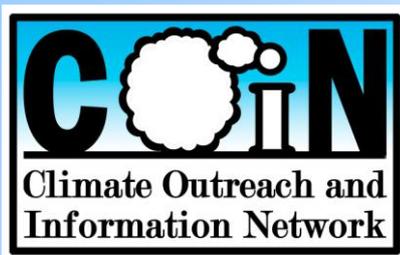
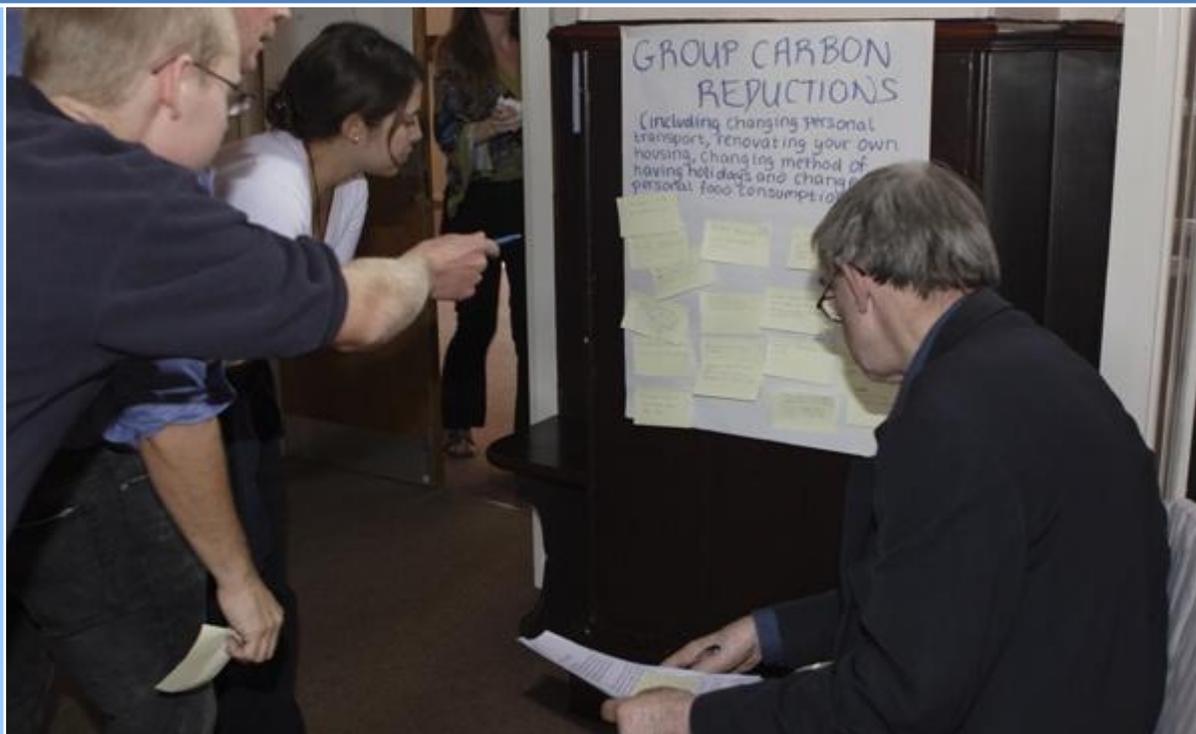


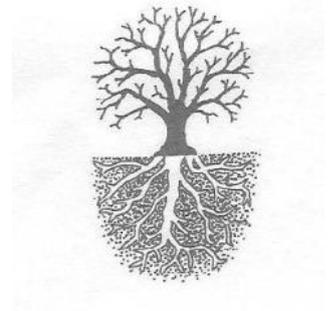
The DIY Guide to Climate Action Groups



www.coinet.org.uk

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Introduction

THE IDEA

Are you a local environmental community group or individual with lots of time and get up and go? Do you want to see more concerted local action on climate change in your community?

If so, this is the guide that will help you to get Climate Action Groups going in your local community.

WHAT THEY ARE

Climate Action Groups (CAGs) are for people who want to come together to take decisive action on climate change within their local communities and/ or networks.

Climate Action Groups can be composed of individuals, friends, acquaintances, neighbours, trade unionists, work colleagues or any other combination of people. They can also be used to reinvigorate existing organisations and develop specific thematic groups on such issues as food, energy, transport etc.

COIN has set up Climate Action Groups in Reading, Oxford, Sheffield and Camden from themes as wide-ranging as pioneering eco-renovation in the home to lobbying local government. This toolkit lets you in on all that we've learnt during that time, including how it works, top tips and possible variations.

HOW THEY WORK

Climate Action Groups normally take place over a six-month period. They are created through the Matchmaker which is a 2hr15 minute meeting that uses an "open space" style facilitating technique to enable people to form groups around particular topics or issues that they want to work on. Each CAG then sets itself a realistic and achievable goal which they work towards over a six-month period.



WHY DO IT?

This manual draws on our own experience in giving you a tried-and-tested method for inspiring collective action on climate change in your community. The Matchmaker process empowers participants to take action on the climate change issues that most interest them. For those involved, it can be a lot of fun as well as a good way of stimulating wider action on climate change – many of the participants involved in CAGs go on to get involved in other types of action on climate change.

And of course, most importantly, Climate Action Groups provide a real opportunity for communities to collectively cut carbon emissions in their locality.

HOW SUCCESSFUL ARE THEY?

Our experiences of setting up Climate Action Groups in four cities across the UK have been independently evaluated; and are available on our website at: www.coinet.org.uk/what-we-do/climate-action-groups.

The Climate Action Group model doesn't promise absolute success. In particular, our evaluations have found that, although a great deal of energy and enthusiasm is generated at the initial event that seeds the Action Groups, this can wear off over the course of the first six months due to over-ambitious goal-setting and burn-out. This isn't a problem particular to Climate Action Groups as our evaluations have shown that many other low carbon community groups report suffering similar setbacks.

In recognising this problem, we have made modifications to the programme – see the seven golden rules in the CAG Organiser section for our top tips on ensuring maximum success.

ROLES

There are two central roles in the Climate Action Group process:

- 1.) **Climate Action Group Organiser:** The Climate Action Group Organiser oversees the overall process and is particularly instrumental in the beginning as s/he takes responsibility for organising the initial Matchmaker event. S/he also acts as the central point of contact for all Climate Action Group Convenors. As this is quite a large job, you may want to consider getting a small group together to act as Climate Action Group Organisers.
- 2.) **Climate Action Group Convenors:** The Climate Action Group Convenors take responsibility for coordinating particular Climate Action Groups. They therefore organise the dates and venues of the group and chair each meeting.

As mentioned throughout this toolkit, COIN is also on-hand to provide support and advice as and when needed – see the end of this section for our contact details.

HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

This toolkit is divided into three parts:

- **Part one:** An introduction to the toolkit – for those who think they might be interested in DIY'ing it but want to find out more.
- **Part two:** A guide for CAG Coordinators (the individual or group which plans the Matchmaker meeting and then supports the resultant CAGs throughout the six-month period).
- **Part three:** A guide for CAG Convenors (those people who volunteer to take responsibility for a particular Climate Action Group).
- **Appendices:** An accompanying appendices section that includes a template press release, action plan, evaluation forms, etc.

FAQs

Does it matter if it's just me or if I've never done anything like this before?

If it's just you that's fine but bear in mind that you'll need plenty of time and initiative to make the CAGs work. Why not get a group of a few interested people together from the outset who can help to publicise and support the groups?

Will I/ we need money to get this going?

Money isn't necessary but it's certainly helpful to pay for such things as posters, venue hire and so on. It's possible you may be able to get many of these things for free but you might also like to try obtaining a small amount of funding for your activities. You'll find a section at the end of this manual on funding to give you some ideas.

How much time will it take?

Our research shows that to really make sure the Climate Action Group model works, it's essential that a central Organiser/ Organising Group is involved throughout the process to act as a central point of contact and support all CAGs. To get around five Climate Action Groups up and running, expect to give **at least** a day per week for 7-9 months.

What support can I/ we expect from COIN?

If you decide to "DIY" it, COIN is on hand to provide:

- **Ongoing support and advice:** Wherever you are located, we are always on hand to provide support and advice by phone or email on anything ranging from group dynamics to setting up a CAG website. We are also happy to field questions on all aspects of your topic, to help you find whatever information you need and to put you in touch with others working on similar issues.
- **Facilitation:** COIN has significant facilitation experience and is happy to facilitate your Matchmaker and potentially any other large CAG related events you may hold.

- **Funding support:** We can help you to obtain funding either in advance or as your Climate Action Groups are in progress. See the section on funding at the end of part two for further information.

CASE STUDIES

Reading Energy Pioneers

The Reading Energy Pioneers were set up in October 2008 as a result of a COIN Matchmaker carried out in September. The group met monthly with the goal of setting up a number of energy events across the city to help people find out about eco-renovating their home and to set up a bulk buying scheme whereby Reading residents could join together in bulk-buying insulation, solar panels and other such materials.

The Pioneers are still going strong and continue to work on various projects around the theme of home energy in the Reading area. Although some members of the group have moved on, they have been replaced by other individuals bringing new skills and enthusiasm.

Sheffield Renewables

Sheffield Renewables (formerly known as Sheffield Community Renewables) was formed in 2007 with the aim of establishing renewable energy projects around the city.

In its first six-months, the group received an initial start-up grant (£250) from Sheffield City Council, raised £350 to invest in a local community renewable energy scheme, initiated two sustainable schools projects (Tapton school and Silverdale school) and completed an options review to develop a community owned hydropower scheme on one of Sheffield's weirs. They also held a public meeting, attended by 60 people and gathered a supporter base of nearly 100.

At the end of the six-month period, the group decided to continue and in 2008, became a fully-fledged organisation. They are currently working on a scheme to use hydropower on a number of Sheffield's historic sites and are also looking into the possibility of using other technologies such as wind, biomass and solar.

VOCAL – Voice of Oxford Climate Action Lobby

Set up in January 2006 at COIN's first matchmaker meeting, this group met about 10 times a year until the end of 2008. It formed around the observation that local authorities have a great deal of money to spend and not much idea about how to spend it wisely from a climate change point of view. The group spent quite a long time talking and getting to know each other, and identified that planning policy was an area where local authorities could have a big influence. VOCAL then began its action by responding to Oxford City Council's consultation on a draft Natural Resource Impact Analysis Supplementary Planning Document. Later that year a major planning application was submitted to redevelop and extend the Westgate Shopping Centre, and VOCAL engaged with the planning department and the developer, and although it went through with only minor changes, the action will have been noticed. In its second year the group began to engage directly with the Council by holding meetings with Councillors on the Executive Board.

The group has now disbanded. Some members have gone on to give other groups the benefit of their experience, and local authorities now have much more regulatory guidance and official advice available to them.

CONTACTING COIN

As mentioned throughout this manual we are on-hand to provide support and advice throughout the process. We'd also be keen to hear how it all goes:

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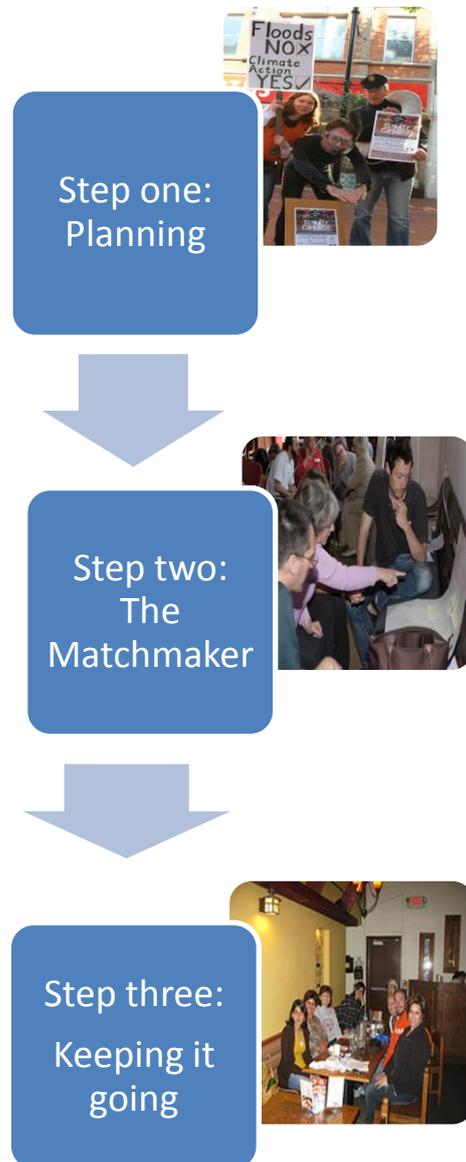
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For CAG Organisers

This section is aimed at the individual, group or organisation which is taking responsibility for planning and publicising the first CAG meeting (the Matchmaker) and then supporting the resultant Climate Action Groups throughout the six-month period.

As outlined in the introduction of this pack (part one), this is quite a substantial task to which you'll need to give at least one day per week over a 7-9 month period as well as plenty of determination, networking and support skills and a good sense of humour.



THE 7 GOLDEN RULES

- **Publicity:** Leave plenty of time. In order to attract the maximum number of people as possible, you'll need to give ample time to allow publicity to filter through. Also, think beyond advertising among the usual suspects and try to get your publicity out to other networks such as tenants groups, trade unions, faith groups and any other local community groups you can think of.
- **The Matchmaker:** Ideally, the Matchmaker is best facilitated by someone with relevant experience. If you don't have anyone available, ask COIN, who will be happy to come along and do the facilitation for you.
- **CAG Goals:** Try to ensure that all CAGs have a goal that can be realistically achieved within the time-frame and with the available resources. Our research shows that previous CAGs often flounder on the basis of being over-ambitious. On the other hand, try to encourage groups to go beyond "small steps" such as reducing plastic bag use or changing light bulbs.
- **Support your groups:** Ensure that all groups receive concerted support throughout the six-month period from a central individual and/ or group.
- **Celebrate successes:** Sustain momentum by keeping it fun and celebrating successes, however small.
- **Language:** Make sure the language you use throughout the CAG process is positive; focus on the solutions not the problem and enable a can-do approach. For further info, see the COIN website for our Guide to the Psychology of Sustainable Behaviour.
- **Use COIN:** Last but not least, remember we're here to help. Stay in touch – we might be able to provide advice on any difficulties you come across along the way.

STEP ONE: PLANNING

If you plan well, you're likely to get a good number of people to the Matchmaker and set your Climate Action Groups off to a good start. Here are a few pointers to bear in mind during the planning phase.

THE DATE

- **Choose your date carefully!** Make sure you leave enough time – preferably a good couple of months to get publicity out.
- Probably best to **avoid dates in the summer holidays or Xmas** as you'll almost certainly have a lower turn-out.
- Don't forget to check that your event **doesn't coincide** with other large events on or around that date.
- Think about possibly **linking in with other key national or local dates**. For example, World Environment Day (5th June), National Carbon Footprint Day (2nd October) or as part of a local social justice festival that will have its own extensive publicity that you can plug into.

Linking to 10:10



Have you heard about 10:10? 10:10 is a high-profile campaign that aims to get as many individuals and organisations as possible signed up to reduce their carbon footprint by 10% in 2010.

Why not link your Climate Action Groups to the 10:10 campaign by getting all Climate Action Groups to work under the banner of 10:10.

For further info on 10:10, see www.1010uk.org.

THE VENUE

The big tips on venues are fairly obvious but worth stating:

- Central
- Easy to find and well known
- Large enough to accommodate your audience
- Preferably with tea and coffee making facilities

If you're stuck for funding, tell venue owners about the event and see if the venue concerned will give you a free or subsidised cost.

PUBLICITY

In order to establish 4 or 5 Climate Action Groups, you will need to get at least 30-40 people along to the initial Matchmaker meeting. If 30-40 people seems like an unattainable amount, don't despair, there are many ways to interest people in coming along. Here are some top tips on the kinds of methods to use in ensuring that your publicity reaches as many people as possible:

PUBLICITY MATERIALS

First off, put together some good publicity materials including:

- A poster (for email and website circulation as well as, budget permitting, printing and displaying around your local area)
- A press release
- A generic email
- A personal invitation

Once you've got all these materials, think carefully about which one to use for each targeted group or individual. For example, in some cases, it may be best to send a personal invitation whereas in others, you might be better off sending a generic email.

Language: the Do's and Don'ts

The language you use in your publicity materials is absolutely key to getting people along:

- **DON'T scare-monger:** Although fear can motivate behaviour change, it only works when people feel personally vulnerable. On the other hand, fear can also tip people over into denial. All in all, best to avoid doomsday scenarios.
- **DO use positive language:** Try to use positive language that can inspire people to see the possibilities and benefits of a low carbon society (eg, stronger communities, saving money and of course, most importantly, lessening the risk of climate change).
- **DO use imagery:** When designing posters, if possible, use one or two eye catching images.
- **DON'T use too much text:** Too much publicity text can put people off. Keep your publicity info short and simple and divide text up by using different fonts, sizes and making sure that you sum it all up with an eye catching header and strap-line.

EMAIL NETWORKS AND BULLETINS

Make sure that details of your event get circulated through as many different email networks and bulletins as possible. The range of networks and bulletins vary from place to place but as a rough guide, make sure you include the following:

- Your local volunteer bureau
- Rural Communities Council
- Local universities
- Facebook and other social networking sites
- Local volunteer groups such as Oxfam, WDM, Friends of the Earth etc
- Faith and inter-faith groups

- The Local Council's sustainability team (see if they can circulate among their staff and on their intranet)
- Local large businesses (ask for their sustainability coordinator if they have one or ask for it to be put out in the staff newsletter or on the intranet)
- Local newspaper events guide (normally free)
- Local newsletters including community and village newsletters
- Networks of other green groups including Friends of the Earth, the Green Party etc.
- Horticultural, cycling, walking, etc groups

POSTERS

Make sure that posters and leaflets get put up and circulated literally anywhere and everywhere in the locality including:

- Libraries
- Universities
- Community centres and halls
- Faith centres (eg, churches and Quaker/ Friends Meeting House)
- Local cafes, restaurants and shops

EVENTS

Why not put on some events to spur people into deciding that they do want to take some kind of collective action? For example:

- **Film screenings:** The Age of Stupid or other film screening. See www.ageofstupid.net for details of how to get a licensed copy.
- **Presentations:** Contact large local businesses and or organisations to see if they'd be happy for you to come and do a quick talk on climate change that introduces the issues and what we can do about it.
- **Climate Change Condensed:** Why not put on COIN's flagship workshop "Climate Change Condensed - all you need to know about climate change in just 3 hours". You do have to pay for COIN trainings but community groups are eligible for discounts and you can recoup some of the expense if participants are charged.
- **Piggy-back:** Save yourself the hassle of organising your own events by piggy backing on other local events. For example, ask if you can give a quick talk at local conferences or hand-out leaflets/ put up a poster at your local farmers' market, Green Drinks event etc.

LOCAL MEDIA

Do try to get local media coverage in the run up to your Matchmaker meeting (as well as afterwards to encourage any other interested participants to come forward) including the local radio, local paper as well as any other local newsletters and bulletins that will cover it.

Getting Media Coverage – Top Tips

- For local newspaper coverage, make sure they receive the press release at least 2 weeks in advance. See the appendix guide for an example press release.
- Follow up a press release with a phone call to your local newspaper and radio station - you'll be far more likely to get coverage.
- Make sure when you talk to the media that you have two or three key messages or sound-bites that you focus on getting across.
- Finally, a media stunt that provides ample room for a photo opportunity can also be a good way of getting your local paper to promote your event in advance. Why not go down your local shopping centre on a Saturday dressed in ridiculous costumes to promote the event and invite the media along?



PUBLICITY TOP TIPS

Get others to help out

Publicity is often the biggest task in organising any event so help yourself by putting together a publicity team of committed, eager volunteers. Make sure you keep a joint publicity record that tracks who's taking responsibility for what. See the appendices section for further info.

Broaden your reach

Reach out beyond the usual suspects by engaging local groups and networks not already directly involved in climate change such as:

- Trade Unions
- Tenants organisations
- Voluntary organisations
- Local authorities
- Business community
- Faith communities
- Migrant and refugee communities

COIN has existing projects working with many of these groups and it's possible we may be able to help if you wanted to develop Climate Action Groups entirely with one of these groups. For further information, see the COIN website (coinet.org.uk) or contact us.

Look out for multipliers

Look out for multipliers – those people who have extensive networks and have large numbers of people at their fingertips.

Work in partnership with other groups

If local organisations and groups feel they have some kind of real involvement in the event they're far more likely to promote it. So why not select a handful of key organisations and groups and work in partnership with them?

STEP TWO: THE MATCHMAKER

Checklist

On the day, don't forget the following materials:

- ✓ Registration form to capture peoples' contact details so that you can follow up with them afterwards (see appendices)
- ✓ Flipchart and at least 8 markers
- ✓ Post-it notes
- ✓ A bunch of spare biros for those who haven't bought them (they'll need it to write their ideas on the post-it notes)
- ✓ Action plan forms (see appendices)
- ✓ Feedback forms (see appendices)
- ✓ Tea, coffee and biscuits (for the tea-break as well as possibly at the beginning)
- ✓ A camera so that you can take some photos for future publicity

Facilitating your Matchmaker

If you and other co-organisers do not feel that confident facilitating the Matchmaker, get in contact with us at COIN to ask if we can come and facilitate the event on your behalf.

If you feel you would like to give it a go, then see below for the [facilitator's schedule](#).



MATCHMAKER FACILITATOR SCHEDULE

TIME	TOPIC	DESCRIPTION	NOTES/ MATERIALS/ OTHER SUGGESTIONS
REGISTRATION			
00.00 (7 mins)	Registration	Incoming participants are asked to sign in on registration sheet and write their name on a name tag.	Materials: Stickers and pens. Additional suggestion: Why not put posters up around the walls with lots of inspiring ideas and case studies of what kind of Climate Action Groups people could form? For example, garden-sharing to grow veggies, veggie growing workshops, travelling to work schemes, car free days, energy conservation in the home etc.
INTRODUCTION AND ICE-BREAKER			
00.07 (3 mins)	Introduction to session	<p>Introduce the Matchmaker meeting and explain goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ FIND: To give you a chance to find people who want to do something about climate change ➤ DISCOVER: Help you to explore and discover common ideas and approaches ➤ SHARE your ideas with people like yourself ➤ MEET new people and, hopefully, decide to MEET again as a group <p>Explain the agenda and timetable for the day. Two parts:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Get ideas out in the open 2. Form groups 	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p>ON FLIPCHART:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ FIND: To give you a chance to find people who want to do something about climate change ➤ DISCOVER: Help you to explore and discover common ideas and approaches ➤ SHARE your ideas with people like yourself ➤ MEET new people and, hopefully, decide to MEET again as a group. </div>
00.10	Icebreaker	“Stand up please!”	

TIME	TOPIC	DESCRIPTION	NOTES/ MATERIALS/ OTHER SUGGESTIONS
(6 mins)	(rapid circulation)	<p>“Meet as many people as you can in 5 minutes. Each person has to:”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ “Thank the other person for coming ➤ Tell them why you’re interested in being involved in a Climate Action Group ➤ Tell them what you’re currently doing about climate change.” 	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p>ON FLIPCHART:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ “Thank the other person for coming ➤ Tell them why you’re interested in being involved in a Climate Action Group ➤ Tell them what you are currently doing about climate change.” </div>
00.16 (3 mins)	Report Back	<p>Ask people to report back on what they heard and learnt. Ask Qs like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ “Who was doing the most interesting things?” ➤ Who had interesting explanations for why they wanted to be in an action group.” 	
00.19 (5 mins)	What are Climate Action Groups?	<p>Explain the overall programme - what it hopes to achieve and past examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Climate Action Groups are groups that work towards a collective goal on a climate change issue over a six month period. ➤ The commitment is this: you meet every month for six months and carry tasks and activities out outside of meetings (approx 2 hours per month each). ➤ Previous examples: renewables, energy conservation in the home, car free day etc. 	

TIME	TOPIC	DESCRIPTION	NOTES/ MATERIALS/ OTHER SUGGESTIONS
		➤ Any questions?	
BRAINSTORMING IDEAS			
00.24 (2 mins)	Introducing the brainstorm	<p>“Our aim is to bring out your ideas and help you find others to work with you - but to begin with it would be good to know what areas you might like to work on. So this is where we get everything out into the open. The question is this: If you were working with a group of other people on climate change and carbon footprint reduction - what areas would you be interested in exploring with them?”</p> <p>“You may well have several areas of interest - for example you may be interested in fixing up your house, reducing your flying, talking at work to your workmates, lobbying the government.”</p> <p>“So it’s a huge area. The aim of this session is to help you to get a sense of which of the areas you are interested in, are shared.”</p>	
00.26 (5 mins)	Posting	<p>“Write everything you are interested in doing on a post-it note - as many post-it notes as you like. To help us make sense of the results we have set up five categories:”</p> <p>“Transport – be it encouraging more cycling, car pooling, encouraging more sustainable methods of getting to work or setting up a group that looks at how to reduce flying when holidaying.</p> <p>Home Energy – including renovating your own home, raising awareness of grants that can be used for eco-renovation, sharing ideas on eco-renovation etc’</p>	

TIME	TOPIC	DESCRIPTION	NOTES/ MATERIALS/ OTHER SUGGESTIONS
		<p>Food – less use of energy inefficient food, local food distribution, farmers’ markets, etc.</p> <p>Holidays – Finding and promoting alternatives to carbon heavy holidays.</p> <p>Local businesses – either supporting them or criticising them for not doing better, working on energy audits, speaking to staff in lunch breaks, talking to senior people in local businesses etc</p> <p>Local authorities – Lobbying your local authority to take a stronger stance on climate change, working with your local authority to see what can be achieved together etc.</p> <p>Anything else not covered”</p> <p>“You are not putting yourself in any group, just getting a sense of what is out there and what you might like to do with other people.”</p> <p>“When you have written your post-its put them up according to the category they best fit and have a look at what other people are putting up.”</p> <p>Circulate and stand up!</p>	<p>ON FLIPCHART: Write the categories on flipchart sheets beforehand and blu-tac in various places around the room:</p> <p>“Transport – be it encouraging more cycling, car pooling, encouraging more sustainable methods of getting to work or setting up a group that looks at how to reduce flying when holidaying.</p> <p>Home Energy – including renovating your own home, raising awareness of grants that can be used for eco-renovation, sharing ideas on eco-renovation, etc.</p> <p>Food – less use of energy inefficient food, local food distribution, farmers’ markets, etc.</p> <p>Holidays – Finding and promoting alternatives to carbon heavy holidays.</p> <p>Local businesses – Either supporting them or criticising them for not doing better, working on energy audits, speaking to staff in lunch breaks, talking to senior people in local businesses, etc.</p> <p>Local authorities – Lobbying your local authority to take a stronger stance on climate change, working with your local authority to see what can be achieved together etc.</p> <p>Anything else not covered”</p>

TIME	TOPIC	DESCRIPTION	NOTES/ MATERIALS/ OTHER SUGGESTIONS
00.31 (7 mins)	Writing and posting	Writing and posting	Materials: Post-its and spare pens for those who don't have them.
00.38 (5 mins)	Looking	<p>“Let's take a minute or two to just look over them and get a sense of what other people are interested in.”</p> <p>(Meanwhile go round looking at all the post-its and note five-eight prominent broad themes that frequently recur.</p> <p>E.g., one such theme might be lobbying local government, another might be around car-sharing, another might be on allotments/ community food growing etc).</p>	
THE OPEN SPACE			
00.43 (7 mins)	Explain the open space concept	<p>“We are going to open space it! So for those of you who have never been at an open space meeting, the most important thing to remember is the “law of two feet”.</p> <p>That is:</p> <p>-You can get up and go to another group or talk to a person who is not part of a group.</p> <p>-So this is a bit like a cocktail party- you can hang around the edge of any topic and move on if you like.</p> <p>“Now, these are the main areas that seem to crop up persistently. These are.... [outline main areas]. Does everyone agree? Does anyone feel there is a particularly</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p>ON FLIPCHART:</p> <p>“The law that says if you're neither contributing nor getting value where you are, use your two feet (or available form of mobility) and go somewhere where you can.”</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>ON FLIPCHART:</p> <p><i>Write the main areas/ themes.</i></p> </div>

TIME	TOPIC	DESCRIPTION	NOTES/ MATERIALS/ OTHER SUGGESTIONS
		<p>predominant theme or idea that hasn't been incorporated well enough?" [If so try to add these in].</p> <p>"Now, decide which one of these areas/ideas you're most interested in."</p> <p>[designate a place in the room for each category]</p> <p>"Quickly bunch up your chairs with other people in that group and for just ten minutes share your ideas, interests and concerns around this idea."</p>	
00.50 (10 mins)	Discussion groups	Discussion in groups (circulate among all groups to see how discussion is developing).	
01.00 (7 mins)	Plenary feedback	Invite groups to feedback on what they've been discussing.	
FORMING CLIMATE ACTION GROUPS			
01.07 (3 mins)	Firming up on ideas	<p>"Now we are going to start forming groups.</p> <p>This is the tipping point. Be creative but listen to others!"</p> <p><i>Reiterate the Climate Action Group commitment:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ "6 month commitment. ➤ 1 meeting per month ➤ Approx 3 hours per month outside of meetings ➤ Work towards a common goal 	<p>ON FLIPCHART:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 6 month commitment. ➤ 1 meeting per month ➤ Approx 3 hours per month outside of meetings ➤ Work towards a common goal ➤ One final review meeting to evaluate what you have done ➤ Then agree to disband or carry on the same topic or change to another

TIME	TOPIC	DESCRIPTION	NOTES/ MATERIALS/ OTHER SUGGESTIONS
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ One final review meeting to evaluate what you have done ➤ Then agree to disband or carry on the same topic or change to another” <p>“We invite your group to select one idea that you think can really have an impact and is also achievable over a six-month period.”</p> <p>“It is absolutely fine if your group can’t think of a particular topic - there will be plenty of proposals and options for you to join in from other groups. On the other hand, if your group really can’t decide between two ideas, then feel free to split into two groups based on your two separate ideas.”</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p>ON FLIPCHART:</p> <p>High impact</p> <p>Achievable over a six-month period.</p> </div>
01.10 (10 mins)	Firming up on ideas group discussion	Groups discuss and agree on an idea (one minute before the end of this time, ask groups to choose a representative to give feedback).	
01.15 (5 mins)	Pitching of ideas	<p>“Can we now hear from you about your idea. Your group has <u>one minute</u> to pitch your idea to the whole group”.</p> <p>Pitching of ideas</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p>ON FLIPCHART:</p> <p><i>Write up ideas as they are outlined.</i></p> </div>
01.20 (10 mins)	***BREAK FOR TEA AND COFFEE***		
THE ACTION PLAN			
01.30	Completing the action plan	“Great, so we now have [x number of] ideas [re-cap each one]. We’re now going to develop these ideas further and check that	Materials: Action plan templates (one per group)

TIME	TOPIC	DESCRIPTION	NOTES/ MATERIALS/ OTHER SUGGESTIONS
(2 mins)		<p>they're workable. To do this, we're going to agree a six-month action plan."</p> <p>"Basically, it's easier than you think. We've prepared all the things you need to consider in advance so all you need to do is fill in the blanks in the next 30 mins."</p>	
01.32 (28 mins)		<p>Groups complete action plans. Facilitator/s circulate and sit in on discussions.</p> <p>[10 mins before end of time, let groups know how much time they've got left and ask them to agree if nothing else, the time and venue of the next meeting, who will convene the meeting and who wants to continue to be involved in the group].</p>	
02.00 (15 mins)	Group feedback on action plans	Ask groups to feedback what they've discussed to everyone else and to identify their Convenor/ contact person (take the action group plan from each person after they've spoken).	
NEXT STEPS & CLOSE			
02.00 (8 mins)	Closing the matchmaker	<p>"We're about to finish in a minute but if you'd like to be involved in any of these other groups, then either let me know or talk at the end to the Convenor of the group who can take your contact details.</p> <p>We've now got your action plans which we'll write up and send to you all in the next couple of days. How you run your group and explore your topic is up to you. However, we ask for only three commitments:</p> <p>You commit to meeting regularly over the next 6 months (timing and regularity up to you)</p>	<p>ON FLIPCHART: Your commitment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ "You commit to meeting regularly over the next 6 months (timing and regularity up to you)" ➤ "You will prepare a report back on your group that can be used for future groups (we will provide you with the form we need)" ➤ "You will all come and meet up again to compare notes, experiences, ideas and inspirations"

TIME	TOPIC	DESCRIPTION	NOTES/ MATERIALS/ OTHER SUGGESTIONS
		<p>You commit to giving at least two hours a month outside of meeting times to carry out activities.</p> <p>You come to a final review meeting in six-months time to share what you have done and learnt.</p> <p><u>Remember what we are seeking to do here is crucial – Climate Change is real and we need to act.</u></p> <p>Questions?"</p>	
02.08 (2 mins)	Announcements	Including info on what else is happening locally in case people want to get involved in those things.	
02.10 (5 mins)	Feedback	Complete feedback forms (these can then be collated to determine what went well etc and in case you want to do an overall feedback of the CAG process)	
02.15	END	Have tea and coffee available for people if they want it for post-matchmaker networking etc.	

STEP THREE: SUPPORTING YOUR CLIMATE ACTION GROUPS

No one CAG is the same. Some may need quite intensive support throughout the six-month period; others may only need occasional support. This section aims to give you some advice and information on how to sustain momentum and best support CAGs in achieving their goals.

Your role as CAG Organiser/s at this stage is key to making or breaking the CAGs.

Evaluations of our previous Climate Action Groups clearly show that where one or two individuals take on a coordinating function for the CAGs, the goals of each Climate Action Group are more likely to be achieved.



KEEPING THE MOMENTUM GOING: TOP TIPS

Immediately after the Matchmaker:

- **Make it quick!** If your Matchmaker goes well, participants are likely to be on a high and raring to go. Make sure you capitalise on this by ensuring that CAG follow-up meetings are scheduled for all groups, as soon after the Matchmaker as is possible.
- **CAG Convenor Guide and Plan:** Ensure that all Climate Action Group Convenors receive a copy of the CAG Convenor Guide (part three of this toolkit) and that all members of each group are sent a copy of their completed Action Plan as soon as possible.
- **Firm-up on goals and action plan:** The Matchmaker is often reported as being quite an exciting, stimulating process. This however can lead participants to set themselves over-ambitious goals that can be difficult to achieve with their available time and resources. Try to attend all initial individual CAG meetings and ensure that the meeting is used to finalise a full action plan. See appendices for an action plan template.
- **Roles:** Ensure that at a minimum, each CAG has a CAG Convenor and a Note-taker (as outlined in the CAG Convenor pack).

Throughout the six-months

- **Support CAG Convenors:** Your CAG Convenors are likely to be quite varied in terms of their available skills, abilities and time. Try to support them as much as possible by staying in good contact with them and trying to help them out where you can by providing advice, capacity etc.

- **Attend CAG meetings:** Don't feel as though you have to attend all meetings but do try to attend some so that you can effectively gauge what added support might be needed for each CAG to accomplish their aims.
- **Share experiences:** Make sure you keep Climate Action Groups in touch with each other after the Matchmaker. This can be useful in sharing inspiring experiences and challenges and possibly even resources. The latter can be done through occasional meetings that bring together representatives from all CAGs, newsletters or, more informally, through regular "meet and share" events and talking to groups about what other groups are doing.
- **Resources:** Try to provide resources for all CAGs including
 - **A central web presence** on which the work of all CAGs can be promoted. If you do not have any web design skills, contact COIN may be able to help in getting a basic website up and running.
 - **Free venues** for meetings and events (see if a local business or your local council or voluntary association will provide you with a meeting space).
 - Low cost or **free printers and designers** for publicity produced by each CAG.
- **Make it fun and celebrate successes:** There's nothing that spurs on a group of people quite like achieving a success. So make sure you encourage CAGs to celebrate your successes along the way. You may also want to hold a monthly or quarterly pub social for all CAGs to enable participants to share their experiences in a more informal setting.
- **Funding:** Think about how you might be able to support groups by getting funding – see the section on funding (p33).
- **Recruit more members:** People have busy lives and however much they commit from the outset to the six-month CAG period, there are likely to be one or two who for one reason or another, drop out. Try to recruit more members on an ongoing basis by putting up ads in local volunteer offices, circulating calls for volunteers in relevant newsletters, putting an ad in the local paper etc.

STEP FOUR:

The Final Meeting & Evaluation

The final stage in the CAG process involves holding a meeting at the end of the six month period bringing together all CAG participants to share their experiences, celebrate successes, evaluate what has been done and decide whether people would like to continue in their groups, get involved in other climate change activities or disband altogether.

This is also a good opportunity to ask people to feedback verbally on the CAG process as well as to complete a final feedback form (see appendices) which can then be collated and contrasted with feedback gathered at the end of the matchmaker process to determine the overall success of the project.

Last but not least, let us know how it's all gone. We're keen to gather everyone's experience of using the Climate Action Group model so that we can refine it and improve it going forward.

REVIEW MEETING FACILITATOR SCHEDULE

TIME	TOPIC	DESCRIPTION	NOTES/ MATERIALS
REGISTRATION			
00.00 (7 mins)	Arrivals	Write name tags (including the name of the CAG you were involved in).	Materials: Stickers and pens
INTRODUCTION & GOALS			
00.07 (3 mins)	Introduction to Session	<p>Introduce and explain goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What happened over the six months from a personal point of view? ➤ What could be done better next time from your personal point of view? ➤ What was achieved (in your CAG)? ➤ What do people in the CAGS want to do now? ➤ What other things are happening in your area? 	<p>ON FLIPCHART:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What happened over the six months from a personal point of view? ➤ What could be done better next time from your personal point of view? ➤ What was achieved (in your CAG)? ➤ What do people in the CAGS want to do now? ➤ What other things are happening in your area?
TALKING ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED			
00.10 (7 mins)	Rapid Circulation	<p>“Stand up please!”</p> <p>“In 5 minutes, meet as many people as you can in who are not in your CAG and ask them the following questions:”</p>	Flip chart. Write down the greeting and questions

TIME	TOPIC	DESCRIPTION	NOTES/ MATERIALS
		<p><i>“Hello, thank you for coming.”</i></p> <p><i>“My name is.....”</i></p> <p><i>“During the last six months I have been...”</i></p> <p><i>“What have you been doing over the last six months?”</i></p>	<p>ON FLIPCHART:</p> <p>Hello, thank you for coming.</p> <p>My name is.....</p> <p>During the last six months I have been</p> <p>What have you been doing for the last six months?</p>
00.17 (3 mins)	Plenary feedback	Ask participants what they have heard that was interesting.	
00.20 (25 mins)	Celebrating successes	<p>“You have one minute to speak about a CAG that you were involved in or any other project related to climate change. This is your chance to inspire and show off!”</p> <p>[If there are too many people to do this in the time-scale given, break up into smaller groups.]</p>	
WHAT COULD BE DONE BETTER NEXT TIME?			
00.45 (6 mins)	Small group discussion	Ask people to break up into their CAG groups to discuss <i>“The thing that could have been done better in my CAG was.....”</i>	<p>ON FLIPCHART:</p> <p>“The thing that could have been done better in my CAG was....”</p>

TIME	TOPIC	DESCRIPTION	NOTES/ MATERIALS
00.51 (3 mins)	Plenary feedback	What did you hear that was interesting?	
WHAT WAS ACHIEVED?			
00.54 (16 mins)	Group discussion in CAGs	Provide the following prompts for the discussion in CAG groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What were the groups aims at the original Matchmaker meeting? ➤ Did you achieve what you set out to do? ➤ Any unexpected achievements? Please put your group's thoughts as to success on the yellow stickers on the wall. [Facilitator/s to group them together as they go up on the walls.]	Materials: Post-its and spare pens <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> ON FLIPCHART: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ What were the groups aims at the original matchmaker meeting? ➤ Was what you achieved what you planned? ➤ Any unexpected achievements? </div>
WHAT DO THE CAGS WANT TO DO NOW?			
01.10 (8 mins)	Group discussion in CAGs	What do the CAGS want to do now? (Keep in mind the achievements discussed and noted already) – discuss in CAG groups.	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> ON FLIPCHART: What do the CAGs want to do now? </div>
00.58 (16 mins)	Plenary feedback and discussion	Each group reports on what they intend to do now [including questions and ideas from the whole group]	

TIME	TOPIC	DESCRIPTION	NOTES/ MATERIALS
WHAT IS HAPPENEING IN SHEFFIELD?			
01.14 (5 mins)		[Feedback from other groups on what they will be doing] <i>We will be doingover the next few months.</i>	
01.19 (3 mins)	Feedback	Also if you are interested in what someone is doing – network!	
01.22 (3 mins)	Sum up	If time: <i>I intend to..... (go round the circle and say one sentence each).</i>	
01.25 (5 mins)	Feedback forms and close	Thank you for coming. Please complete feedback forms.	
CELEBRATORY DRINK AND POSSIBLY FOOD (OPTIONAL BUT HIGHLY RECOMMENDED)!			

OTHER INFORMATION

FUNDING

Pre-CAG Funding

Ideally, it would be good to get funding in advance of setting up your Climate Action Groups. Funding could then cover the costs of the Matchmaker and provide a small budget for each resultant CAG and preferably a salary for a part-time CAG Coordinator. COIN has dedicated fundraising staff and can help to fundraise for your Climate Action Groups on your behalf. That said, funding is often difficult to obtain in advance and it is certainly possible to run the whole programme without funding but with plenty of enthusiasm and drive.

Here are some thoughts for funders and helpful organisations you could potentially approach to help resource your CAGs:

- **Your voluntary sector support organisation:** Should probably be your first point of call as they hold information on local funding opportunities and can even help you in completing funding application forms. To find your local voluntary support organisation, contact the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO), www.ncvo-vol.org.uk.
- **Your council:** Funds provided by councils vary but most councils offer small grants of a few hundred pounds to community groups.
- **The Cooperative Foundation:** Awards grants of £500+ to community groups in the UK. www.co-operative.coop/ethicsinaction/communities/fundsandfoundations.
- **Awards for All:** Awards for All England is a simple small grants scheme making awards of between £300 and £10,000. The Awards for All programme aims to help improve local communities and the lives of people most in need. www.awardsforall.org.uk.
- **Local business:** Local large businesses are often happy to give their support to community initiatives.
- **Community Chest:** Provides small grants of £200 for local energy saving community projects. www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/cafe/Green-Communities/Funding-Advice/Community-bursary.
- **Artists Project Earth:** Awards grants of £500+ to climate change projects. www.apeuk.org
- **The Wakeham Trust:** Provides grants of £75-750. www.wakehamtrust.org

Finally, if none of this works, talk to COIN who may be able to provide further ideas and advice. If you're new to writing fundraising applications, we can also provide comments and guidance on your draft application.

Note: *This toolkit also includes a funding section for CAG Convenors in part three.*

RESOURCES

For a list of useful organisations working on climate change including those working on food, transport, local business etc, see the useful links section in part three (CAG Convenor Guide).

For CAG Convenors:

The mini-guide to chairing meetings and managing groups

YOUR FIRST MEETING

Your first meeting is essential to ensuring that your CAG gets off to a good start. Here's a suggested draft agenda - try to make sure that all these points are covered.

Draft Agenda for your First Meeting (120 minutes)

- 1.) **Re-introductions (10 mins)** to help jog people's memory and remember each other's names. Perhaps also ask everyone to include a quick comment on what they particularly enjoyed about the Matchmaker meeting.
- 2.) **Appoint note-taker (2 mins)** (can be for this meeting only and discussed further under item 6)
- 3.) **Agreeing how to work together (10 mins):** Meetings will be most effective if a shortlist of meaningful (and practical) ground rules can be agreed from the outset. These are particularly important to help you avoid and manage conflict.

Here is a way that other groups have found useful. Ask yourselves: what behaviours could occur that would really annoy us, let us down as a group or stop us being effective? Once these are listed, the group can develop the rules they need to manage themselves. What ground rules do we need to agree to, so that these things don't happen?

Examples of ground rules, which may be helpful:

1. Seek common ground and areas for action
 2. Share what you know
 3. All ideas are valid
 4. Relax and enjoy yourself
 5. Listen to understand
 6. Be curious
 7. Explain your reasoning or intent
 8. Start on time, finish on time
- 4.) **Meeting times and venues (10 mins):** Try to agree a regular meeting date (eg, second Tuesday of every month) so that people can schedule in all meetings in advance. Also, if you can agree a regular, centrally located meeting place, so much the better.
 - 5.) **Agree Action Plan (30 mins):** Revisit the Action Plan completed at the Matchmaker meeting. Take some time to firm up on weak points and fill in any gaps (the CAG Coordinator should be able to provide you with a copy of what you had produced). Make doubly sure that your action plan is realistic and achievable within the six month period and on the resources available to you.

- 6.) **Agree roles (10 mins):** Confirm any roles such as the CAG Convenor and a meeting note-taker and agree any other roles that seem appropriate such as that of fundraiser, media spokesperson, events organiser, website person etc.
- 7.) **Actions for this month (30 mins):** Discuss and agree actions for this month according to your action plan.
- 8.) **Recap and other aspects to be agreed before next meeting including a.) actions for next meeting b.) agenda for next meeting (15 mins).**
- 9.) **AOB (10 mins)**

FOLLOW-UP MEETINGS

Decide what standard agenda items you might need, such as:

- Minutes and actions of the last meeting
- *Other agenda items*
- Analysis of whether you're on track with the overall action plan
- Any other business
- Re-cap on discussion, including actions for next meeting
- Date of next meeting

Try to send out a proposed agenda and reminder in advance and ask if anyone has any comments or suggestions for further agenda items.

Suggestion: Discussion Topic

In addition to the suggested agenda items, you may like to include a standard discussion item to your meeting agenda.

The idea is that someone takes responsibility for introducing a relevant news item for discussion in the last 10 minutes or so of your meeting. The topic could be on anything from new home energy funding to a successful local public transport scheme.

RISKS AND CHALLENGES

RISK/ CHALLENGE	POSSIBLE SOLUTION
CAG members are too busy to come to meetings	<p>Make sure that you communicate to all those wishing to become a CAG member that they will need to attend meetings every month and contribute around 2 hours per month to tasks outside of meetings.</p> <p>During your first meeting, try to agree and book in advance all meetings for the first six months (e.g., a regular date such as the second Tuesday of every month).</p>
CAG members persistently fail to carry out tasks in between meetings	<p>Again, make sure that everyone is aware of their commitment to attend meetings every month and contribute around 2 hours per month to tasks outside meetings.</p> <p>Be clear about who will carry out what actions in between meetings and make sure you follow up on actions at the start of each meeting.</p>

	<p>If someone hasn't done their action, check to see if they need any support in doing so. If there are particular individuals who persistently fail to carry out tasks, you could suggest that they double up with someone else in carrying out future actions.</p>
<p>CAG members start dropping out</p>	<p>Try to ensure at the Matchmaker that you have at least 8 or 9 people in each group as there are sure to be a few who drop out. So long as you are able to maintain a group of 5 or 6, you should have enough people to keep the momentum going.</p> <p>Also, as above, either actively recruit new members through general ads in volunteer centres etc., or recruit for specific skills needed by the group (eg, web design, event organisation, etc).</p> <p>Finally, if people are going to be giving up their free time to participate in the CAG, they're going to need to feel motivated to do so. So, make it fun and don't forget to celebrate successes, however small, so that people feel that what they're doing is worth it. Also, recognise the different reasons for why people have got involved. For some it may be to do something about climate change; for others it may be more about social contact, for still others, it may be to develop experience. Make sure you respond to all of these reasons by giving people the opportunity to gain experience in things they haven't done before, by suggesting post meeting drinks, etc.</p>
<p>Lack of specific expertise (eg, languages, website skills etc)</p>	<p>As above, actively recruit for the skills needed.</p> <p>Consider at your first meeting if you are in need of particular skills and whether or not you will be able to easily obtain these skills or develop them among your existing members. For example, media skills are relatively easy to develop (contact COIN for some advice) but if you need someone who speaks Japanese, you may need to re-think your plan!</p>
<p>Goal proves to be over-ambitious</p>	<p>Make sure that your group is working to a realistic goal from the outset and that action plans are developed which as far as possible chart each step of the way. Your first meeting is essential to ensuring that this is the case.</p>
<p>Group needs money to carry out activities</p>	<p>Try to anticipate the funding needs of your group from the outset so that you can look at getting funding in advance if necessary (see the funding section below for further info). Alternatively, you may want to consider how you can get help in kind such as by asking your local printer/ local large business to print some posters in return for putting their logo on them or by contacting a large business to see if they'll sponsor a venue for your event etc.</p>
<p>Some individuals dominate meetings, while</p>	<p>In this situation there are a number of options:</p>

<p>others are quieter and seem to find it difficult to make themselves heard</p>	<p>First you can agree at the start to some rules for your meeting (see Ground Rules above). Another idea is that the Chair/ Convenor intervenes and says ‘Thanks for that Tony, let’s hear from everyone else’.</p>
<p>Frequent or ongoing disagreements</p>	<p>First of all expect and welcome disagreements on such an important subject. It can be a way of deepening your understanding. The group doesn’t need to agree on everything. So work on the things where there is agreement.</p> <p><i>If the disagreement is significant (if it is a ‘show stopper’) there are at least three options to try and resolve it:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If it is essentially between two people, the chair could ask them to set up a separate meeting to discuss it one-to-one • If it’s a bigger disagreement between several people, devote a whole meeting to it and agree a clear process beforehand. One useful thing at such a meeting is to let everyone speak WITHOUT interruption until they have said all they want to say and for everyone else to really listen • Ask COIN to help facilitate or mediate to resolve the disagreement <p>As a general rule, we suggest you focus on where there is agreement and park the conflict unless it becomes a showstopper.</p>
<p>And finally, if all else fails, ask either your Climate Action Groups Coordinator or/and COIN and although we can’t make any promises, we’ll see if we can help.</p>	

FUNDING

Try to consider at the outset of the six-month period, whether or not you’re likely to need funding to carry out the goals of your CAG. Much help can be obtained “in kind” for example by asking local businesses to support your activities through the provision of printing facilities, free venues etc.

Here are some thoughts for funders and helpful organisations you could potentially approach to help resource your CAG:

- **Your voluntary sector support organisation:** Should probably be your first point of call as they hold information on local funding opportunities and can even help you in completing funding application forms. To find your local voluntary support organisation, contact the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO), www.ncvo-vol.org.uk.

- **Your council:** Funds provided by councils vary but most councils offer small grants of a few hundred pounds to community groups.
- **The Cooperative Foundation:** Awards grants of £500+ to community groups in the UK. www.co-operative.coop/ethicsinaction/communities/fundsandfoundations.
- **Awards for All:** Awards for All England is a simple small grants scheme making awards of between £300 and £10,000. The Awards for All programme aims to help improve local communities and the lives of people most in need. www.awardsforall.org.uk.
- **Local business:** Local large businesses are often happy to give their support to community initiatives.
- **Community Chest:** Provides small grants of £200 for local energy saving community projects. www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/cafe/Green-Communities/Funding-Advice/Community-bursary.
- **Artists Project Earth:** Awards grants of £500+ to climate change projects. www.apeuk.org
- **The Wakeham Trust:** Provides grants of £75-750. www.wakehamtrust.org

According to the focus of your group, there may also be specialist funders willing to support local initiatives around for example transport, food and so on.

Finally, if none of this works, talk to the CAG Coordinator and/or COIN who may be able to provide further ideas and advice.

USEFUL LINKS

GENERAL

10:10 campaign

10:10 is a mass movement that is signing up people and organisations from Britain to create a low-carbon society. The aim of this campaign is to cut carbon emissions by 10% in 2010 by encouraging people to make simple changes to their lifestyles, homes and workplaces.

www.1010uk.org

BiofuelWatch

Biofuelwatch is a volunteer-led campaign group, which argues that biofuels accelerate climate change, threaten rainforests and lead to the forced displacement of people.

www.biofuelwatch.org.uk

Campaign against Climate Change

The Campaign against Climate Change organises regular events and an annual march to protest against climate change. It brings people together to push for the urgent action that is needed to prevent catastrophic consequences of climate change.

www.campaigncc.org

Carbon Trade Watch

Carbon Trade Watch campaigns against the carbon market and exposes its flaws by producing detailed reports on emissions trading.

www.carbontradewatch.org

Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT)

CAT offers practical solutions to climate change, pollution and decline of natural resources. The focus of CAT's work is around renewable energy, environmental building, energy efficiency, organic growing and alternative sewage systems.

www.cat.org.uk

Climate Camp

The Climate Camp is a place for those who would like to take action on climate change. It involves volunteers from different career backgrounds so anyone can sign up. It organises an annual summer camp in England, Scotland, Wales and other locations around Europe.

www.climatecamp.org.uk

Climate Radio

Climate Radio productions are the independent initiative of journalist Phil England and represent some of the best informed and challenging views on climate change.

<http://climateradio.org>

The Environment Council

The Environmental Council helps individuals and organisations find sustainable solutions to environmental issues through training, facilitation and providing a forum for dialogue.

www.the-environment-council.org.uk

Defra – Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

The UK Government department tasked with issues such as the environment, rural development, the countryside, wildlife, animal welfare and sustainability.

www.defra.gov.uk

Forum for the Future

Forum for the Future is a charity committed to sustainable development. It offers advice, research, inspiration, capacity-building and support for businesses and communities that would like to promote environmental sustainability and social justice.

www.forumforthefuture.org.uk

Friends of the Earth

Friends of the Earth is one of the UK's largest environmental campaigning organisations with local groups across the UK. It seeks to influence the government to make changes to policies in favour of people and planet.

www.foe.co.uk

Futerra

Futerra is a communication agency, which works on corporate responsibility and sustainability. It captivates audiences, builds websites and grabs the attention of opinion formers.

www.futerra.co.uk

Green Alliance

Green Alliance is an influential environmental think-tank that works closely with UK political leaders and ensures delivery of their strategy to combat global environmental issues.

www.green-alliance.org.uk

Greenpeace

Greenpeace is a global non-governmental organisation that formed to protect and conserve the environment. To achieve its goals Greenpeace uses direct action lobbying and research.

www.greenpeace.org.uk

Low Carbon Communities Network

Aims to encourage the adoption of low carbon and zero carbon technologies and lifestyles at a community level, and to enable groups engaged in this to be as effective and efficient as possible. Provides a list of low carbon community groups from across the UK in their member section.

<http://lowcarboncommunities.net>

New Economics Foundation

NEF demonstrates economic well-being by putting people and planet first. Its aim is to improve quality of life by promoting innovative solutions that take into consideration environmental, economic and social issues.

www.neweconomics.org

Oxfam

Oxfam is a charity devoted to tackling poverty and social injustice. It also works on climate change, by working to prepare poorest communities around the world and campaigning for action.

www.oxfam.org.uk

People and Planet

People and Planet is the largest student network in Britain campaigning on world poverty, human rights and the environment.

<http://peopleandplanet.org>

Rising Tide

Rising Tide is a network of groups and individuals that is dedicated to taking local action and building a movement against the root causes of climate change.

<http://risingtide.org.uk>

Seeds for Change

Works together with activists and campaigners in the UK to help them organise for action and positive social change. Offers some free workshops and training for grassroots campaigners, and has a wide range of free briefings and resources on practical campaigning skills and working in groups.

www.seedsforchange.org.uk

Stop Climate Chaos

A UK climate change coalition consisting of over 100 organisations and their 11 million supporters, working together for positive action.

www.stopclimatechaos.org.uk

Transition Towns

Transition Towns Network encourages communities to create a vision for their village, town or city. It prepares communities for challenges, such as Peak Oil and Climate Change by rebuilding resilience and reducing carbon.

www.transitiontowns.org

Women's Environmental Network

WEN is dedicated to work on empowering women to make positive changes to the environment. It increases awareness of women on environmental issues and encourages decision-making.

www.wen.org.uk

WWF

Aims to safeguard the natural world, tackle climate change and help people to change the way their live to ease pressure on natural resources.

www.wwf.org.uk

World Development Movement (WDM)

Campaigns against the root causes of poverty all around the world. Their main focus is to lobby decision makers to change the policies that keep people poor and to research and promote positive alternatives. A significant proportion of their work deals with climate change.

www.wdm.org.uk

BUSINESS

Business Link

Provides advice and information to businesses on a range of issues including environmental efficiency.

www.businesslink.gov.uk

Best Foot Forward

Offers sustainability products, designs sustainability tools and delivers sustainability publications. We work with clients to measure business carbon footprints, offer wider carbon accounting services and provide business carbon calculator tools. Ecological footprint analysis (also known as the environmental footprint) is another area of expertise we apply to support environmental impact projects.

www.bestfootforward.com

Carbon Trust

Works with medium and large organisations to reduce carbon emissions now and develop commercial low carbon technologies for the future.

www.carbontrust.co.uk

Sustainable Business Partnerships

Most County Councils have a "Sustainable Business Partnership" or something similar which provides advice and support to small and medium sized organisations to lower their carbon emissions. To find out if this service is provided in your area, contact your local county council.

FOOD

Composting Community Network

The Community Composting Network is the only UK wide network of not-for-profit community organisations and social enterprises involved with organic wastes collection, processing and use.
www.communitycompost.org

Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens

The Federation of City Farms & Community Gardens exists to support, represent and promote community-managed farms and gardens across the United Kingdom.
www.farmgarden.org.uk

Garden Organic

Garden Organic, the UK's leading organic growing charity, has been at the forefront of the organic horticulture movement for 50 years and is dedicated to researching and promoting organic gardening, farming and food.
www.gardenorganic.org.uk

Local Food Big Lottery Funding

Local Food is a £50 million programme that will distribute grants to a variety of food-related projects which will help make locally grown food accessible to local communities. The programme provides grants from between £2,000-£300,000.
www.localfoodgrants.org

Making Local Food Work

Making Local Food Work is an initiative aimed at exploring community enterprise approaches to connecting land and people through food.
www.makinglocalfoodwork.co.uk

The National Allotment Gardens Trust

The National Allotment Gardens Trust has emerged from the Allotment Regeneration Initiative. It is a newly registered charity and assists in all areas of promotion and allotment regeneration.
www.nagtrust.org

The Permaculture Association

The Permaculture Association (Britain) is the national education and research charity that helps people to use permaculture in their everyday lives to improve their quality of life and the environment around them.
www.permaculture.org.uk

The Soil Association

The Soil Association is a membership charity which develops, promotes and supports organic food and farming in the UK and abroad. It is the UK's leading campaigning and organic certification organisation.
www.soilassociation.org

Sustain

Sustain is an alliance for better food and farming advocates food and agriculture policies and practices that enhance the health and welfare of people and animals, improve the working and living environment, enrich society and culture and promote equity.

www.sustainweb.org

Women's Environmental Network

Women's Environmental Network (WEN) is a registered charity and non-profit-making national membership organisation. Among other activities, it supports 40 food growing groups across the UK.

www.wen.org.uk

HOME ENERGY

Act on Co2

There are many online carbon calculators that enable you to calculate your carbon footprint. The Act on Co2, designed by Defra, is just one of them.

<http://carboncalculator.direct.gov.uk>

Association for Environment-Conscious Building

Lots of relevant information, including a discussion forum by people who are passionate and knowledgeable about the subject. There is also a directory of environmentally-conscious building professionals for local builders and other trades.

www.aecb.net

Ecovation

Ecovation is a project run by COIN in partnership with Climate-X which aims to support home-owners to eco-renovate their homes. The programme runs a range of activities from the ecovation website which provides comprehensive information and advice to open day events in which home-owners open their homes to the public.

www.ecovation.org.uk

Energy Saving Trust

Provides free advice and information for people across the UK looking to save energy, conserve water and reduce waste.

www.energysavingtrust.org.uk

Green Communities

A programme from the Energy Saving Trust that aims to support, facilitate and promote community based energy projects.

www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/cafe

Imeasure

A unique online tool giving you the ability to accurately measure and monitor your household's energy use and carbon emissions over time.

www.imeasure.org.uk

Low Carbon Buildings Programme

Provides information on grants for solar panels, mini wind turbines and other green energy equipment for buildings.

www.lowcarbonbuildings.org.uk

Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings

Useful information on how to maintain/renovate older buildings (and how to avoid inappropriate mixes of old and new technologies).

www.spab.org.uk

Sustainable Energy Academy

Promotes education and action to reduce the carbon footprint of buildings and communities.

www.sustainable-energyacademy.org.uk

The Yellow House

The Yellow House is a site by COIN's founder, George Marshall, which shows how he and his family transformed their 1930s ex-council house into their environmental dream home, transforming their energy consumption by two-thirds.

www.theyellowhouse.org.uk

TRANSPORT

Car Clubs

Here you can find pay-as-you-go cars. This is an excellent solution for those who need only occasional drive and don't want to own a car. Book it online or by phone, pick it up from your neighbourhood and drive. Also gives information on how to set up a car club in your area.

www.carclubs.org.uk

Carfueldata

The purpose of this website is to inform buyers of new cars about efficiency, fuel consumption, CO₂ and other emissions performance figures of new cars.

www.vcacarfueldata.org.uk

Liftshare

Website that enables you to find people with whom to share lifts from short commuting journeys to international journeys.

www.liftshare.com

National Car Share

Free national car sharing service, ideal for those who want to reduce their carbon footprint and save money on journeys by sharing a car with another person.

www.nationalcarshare.co.uk

Sustrans

Sustrans is the UK's leading charity that promotes sustainable transport. Their work is based on reducing the environmental impact of transport and encouraging people to choose "active travel" more often.

www.sustrans.org.uk

HOLIDAYS

Eurostar

Official website of Eurostar where you can find timetables, check availability and book tickets online.

www.eurostar.com

Loco2

Loco₂ was founded as a pragmatic response to the lack of options for people seeking to travel without massively increasing their carbon footprint. Their aim is to make low carbon travel easier, cheaper and fun.

www.loco2travel.com

The Low Carbon Travel Blog

Blog about the joy of slow and low carbon travel. The blog was originally set up to record blogger, Ed Gillespie's, slow travel trip around the world in 2007 – 2008 which employed every mode of transport available and revelled in the slow movement through landscape, culture, people and language rather than just passing over it all in an aluminium sausage!

www.lowcarbontravel.com

The Man in Seat 61

Website that gives in-depth practical information on how to travel from the UK to Europe, Africa and beyond by train and ship.

www.seat61.com

Rail Europe

Website that enables you to access timetables and book trains from the UK to destinations across Europe.

www.raileurope.com