

# Responding to the climate emergency

As Locality and our members continue to increase our engagement around the climate crisis, this workshop looked at the contribution that community organisations and businesses can make to counter the climate crisis and to do this in a way that also addresses social justice.

In this workshop we explored the following questions:

- What impact do community businesses have in tackling the climate crisis?
- What climate change focussed business models are both sustainable and replicable?

These are two questions which Locality has been looking at closely in a piece of work we are carrying out with the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) supported by Power to Change.

At the session we heard some inspiring examples of how community organisations are taking on business models which proactively address the climate crisis in their communities:

## Green Estate CIC

We were joined by Ros Davies of [Green Estate CIC](#), which aims to grow engaging, adaptive and resilient urban places.

Over 25 years, the organisation has transformed wastelands into thriving community businesses – making a difference to people’s lives through landscape and heritage. They now offer business units including landscape services, green waste and venue hire. They have also been creating pictorial (wildflower) gardens around the Tower of London and the Olympic Park.

**“The climate crisis is the only game in town – and it’s here now!”**

Ros highlighted the need for us to work together to adapt and build more resilience in communities that are more vulnerable to the climate crisis.

## Derwent Valley Car Club

Susan Ross and Mick Marston run **Derwent Valley Car Club (DVCC)**, a voluntary-run rural community car club in the North East. This is the first solely electric car club in the UK. They’re having a huge impact as the cars are carbon neutral and save over £3,500 a year compared to running a private car. Each car replaces as many as 20 private cars. They are supporting the development of EV car clubs across the country.



## London Development Trust

Miriam Burke of [London Development Trust](#) talked about their experience in setting up an ethical floristry business as an offshoot of a group of community anchor organisations.

They first opened a florist shop, **Woodberry Blooms**, on their local estate. They had to “pivot” their operations during COVID-19 and went on to establish an innovative

partnership with Brewdog to offer an outlet at their site at Waterloo Station. There are many lessons from their model, including how community businesses can set up ethical and sustainable supply chains and the importance of taking into account wider ethical considerations, such as workers' rights and transport emissions.

## Key learnings and tips

- Community organizations are in a perfect position to act alongside their communities in response to the climate crisis, which is already here and requires urgent action.
- Community organizations have the potential to make a significant contribution in addressing the climate crisis, through initiatives such as modifying supply chains and raising awareness about climate issues with their communities.
- There are many examples of community businesses taking action to address climate change – and there's lots to learn about how their business models can be replicated in other communities.
- We need to work together to adapt and build more resilience in communities that are more vulnerable to the effects of the climate crisis. Start these conversations in your neighbourhoods to build partnerships, and bring your community along on the climate action journey with you!

Download the slides from the workshop:

[Derwent Valley Car Club](#)

[Green Estate CIC](#)

If you'd like more support with any of these topics, Locality has a range of consultancy on offer: <https://locality.org.uk/consultancy-services>



