



Impact report

Building a movement for positive change on climate, nature and inequality.

Spring 2026



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Jodie Mann


Introduction and overview

The Community Climate & Nature Action Project is creating a movement for positive change towards a healthier, fairer city and region. A movement supporting communities to lead their own response to the climate and nature crises and address systemic inequality.

Over five years (Autumn 2020 – Autumn 2025) the project has co-created a collection of community-led climate and nature action plans, developed a strong network of leaders advocating for their communities, and produced on the ground projects delivering impactful change for local people.

This has led to an effective and inclusive place-based model for community led climate and nature action developed by Bristol Climate & Nature Partnership in collaboration with community organisations, climate and nature sector partners and Bristol City Council. The model is now expanding across the West of England region and influencing nationally.

This collaborative approach harnesses existing social and community infrastructure to support both community and climate resilience. It recognises community expertise and lived experience and puts communities at the heart of local action towards a just transition.



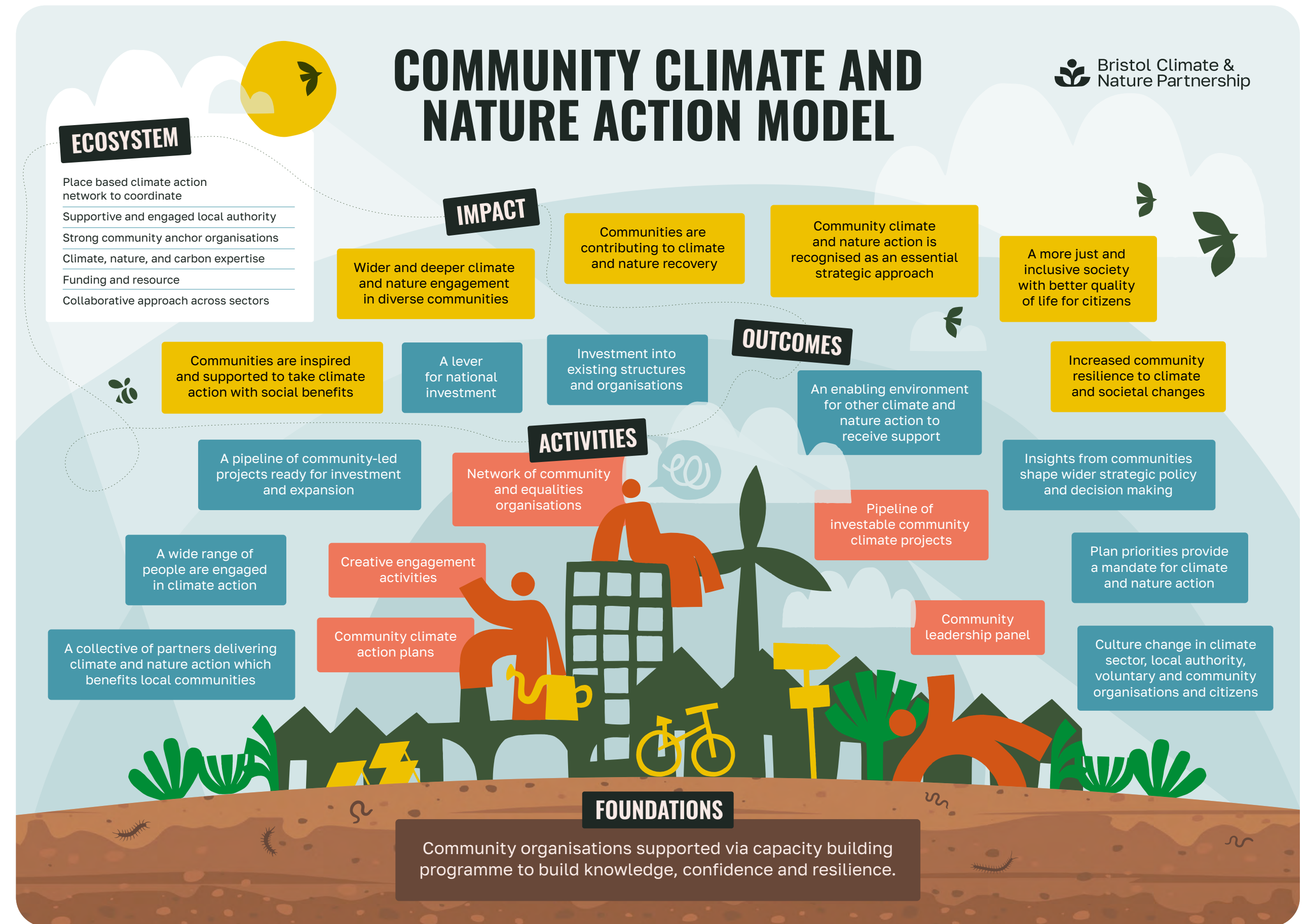
“A place-based approach to action on climate and nature, building up the power of communities and creating an enabling local environment, is a more inclusive, more equitable way of doing things, that will deliver tangible outcomes. I’m glad to see Bristol once again showing leadership on this front.”

Kerry McCarthy
MP for Bristol East

The Community Climate & Nature Action (CCNA) model was developed through:

- 🌱 Co-creation of 17 community climate and nature action plans by a diverse range of communities, supported through a year-long capacity building programme
- 🌱 Five community-led climate and nature projects delivered across the city
- 🌱 Co-creation of an inclusive transport vision for the city and accompanying toolkit for communities
- 🌱 A climate and disability strand, aimed at improving Disabled people's influence on climate, access to nature and food, and getting around the city
- 🌱 Development of a community leadership panel on climate and just transition, to review and provide recommendations to strategic initiatives across the region
- 🌱 Commissioning a wide range of creative engagement, including films, podcasts and sculptures.

The CCNA model also acknowledges the need for joy and creativity to sustain community resilience. Its impact relies on collaboration and partnership working with diverse communities and stakeholders. Project 'ways of working' have been co-developed which share the values and ethos underpinning partners' approach to working together.



[Learn more →](#)

Why this project was needed

There is widespread support for climate and nature action and transformation happening from a neighbourhood level upwards.

However, the costs and benefits need to be fairly distributed across society. When solutions are shaped by communities, they reflect the views of local people and can lead to reduced inequality and improved quality of life.

Community organisations provide stable, trusted, and often the only, local infrastructure to connect, support, and include people in climate and nature action. They are trusted connectors and messengers, helping local people understand how climate and nature is relevant to, and can help improve their lives. Community organisations are essential for a just transition, ensuring the changes we make for the planet and nature are fair for people too.

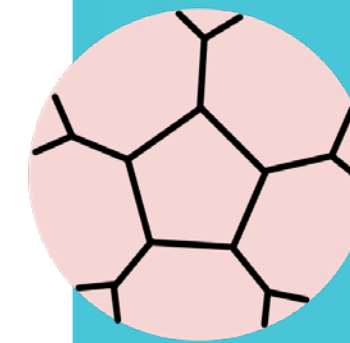
“Being part of the Community Climate & Nature Action Project has been a huge game changer. It has enabled us to bring in new staff, expertise and ways of working, and allowed us to begin to be a nature connected organisation across all our projects and activities, bringing new forms of resilience as our community face climate change and the ecological breakdown.”

– Eleanor Fairbraida Lockleaze Neighbourhood Trust



Foundations and context for Community Climate & Nature Action

The role of place-led initiatives and a more people-centred approach to participation is now being recognised as critical to net zero, by both Government and academia. Place based, cross-sector partnerships can provide a foundation and context for collaboration and system change where connections can be made and action catalysed as part of a wider movement for change.



Bristol Climate & Nature Partnership was established in 2007 and today supports a network of over 1,400 member organisations working together towards a city and region where all our communities and nature thrives. It is home to projects and programmes engaging organisations from across sectors that make up its membership, from business to community-based organisations to local authority agencies. The Partnership originated and provides a foundation for the Community Climate & Nature Action Project and other collaborations to emerge, grow, develop shared insight, interact with local governance structures and re-connect with a wider ecosystem.

Impact in numbers

Over five years:

18,300

people took part in local climate and nature action

550+

community activities delivered

14

strategic city projects influenced

50-75%

project participants new to climate action (rising to 75 -100% for some community groups)

17

community climate and nature action plans co-produced and progressed, working with:

- Local residents from neighbourhoods across the city, including many in areas of high deprivation
- Disabled people
- Asylum seekers and refugees
- Under-represented young creatives
- Cricket fans across the region
- Older people
- Women aged 40+ from marginalised communities

Over £4.3 million

of additional funding leveraged for Bristol

“I’m most proud of supporting women from less represented communities – many of whom have experienced significant life challenges and trauma – in turning their ideas, big or small, into something real and empowering. Together, we co-created the One Green Kitchen climate action plan, a project that not only amplifies their voices but also places them at the heart of local climate and wellbeing solutions.”

– Anne Su One Green Kitchen

13

creative commissions delivered



Impact in numbers

Over three years, six on-the-ground community-led projects achieved:

Reduction of

382 tonnes CO₂

the equivalent of 2,255 short haul return flights, planting 3,294 trees or heating 156 homes for a year

12,500⁺kg

compost generated

22km²

of green spaces created or improved

1,840kg

food grown

1,842

trees planted



700~

people received energy advice

800~

people adopted energy efficiency measures

1,244

people received skills training

124

qualifications gained

32

sustainable businesses created and 16 new jobs created

33

work placements



ACH: Green Growth Accelerator & Green Employment Skills Programmes

ACH's project focussed on including refugees and migrants in the climate conversation, providing training on starting a small sustainable business, and working with employers to create job opportunities in the environment sector. The project has supported over 70 refugees and migrants with green employment support. Learners' self-evaluation showed clear and consistent increase in all key areas including understanding of climate change and where to find green jobs, training, and volunteering. 30% accessed training or volunteering in the sector and in businesses developing sustainability. 122 refugee and migrant led businesses have been supported with their sustainability goals and 33 new businesses launched with owners feeling confident to include more green goals and measures.

“Refugees and migrants don’t have a huge carbon impact, so some people have asked why we were targeting them for our green employment and business courses. Part of the reason is because this is a community that is not being included in conversations or decision making, and that are under-represented in the environmental sector. It was important for us to work with employers around exploring ways in which they can diversify their workforce and to retain, progress, and hire refugees and migrants in those workplaces.”

– Jah Caballero ACH



[Learn more →](#)

Key impacts and influence

The Community Climate & Nature Action Project has grown a movement for positive local change, which puts communities at the heart of a fair and inclusive transition to a carbon neutral and nature rich city and region. As well as delivering tangible carbon, nature and social benefits, project impacts include:



Community priorities embedded in strategic citywide action

The 17 community climate and nature action plans developed so far now form part of Bristol's strategic approach to climate and nature action. Collective priorities from the plans are becoming embedded within local council mechanisms, projects and strategies. The plans are championed by those working in the environmental sector and local government, and the CCNA approach has also inspired several other strategic Bristol City Council climate and nature projects: Mission Net Zero; Nature Together and the GreenDEMO.

The Inclusive Transport Vision for Bristol champions the sustainable transport priorities in Bristol's community climate and nature action plans and advocates for the transport needs of Bristol's community of Disabled people. The Vision formed part of a Bristol City Council Golden Motion to make Bristol a highly accessible city and is now embedded in the city's transport policy.



A dynamic community climate and nature action network developed

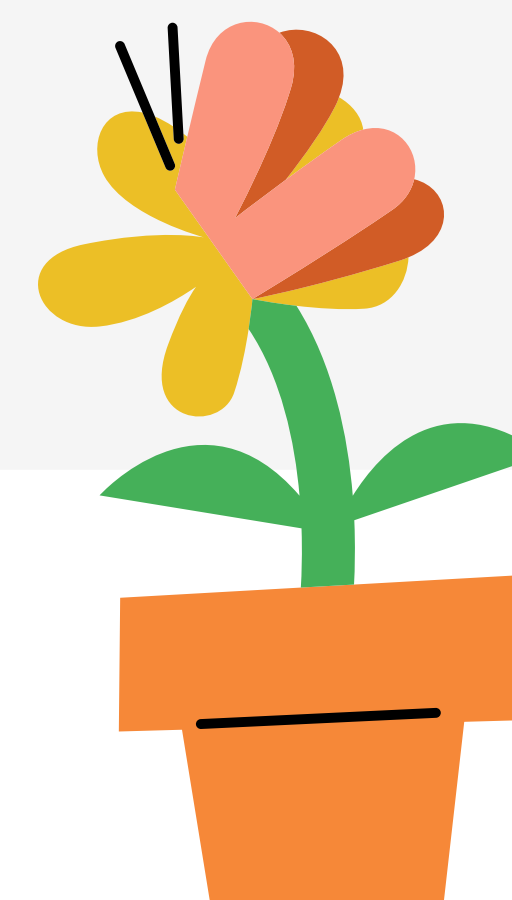
The project has developed a dynamic and supportive network around community-led climate and nature action in Bristol which includes communities of place, demography and interest, alongside climate and nature sector partners. Community partners have developed knowledge, skills and confidence through the project's capacity building programme, and represent diverse perspectives which are critical for a fast and fair transition. Supported by a group of community advocates, the network aims to align community climate and nature efforts across the city, identify new opportunities and support progress towards priorities in Bristol's community climate and nature action plans.



Increased agency and influence of communities through the leadership panel

The Community Leadership Panel on Just Transition is a group of community leaders who review local projects, policy and strategy proposals, providing invaluable insights at an early stage of the decision-making process.

The panel is informed by the priorities in the community climate and nature action plans which have been co-developed through inclusive community engagement, which gives it legitimacy. This model of community influence and leadership aims to embed just transition principles to which the city is committed and ensure more inclusive policies that avoid creating unintended barriers and compounding existing inequities. The panel has reviewed and provided insightful recommendations for 11 projects and helped develop trusted connections between community leaders, strategic climate initiatives, and the council.





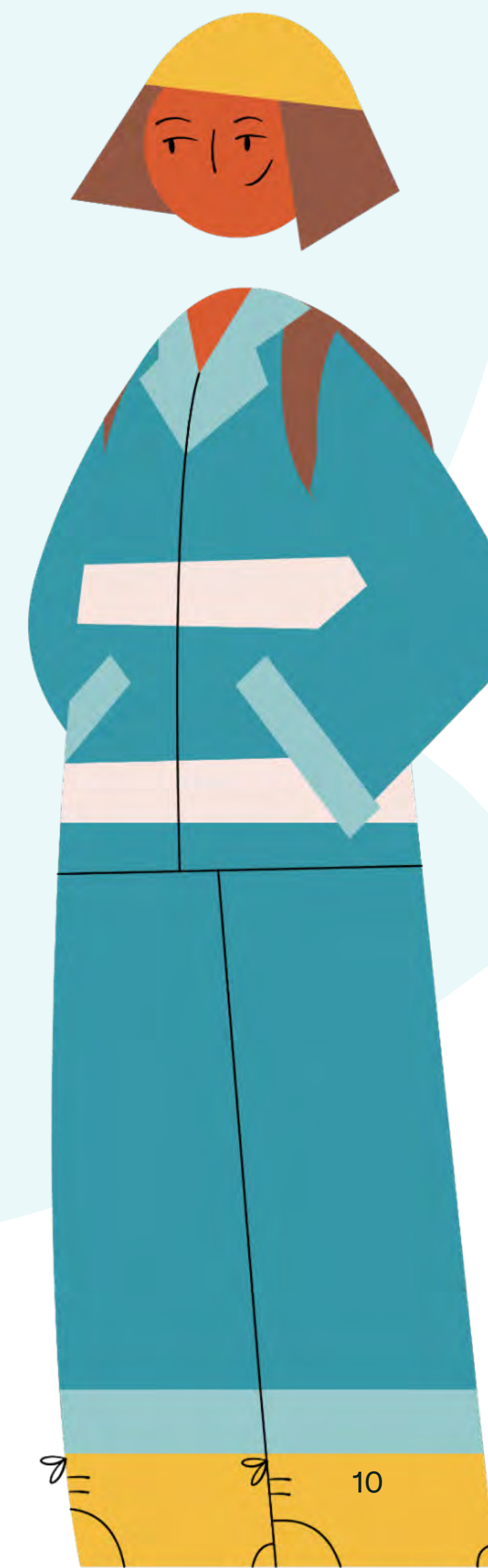
Resources to build capacity locally and influence nationally

A range of resources, toolkits and insights reports have been developed through the project to:

- Inspire and support other communities across the region with their climate and nature action journey
- Inspire local authorities across the country wanting to engage more deeply with their communities on climate, nature and just transition
- Champion the leadership of diverse communities in shaping climate and nature policy, in particular the UK's community of Disabled people
- Highlight the value and impact of harnessing creativity to engage citizens in climate, nature and social justice topics
- Share reflections and wisdom from five years of deep, place-based climate and nature action with communities at its heart
- Strategically advocate for the value and importance of communities in the UK's transition to net zero.

“The Community Climate & Nature Action Project has become a cornerstone in Bristol’s response to the climate and nature crises – meaningfully creating space for communities to have a voice and play a key role in their delivery. It has been hugely powerful to see anchor community organisations, and their communities, engaging positively in climate action and mapping out concrete local plans.”

Helen Martin
Bristol Energy Cooperative



Ambition Lawrence Weston: Grow, Cook, Eat Lawrence Weston

Ambition Lawrence Weston's project has been regenerating local green spaces to maximise growing opportunities, give residents the skills to grow and cook their own sustainable food, and create nature habitat. The project has helped residents build planters and vegetable beds, plant berry bushes and fruit trees, and create wild-flower meadows.

Together with a gardener and Community Ecologist, they developed a community allotment, focussed on street verges and green spaces, and supported pupils in building and tending school gardens and wild spaces. Foraging sessions were held and locally grown produce used in cooking courses and supper clubs. All these initiatives have reduced carbon emissions and food miles, enabled access to lower cost healthier food options, whilst improving biodiversity and connecting

people to nature and growing. Residents from a range of backgrounds are now engaged in community climate action and empowered to take a leadership role, including those traditionally excluded.

“The food growing and cooking has been a real success with the launching of our supper clubs to be able to bring local residents together. The surplus food that we grow goes back into supporting the clubs, as well as the eat well, spend less cookery course that was developed specifically for us by the community learning team. The work we have been doing with our children and young people at the allotment, and across the whole community has been a real asset to this project, and we will be continuing to do more work.”

– Donna Sealey Ambition Lawrence Weston



[Learn more →](#)

Equity focus: Climate and Disability programme

Disabled people are one of the groups that will be hurt most by the impacts of climate change and nature loss.

Yet Disabled people have been largely left out of climate action and planning. This has led to both new barriers for Disabled people, and the movement missing out on the expertise and ideas that Disabled people can bring. The Climate & Disability programme launched the first ever community climate and nature action plan developed with, by and for a community of Disabled people in 2022 and remains one of the only current UK projects focusing on this important area of climate action. Coordinated by Emma Geen and Bristol Climate & Nature Partnership, the programme has delivered a diverse range of activity and resources.

“Disabled people have been historically excluded from climate action, which has led to the creation of significant new barriers and traumatic experiences for the community. So the Climate & Disability programme was a vital intervention to bring the voices of Disabled people into the conversation. The resources created are addressing important gaps not only locally but across the country and even internationally. There’s still much work to be done but it has put Bristol on the map as a leader in disability climate justice.”

– Emma Geen Climate & Disability Advocate



The Climate & Disability programme included:

- Working with a Forum of Disabled people to refresh the action plan
- Research and engagement projects with Disabled people on the themes of inclusive transport, home energy efficiency improvements, food and nature
- Guides to support local authorities to consider the Disabled community in their climate and nature policies, and support employers to create inclusive green jobs
- Training and briefings for the project team and local authority staff to ensure the learnings are spread widely
- Working with Disabled artists to explore the themes of inclusive transport and climate justice
- A collection of useful resources and insights reports to support and inspire others to involve the Disabled community in climate and nature action and policy
- The community climate and nature action plan developed through this programme is now embedded in citywide strategy; Bristol City Council established a Disabled people's transport group and a Golden Motion to make Bristol a highly accessible city.

“For me as a Disabled person I feel it has opened up a whole new world concerning climate change and its link to nature. I have gained much more knowledge and confidence around what I and my community can do to help tackle climate change. It has linked me with a whole new network of people who are working hard to tackle the climate disaster and its effects. I now feel that I can share my thoughts and influence climate change work in the city.”

– Climate & Disability Forum member

[Read more →](#)



Heart of BS13: Sowing the seeds of change

Heart of BS13 have focussed on tackling health inequality and climate change in Hartcliffe and Withywood. They developed a chemical-free flower farm and a micro composting enterprise, creating local green jobs. The project has also engaged young people through their roundhouse community space and addressed food insecurity.

Over three years, Heart of BS13 has transformed a composting unit and e-cargo bike into a fully operational closed-loop composting enterprise that diverts local food waste, reduces carbon emissions, enriches soil, and supports community-led growing. The addition of two Ridan composters has doubled processing capacity, enabling expansion of business collections and supporting their 50:50 earned income to grant funding model.

Their closed loop composting guide and video both support replication, and their work has received national coverage on BBC's Gardeners' World and Save Our Wild Isles!

“Five years into our climate journey, we’re proud of how far we’ve come and excited for what’s next. The solutions to the climate and nature crisis already exist in our communities. When people are trusted, resourced and listened to, they lead.”

– Kirsty Tait Heart of BS13



Our approach: harnessing creativity and joy

“We see creativity as a key strategy for deeper engagement. By collaborating with artists, storytellers, and makers, we build resilience, empower more people, and ensure diverse voices shape the future of climate action. This is more than a method – it’s a movement, a way of working, and a powerful tool for change.”

Kirsty Tait
Heart of BS13



Creativity and joy are intentionally woven through the Community Climate & Nature Action Model and ways of working.

Creativity has been a key element of how the project has been delivered, both through citywide commissions and community level collaborations with artists. This has had an important role in effective community engagement, helping to make the climate conversation more relevant and accessible to people’s daily lives and connecting with them on an emotional level.

By commissioning artists to deliver a range of creative projects, our community partners reported more meaningful engagement with a wider range of people within their communities.

As a city with a thriving arts and cultural sector, Bristol often uses creativity to explore challenging topics or have difficult conversations. The creative process can help make the more abstract and complex aspects of climate change more relatable and accessible to people. Artists can also creatively challenge and disrupt established ways of thinking and doing. This makes them subtle but important agents for change, helping to bring new perspectives on issues like community leadership on climate and the importance of climate justice.

We've also incorporated joy into project delivery at all levels. When people are struggling with multiple challenges in their day-to-day lives; or experiencing climate anxiety or burnout – this notion of joy isn't something frivolous. Instead, it's essential for sustaining the energy and resilience needed to take and lead climate and nature action locally; to challenge systemic inequity, and to help us collectively imagine a better future together.

Read more about the impact of creativity in climate and nature action in our [Climate and Creativity insights report](#).

“We are excited by the Community Climate & Nature Action Project’s use of arts and culture to engage more people in climate and nature action. Not only does this approach harness the region’s talent to reach wider audiences but also recognises the expertise and talent of the creative sector in communicating about complex and difficult subjects.”

– Elise Hurcombe Bristol City Council

[Discover resources →](#)



Eastside Community Trust: Eastside People Power

Eastside Community Trust set out to create welcoming, community hub spaces in Easton and Lawrence Hill for shared climate learning and action. It aimed for greater resilience to rising energy costs and extreme weather by building local skills, knowledge and resources. All residents involved in Eastside People Power reported learning new skills to save money and make their homes more energy efficient.

Eastside Community Trust also worked with Bristol Energy Network to improve the energy efficiency of their buildings and train local Energy Champions to share knowledge in their community. Their Climate Leadership Programme brought together 24 community members for creative workshops and “what’s possible” trips to learn, connect, share ideas and shift the narrative of who leads on climate.

The project met people where they were at, led with solid benefits like lower energy bills, warmer homes and new skills, whilst also reducing local carbon emissions.

“The energy champions model has helped build links between energy experts with wider communities, including many who haven’t engaged with these topics before. Our champions have developed new skills and learned actions they can take to cope with colder temperatures and rising costs and to be able to share this with others in their communities.”

– Emily Fifield Eastside Community Trust



[Learn more →](#)

Jodie Mann

Embedding just transition and social value

The transition to net zero could (and should) be a once in a generational opportunity to address systemic inequality – but there’s a risk that some actions will instead further compound existing inequity.

The Community Climate & Nature Action Project champions transformative climate and nature action that reduces, rather than exacerbates existing inequalities. By allowing local people to shape local solutions, the changes required for the UK’s transition to net zero are likely to be faster and more effective. Therefore, increasing the benefits for communities and reducing the risks of backlash and delay when people haven’t been included in the process.

From films and podcasts exploring what a just transition means to local people; through to the pioneering Community Leadership on Just Transition, the CCNA project has helped turn Bristol’s Just Transition Declaration principles into action.

We need our societal response to the climate crisis and nature emergency to be as varied and diverse as our communities, and so community-led climate and nature action is an essential ingredient for a just transition, locally and nationally.

The CCNA project delivers significant environmental and social value for the city and is aligned with the Environmental Social and Governance (ESG) objectives of many organisations in Bristol and beyond.

“The Community Climate & Nature Action project aligns well with the council’s Just Transition approach, including both how we engage with citizens about environmental issues and ensuring climate action at a city scale does not exacerbate existing inequalities rather reducing them. The project has had direct, positive impacts on community engagement and empowerment as well as practical climate and nature action in Bristol.”

Martin Fodor

Chair of Environment and Sustainability
Committee, Bristol City Council



Lockleaze Neighbourhood Trust: Really Wild Lockleaze

The Really Wild Lockleaze project tested new approaches to nature recovery in urban housing estates, working directly with a Community Ecologist from Avon Wildlife Trust. They have been transforming public housing greens, gardens, street verges and marginal land for nature in Lockleaze by planting trees and hedges, installing ponds and creating wildflower meadows.

“Creating social cohesion in Lockleaze is as important as the climate action itself. It is the togetherness and community hive mind that dissolves division and creates positive change.”

– Melissa Blackburn
Lockleaze Neighbourhood Trust

This work has created an improvement in biodiversity and species richness on all public sites, for plants and insects, and surveys showed an average uplift in floral diversity of 486%. The project saw an increase of 83% in participants’ confidence to take action for nature and 67% in their contact and connections with neighbours. Residents have connected across a diversity of backgrounds, integrated into the community and improved their wellbeing, hope and pride in the area and a new generation of green leaders has been nurtured.

The project shows the power of combining nature recovery with community action. It has also demonstrated how Bristol City Council can use their land to meet its goal of managing 30% of land for nature and influenced them to consider a **“single front door” approach** for enabling resident-led greening across the city.



[Learn more →](#)

What's next: working regionally, influencing nationally

The West of England region is leading the way on climate and nature.

83% of Bristol residents report concern about climate change and that concern is translating into action from a neighbourhood level upwards. 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.

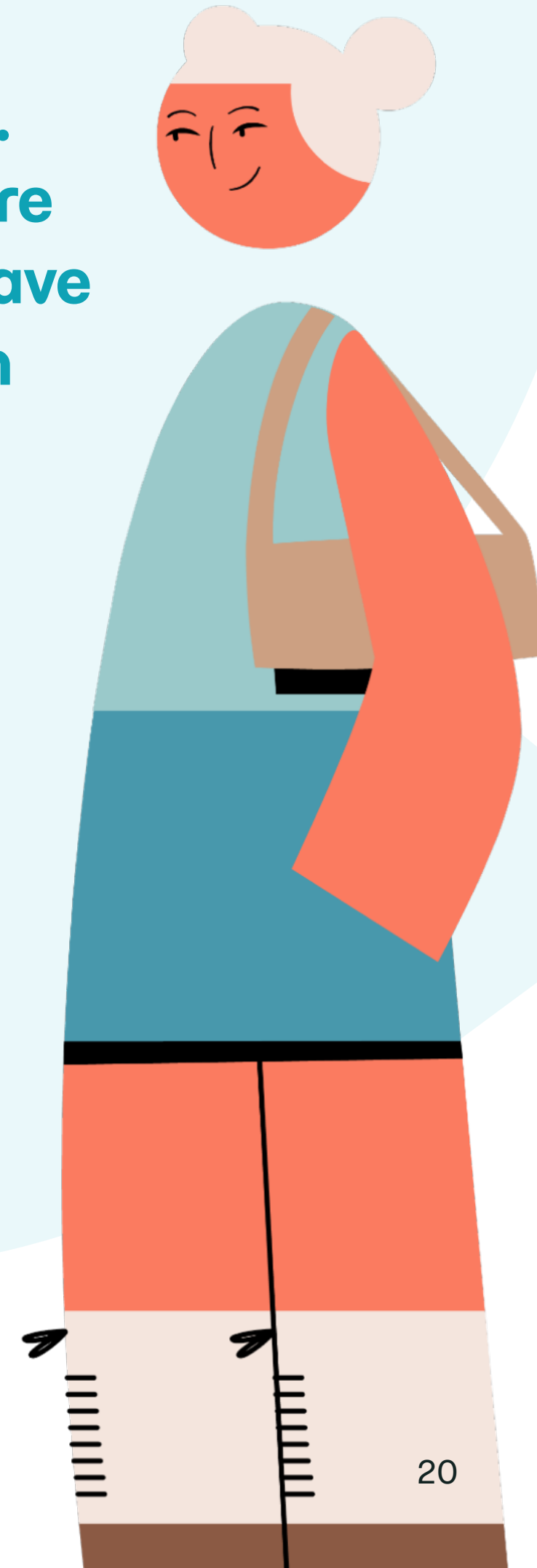
Bristol Climate & Nature Partnership has been funded by National Lottery's Climate Action Fund to scale our effective model for community climate and nature action beyond Bristol to the wider West of England region and to influence policy nationally. The next phase of the Community Climate & Nature Action Project runs until September 2028 and extends to Bath & North East Somerset, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire. It includes supporting a further six community organisations to develop community climate and nature action plans and start putting them into action. As well as a Bristol network to advocate for local priorities, a West of England Community Leadership Panel, work to influence national policy, and an ongoing Climate & Disability programme.

We will continue to develop an enabling ecosystem and provide opportunities for new community climate and nature action plans to be co-developed – and for existing plans to become realities for communities across the region through advocacy, collaborative working, and unlocking resources, funding and investment for delivery.

“Across the West, we care deeply about our planet. Nature thriving means greener, healthier places for us all to call home. Bristol Climate & Nature Partnership are an important part of that work. They have already empowered communities from Shirehampton to Hartcliffe to deliver projects that bring social and environmental benefits. Excitingly, National Lottery funding will now help grow their work and impact across our wider region.”

Helen Godwin
Mayor of the West of England

[Read more →](#)



“Community infrastructure exists everywhere, and community organisations are experts of their place, community and lived experience. It’s essential that we harness the wisdom and potential of the UK’s community infrastructure to catalyse widespread climate and nature action, which both involves, and improves the quality of life of local people.”

Amy Harrison
Head of Community Partnerships,
Bristol Climate & Nature Partnership

“The community climate & nature action network, supported by Bristol Climate & Nature Partnership keeps us connected and informed of opportunities, training, funding and policy changes. This influences what we do on the ground. The network helps us see the bigger picture of our work and champions community climate & nature action in Bristol, and how we can look at opportunities to continue and expand this important work”

Annali Grimes
CCNA Community Advocate



Acknowledgements and contact details

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