organisations who have the foundations and passion to develop their community climate and nature action plan. However, organisations are encouraged to also use additional match funding, volunteering time, pro bono climate expert time etc. to lever further capacity and budget for the wider development process of creating and delivering their community climate and nature action plan. Bristol Climate & Nature Partnership will support this wherever possible, for example help make connections to climate experts, letters of support for supplementary funding applications, comms and advocacy of new plans.

Funders are increasingly making climate change and nature recovery a criterion for grant applicants, so developing a community climate and nature action plan could help support your community organisation’s ongoing resilience.

APPLICATION CRITERIA AND PROCESS

INFORMATION SESSIONS

There will be online information sessions on **19 (10.30am) and 25 (1.30pm) November 2025** where you can find out more. These sessions will be recorded.
[You can sign up here.](#)

Alternatively, all the application information can be found below.

The application deadline is **8 January 2026**. Applications can be submitted either in writing or as a video. Organisations will be notified of the outcomes of their application by 31 January 2026, and the first learning and mentoring programme workshop is on 25 February 2026.

SUBMITTING AN EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

To apply for the Capacity Building Programme, please submit an expression of interest by **5pm on 8 January 2026** using [this google form](#) or download [this word document](#) and email to contact@bristolclimatenature.org

If you are more comfortable submitting a video application, we are open to this but you would need to respond to the same questions as in the written form. The video will not be judged on quality of filming, purely on the responses given. Please contact us if you require any advice on this.

USEFUL LINKS WHICH YOU MAY WANT TO LOOK AT BEFORE SUBMITTING AN EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

- 📖 **Community Climate Action plans – Bristol Communities**
- 📄 **CNA Capacity Building Programme Insights Report**
- 🌟 **Community Climate and Nature Action Model**
- 📊 **Climate and Creativity Insights Report**



Image: ShamPhat Photography

SELECTION PROCESS

The expression of interest forms submitted will be reviewed by a panel of Community Climate & Nature Action lead project partners (from Bristol Climate & Nature Partnership, Centre for Sustainable Energy, the University of the West of England and the West of England Combined Authority). The panel will also consider feedback from the three local authority partners when it makes its decision.

The scoring criteria listed here will be used by the panel along with a simple 1 – 5 scoring system [1 – does not meet / meeting of criteria not clearly demonstrated, 3 – sufficiently demonstrated, or 5 – meets / exceeding criteria clearly demonstrated]:

REVIEW CRITERIA:

- Does the community organisation meet all eligibility requirements: West of England region-based (excluding Bristol), non-profit, has a bank account, management board / trustees / committee, dedicated (paid) member of staff who can attend all sessions?
- Does the organisation represent a community (geographic, demographic or interest) which isn't currently represented within the Community Climate & Nature Action Project?
- Does the organisation authentically reflect the community it serves?
- Is the organisation equalities-led or represent a community experiencing deprivation? **(extra weighting)**
- Does the organisation regularly communicate and engage with its community?
- Does the organisation effectively engage with other services / organisations working in/with their community?
- Does the organisation show an interest in and commitment to community climate and nature action?
- Does the organisation have a tangible reason for wanting to participate in the Capacity Building Programme?

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUERIES ABOUT THE PROCESS, OR WHETHER YOU ARE ELIGIBLE TO APPLY PLEASE EMAIL:



Image: ShamPhat Photography

Is this opportunity for you? If so please submit your application by 5pm on Wednesday 8 January 2026.

If not, read on to find out about other opportunities to access support ...

If you don't feel that your group is ready to take on this opportunity, due to capacity, not currently meeting basic criteria, you could access the following support to set you up to apply for similar opportunities in the future:

- The following organisations offer support advice and guidance for local groups in the West of England to make a bigger impact, primarily focused on organisations and groups from communities that experience the greatest disadvantage:
 - 3SG: Bath and North East Somerset Third Sector Group
 - CVS South Gloucestershire
 - Voluntary Action North Somerset
- Quartet Community Foundation has a range of funding opportunities to support community organisations in the West of England region
- West of England Combined Authority has ways to access funding and advice below to reduce your carbon footprint and support nature as a resident or business in the West of England
- Black South West Network builds dynamic, independent, and strong Black and Minoritised communities, businesses, and organisations that are empowered to flourish while challenging systemic barriers and forging a true path for themselves
- Range of resources developed by Bristol community organisations to support community-led climate and nature action
- Range of resources to support your climate action journey from Bristol Climate & Nature Partnership's Climate Action Programme (for businesses)

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