

12 Bright Ideas for a Zero Carbon Cambridge

Cambridge City Council's ambition is to be [zero carbon by 2050](#). The solutions, technology and vision to reach zero are out there and are captured in a new research report, '[Zero Carbon Britain: Making It Happen](#)'. At the end of April 2017, Paul Allen from the Centre for Alternative Technology and co-author of the report was joined by 68 people from Cambridgeshire to explore those solutions. Below are their 12 Bright Ideas for a Zero Carbon Cambridge. They'd like to share them with local decision makers, influencers and the public. This event was organised by [Cambridge Carbon Footprint](#) and [Pivotal](#), with support from the [Global Sustainability Institute](#). For further details please contact Nicole Barton at Cambridge Carbon Footprint on 01223 301842 or nicole@cambridgecarbonfootprint.org

Food

1. Reduce food waste

Work with businesses to reduce waste (using measuring tools such as recommended by WRAP) and encourage caterers to serve smaller portions.

2. Reduce meat consumption

Promote behaviour change through cookery workshops. Focus in on schools - provide exciting introductions to vegetables and include vegan options on school menus. Encourage the use of findings from food architecture research (e.g. putting vegetarian/vegan food first on menus). Get institutional chefs on board to spread the message to other institutions. Get celebrities to take on public awareness raising campaigns. Work with trend setters in the community.

3. Provide free tap water

Run a campaign to get restaurants to provide free tap water and bring back drinking fountains.

Transport

1. Provide integrated electrical vehicle charging and parking spots

2. Build a light rail system

3. Build a segregated cycling network

Buildings and Energy

1. Provide low cost finance for retrofitting (using the Cambridge Building Society?)

2. Ensure there are retrofit requirements on landlords

3. Require and promote higher building standards

Consumption and stuff

1. Use fiscal incentives to promote a circular economy of reuse, repair and durable goods etc.

Place no VAT on repair or life-long goods and celebrate the number of new jobs that would be created in a circular economy (up to 50,000 in East of England, WRAP). Use fiscal incentives to promote renting and leasing over ownership and ensure that tax-payers/the local authorities use their buying power to favour circular goods and services in the procurement process.

2. Create community hubs that foster local economies of sharing, exchanging and repairing of goods.

Hubs could take digital forms e.g. ride sharing and selling apps and/or be physical community spaces. Physical hubs could be venues in which people exchange both skills and possessions, borrow items and host events like Repair Cafes. In the near future, Cambridge should aim to host a commercial reuse/repair space and emulate Sweden's new reuse mall www.retuna.se.

3. More and better education on personal carbon footprints, environmental limits and waste.

Use marketing/behaviour change/advertising to sell the appeal of a life full of experiences, interactions and relationships to counteract overconsumption.