Newsletter #7
March 2022



Welcome to Deeside CAN's Newsletter #7

We hope you and your families and friends are keeping well and haven't been too badly affected by the recent storms.

You are receiving this because you expressed an interest in keeping in touch with what we are doing. Please feel free to forward this on to others who may be interested or let us know (deesidecan@gmail.com) if you no longer want to be contacted by us.

NESCAN (North East Scotland Climate Action Network) update

NESCAN is up and running, aiming to be an information and collaboration hub for almost 30 community-led organisations working on climate action issues across Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire. A mapping exercise is currently underway, collating information about all the organisations and projects going on in the area, so that there is a clear idea of what is happening and how NESCAN can support everyone. At Deeside CAN, we are very much looking forward to seeing who we can work with and learn from, and how we can help others.

If you would like to connect with NESCAN directly and receive information about events and all aspects of climate change and biodiversity loss, then you can apply to become a **member of NESCAN**. If, in addition, you would like to have a direct say in how NESCAN is run, with a vote at meetings etc., then you can apply to become a **member of NESCAN Hub CIC** (Community Interest Company).
Please see the attached NESCAN membership document with full details and links to the application forms.

What have Deeside CAN been up to?

We are working on projects in our six focus areas:

1. **Raising awareness:**

- We continue to **post news, updates, interesting articles and tips** on our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/DeesideCAN), as well as on our website (https://www.deesidecan.org.uk), and Instagram (deeside_can) and Twitter (@DeesideCAN) accounts, and we encourage you to have a look.

2. **Lowering our local carbon footprint:**

- We are in the early stages of working with the Banchory Town Team to develop a plan for **Net Zero Banchory.** The methodology and approach, which can be applied in other local towns and villages, are summarised here https://www.deesidecan.org.uk/net-zero-banchory/
- We are working with Zero Carbon Daviot and Udny Climate Action to support a group looking at how best to improve **home insulation** in houses in Crathes, Strachan and Banchory. This is crucial to reduce carbon emissions and is becoming more urgent as fuel bills soar. The challenge is to retrofit the current housing stock cost effectively – links on this page are useful guides on how existing homes can be adapted to meet climate targets https://www.deesidecan.org.uk/home-insulation-project/

3. **Reversing biodiversity loss:**

- We continue to work on the **Wildlife Friendly Village** project in Banchory and Torphins, aiming to set aside 20% of all public and private spaces in the villages to create habitats for wildlife to thrive. For more information, see https://www.deesidecan.org.uk/wildlife-friendly-village-project/
    - We are raising awareness of the biodiversity we have in our area, and how everyone can do their bit to help our local wildlife (e.g., hedgehogs).
    - We are planning our **Spring campaign**, which will build on last year's planting of wildflowers and fruit trees in various locations. We will also be adding hedgehog hotels and bird boxes at key sites, including the grounds at Crathes and Banchory Lodge Hotel.
    - We will be supporting Banchory's **skatepark project** to establish suitable plant borders.
- We will be planting a '**Wee Forest'** at the far end of Bellfield Park in Banchory.
    - This is a dense, native, mixed woodland copse, covering an area roughly the size of a tennis court. It brings the benefits of a forest, helping to mitigate the impacts of climate change, as well as providing a nature-rich habitat patch to support wildlife.
    - 300 free trees have already been delivered and we are waiting for final permission from the Council to start planting. We have a tentative planting date of **Saturday 2nd April.** Before this, we will need to erect a deer and rabbit proof fence around the Wee Forest to protect the saplings in the first few years of their lives and prepare the mulch before planting.



- An important element of a 'Wee Forest' is educational, helping to raise awareness of the climate and biodiversity crises, teaching our local community, and in particular young people, how to plant and look after trees, and helping them to learn about our local biodiversity.
- We hope that our 'Wee Forest' will be part of the **Queen's Green Canopy Jubilee** initiative and will contribute to the Scottish Government's targets of Net Zero by 2045, which requires a challenging carbon reduction of 45% by 2030 from 2020 levels.

- We managed to raise enough pledged funds from our local community to put in a bid to **buy a small part of the wood** at the base of Scolty Hill. Unfortunately, we weren't successful, but we have learnt a lot and are on the lookout for other opportunities to create local, mixed native woodlands.
- We have expressed interest in supporting the Leys Estate to regenerate the **Loch of Leys**, north of Banchory.

4. Eliminating waste:



- We are working with Banchory's Number One community hub to **reduce food waste**, by collecting food that is destined for landfill from local supermarkets on Monday and Tuesday evenings and giving it away for free on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings. Over the past 2 years the project has collected over 6,500 kg of food, with more than 500 kg collected in the past 3 months.
- We are working with Number One on a **Zero Waste Deeside** project and have been successful in winning funding from the National Lottery for a project coordinator, who will be appointed very soon. The project includes:
  - Expanding the food waste project to **Farm to Fork**, supporting Aberdeenshire Council's Food Strategy. This will include food insecurity and healthy food choices, as well as food growing projects and supporting local growers and producers
  - A new **Upcycling and Repair Project**, aiming to increase skills on upcycling and repairing items such as clothing, furniture, electrical equipment, etc.
  - A new **Recycling Awareness Project** aiming to increase skills on recycling and reducing plastic use

5. Political engagement/consultations:

- We are planning to host **climate hustings** before the forthcoming local elections in May 2022.
- We are working with NESCAN to respond to the ongoing consultation on the **4th National Planning Framework (NPF4)**. This is the framework for all future developments in Scotland for the next crucial decade in dealing with the climate emergency. The consultation period lasts until **31st March 2022**, and we encourage you to add your input too. See this document for an NPF4 summary relevant to NE Scotland and links to respond to the consultation https://www.deesidecan.org.uk/consultations/

6. Increase our community's resilience to climate change:

- Following Storm Arwen and subsequent storms, we have investigated what actions could be taken to improve our **resilience** as the climate changes. You can read our suggestions in the document at https://www.deesidecan.org.uk/resilience-to-climate-change/

Upcoming events

- **Climate Week North East** (CWNE) is 10 days packed full of fun, inspiring and interesting events, designed to raise awareness of climate change but, more importantly, show what we can all do to make a difference and reduce our carbon footprint, live sustainably and increase biodiversity in a fun way. The next CWNE is **18-27th March 2022**. For the full programme see https://climateweeknortheast.org
- Aberdeen Climate Action (ACA) holds a **Climate Café** every 1st Tuesday of every month. See more details on https://aberdeenclimateaction.org/climate-cafe/
- **The Far Orchard** will create an apple orchard that is distributed across Banchory, with each tree hosted by an individual, family or group. The Barn is inviting everyone to join this creative project and apply to host one of the 100 apple trees that will begin the Far Orchard. Click here for more information and to apply for a free apple tree: https://www.thebarnarts.co.uk/article/the-far-orchard
- **Cairngorms Nature Big Weekend** is a celebration of the fantastic natural heritage of the Cairngorms National Park and this year is planned for 13th-15th May. We will showcase our local activities at Glen Tanar. For more details see https://cairngorms.co.uk/discover-explore/things-to-do/events/big-weekend/

General

We'd love to hear your feedback and ideas, and especially if you'd like to get involved in any of our projects! Please write to us (deesidecan@gmail.com) or join us at one of our **fortnightly meetings on Mondays at 4-6pm**. Everyone is very welcome to attend; just tell us that you'd like to come along, and we will let you know details of dates and agenda, as well as the Zoom log-in information.