

Full Council

Report Title:	Green Living Plan Actions – Update (November 2023)
Meeting Date:	14 November 2023
Contact Officer:	Becky Reid, Environmental Project Officer

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 To update the Council on action taken against Thame’s Green Living Plan.

2. Background

2.1 On Tuesday 14 July 2020, Thame Town Council (TTC) formally adopted our Green Living Plan (GLP), a 10-year plan for a cleaner, greener plan. In October 2020, the final Green Living Plan was published, filling gaps that the Thame Neighbourhood Plan can’t fully cover. The plan was written by the RSA Thame group, who from the time of publication changed their name to ‘Thame Green Living’ (TGL) to better represent the work that they had done in the creation of the plan, as well as the work that they have gone on to do to support its implementation over the past 3 years.

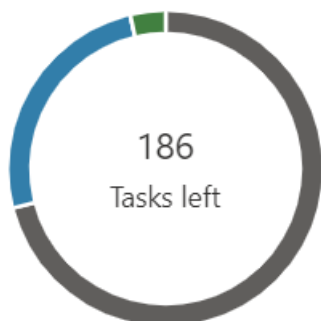
2.2 Since the time of TTC’s adoption of the GLP, this group of volunteers has worked tirelessly to both engage with Thame Town Council to encourage and support the implementation of the plan, as well as to deliver elements of the work themselves. As a result of their effort, we have seen many projects delivered – some by Thame Green Living alone, and some through them working in partnership with other local organisations. Just some of these include:

- Delivery of 2 Electric Vehicle events in the town centre.
- Implementation of a change in practice to how we mow our verges – to support an increase in biodiversity.
- Tree planting projects supported by local businesses.
- A project (currently in progress) to open up ‘Rycote Meadow’, that will form an extension to the Cuttlebrook Nature reserve, located off Oxford Road.
- Supporting the implementation of Thame Solar Streets, leading to 20 solar panel installations on private properties within the town.
- Supporting local company 3Bhire to set up and deliver an EV Car Hire scheme.
- Setting up Phoenix Energy Community in partnership with other local organisations.
- Delivered a highly successful ‘Green Living Home and Community Energy Expo’.
- Supported the establishment of Cosy Thame.
- Developed and delivered the Thame Outer and Thame Inner Circuits – 2 new walking routes for Thame.

2.3 In November 2022, Thame Town Council created an ‘Environmental Project Officer (EPO) role, with responsibility to coordinate the implementation of the Green Living Plan, support Thame Town Council on its own sustainability journey, and work to engage all environmental groups through the delivery of an Environmental Forum. This report will start to regularly update Council specifically on progress made against the Green Living Plan.

3. Current Status

- 3.1 The Thame Green Living Plan has a total of 193 actions. These range from small actions that individuals can take, to larger more substantial pieces of work that involve significant infrastructure change – and will therefore require proper consultation, finance, and support from external stakeholders to implement.
- 3.2 Thanks largely to the work already done by Thame Green Living, some of these actions have already been completed, including:
- delivery of EV Car Hire club: unfortunately, this has since needed to stop due to the provider withdrawing, but work is being done to secure a replacement company to get involved.
 - delivery of 2 EV days in the town centre to raise awareness and share information about electric vehicles.
 - permanent opening up of the pathway through the ‘Triangle’ – an area of land near the Skate Park, this allows people to safely cross Tythrop way to get to Ham Wood and beyond.
 - development of the Thame Outer Circuit walking route, with a printed leaflet that is proving to be extremely popular.
- 3.3 Other actions are also in progress, however, as you can see below there are many that have yet to properly start.



Not started	137
In progress	49
Late	0
Completed	7

- 3.4 The GLP is written in 5 main sections. These are biodiversity (including active travel – walking & cycling), water, air, energy and waste. A mapping project against the plan undertaken this year, identified that many of the actions could be grouped together into different delivery methods in order to progress them in the most efficient way possible. Work has since been taken to develop these methods – in some cases this has required establishing new groups of people to lead on particular areas; in others it has been about working to include the actions into the remits of already existing groups; some involve the need for new infrastructure.
- 3.5 The table on the following page details each of the delivery methods that are currently being explored. Some have already started, others will follow. It also outlines the number of GLP actions that should be achieved through that delivery method and details the current status.

Area of work	Delivery method	GLP actions	Current status
Air Quality	Small team working to attract funds to initially deliver a 3-year project to promote improvement in Air Quality, working in partnership with local schools	8 total, 1 in progress.	Proposal to use Air Quality Section 106 funds allocated to Thame to support this work. Waiting for SODC to confirm this is possible before developing project further.
Biodiversity Group	The GLP actions are generally being led by either Thame Green Living, TTC, or Thame Trees. Much of the work is partnership between all. Other organisations are also playing key roles.	24 total, 6 in progress, 2 complete.	Various planting/wilding projects including verges, Rycote Meadow, Table Top, The Triangle, QEC play area, and more.
Business	'Sustainability Spark' – partnership project with 21 st Century Thame. Being delivered to engage local businesses in green initiatives around the town. Already secured over £11k of funding from businesses and SODC Councillor funding, towards projects, along with manpower to deliver elements of these. The work being delivered has also engaged over 100 members of the community who are supporting delivery of different elements of the work.	10 total, 2 in progress	Continuing to build on this work, expanding to new businesses and developing different ways of engaging them and attracting further funding to expand the work.
Communications	Development of TGL website into partner website with TTC to allow us to share education and resources to meet GLP actions.	29 total, 3 in progress	Website scope completed; test site being developed ready for launch in 2024.
Community Groups	Work in this area is primarily about supporting Community groups on their own sustainability journey.	3 total, 1 in progress.	Ambition to create a network of support where groups can learn from each other.
Cycling	Several projects around Cycling and improving it. A group will need to be established to develop these. However, this will need to wait until the LCWIP is implemented so that it complements the work done through this.	8 total, 2 in progress	
Energy	Being led by TGL volunteers who are responsible for completing the most actions to date. Support from TTC EPO as required.	36 total, 8 in progress, 5 complete	Current focus on developing work of Phoenix Energy Community
Landowners and Farmers	Different approaches being made through TGL and through the work of Thame COP	6 total, 1 in progress.	TGL leading on work to explore the potential of a Thame Biodiversity Band; Thame COP developing a book to celebrate

			local landowners and to further connections with them.
Mayoral Projects	Proposals within the GLP for ways that the status of the Mayor could be used to encourage more sustainable behaviour.	2 total.	Yet to start.
Travel Plan Working Group	Leading on Active Travel through this group. Waiting for OCC to start development of Thame's Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). Once this is in place we will have a plan that meets many of the GLP objections written into a list that OCC has ownership of, and that all layers of council are able to work towards – joined up approach.	33 actions, 17 in progress.	Gathering relevant information and lining up crucial stakeholders to support the LCWIP work.
TTC led	Projects that need to be developed within TTC – usually using officer time – to help us on our own sustainability journey, or to engage with other levels of Council.	22 total, 6 in progress.	Projects in progress include implementation of Public Art wayfinding signage; supporting local conservation bodies; engaging schools; TNP2 work; training for our Maintenance team to support biodiversity.
Waste	A new team needs to be established. Local business keen to support this and looking at a launch event for it in 2024.	12 total, 1 in progress	Funding bid submitted to SODC business team for support to achieve

4. Other Environmental Project Officer Actions

4.1 As well as the working being undertaken against the Green Living Plan, the EPO is also involved in the following action:

- Delivery of a bi-monthly Environmental Forum that provides a forum for all groups involved in environmental activities to come together to learn from each other and share updates. This is currently going through a review to understand how to develop it.
- Working to support these groups individually if asked – this includes through supporting funding applications, providing links and introductions to each other, to relevant staff and councillors within TTC and to other layers of council.

5. Action required:

- i) ***To note the report.***
- ii) ***For Councillors to read the Green Living Plan if they have not already – copies available to lend if you would rather read a paper copy.***
- iii) ***For anyone interested in playing a role in any of the plan's delivery, to liaise with the EPO to ensure a coordinated approach.***