

# Warwickshire **Climate Change Partnership**

09 January 2009

## **Submission Form for Case Studies**

### **Community groups**

**Name of Group: Action 21**

**Date: 13/07/2008**

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Please use as much space in the boxes as you need

### **1 Groups activity type**

Action 21 promotes sustainable living through practical projects with local people. The projects generally involve volunteers

### **2 Aims and Objectives**

The groups work is split into four themed areas, which include..

Food  
Transport  
Energy  
Waste  
Education

The theme groups are a forum for dealing with sustainability issues and our goals include sustainable energy use, recycling, composting, locally grown food, health, sustainable transport, reduced consumption and waste.

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### **3 Why was the group initially formed?**

Action 21 has been a limited company for around seven years; however prior to this it was formed in conjunction with Agenda 21 in the 1990s.

Action 21 was originally a Local Agenda 21 group, which encouraged working with local communities, and thus was a council programme, not a separate legal entity.

Eventually local authorities stopped specific Agenda 21 programmes leaving the citizens engaged with the programme to move in a number of directions. Some of those citizens' formed pressure groups; others formed independent environmental groups. Similarly in Warwick district, funding for sustainability was cut back and Action 21 was encouraged to become an independent not for profit organisation.

As an independent organisation it was still supported by Warwick District Council, receiving core grant funding. Action 21 was able to employ the sustainability officer who had been seconded to the project when agenda21 and took on the reuse shop at Princes Drive Household waste and recycling centre to provide a valuable source of income.

Action 21 now has two full time employees and is funded by revenue from the recycle warehouse and in-kind support from Warwick District Council.

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### **4 Who are your members?**

The group has around 300 members of which 50/60 are active. Members are usually local people interested in environmental issues.

### **5 Member, local authority and Public Communication**

Action 21 uses a number of methods to communicate with its members and others including

- Emails – regularly distributed emails to whole membership group
- Quarterly newsletter- distributed to members and other interested parties
- Web Site – contains up-to-date information of the group's activities
- Shop notices
- Key press releases
- Member of Warwickshire Climate Change Partnership
- Articles in Warwickshire Climate Change Community Newsletter
- Courier Colum by Mat Cox

### **6 Group's Achievements**

The group has had a long history and thus has had many notable achievements, below are just a few..

- Action21 run a reuse shop at Princes Drive recycling area
- Preserving Dobson Lane allotment site
- Effective partnership working
- Schools' sustainability event 200\_ and beyond
- Peace Festival
- Veg purchase food coop in Lillington

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### **7 Any issues/problems**

- The group receives some funding through Warwick District Council this can lead to issues as district expectations can sometimes be different to those of the Action 21 agenda.
- Time can be a major issue, as time is required to over-see the running of shop and organisation of events and projects.
- Continuity of funding can sometimes be an issue
- Volunteer management is key it is important to manage volunteer expectations.

### **8 How could local authorities encourage the formation of community groups/assist community groups**

To encourage the formation of local community groups it is important that local authorities create focussed projects, this gives individuals direction and motivation to achieve a goal.

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### **9 Any other useful information?**

Sources of other useful information and links are given below.

- Successful volunteer organisations have to have a strong sense of purpose/mission
- It is important to focus around some type of motivating issue