



20,000 People across the UK now certified as Carbon Literate [1]

As extreme weather events driven by climate change become increasingly severe, and their economic impacts increasingly obvious, the UK approaches its leadership and hosting of the COP26 United Nations climate change negotiations in Glasgow beginning on November 1st. 2021.

Our government, employers, educators and civil society are all grappling as to how to engage people and organisations in delivering meaningful carbon reduction and action on climate change quickly and at scale.

In very positive news therefore, The Carbon Literacy Project [2] has today announced that more than 20,000 people across the UK have now been formally assessed and certified as Carbon Literate [1], and as a consequence, pledged and taken well over 40,000 actions to directly address climate change and immediately reduce UK carbon emissions.

Working with people, groups and organisations drawn from all sectors of society, The Carbon Literacy Project oversees the delivery of a days' worth of learning and action about climate-change. Uniquely however, although quality controlled by the Project, the training is co-designed and delivered not centrally, but by members of the sectors, groups and audiences receiving the training.

Carbon Literacy [1] is thus adaptable for anywhere and yet consistent everywhere, and engages, informs and inspires audiences both to act right now to reduce their carbon emissions, but also to begin to plan and take much longer-term action toward a zero-carbon society, whatever they do, and whoever they are.

The Carbon Literacy Project (wholly owned by The Carbon Literacy Trust [3], Registered Charity no 1156722) works with citizens and community groups, social housing providers and civil society. It works with employers both public and private sector and organisations from SMEs to PLCs and local authorities and Government, and works in formal and informal education with schools, colleges and universities across the UK.



Because of this unique reach across all organisations and sectors of society, the Project has been able to bring together groups, organisations and individuals, to form unique partnerships and consortia, working and acting together to share ideas, resources, and funding, to achieve far more to accelerate climate action and reduce carbon emissions immediately than any single organisation could ever achieve alone. In summary as regards Carbon Literacy: “The whole is far greater than the sum of the parts”.

Because of its unique approach, the training and certification of 20,000 individuals has been performed not by the central Project working alone, but by the vast network of sectoral partners and organisations distributed across the sectors and geography of the United Kingdom and beyond.

Climate Northern Ireland [4] has played its part in this initiative by developing the Climate Emergency training for Local Authorities in Northern Ireland and worked with Business in the Community NI to develop a Carbon Literacy for Top Management NI training targeting SMEs. In the last 6 months, Climate Northern Ireland has worked with The Carbon Literacy Project to adapt their Local Authorities toolkit to the context of Northern Ireland and tailored the training content to fit NI Local Authorities’ needs. In June 2021, a first pilot training was delivered to 30 staff members of Derry City and Strabane District Council (DCSDC). This initiative is part of a 2.5-year project funded by DAERA to provide mitigation support to Local government and SMEs across NI. Climate NI also delivered the training for its staff and those of Northern Ireland Environment Link which it is part of, as they are working towards becoming a Carbon Literate Organisation.

Sectoral participant Cathy Burns, DCSDC Climate Program Manager said “We are delighted in Derry City & Strabane District Council to have had the opportunity to be the Northern Ireland pilot for the Carbon Literacy training through Climate NI. Equipping our teams to understand climate change and delivering action across Council is vital to achieving our pledge to reach net zero and climate resilience by 2045 for the City & District. The training acts as a catalyst for change creating climate champions to drive forward action across all of our Council and we hope to deliver more training to achieve our aim of becoming a carbon literate Council.

The logo for 'cooler' features the word in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font. The letters are set against a solid black rectangular background. A thin red horizontal line is positioned directly beneath the black background.

Climate Northern Ireland's

mitigation officer, Perla Mansour said: "Northern Ireland is already behind other parts of the UK in that we do not even have a net zero target. All sectors of society have a role to play in adapting to and helping mitigate climate change, we are working on delivering the Carbon Literacy training for Local Authorities and SMEs in NI as a first, but crucial step, to build an understanding of the current climate crisis and help enable informed decision making to reduce emissions on both an individual and organisational basis."

The logo for the Carbon Literacy Project consists of the words 'Carbon Literacy Project' in a white, sans-serif font, stacked vertically within a black speech bubble shape.

Since its inception in 2012 the Project has grown steadily but for the last five years has been doubling in size every 20 months.

As a result of the effective, collaborative approach of Carbon Literacy, the UK Government (Dept of Business Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS)) has funded Carbon Literacy implementation across the public sector, so that every UK local authority, university and college, government department and NHS department now has access to comprehensive, free, government-sponsored Carbon Literacy Toolkits, to acceleration adoption and implementation.

This has been followed by adoption within the wider private and commercial sector, with collaborative toolkits for social housing, the rail sector, the automotive sector, and museum and galleries all now either launched or in advanced preparation.

Over 60 organisations have now been certified as Carbon Literate Organisations, but over 1500 organisations now have Carbon Literate staff, via some 216 unique certified Carbon Literacy courses, in some nine sectoral consortia developed, presented and delivered by partner organisations taking action on climate across the UK and beyond.

Work by Jacobs Engineering indicates that each Carbon Literate citizen reduces their personal and/or professional resource footprint by between 5% and 15% annually.

Co-founder and Managing Director of the Carbon Literacy Project, Dave Coleman said;

"One of the core values of Carbon Literacy is that by working together we achieve far more than any of us could alone."



“When Carbon Literacy learners are given both knowledge and agency to take action, we see newly Carbon Literate individuals taking person action at the small scale, but also professionally at massive scale, resulting in real savings of carbon immediately, and a long-term shift towards the kinds of personal and organisational behaviours that will deliver the zero-carbon society that we all need.”

“We could not have achieved this without the work of Climate Northern Ireland – experts in their sector – who have worked so hard to make this happen and deliver real change now”.

[ENDS]

NOTES TO EDITORS

[1] Carbon Literacy is:

“An awareness of the carbon dioxide costs and impacts of everyday activities, and the ability and motivation to reduce emissions, on an individual, community and organisational basis.”

It is achieved by the testing, assessment and then certification of successful individuals as Carbon Literate after they have participated in a days-worth of learning and climate-change action and planning.

[2] The Carbon Literacy Project:(www.carbonliteracy.com)

The Carbon Literacy Project (CLP) was created and founded by Cooler Projects CIC (Cooler) in 2011 and was launched publicly in November 2012.

Note: in general usage and specifically within copy, the term Carbon Literacy is correctly capitalised as a noun: It is therefore “Carbon Literacy” not “carbon literacy”.

[3] The Carbon Literacy Trust:

In 2013, The Carbon Literacy Trust (registered charity number: 1156722) was established and took on all Carbon Literacy Project assets, so that the charity’s trustees could oversee the dissemination of Carbon Literacy across the UK and beyond, for the public good. At the Trustees' behest, Cooler continues to act as the Trust's project delivery partner.

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[4] **Climate Northern Ireland:**

(<https://www.climatenorthernireland.org.uk/>)

Climate Northern Ireland is an inter-sectoral network, part of Northern Ireland Environment Link organisation, devoted to increasing understanding of climate change impacts and risks within Northern Ireland and promoting the adaptation and mitigation actions necessary to address these.

Climate Northern Ireland is funded by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) to help fulfil its obligations to address climate change.



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