



Carbon Charter Summer 2020 Webinar Series

Hosted by Woolley

Audience Questions

Questions that we do not have time to answer during the webinars will be captured and answered here. This document will be updated as new answers become available.

Recordings of the webinar sessions can be found at <https://carboncharter.org/chartertuesday-stars-woolley-host-the-summer-event-2020/>

Questions from Webinar Session 1 – 2nd July 2020

How can we raise the profile and stress the importance of green jobs to CV-19 recovery? I've heard little mention on a national scale.

CO2 concentrations have not dropped yet at Mauna Loa because of the covid epidemic, it's concerning, what do you think?

Ned Harrison (Suffolk County Council): The global policy response to the pandemic saw a dramatic short-term drop in carbon emissions – particularly from a reduction in travel. Global analysis of emissions trends can take several years to process, but early estimates suggested a possible reduction in global emissions of around 5-8% (see the links below for some of the discussion around how they calculate this).

That is a huge impact – albeit short term. But we wouldn't expect to see that translate to reductions in the concentrations measured at Mauna Low (the longest-standing CO2 monitoring station). Despite the drop in emissions from last year, we are still adding to the total in the atmosphere. Think of filling a bath – turning the flow down will slow the rate at which it fills. But to stabilise or even reduce the level we need to turn the tap off altogether (net zero) or take the plug out (carbon capture or sequestration). What's needed isn't the short-term slowing in emissions we see from recessions or this pandemic. It's serious structural change towards net zero carbon society.

<https://www.carbonbrief.org/iea-coronavirus-impact-on-co2-emissions-six-times-larger-than-financial-crisis>

<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41558-020-0797-x>

During this covid period do you think consumer trends, especially the uptake of online shopping, fast-fashion and quick-buy/single-use products has worsened? Do you think this trend will have significant changes to waste and/or plastic pollution? Are there any ideas/policy on how to tackle this problem? I appreciate that's a broad question and one I thought of while Neville was

speaking of waste, individuals and the positive outlook and appreciation of the environment during lockdown.

Ned Harrison (Suffolk County Council): This was discussed during the webinar in the context of voluntary vs regulatory action. I just want to highlight a Suffolk based business that is innovating directly in response to some of these issues. Past Greenest County award winners [Where Does It Come From?](#) are pioneering an approach that stresses the value of clothing made with consideration for its supply chain and the environment. Each item sold allows the buyer to see exactly where it was made. They now also make face masks!

What effective steps in research can be made to move from waste to landfill into recycling waste to new uses?

With plastics and waste, these surely now need to be planned to be recycled locally for the benefit of a circular economy, why are we not developing this?

Agriculture in Suffolk is already facing climate change, it is already engaged in the rough ride to the future. SCC needs to support its food providers, I am not aware of any consultation with Agriculture locally?

How could SCC help get Suffolk fed totally by Suffolk Farmers where possible?, and therefore make a start on dismantling the centralised food system, this has many benefits

The Carbon Charter is great, but dramatic membership price increase is regrettable to put it mildly.

Ned Harrison (Suffolk County Council). We agree; in an ideal world we'd love to be able to continue to provide this service free of charge. Unfortunately, the external funding we've used tends to be structured around demonstrating innovation, which makes it difficult to go on resourcing long-running services. We've put a lot of work into building the value. We hope the cost is something businesses feel is justified, even if they'd rather have it free. Suffolk County Council continues to subsidise the running of the accreditation, but it just isn't feasible to provide individual assessments to all businesses without external funding.

We will continue to seek further funding to support local SMEs to decarbonise, but the focus of this is likely to be on support to specific projects (like [BEE Anglia](#)) and on enhancing the support for those that have a Charter accreditation. We also work with partners such as the East of England Co-op to provide subsidies for businesses within their supply chain that are looking to gain the accreditation.

We very much hope that the Charter network continues to grow – and the signs are that the charges have not significantly impeded that so far. As it grows, this will also increase the benefits to individual members, by raising recognition of the brand. Ultimately, if businesses do not feel that it is worth the cost, we may need to reconsider how and why we run it. We won't continue to resource something that is not valued. We certainly hope that won't be the case, as we see independent verification as a key means to empower sustainable business. Thankfully the signs so far are that our members continue to value the accreditation and the support it provides.

What happened to the Suffolk County Council Food Charter?

Ned Harrison (Suffolk County Council): The Food Charter has become the Suffolk Food Plan, run by [Healthy Suffolk](#) (website currently being updated, so if it's blank, check back later). Development has been put on hold until September due to the need to prioritise other Public Health strands.

How many attendees are there today (2nd July)?

Ned Harrison (Suffolk County Council): 65

Questions discussed during the 2nd July webinar

Is national dictat the only way to ensure a level playing field to protect / enhance nature? Local initiatives often stumble through viability issues. How should we afford biodiversity?

All of the panellists' presentations have been intellectual (understandably given the context of this event) and very interesting, but I'm interested in asking them how climate and ecological breakdown makes the panellists FEEL.

I like the idea of VOLUNTARY vs REGULATORY action. How do we encourage the former, other than Carbon Charter, natch!? I'm back on this and [POSITIVE DEVIANCE](#) is back on the agenda! 'In every community with a problem, somebody has found the answer.'

Why are we still seeing housing developments without significant renewable energy embedded and built with bricks and cement? Can Suffolk CC not change the planning regulations/requirements

There is always lots of talk, I am glad the SCC climate emergency plan is on the way, albeit it was meant to be in place by now, does it go far enough?