



Part Two: What would Siddhartha do about climate change?

A Generic Action Plan

Climate and Community - Charity

Reg No 1172500

Introduction

What would Buddha Siddhartha do about Climate Change? was written after reading the essay by Rob Burbea “Buddha and the Sacred Earth” on the DANCE website. It was written for friends in Dhamma who are concerned about inaction on climate change. We worked from our practical experience, study and research.

In the first part we looked at what the Buddha knew and how it motivated him to act. In the second we look at what we consider what he would do in the present situation. In the third we will consider what may happen if the status quo continues.

In the first part we conclude that Siddhartha would indeed be motivated to act on climate change. We suggest he would organise and establish a means for ordinary people to walk away from the economic system that is driving growth for its own sake and business as usual.

So we now have the core of part 2. It occurred to us that Siddhartha would not suggest to others something he was not doing himself. So we have been working trying to implement what we thought was the most practical plan. It turned out it was more difficult to fill in the details and get going than we first thought. We set up a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO),

climateandcommunity.org as the legal structure and have been working on it for long enough now to see that it is practicable.

It is written for those who are interested in working with us; in a social movement which facilitates its members to change their lives and livelihoods and create local trading economies through Dharma. Which lets us individually and collectively take responsibility by getting involved in practical action which begins to reverse the harm being done to our natural world and civilisation.

It explains the rationale for education, re-skilling and community engagement. Because an awakening and awareness needs to happen to create an alternative economy. This feeds into the re-establishment of market gardeners, small holder tenant and cooperative farmers who can function in interconnected communities owned by charitable trusts. Whose prime aims are to reduce emissions, lock up carbon by regenerative farming methods and provide alternative livelihoods and positive examples for change.

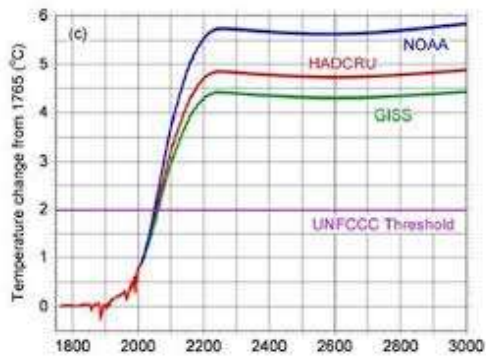
This a major aim of Climate and Community and we will describe a plan which navigates from where we are now towards this outcome. *We have applied all the lessons, positive and negative we have learned over decades of effort and initiative in our attempts to do something about the environmental problems.*

Our plan is intended to keep going for as long as necessary without becoming co-opted or distracted. If it can keep going it will work and make some positive contribution. We believe it is a Dharma response to the current circumstances.

Rationale

The American psychiatrist Robert Jay Lifton describes a condition 'malignant normality' to explain the current rejection of the urgent need to act on climate change. In his book 'The Climate Swerve' he considers why powerful people and institutions sabotage wise climate action.

There is already some general understanding that in a timescale of less than a few generations the warming climate, oceans and land are going to present the greatest environmental difficulties to humans and many other flora, fauna and habitats on the planet.



Food, the Big Issue

At present there is little general awareness or interest in the adverse impacts happening now or rapidly approaching in the future. Such as the declining global agricultural production from aridification which will have a progressive effect even in the UK. Around half of the food consumed here is imported. The consequences if we fail to take appropriate steps will be growing engagement in conflict and contests for food and resources along with the brutal suppression of migration. Unaddressed it will also lead to extremist politics and revolutionary pressures in industrialised societies such as our own.

In his book "Six Degrees" Mark Lynas outlines the probable progression of adverse impacts of warming as they play out over the next 200 years. He describes what will happen if we continue business as usual carbon emissions. The outcomes of the current trajectory will lead to a planetary habitat very different from what we see today. In a timescale of a couple of centuries that is no further into the future than Nelson was in the past.

Taking the actions needed to address the warming gives a key to solving many other collateral problems. The costs of initiating action now is a fraction of what is already being spent on aircraft carriers, war planes, submarines and missiles intended to be used in future conflict scenarios. Food shortage due to changing climate is the most likely driver of migration and war.



If we care, are we crazy?

The Tibetan lama Chogyam Trungpa describes in his book 'Crazy Wisdom' some very applicable advice for action on climate change. As it gives

instruction and guidance for the situation we face today. The balance of society has become dangerously irrational in the face of an established problem. In a world gone mad rational people are seen as crazy.

The advice has two parts; firstly abandon false hopes and secondly become fearless.

People who are serious about changing behaviour in order to evolve a less damaging way of living are seen as crazy, albeit in UK it is politely done. They are ignored and marginalised so that business as usual, the malignant normality, may proceed and ordinary people can “get on” with their lives.

There are some token initiatives, lots of dead end discussions, fruitless political processes and diversionary propaganda whilst the deadly obvious effective solutions of economic, social and political restructuring are ignored. For example highly visible technological infrastructure such as wind and solar power generation are seen as the big solution to climate change. However profligate energy and material consumption goes unquestioned. The apparent need for perpetual economic growth goes unquestioned. There are thousands of media articles detailing how serious the problem is but omitting a description of the commensurate solutions. The UN Conference of the Parties (COP) a multi-decadal process has led to legally non-binding half effective outcomes.



It is important to recognise that the failure to take the climate problem seriously is not restricted to the elites and leadership. Our experience informs us that wilful ignorance spans across the whole of society. Were it otherwise there would be vast and visible social and economic change underway; in fact the opposite is now true in many developed countries. This wilful ignorance is driven by the promotion of extrinsic values by the media and our wider cultural society. Which in turn undermines the inherent care and concern we have for our children and the natural world.

Some False Hopes

- It can be left to others.
- It is the Chinese who are responsible and they must act first.
- The political social and business leaders will sort the problem out for us.
- Mainstream media will describe and promote the obvious solutions.

- People and corporations who say they are committed to change really mean it and will take rational action.
- The problem is not as serious as science is telling us.
- My behaviour is minimal and not part of the problem.

Rubbish Attitudes

- There is nothing I can do, so I do nothing.
- I don't want to know the facts, ignorance is bliss.
- Don't tell me about it; it makes me feel bad.
- I am concerned but I have higher priorities.

Inescapable Truths

- What you do is what you believe in.
- There are ways to solve climate change but the path can be difficult.
- Climate change will not be solved if you do nothing.
- You cannot solve it on your own.



For thousands of years we have seen nature as a dumping ground, modern economics calls it an externality. In a Christian cultural context people are educated to see themselves at the top of a hierarchy in dominion over everything lower than themselves e.g. fish, birds, trees, monkeys etc. The awareness of the obsolescence of such beliefs has yet to sink in to our UK culture or that of US mainstream.

As ethical and economic models have been predicated on these beliefs; action on climate change is perceived as a challenge to this paradigm. The current paradigm is also predisposed to contest any such challenge irrespective of its merits. For these reasons we have found that a direct approach calling for mainstream to change to manifest and demonstrate practical solutions is not effective. Machiavelli in 'The Prince' gives good advice: 'do not try to change a paradigm'.

We have already experienced this process during 30 years of action in the face of climate denial. Where initially the paradigm challenge is denied and derided (as the scientists have discovered) and then ignored. If the challenge continues it will be fought before acceptance. On this basis a challenge for action on climate change would tend towards revolutionary action and civil conflict, a pathway to be avoided. If the Climate Camps of 2005-9 were to

have survived the growing police oppression they would have had to consider engaging in violent conflict.

Machiavelli is still right, the lesson to be learnt is don't challenge the current paradigm.

We propose there is an alternative route which goes around the current paradigm by setting out to build an alternative in parallel. As long as we have the basic freedoms of the Human Rights Act this route is open and we can use the current economic system to fund it.

We believe this indirect method will be most effective if it manifests as a social movement. There are several reasons why this is a good idea. It begins to raise a profile that believes an alternative is possible, describes it and sets out to manifest it. *At present there is nothing for communities inside the current competitive paradigm to compete with to solve the environmental problems.* An ordinary person who wakes up and wishes to change the way they live has nowhere realistic to go or join in with other than the "green" eco business model.

As far as we can see the right idea is to set out to create an alternative and collective way of living with an economic model that is environmentally sustainable and economically robust.



It may be thought that this objective is practically impossible. On the contrary we have learned that the practicalities are not the real problem and we will describe some workable and tested means and methods in more detail. Over time we have found the primary barrier is that people are scripted to be reactionary individualists by the current paradigm. This makes it difficult to cooperate in developing and manifesting an alternative economic system which is pro-active against the negative outcomes ahead. There is also an unhelpful tendency for us to be dominated by short term self interest.

Another barrier is one of critical mass and the establishment of interacting mechanisms necessary to initiate a new economic system even at a small pilot scale. By analogy the Christian Old Testament story of Ark building is most relevant to our times; the Ark is needed before the rains. An Ark is like building a machine or factory which does not operate effectively until it is substantially completed. We are going to try building a viable landbased economic process alongside a social re skilling. This is a challenging task. It will take time and determination to train people, establish working groups and obtain resources before it can function. We need to ask for help and support without compromising the objectives.

Why focus on building an alternative land based primary economy?



Because when we look deeper into the problem we see it is the source of our true wealth and long term wellbeing. We see it is a key area in solving the environmental, social and economic aspects of the crisis. Food is first.

In 1850 we had half the population in rural areas working the land. Now it is about 2%. Farming and forestry in this 2% is predominantly industrial and intensive. Farming and forestry used to produce all our energy in the form of food, fuel and materials. Before high fossil fuel use started during the industrial revolution farming and forestry were society's primary net producers of energy in the form of crops providing food energy, wood providing solid fuel as well as useful materials. The population was then around 10 million. One hundred years ago farming and forestry employed more than one third of the people in the UK to do this essential work. The population was over 40 million.

Our practical aim would be to manifest an alternative economy and employment. This is not a trivial project. Establishing a primary economy means growing food, fuel, fibres and other materials. It would have to engage in forestry and farming using minimal fossil fuels and techniques like regenerative agriculture. It means processing and adding value to produce. It means having surplus for trade and engaging in other revenue generating activities to bring in currency. It is actually possible using existing techniques to demonstrate a way of living that puts carbon into the soil while producing and cooking food and growing materials. It would need suitably situated farms and woodlands large enough to support a viable community and economy.



To recap the initial proposal; an alternative would focus on primary economic activity: food, fuel and grown materials. Being unfunded this has to be engaged opportunistically. It is important to appreciate that such a demonstration project has to be built person by person and is fundamentally an educational project within a social movement. Access to unlimited funds or government sponsorship would not get round this. In order to work and attract supporters and participants the project must be authentic and activist led. The example of how the Climate Camp movement initially built itself up, made decisions and provided training opportunities shows what is possible for an engaged social project to get going and organise effectively.

If we look forwards to what an alternative society might look like it is worth considering that change will come one way or another. If it can be demonstrated in a timely way, an abrupt or revolutionary change may be mitigated or avoided. We need to envision what to achieve for both a pre-emptive model as we suggest and what a revolutionary solution would be. The eventual outcomes would be broadly the same except the pre-emptive version would be better in terms of efficiency, durability and reduced suffering.



The book 'Report from a Chinese Village' by Jan Myrdal illustrates this process. It describes how the pre-revolutionary peasants evolved a local co-operative structure which was more efficient, effective and less traumatic than the imposed post revolutionary (politically inspired) collective farm system.

Before laying out the step by step plan for Climate and Community from where we are now we will describe what an attainable functional alternative economic system would consist of.

We are not trying to be prescriptive, only outlining the most practical structure that would work if the community of people could be gathered to manifest it.

Basic Infrastructure

We believe that a viable economic unit would have from 50 to 150 core workers and one or more market gardens closely located to a market town or city. The market gardens would need to be large, well situated with water and good quality growing land. In addition to this a base farm of 250 acres or more within five to ten miles of the market gardens would be required as the farm community hub. The base farm needs to be well chosen with woodland, water, meadow, grazing and arable potential. The farm buildings hub would not be occupied as a dwelling and the community would be distributed in portable dwellings such as Mongolian yurts. The farm buildings hub would have kitchen, dining area, ablutions and laundry, office, library, education and training facilities, tool and equipment storage, workshops, transport, food processing and storage. A substantial area of coppice and standard woodland would also need to be obtained or managed within 3 to 5 miles of the base farm.



Regenerative horticulture and agriculture would be the farming practice. Using and developing integrated carbon negative systems demonstrated around the world. Regenerative agriculture describes farming and grazing practices that among other benefits, reverses climate change by rebuilding soil organic matter and restoring degraded soil biodiversity resulting in both carbon drawdown and improving the water cycle.

Regenerative agriculture involves all year crop cover and other cover as well as agro-forestry which combine crops, cover crops, trees and animal husbandry. Through photosynthesis, a plant draws carbon out of the air to form carbon compounds. What the plant doesn't need for growth is exuded through the roots to feed soil organisms, whereby the carbon is humified, or rendered stable. Carbon is the main component of soil organic matter and helps give soil its water-retention capacity, its structure, and its fertility. Some pools of carbon housed in soil aggregates are so stable that they can last thousands of years (Lal). This is in contrast to "active" soil carbon, which resides in topsoil and is in continual flux between microbial hosts and the atmosphere.



In horticulture Edward Reville a market gardener in Wales has developed a particular type of regenerative agriculture. A no dig system using alley cropping (long beds in rotation, running along perennial beds incorporating trees and shrubs with minimal disturbance to allow fungal activity). It is based on the discovery that carbon structures (charcoal) in soil promotes the efficiency of fungal growth and its associations with plant roots. Carbon can be added up to 10% or more by volume of soil with effect. In comparison modern artificial fertilizer based horticulture releases carbon from the soil. Other benefits include moisture retention, nutrient holding capabilities, works in temperate climates and the system can incorporate biochar stoves which create charcoal while supplying cooking heat and hot water. The system relies on the input of woodchip and biochar and consequently works with a coppice and standard woodland management system.



Appropriate Technology

Using the 'two tool kit' we can make use of the traditional and the modern by using appropriate technology. Food, fuel, fibres and grown materials in surplus would feed value adding processing to produce marketable goods. Once primary economic viability is achieved advanced technical industrial activities can be undertaken. Such as; manufacturing tools and devices needed on the farm using electro/hydraulic wind generation and solar power. Fibre crops can be processed and spun into twine, cord, ropes and threads. Thread can be used for weaving canvas and finer textiles. It may be possible to process oil crops to polymers for high value items such as polytunnel films of direct use to market garden food production and waterproofing fabrics. The basic model is some sort of distributed village community trading locally but fundamentally sufficient in life basics including food, fuel, textiles and essential materials. It would be engaged with and supportive of its local community.



Is this a scalable solution and how relevant is it to the big picture of climate change?

Applying regenerative agricultural methods is paramount in this alternative economic unit. Soil is a vital store of Carbon. If it is badly managed it can be a major source of green house gas emissions. An estimated 9.8 billion tonnes of Carbon are stored in Britain's soils indeed soils store three times as much Carbon as is contained in the atmosphere.

The agro-ecological methods can certainly be used on horticultural holdings supplying local fruit and vegetables across the whole of the UK. This would emulate the traditional market garden supply chain which provided fresh produce and local jobs to towns and cities within a 25 mile radius.

A practical manifestation would be well located small scale plots worked by people highly educated in the soil Carbon ways of maximum sequestration, in the process becoming stewards of the land. The efficiency of such a system is demonstrated by the UN report 'The Trade and Environment Review 2013; wake up before it is too late'. It analyses the transition needed in agriculture globally and makes the observation that food has quickly become the hidden driver of world politics (Brown 2011) The message is If we cannot increase crop yields with less water and conserve fertile soils many agricultural soils will cease to be viable.

Is this relevant to the UK?

'There is an emerging scientific consensus that a shift to small scale sustainable agriculture and localised food systems will address most if not all of the underlying causes of deteriorating agricultural productivity as well as the conservation of natural soil and water resources while saving the climate (Ho et al 2008, Hoffman 2011, De Schutter 2011). This is not just relevant to developing countries but globally.



Pioneers in no dig regenerative agricultural methods such as Ed Reville; have demonstrated this in the temperate UK situation albeit small scale. "It calls for a transition towards more sustainable forms of agriculture that nourishes the land and people and provide an opportunity for decent financially rewarding and gender equal jobs" (Hoffman 2011).

Do the economics add up?

'Small farms generally produce more per hectare than large ones... economists have long observed and debated this inverse relationship between farm size and productivity (Quan 2011). Small farms are 2-10 times as productive and much more profitable and not just in developing countries (Rosset 2006). The US agricultural census of 1992 found sharp decline in net income from \$1,400/acre to \$12/acre as farm size increased from 4 acres to 6,709 acres (Rosset 2009). Unfortunately European subsidies skew this tendency in favour of large farms economically but still show the drop in productivity in relation to size



Small farms are also associated with “intensive use of household and community labour, high levels of motivation with much lower supervision and transaction cost” (Quan et al 2011) which may explain their economic advantages but not their actual productivity. These farms are highly productive because they are typically biodiverse systems that integrate multiple crops and livestock which enables them to maximise synergistic relationships while minimising waste...they embody the circular economy of nature (Ho et al 2008) wherein energy and nutrients are recycled within the ecosystem for maximum productivity and Carbon sequestration, both above and below ground.

We need to create ways for those willing to engage in these meaningful occupations by walking away from existing fossil fuel intensive jobs and housing. We need to educate, re-skill, enable the establishment of market gardens, smallholder tenant farmers and cooperatives in related and interconnected communities. Such communities would be viable and sustainable. Land could be held in charitable trust. It may be possible to establish an example in less than ten years. This is the major aim of Climate and Community; of course we now need to describe a plan that creates a path which navigates from where we are now to this outcome.

An Indirect Approach

From a marginal position and the reasons laid out above we believe that an indirect approach to be most effective in creating the formats and structures within and from which a viable social movement can build. A social movement can bring about examples of appropriate change as described and demonstrate methods of solving the practical problems. In doing so the circumstances leading to conflict can be reduced. At the same time reducing the underlying drivers of greenhouse emissions.

The idea is to create a practical and viable alternative way of living and economic interaction. One that is socially more attractive than the current mainstream. It would offer a gateway to people to move away from the current “malignant normal” social-economic arrangement.

A key issue here is breaking away from the current economic and employment system which co-opts all including the unwilling into participating in causing the environmental problems.

We need to work closely with community structures such as community councils that are small enough in scale and orientated towards civic duty and

voluntary service and less focused on large scale budgets and bureaucracy which characterises many larger county councils. That said we should be open to any individual politician that is sympathetic to our needs.

We need a plan that we can begin to deliver with minimal resources and capacity. This means our plan must be capable of a self funding progression. We avoid risk and do not over extend. Grant and donation support should be obtained where possible but we should not take on liabilities that run beyond grant funded projects. This means we cannot engage in mainstream style employment using salaried "staff". Instead we can provide other means to maintain people, something closer to monastic but without doctrine



Creating a Constituency

Our objective is facilitating a climate social movement. But first we should establish precursor activities in order to engage a supportive constituency. This will provide the frameworks, guidance and material assets needed to allow a social project to manifest.

Al Gore in his presentation 'An Inconvenient Truth' makes the observation that not acting on climate change is at its root an ethical problem. While this is very true we believe there is very little practical value in appealing for change on such grounds. Our experience leads us to conclude there is no point in attempting to persuade anyone of the need to act on this issue. And that it will be more effective to begin to raise a profile working on un-contentious practical environmental problems such as litter picking. Allowing people who are already convinced to find us and join in.

Inspiring Real Life Stories

Our plan has been informed by our own experience and inspiring people and projects that have worked in the past. Some are still working today and some we have been directly involved in, like the Climate Camps. Starting from the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930's, Sarvodaya Village Movement founded in Sri Lanka in 1958 and more recently the Climate Camp operating between 2008 and 2012 in the UK.



The Civilian Conservation Corps

From 1933-42 three million volunteer enrollees signed up to live in rural camps and carry out emergency conservation work. This was part of Roosevelt's New Deal. The economic depression had created high unemployment levels especially in the young. America was suffering from vast areas of environmental degradation in the form of soil erosion, and flooding caused by intensive farming methods and deforestation. During the 9 years over one billion trees were planted as well as a whole range of practical land based environmental work.

The lessons to be applied from the CCC relate to the practical response to a massive social, economic and environmental problem. It took young people out of the cities and trained them for sustainable skills. It became the social movement of the day, a place for any young person to be, to cooperate and work together. Climate and Community would like to build on networks in the community so that we can start facilitating conservation camps for young people on public land.



SARVODAYA VILLAGE PROJECT

"We Build the Road and the Road Builds Us"



'Sarvodaya' means awakening of all or everybody wakes up! It is a Buddhist and Gandhian inspired community development movement with popular participation of over 5000 villages in Sri Lanka. It actively engages people of all religions and ethnic background. It asserts development is only meaningful

in terms of fulfilment which goes beyond material and can be the cultivation of wisdom and compassion. This begins with the person to the community and to the world. Respect and harmony is encouraged in the village by organising constructive work projects which improve the village and the villager's lives. Villagers work together and share food.

Principles to encourage good social conduct are: generosity, the sharing of one's time, skills, goods and energy. The four sublime attitudes: loving kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity. Respectful, honest speech and constructive work. The work camps where villagers share their labour is viewed as essential if persons and community are to awaken and make change.



What we learn from Sarvodaya is the need to redefine what the real solutions to climate change are. They are not large scale technological fixes put forward by media and politicians. Just like Sarvodaya we can redefine what the solutions to our environmental instability and social inequality are and decide what actions need to take place. Climate and Community believe the collective waking up needs to be based on care for our communities manifested in practical communal work, re-skilling and personal awareness.

Climate Camp Movement

The camps took place over 10 days once a year over 5 years. A small group of people were motivated by the climate science to organise and gather support for national camps. In their process of organising they set up monthly gatherings and regional neighbourhoods whose decision making fed into the national gatherings. A set of principles were agreed: Facilitate education on the problem of climate change, Facilitate practical skills training, Demonstrate practical examples of sustainable living in the form of camp infrastructure, facilitate opportunities for non-violent direct action and protest.



We can draw on the experience gained from the climate camps which demonstrated that any person can join and contribute to a social movement equitably. It should function with a minimum but overt hierarchy that is collectively selected. The DIY approach used non-hierarchical consensus decision making and group facilitation. These methods were effective and could be used in practical rural skills training camps. The squatting of sites caused the camps to be in confrontation with the police. This led to their suppression. It is better to have a legitimate camping site and common cause for being there.

Climate and Community's Initial Operations

We set up a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) as a legal framework within which to operate in 2017. This model can be copied by anyone or they can join us and we can extend it. We will do what we can to help and co-operate. If you would like to help please contact us.

There are three initial areas for manifesting practical events:-

- Litter picking.
- Rural skills training.
- Personal Development.

Litter Picking and the Taclu Project



In Welsh Taclu means 'to put in order', so it is the process of tidying up. The idea is to build a profile while running litter picking events locally in South Wales using a portable litter picker's hub. In Wales we are setting out to cover a wide area of coastal and inland sites. This needs to be adapted to a local groups own conditions. Litter picking addresses a real problem that is a concern to many and is uncontentious. It is a low budget entry point and can be made self funding through provision of café facilities, selling merchandise and asking for donations. It gives opportunities to work with community councils, other community groups, concerned politicians and local residents.

The aim is to make connections and friends with all levels of society. Invite them in to talk, and do something practical together. From this we will recruit people who are interested in getting involved further with the project. People volunteer their time for different reasons; they may be lonely and would like to socialise and make friends, or they are interested in learning new skills and

maybe they wish to take part in causes bigger than themselves. The Taclu project offers opportunities for all three.

Practical Kit and Operational Plan

The Taclu project deploys a litter picker's support hub. The charity chooses locations, promotes the events through social media and local community networks. It needs to operate all year round and through all weathers.

The hub provides responsible organisers with communications, shelter/café, toilet, road signage support, craft area and transport. In addition the hub equipment will include accommodation for one or two persons for extended site or area stay where it takes more than a day to pick. We have one 9x9' shelter, one 12'x12' shelter, one 14'x14' dining shelter, a garden trolley and the land rover with a secure tool box and trailer.

We have devised wood burning heating/cooking equipment for the 9'x9' and 12'x12' shelters. We have primus stoves for hot drink making, which operates under the shelter as a sitting/cafe area. We also have craft area where screen printing equipment can be used by litter pickers to print their own 'T-shirts and patches. The charity got underway with the litter picking in spring 2018 and intends to operate this as a regular event.

We are looking at acquiring a net book and a wifi hub so that we can operate administrative functions and internet management in the field for extended operations. It is an advantage to be able to create and upload blog posts and event information.



Of course it is possible to do litter picking without the support equipment from car based transport by the day and that can be a starting point. The reason for the elaboration is to create a reason for obtaining the equipment and developing the skills to facilitate numbers of people in the field all year and in all weather for extended periods. This is a step on the way to rural skills training and a portable school which is itself a step to an alternative, environmentally friendly way of life.

Finance

This type of project attracts some funding support. We have already been granted small funds from Comic Relief money to assist us with the initial set up of the Taclu project.

Target Locations and Planned Events

The criterion for targeted locations and planned events are: areas targeted for maximum public benefit against resources expended, operate in areas where community links exist and where there is demonstrable social and economic need. In Wales Swansea and the Valleys need to be prioritised as they are post industrial towns and cities suffering with outstanding need. We have already looked at a number of locations in the Valleys and identified several beaches which need attention.

Rural Skills Training Hub



Practical skills training has great benefit to any person, their community and the wider environment. We empower ourselves by learning and teaching practical skills. With these skills we create working examples of sustainable living and livelihoods as a direct demonstration of what can be done.

The aim of this project is to use our existing equipment to create a portable training hub which can be set up anywhere for however long it is needed. Some equipment will be shared with the litter picker's hub. We have much experience in rural skills training: hedge laying, coppice and standard woodland, coppice crafts and basket making. We also have the tools and equipment for teaching groups. These skill areas are prioritised as sustainable skills which are a foundation for sustainable livelihoods and livings. We intend to build delivery of more skills courses following this relating to regenerative agricultural methods to grow food and materials.



There are two parts:

Part One: Working with community council wards who are interested in managing their public spaces using local resources, skilled labour from the community and the omission and reduction of fossil fuels. In February 2018 we began working with Bishopston Community Council. We delivered hedge-laying workshops which used local hazel in the council's woodland for the stakes and etherings. We also identified Copley wood as a prime site to rejuvenate as a community coppice to provide materials for the local community. We will consult the community with a draft plan in late summer 2018. We also have dates for hedge-laying in Bishopston in October 2018. <https://climateandcommunity.org.uk/>

Part Two: Working with Community Councils, local conservation organisations and community groups to facilitate and organise practical conservation camps on public land. Linked to a portable skills school working in the Gower and the Welsh valleys. This is inspired by the original Civilian Conservation Corps, one of the most popular and successful New Deal projects and still referred to as a period of new environmentalism in the US. From 1933-42 3 million enrollees signed up to living in rural camps and carrying out emergency conservation work.

Targeted Areas and Planned Events

See the climate and community site and social media for details.

Practical Kit

In order to deliver these training events we are upgrading and sorting out our field accommodation. Following our reconnaissance in Sept 2017 it became clear that our current arrangements were not up to providing working accommodation in mid winter. It needed heating and hot water running on wood. We kitted out the land rover tent with an insulated floor, interior lining and wood burner. It was tested in February 2018 when we delivered the Bishopston hedge-laying courses. This set up relies on gaining permission by land owners to erect and stay in the shelter on or close by the land you are working on. In Bishopston this was offered to us by a community councillor Sue Dunce.



This set up has given us the first component of a field deployable school; providing accommodation in comfort for 1 instructor or 2 for short periods. If

an instructor is going to spend more than a week in the field in winter they need accommodation that is dry and warm with facilities for cooking, ablution, minor laundry and clothes drying. This equipment fits on a Land Rover with spare load capacity for some tool carriage. More extensive equipment can be accommodated in a trailer. The school only requires suitable flat ground and access to potable water within a reasonable distance. A metered standpipe and Mod water carriers would also suffice to bring water in. Such a facility could be deployed in a wide range of locations. If predominantly ex Mod shelters were used it could be erected on hard standing.

From this initial start we will build up all season, all weather training and accommodation facilities of a similar standard for 8 then 16 trainees. We will be able to build, store and maintain this equipment in our workshop in Cilgerran. We also have garage services there to maintain and repair motor transport and trailers.

For summer field use a light weight version can be used. Attendees will have to bring their own small tents.

Finance

The charity has obtained £350 from the Chestnut Fund to pay for tools to assist in rural skills conservation work in the community. The hedge laying courses charge fees for students, full price and concessionary rate. The charity will also be open to take on paid work. Some grant opportunities exist for funding as well as fundraising from the local community.



Personal Development Workshops

Our own experience informed by best practice in the field has helped us to understand the importance of assertiveness training and dealing with gender stereotypes and prejudice. Educating and enabling a person to be more open, honest and able to work together cooperatively. Also to be more successful in relationships this is a desirable personal benefit.



We believe that there is an opportunity predominantly among the younger people to help them see their own context and difficulties as illuminated by transactional analysis. We propose developing educational workshop programs based on the works of Eric Berne, Claude Steiner, Anne Dickson and others. We believe there is significant social benefit to be attained by promoting knowledge of social game playing as described by Berne, life scripting as described by Steiner and gender equanimity and assertiveness from Dickson.

We would also seek educational opportunities for those interested in taking part in unconstrained dialectic. To enable candidates to learn and explore truths through collective reasoning.

The practical aim of this work is to build a group who understand themselves and the environmental issues enough to work together, cooperate and manifest practical action on climate change.

Practical Kit

Minimal kit needed for assertiveness training. Developing a series of workshops over number of weeks would be necessary. LOOC (Learning Out Of Context) workshops will need further resources: wardrobe, make up, wigs and suitable venues with facilities.

Finance

We have identified some funds that may help us develop this. Any support or assistance is welcome.

Targeted Areas and Planned Events

We need to look for opportunities while running the litter pickers hub and rural skills events to recruit those interested in participating in the personal

development training. We need the goodwill from the other projects to build good relations and trust for it to work.

Wider Social Movement

We believe it will take Climate and Community and any other group wishing to undertake similar activities years to build an authentic social movement. One that is capable of taking on a farm with all the necessary practical and personal skills. Of course we cannot predict the degree of awareness of the wider population. But what we are really looking for are the first pioneers who are prepared to do things differently!

Can You Help

If you can help in any way please contact us through

climateandcommunity.org

Email: climateandcommunity@btinternet.com

Facebook facebook.com/climate222