



# **From Sooke Town Hall to Action Teams: a proceedings report**

*Proceedings of the  
Community Action Workshop*

*Sooke, BC*

*September 29, 2019*

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## SUMMARY

On September 29, 2019, the Transition Sooke Climate Emergency Action Group sponsored a full day workshop aimed at creating an action plan to respond to multiple elements of the climate emergency. Forty Sooke businesses endorsed the event and approximately 75 people attended. The format of the workshop included a plenary in the morning and focussed discussions in the afternoon at 13 tables set aside to explore the following topics:

Food Security / Local Agriculture	Emergency Disaster Planning
Rainwater Harvesting	Green Energy
Forest and Ocean/Habitat & Species Protection	Climate Angst and Listening to Youth
Divestment from Fossil Fuels	Green Lifestyle
Zero Waste	Direct Action / Non-Violent Resistance
New Economic Model	Water Conservation
Transportation	

The topics arose from deliberations at a Sooke Green New Deal town hall that was held in June 2019.

Following a morning plenary that consisted of two keynote speakers and thirteen short presentations about the topics to be discussed in the afternoon, participants chose tables at which to share ideas and build action plans. Tables were tasked with articulating up to three Actions their team could take. Some participants stayed the entire afternoon at one table; other participants moved from table to table. Most tables came up with at least one Action.

Over the course of the day, several overarching themes were raised, in plenary sessions and at multiple table conversations. These are listed in the table below:

Theme	Raised at Tables....
Advocacy with other bodies and multiple government jurisdictions (Transit, BC, MOTI Canada, CRD and Sooke Council)  Most tables articulated a developed advocacy plan, which could cohere into a strong unified advocacy strategy for Transition Sooke.	Forest and Ocean, New Economic Model, Rainwater Harvesting, Transportation, Green Lifestyle; Green Energy, Water Conservation; Zero Waste
Boost Local Employment	New Economic Model; Transportation; Food Security and Local Agriculture; Zero Waste
Edible landscaping on municipal and private land	Food Security and Local Agriculture, Green Lifestyle
Educating the public/ raising the local media profile  Education topics raised were varied but tended to either serve the objective of attitude change or the objective of system change.	Food Security and Local Agriculture; New Economic Model; Rainwater Harvesting; Transportation; Green Lifestyle; Water Conservation; Green Energy

Theme	Raised at Tables....
Engaging youth  Many of the youth engagement initiatives suggested were artistic in nature.	Food Security and Local Agriculture, Forest and Ocean, Transportation, Climate Angst and Listening to Youth,
Food Security	Food Security and Local Agriculture; New Economic Model; Zero Waste
Reaching out to and strengthening partnership with T'Sou-ke First Nation	Food Security and local Agriculture, Forests and Oceans
Use Theatre, Art and Humour to connect with people on climate change issues	Zero Waste, Transportation, Climate Angst and Listening to Youth,
Contribute to Official Community Plan and Sooke Municipal Bylaws	New Economic Model, Rainwater Harvesting, Transportation, Food Security and Local Agriculture

Details outlining possible ways these overarching themes may be addressed are contained within the many Action Plans created by participants at the topic tables. The fact that many topic tables are concerned with these overarching themes suggests there is room for extensive collaboration in many areas.

These proceedings were compiled by Susan Belford.

## **THE ACTION PLANS**

This report primarily reports the table discussions and action plans arising from them. This report does not mediate or interpret comments, rather recording them as written in order to ensure that all comments are kept in the record at this time, and that workable plans can be created around the ideas contained in the comments, without the bias of a single reporter.

Most tables did create action plans; however even those tables that were not able to create action plans were able to determine directions for further study and effort. A list of the 26 Actions follows:

### *Food Security and Local Agriculture*

1. Pilot Community Kitchen Project

### *Rainwater Harvesting*

2. Public Workshop on Rainwater Harvesting (already planned) Ken Nentwig- Rainwater Harvesting Nov.2, 1-4 pm Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Sooke
3. Connect with CRD to create a Regional District Cistern Rebate program for residential properties, schools and businesses installing rainwater harvesting systems (similar to Nanaimo RD)- include the bulk buying of cisterns (Council will support discounting bulk purchase of cisterns)
4. Pilot Rainwater Harvesting Project. Build on the energy of the Nov.2 presentation to showcase best practices, research funding options, pursue funding and bulk-buy cisterns.

### *Forest and Oceans*

5. Hold Community Forums using local speakers on local issues. Develop a Roundtable concerning actions and ecosystem effects
6. Photo Essay Display at EMCS and Forum

### *Zero Waste*

7. Creating Creativity Kits of re-usable waste materials (Amanda)
8. Connecting with Zero Waste stores in Victoria with a view to bringing products to Sooke and eventually fund a Zero Waste store in Sooke
9. Explore bulk ordering possibilities (Wendy)

### *New Economic Model*

10. Set up (broaden existing?) local equipment loaning and sharing
11. Establish group to oversee Official Community Plan (OCP) development to better develop the local economy including allowing: Co-op Retail Hub; Light Industrial; More retail space (85%); Genuinely affordable housing
12. Study group to explore different economic systems

### *Transportation*

13. Advocacy campaign with Transit, Sooke and MOTI (details in Transportation section)
14. Create Car Pooling Website
15. Address the need for attitude change by
  - Connecting with youth to involve them in the design and building of pathways, safe routes to school, the building of original Sooke bus shelters, etc.
  - Develop an occasional presence at grocery stores, to inform and survey people with single questions at the table and online. Questions such as “How often does the bus need to go for you to be able to use it?” “What would get you out of your car?”

### *Green Energy*

16. Educate, support and advise people about how to retrofit their homes by pulling together information on resources and funding support that is currently available for homeowners and publicizing this information.

### *Green Lifestyle*

17. Rewild for bio-diversity by planting edible plants in gardens
18. Advocate with Sooke to changes rules and regs re clotheslines, chickens, and other choices with [environmental benefits](#) etc.
19. A group will form to continue sharing ideas, meeting TBA

### *Climate Angst/ Listening to Youth*

20. Connect with Teachers and Youth at EMCS. See Climate Angst and Listening to Youth section for details
21. Pilot a Mural Project depicting a climate emergency theme. See Climate Angst and Listening to Youth section for details.
22. Hold a series of Healing Circle sessions. See Climate Angst and Listening to Youth section for details

### *Direct Action*

23. Organize a local Rise and Resist chapter
24. Hold a workshop to respond to issues raised at the Sooke Town Hall to Action Teams event
25. Build a “first responder group” to offenses against the environment

### *Water Conservation*

26. Create a 5-minute presentation to Council outlining a workable water conservation plan involving simple, positive water conservation measures Council could enact. See details Water Conservation section.

## **TABLE REPORTS**

The following sections are intended to provide a detailed account of table conversations, based on notes taken recording important considerations raised and actions decided. In some cases, these notes have been added to by the table facilitator's recollections.

## Food Security and Local Agriculture

*Facilitator and resource person: Mary Alice Johnson*

Table members were informed that while Sooke used to export food, there are now many challenges to finding land to farm. Also, it was noted that agriculture can be a large source of greenhouse gases (ghg), with red meat and dairy generating 14% of ghg and food waste generating 8% of ghg.

It was reported that historically, home gardens dramatically increased food production (i.e. WW2 victory gardens). Recently, the UN declared that small farms (2-5 acres) are the future of agriculture. Sooke is almost exclusively small farms: our food security is dependent on small farms. But the regulatory context favours large farms.

It was noted that discussions about food security dovetails with re-evaluating our current economic model. Early in discussions, the table discussed land use and land taxation, regulatory practices, food transportation, food land trusts, and community practices such as food sharing (apples), seed conservation and biodiversity, farmer return on investment, public education regarding food quality and local production, creation of a community food hub, and local opportunities for growing such as Woodside Farm.

Discussion coalesced around several themes:

- Advocacy
  - With politicians of all jurisdictions regarding how they can support local agriculture and small farms and food processing facilities.
  - With Sooke Council:
    - How Council can support local agriculture and small farm and food processing businesses?
      - Use community owned land for food production.
      - In addition, encourage Council to purchase land for community farms.
      - Edible landscaping of municipal land
      - The purchase of land to benefit of T`Sou-ke First Nation and Sooke community
      - Discover degree of support for the development of farmland trusts
      - Put a cap on the number of fast food outlets and drive-throughs (Sinclair will draft a proposal to take to council to consider with Transition Sooke support)
- Connect with T`Sou-ke First Nation regarding food security and agriculture
- Community Gardens
  - Take over underused parks for community gardens?
  - Build larger community gardens with bigger plots including large shared plots for crops like potatoes, quinoa, dry beans...
- Individual Food Gardens
  - Gardening “master classes” teach homeowners how to grow food more/better
  - Promote home garden food production
  - Match unused garden space in people’s yards with people wanting to grow food

- Educate the public
  - Sea Parc ongoing education (1:30-2:30) is a good opportunity
  - Bring experts for public presentations (Kwantlen, Lobrunner, Haliburton Community Farm, T'Souke Nation, Sooke Farmland Trust, Transition Sooke, Sooke Food CJI, Camosun/ Uvic/ CRF Fair)
  - Educate people to choose food that reduces impact of climate change and to buy ``less than perfect`` food.
  - Promote local food with farm tours
  - Speakers series, pot-lucks, more videos on food production and awareness
  - About wild harvesting (Kevin Trim/Sinclair)
  - Update market/farm list
  - How much does the Sooke resident pay for local food?
- Pilot
  - Community kitchen project
- Resources
  - Habitat Acquisition Trust, Community Composting Centre
- Study Group
  - Sinclair, Mary, Patrick, Sheila Stoner, Tony, Jeff
- Support for small local farms
  - Farmer succession
  - Permanent location for farmers' market
  - Land acquisition
- Woodside Farm
  - T`Sou-ke First Nation, CRD Parkland, community involvement. Livestock(?)
  - Bring together groups to study costs and regulations requirements
  - Talk to real estate agent about covenants- Sheila Stoner
  - Talk with administration about partnerships
- Youth
  - How to engage? Support for educators and local expertise

### **Food Security and Local Agriculture Team Actions**

The table facilitator noted that while a pilot community kitchen project was discussed in the group, a great deal more time was spent discussing the purchase or acquisition of land to be made available to people who wanted to farm in a community farm format. While no Actions were articulated at this table, it is likely that the potential for action exists regarding:

1. Land acquisition for community farming
2. Explore connection with T`Sou-ke First Nation about food and agriculture
3. Advocate for policies which support small farms and small food processing plants.

Contact: TBD

## Rainwater Harvesting

*Facilitators and resource persons: Sue Lidster and Robin Zabloski*

Conversation at this table was very focused on specific actions required to further the collection and use of rainwater for both potability and home greywater functions in the Sooke area. Discussion themes included:

- Advocate with Sooke Council regarding the following by-laws:
  - Rainwater harvesting for potability
  - Plumbing to have rainwater perform grey water functions in house (ie. Flush toilets)
  - Certification of plumbers to plumb Rainwater Harvesting systems
  - Building codes adjusted to allow RAINWATER Harvesting initiatives
  - Creation of grey water systems for residents on septic systems
  - Ameliorate anti-greening of new development through requirements for roofs, parking lots and highways to be either energy capturing, water harvesting, and green (trees, other plants)
  - Reduce taxes for residents who use little of "city water"
- Connect with CRD
  - to create a Regional District Cistern Rebate program for residential properties, schools and businesses installing rainwater harvesting systems (e.g. Nanaimo RD)- include the bulk buying of cisterns (Council will support discounting bulk purchase of cisterns)
- Educate Public
  - CRD rebate program for residential properties, schools and businesses installing rainwater collection systems
- Harvest rainwater from road surfaces and parking lots
  - slope surfaces gently to drain water onto catchment ditches and swales with plants, trees or hedges to absorb water and emit oxygen
  - What types of parking lot and road surfaces can be "greener" and harvest rainwater for trees etc? (permeable pavers, etc)
- Pilot
  - A Sooke project on the use of rainwater in our community (from Ken Netwig's presentation)
  - Research funding options
  - Pursue funds for project
  - Showcase best practices in rainwater harvesting

### Rainwater Harvesting Team Actions

The following actions were planned.

1. Public Workshop on Rainwater Harvesting (already planned)

Ken Nentwig- Rainwater Harvesting  
Nov.2, 1-4 pm Holy Trinity Anglican Church, Sooke

2. Connect with CRD to create a Regional District Cistern Rebate program for residential properties, schools and businesses installing rainwater harvesting systems (similar to Nanaimo RD)- include the bulk buying of cisterns (Council will support discounting bulk purchase of cisterns)
  
3. Pilot Rainwater Harvesting Project  
Build on the energy of the Nov.2 presentation to showcase best practices, research funding options, pursue funding and bulk-buy cisterns.



## Forest and Ocean/Habitat and Species Protection

*Facilitator: Christina Schlattner*

*Resource Person: J Ocean Dennie*

This table's conversation focused first on threats to local forests and oceans, then on different actions that could be taken, within the context of an overall goal of creating/preserving a Community Forest. Specific threats explored include:

- Logging, land speculation, road thru Sooke hills
- Salmon decline (local Sooke actions that could be taken)
- Lack of public awareness
- Declining ocean ecosystem

Participants had a strong desire to inform the public, involve youth and learn more. Themes discussed included:

- Educate the Public
  - Community Gathering/forum(s)
    - About the future of our local forests: this would be non-partisan, have a broad appeal, involve listening, vision, planning
    - Connecting logging, salmon and orca/ocean health
    - Local speakers, local issue focus- leading to a round table
  - Exhibit a photo essay by youth at gathering.
- Pilot Project
  - A T'Sou-ke Nation/Sooke town community managed forest and eco-tourism
- Research
  - Transitioning jobs in logging
  - Find out more about the local economy
- Resources
  - Streamkeepers rehabilitate streams, with DFO (Ayum Creek, Muir Creek)

### Forest and Ocean Team Actions

The following actions were planned in service of the overarching goal of creating/managing a Community Forest

1. Hold Community Forums
  - Local speakers
  - Local issues
  - Roundtable concerning actions and ecosystem effects
2. Photo Essay
  - Display at EMCS and Forum

## Zero Waste

*Facilitator: Wendy O'Connor*

*Resource People: Zero Waste Sooke*

Table participants were told about Zero Waste Sooke's Wednesday meetings at the Sooke Library from 6:30 to 8:30, and their website [zerowastesooke.ca](http://zerowastesooke.ca). Discussion about the following themes included both education about ideas that have been tried and the raising of new ideas.

- Advocacy
  - Sooke Council: (Paul Lounett's 10 step program)
  - General public: using creative arts and surprise humour to engage citizens
- Plastics
  - Best practices of plastic disposal
  - Alternatives to plastic (compostable plastics, deposits on water bottles)
  - Ban more than single use plastic
- Doable steps toward every-day practical household habits
  - Creativity kits—turning plastic debris and other waste into art
  - Having household and friend conversations about step by step change
  - Noting successes through displays of possibilities
- Connect with Victoria Zero Waste Store
  - Amanda will do
- Inform Public/Education
  - Motivating people to change habits- convenience is compelling
  - Finding incentives; plastic as "useful item not disposable"- highly reusable, re-purposable
  - Book club element
  - Media articles (compost fairy is already in action) (AnnC)
  - Materials to reach out to nondigitized persons
- Research
  - Above – best practices for disposal (Ivan ) plastic burning
  - Alternatives to plastics
- Zero Waste Team Can...
  - Collect good up-to-date information
  - Build a regular media presence (newspaper articles, social media) Newspaper to give education for people without internet about sorting recycling, compost, garbage
  - Initiate bulk ordering
  - Use art and a sense of humour (as with Poly Ethyl Styrene) using creative arts to engage citizens; display of replacement items, visual representation. Simple easy to "read" information
  - Book club to make a complex topic more digestible (as part of Zero Waste Sooke)
  - Compost fairy in newspaper (Ann's action item - Carol Mallett)
  - Advocate for and raise funds for a Zero Waste store in Sooke
  - Makes sense for the Zero Waste Team to work with Green Energy team in various ways.
- Community connection-making
  - Such as getting edible compost to pig farmers (people (pig farmers, compost producers register to link pig farmers with composters)

## **Zero Waste Team Actions**

The following actions were put forward:

1. Creating Creativity Kits of re-usable waste materials (Amanda)
2. Connecting with Zero Waste stores in Victoria with a view to bringing products to Sooke and eventually funding a Zero Waste store in Sooke
3. Explore bulk ordering possibilities (Wendy)
4. Workshops will be held at the Sooke Maker Space (Wendy)

Contact: Wendy O'Connor, [wendyoconnor@me.com](mailto:wendyoconnor@me.com)

## New Economic Model

*Facilitator: Alan Dolan*

*Resource People: Susan Nelson and Vivi Curutchet*

The conversation at this table demonstrated how much there is to be learned on this topic. Major themes included:

- Sub-issues:
  - Self-employed businesses
  - Economics and the planet
  - Housing co-ops
  - Worker co-ops
  - Co-operation and sharing
  - Beyond capitalism
  - Resource people/ background
  - Community farming
  - Economics of survival
  - Meeting basic needs
  - Community supported agriculture (CSA)
  - Trade unions
  - Worker sharing
  - Biochar is made from biomass via pyrolysis and among other things can be used as a soil amendment. Biochar Co-ops are in the process of being established in Cortes Island, Sooke, and the Sushwap.
- Challenges
  - Difficult to find people in trades
- Research needed
  - Different economic systems

### New Economic Model Team Actions

1. Set up (broaden existing?) local equipment loaning and sharing (could Zero Waste Sooke do this?)
2. Group to oversee Official Community Plan (OCP) development to allow local economic opportunities including:
  - a. Co-op retail hub for small businesses that cannot often afford retail space rents
  - b. Light Industrial space for Sooke-based businesses; possibly part of the new development
  - c. More retail space (85%)
  - d. Genuinely affordable housing
3. Study group established to explore different economic systems

Contact: Alan Dolan, [alan@alandolan.com](mailto:alan@alandolan.com) and Hester Vair, [hvair@telus.net](mailto:hvair@telus.net)

## Transportation

*Facilitator: Susan Belford*

*Resource Person: Bryan Davis*

This group consisted of five people, who mostly stayed at the table all afternoon. A couple others joined for short periods of time. Several sidebar conversations occurred during the afternoon, which connected with topics at other tables- for example, the idea that Sooke should explore Tidal Energy as a source; that Sooke could embrace local travel by small electric cart such as golf carts. Major themes discussed include:

- Transit
  - Light Rapid Transit (LRT): how to practically create and implement. Use of Galloping Goose? How to accommodate other trail users.
  - Bus lanes – growing, Electric buses - convenience/frequency
  - Increase number of Park and Rides (locations- on the west side, Sun River, Whiffen Spit
  - Promotion of transit is needed.
  - Bus Stop design: have a consistent design that provides shelter as well as seating (could this be a high school shop project?)
- Road Infrastructure
  - Reduce load, use “complete streets” model with bus lanes, cycle lanes and pedestrian walkway;
  - lower speed limits/lights/no highway expansion/
  - Privilege EVs and motor bikes?
- Subdivision design
  - Design to include local grocery
  - "living communities"
  - Pathways and sidewalks required for all new development
  - Reduced street parking
- Electric Vehicle Infrastructure
  - Charging stations - (research?) available types of models - meet needs. Local locations: Sooke, Sooke Rd, West Coast Road.
  - Convenient, "off-grid" (ie. Solar) charging; or charging stations that use other alternative energy (tidal?)
  - City tax rebate for EVs (added to that provided by Feds and Province)
- Carpooling
  - Create an on-line carpooling website for the Sooke area, similar to that in Nelson
  - Transition Sooke has a contact in Nelson
- Commuter/Public Attitude Change
  - Need to encourage people to “get out of their cars”
  - Cost of annual bus pass versus the costs of running a passenger vehicle
  - Incentives through local grocers
  - Shopping incentives; talk to people at grocers; factsheets and advertising to share (pocket news?)
- Boost Local Employment (and reduce need for commuting)
  - Build up Sooke’s business community to increase local employment and reduce commuter traffic

- Other Ideas:
  - Grocery Delivery
  - Connect with Youth and school district (environmental studies class? PAC?)
- Advocacy
  - With BC Transit
    - Organize a cadre of individuals to call regularly asking for improved transit service to and around Sooke-- connect with service groups in the Sooke area. They can call the bus-line (250-382-6161), as well as offices
    - Increase the number of buses, stops, routes, and hours of operation (2 years, 2-3 routes)
    - Improve service by:
      - 15-30 minute service (Sooke is the most under-served community in BC);
      - Dedicated Sooke to Langford service for high volume at rush-hour;
      - 15 minute service to Langford/Colwood)
  - With Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI) (and Premier Horgan our MLA)
    - Sooke citizens should benefit from local collection of provincial gas taxes
  - Advocate with Sooke Council regarding:
    - Increase municipality's share of Transit funding
    - Safe pathways and bike lanes connection to Sooke from surrounding region.
    - Subdivision design to reduce need for auto traffic and privilege human powered transport

### Resources Needed

- For advocacy:
  - network of committed individuals to do calling to Transit and MOTI (need a schedule)
  - Factsheets, demand assessment
  - Printed materials, ink, printer, \$ from council
- For Carpooling
  - Contact information for Nelson carpool.

### Transportation Team Actions

1. Advocacy campaign with Transit, Sooke and MOTI as outlined above
2. Create Car Pooling Website (Mick Rhodes to contact Nelson)
3. Address the need for attitude change by;
  - a. Connecting with youth to involve them in the design and building of pathways, safe routes to school, etc.
  - b. Develop an occasional presence at grocery stores, to inform and survey people with single questions at the table and online. Questions such as "How often does the bus need to go for you to be able to use it?" "What would get you out of your car?"

Contact Susan Belford: [Susan.E.Belford@shaw.ca](mailto:Susan.E.Belford@shaw.ca)

## Emergency/Disaster Response

*Facilitator: Dave Court*

*Resource People: Al Wickheim, Ron Bilinsky*

Following a detailed key-note presentation in the morning on how emergency/disaster pods can be created and what they can do in a neighbourhood, there was little discussion about actions needed. However, many people came by the table to sign up to receive help from Al Wickheim and Ron Bilinsky in creating a pod created in their neighbourhood.

To create a pod, contact the numbers below and set a date for ESS meet with 6 people for 2 1/5 hour to learn the ropes. Choose a pod captain and pod captain. It will be useful to make an inventory of tools (chainsaw? generator?) and skills (first aid?) available in the neighbourhood.

Sooke Emergency Support Services (ESS) meets in the Council Chamber on the 4th Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. No meetings are held in July, August and December. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Contact : Sooke ESS Coordinator Matt Barney, 250 642 5422 [mbarney@sooke.ca](mailto:mbarney@sooke.ca)

Otter Point Emergency

250 642 6211 [jdf@crd.bc.ca](mailto:jdf@crd.bc.ca)

## Divestment from Fossil Fuels

*Facilitator: Susan Clarke*

Divestment from fossil fuel (pensions, institutions/organizations, personal investments) is championed by Jo Phillips and Susan Clarke. We are in the research phase of producing a how-to handbook for South Vancouver Island/Sooke. Anyone who is interested in helping please contact us. We are currently meeting with Divest Victoria and economists. We are planning to talk to the fund managers of the credit unions. As well, we need to get the hard facts from all the banks on where their funds are invested. But most importantly, we need to help create a huge campaign to get Canada Pension Plan to divest from a future of stranded assets to a future of growing green assets.

A hand-out was prepared for table participants and is uploaded to the Transition Sooke website.

This link also provides additional information: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/business/fossil-carbon-investment-1.5316628?fbclid=IwAR0IirKt9PhHksMVZYM2ahRli2rcjBG5S2IAIJgJu2VhYZQZBoEckTyyrv8>

Contact: Susan Clarke, [dolcla@islandnet.com](mailto:dolcla@islandnet.com) and Jo Phillips, [jo.p@shaw.ca](mailto:jo.p@shaw.ca)

## Green Energy

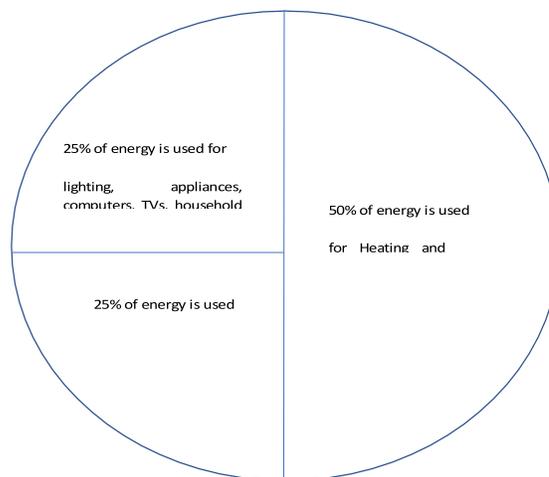
Facilitator: Lily Mah Sen

Resource Person: Andre Moore

This table began its conversation by learning from the experiences of the T'Sou-ke First Nation who have been able to transform their community from their reliance on fossil fuels into a sustainable net zero community. Andrew Moore, an architect and renewable energy resource advisor to the T'Sou-ke Nation, reflected that if they were to do this again, though, they would do it differently. They started in 2007 with a solar project, installing large photovoltaic systems to produce electricity as well as solar hot water systems to heat family homes. While this has been a very successful project, it is very costly. Andrew feels that a better approach would have been to work from the bottom up, starting with basic energy conservation (which involves changing people's habits), and changing to more energy-efficient heating, cooling, and hot water systems (utilizing various government programs for retrofitting), before launching into alternative renewable energy technologies.

For most of us in Sooke, the high cost of going solar or geothermal (or other renewable alternatives) will prevent us from reaching the objective of a "Net Zero Home".

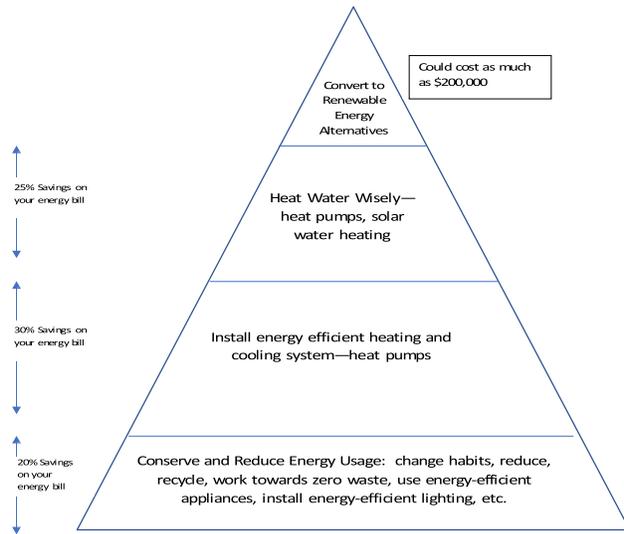
Andrew explained that the bulk of our energy needs in a home are as follows:



### Distribution of energy needs in an average home

It would make a significant difference if we addressed ways to reduce our energy costs at this level before we start considering installing alternative technologies.

## “Pay as You Save” Energy Planning



This model describes the path toward the prime objective of “Net Zero System Homes”. First, achieve 75% savings by reducing energy consumption in one’s home. Conserving and reducing energy use will see a 20% savings on your energy bill; installing efficient heating and cooling systems will save another 30% and retrofitting your home to enable you to heat water wisely will save another 25%. The money saved from your current energy bill will give you a good start towards the costs for converting to alternate energy options such as solar power, power from wind generation, tapping geothermal power, etc.

These precepts led the table’s conversation naturally to three Actions.

### **Green Energy Team Actions (awaiting “Champions”)**

**Objective:** Net Zero System Homes using the Pay as You Save Method. Achieve 75% savings on reduced energy use in current house. Use the monies saved to fund alternate energy options (solar/wind/tidal power/geothermal, etc.)

1. **Retrofit/Conserve:** Educate, support, advise people about how to retrofit their homes by pulling together information on resources and funding support that is currently available for homeowners and publicizing this information
2. **New Builds:** The aim is to advocate that new builds utilize “Smart designs”, in which the home is designed in such a way that builders and subcontractors can implement the steps as you move your home incrementally to a net-zero home. For example, is the home “solar ready”? Advocate with Municipal Council re the STEP Code (is Sooke Council pushing developers to use this code?) Can Council require that all new houses are “solar ready”?

### 3. New Technology:

- Advocate with governments (BC provincial, Canadian Federal) to provide more resources (grants/subsidies), information, etc. on alternative energy options
- Investigate geothermal hot spots in the Sooke Region. Research what it would take to tap into geothermal in our region.
- Explore the use of “old” techniques in home building—straw bales, Grasscrete, rammed earth, bamboo, recycled plastic, mycelium, etc.
- Investigate new building materials
- Research the feasibility of solar

Contact: Lily Mah Sen, [lilymahsen@telus.net](mailto:lilymahsen@telus.net)

## Green Lifestyle

*Facilitator: Yvonne Court*

This table began with a generalized conversation articulating a variety of concerns related to the role of individual change versus social / community changes. It was noted that in some ways, we have “been here before, but the individual style of actions people took in the 1970s are not enough and it is important for us now to start thinking as a group.” Major themes that emerged included needed attitude shifts, personal actions, and shared, or community action.

- Needed Attitude Shifts
  - Discussion about needed attitude shifts surfaced a “disconnect” between evolving environmentally conscious perceptions and the existing structures currently held in place by social controls such as peer pressure, which are often codified into rules and regulations. Examples of this dynamic can be found in the banning of clothes lines, back yard chickens, and other activities which have a positive environmental, or green effect, but are often prevented through municipal bylaws or neighbourhood policies that were created in earlier times.
  - It was noted that attitude shifts can be achieved through informing the public through local media, through articles about green alternatives as well as to advertise meetings. Suggested media in this conversation, Sooke News, Mirror, Pocket News, Facebook
  - One attitude to be promoted is that of voluntary simplicity—that happiness may be found with less, rather than more.
- Personal Actions
  - Take your vacations via drone video and virtual reality rather than in person?
  - Rewild your yard with edible plants (daily leaves are edible, dutch clover for lawn, Oregon grape, salal, etc)
  - Use EVs (issues of charging and distance were raised)
  - Use solar panels (issues of cost and supply were raised. One local source is Veridian Energy Co-op)
  - Use geese as watchdogs for chickens and ducks
- Shared (community) Action
  - There is a Sooke Maker Space held at Edward Milne School for basic mending; making bags and repurposing of items. Check out <https://www.emcsprograms.ca/makerspace>
  - Advocate with Sooke Council to modify and change rules (such as those for chickens) that undermine green values.
  - Advocate with Sooke Council about landscaping with edible plants in public spaces and creating wildlife corridors in and around the municipality.

- Start a Co-op

### **Green Lifestyle Team Actions**

1. Rewild for bio-diversity by planting edible plants in gardens
2. Advocate with Sooke to changes rules and regs re clotheslines, chickens and other choices that support positive environmental outcomes.
3. A group will form to continue sharing ideas, meeting TBA

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## Climate Angst and Listening to Youth

*Facilitator: Jo Phillips*

*Resource person: Marin Clarkston (grade 12 at EMCS)*

Two primary themes were identified by this table:

- Engagement with the community and countering isolation around climate angst by establishing a safe place and an effective way to discuss it
- Connecting and listening to youth.

Some general thoughts on both themes:

- We all feel some fear or angst about what will happen in the future
- If people know the little things they can do to effect change it is not so overwhelming
- We need to consider ways to support and help one another through joint actions.
- We also need a counter-balance to "action" that focuses on our own emotional needs so we don't feel isolated. How we react personally IS important.
- People are not willing to discuss their angst unless they feel that they are in a safe place.
- We need to consider how to move people from being "frozen" to feeling empowered; we humans don't do change well.
- Preaching at people isn't useful but if things do happen ecologically that are caused by climate change it needs to be noted. It is important to consider and develop best practices in how we talk to each other on an issue we are concerned about.

Some general thoughts on connecting with youth

- Most youth are ready to "do" but they don't know what to do.
- Dialogue is needed between youth and adults such as parents and teachers but it needs to be initiated by the youth. They need to own their own participation in climate actions and discussions.
- Climate Emergency needs champions in the school system (parents, teachers)
- Teachers and parents and Transition Sooke can offer tools such as non-violent communication workshops.

## Climate Angst/Listening to Youth Team Actions

### 1. Connect with Youth

- ❖ Two students at the table and Mr. Gale, a teacher who joined the table briefly made the following suggestions:
  - At Edward Milne Community School, Wednesdays from 1:30-2:30 is "Focus Block". These are times of self-directed study or learning where students can explore careers, do coursework, do projects or "pursue their passions for deeper learning in their studies". This could be an opportunity to present ideas for projects for students to engage with.
  - Go to a staff meeting to see if any teachers or staff persons would like to work with us to engage students in a project.
    - Suggested teacher/staff contacts: Mr. Gale, Susan Percival, Emily Lutz.
  - Starting in September of 2020 there will be something called Environmental Immersion for grade 9-10 students.
- ❖ The Mural Project - champion Diego

The Mural Project is a way to engage youth. It would be a climate emergency themed mural. It could evolve into further climate emergency actions if the group, in informal discussions and connection, become inspired by an idea or plan that might arise among them, but that is not the goal. Besides planning and creating a mural, the group could

- Take excursions into nature with easel and paint, learning to listen to and observe nature
  - Use recycled materials or outright litter (there is much in the school environs) in the mural
- Build a dialogue that might lead to more actions

### 2. Healing Circle - champion Moki Tacon

- Moki has facilitated Healing Circles in the past and would facilitate a sharing circle looking at key questions and concerns (fear, lack of clarity, etc.). It helps to have other people witnessing one's own journey.
- Moki envisions starting with 4 sessions primarily for Transition Sooke people. He will plan and initiate the Healing Circles and with the help of other folks who were at the table.

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## **Direct Action (Non-Violent Resistance)**

*Facilitator: Jack Gegenberg*

Like several other tables, the discussion began at this tables by people sharing their most pressing concerns. These included big agriculture grabbing up farmland, development in the Sooke Hills, evictions along Sooke Road, logging, the need to protect the watershed, pipelines, the building of too many roads, and the use of single use plastics. Many of these points connect with conversations at other tables, such as Transportation, Zero Waste, Climate Angst and Green Lifestyle. This wide-ranging discussion led to consideration of what could be done locally to bring the Sooke community into action.

### **Direct Action Team Actions**

1. Organize a local Rise and Resist chapter
2. Hold a workshop to respond to issues raised at the Sooke Town Hall to Action Teams event
3. Build a “first responder group” to offenses against the environment

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## Water Conservation

*Facilitator: Cheryl Travis*

This table explored many ideas for keeping water on (and in) our land and away from our houses by instituting individual and community water conservation measures. One part of the conversation referenced a new development on Sellars Road, and how water conservation strategies could be built into its design, for example by utilizing grey water, and the marrying of esthetic form and water conserving function. This conversation led to the listing of individual actions people can take, such as:

- Keep moisture in the soil below your lawn by cutting the grass less frequently and to a longer height
- Don't let animals overgraze or otherwise "wear out" the grass
- Clear brush from around the house, and clean out gutters and culverts
- Allow berries to grow to help with moisture retention.

### Water Conservation Team Actions

#### 1. Advocate with Council

- Make a 5-minute presentation outlining a strongly documented, workable water conservation plan involving simple, positive water conservation measures Council could enact, including
  - Tax breaks and other incentives for people conserving water through use of permeable pavers and permeable mortars
  - The use by Sooke of permeable road base, and aggregate bicycle paths
  - Allowing "wild" ditches, planted with water absorbing, detoxifying, deer resistant plants

#### 2. Demonstrate

- Composting toilets (currently allowed if not your primary), living roofs, planted ditches, bioswales, sidewalk islands, use of rainwater cisterns, a dugout that collects water, permeable pavers in parking lots and driveways.

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