

Brief 1:

Climate Emergency

How might we support and engage our local neighbourhoods to respond and adapt to the challenges of climate change?

Background

- People have known about the dangers of climate change for more than thirty years but so far not enough has been done to prevent it. However, people demanding urgent action, particularly children and young people, are now making their voices heard.
- Human activity such as burning fossil fuels, destroying forests, and using fertilisers is increasing the level of 'greenhouse gases' in our atmosphere. These gases act like the glass in a greenhouse, trapping the sun's heat and stopping it from leaking out into space. Higher concentrations of greenhouse gases are contributing to the warming of the planet.
- The last four years have been the hottest on record and winter temperatures in the Arctic have risen by three or four degrees Celsius in the last 50 years. This means that weather patterns and ecosystems are changing faster than animal species and human communities can keep up with.
- Rising sea levels are forcing people to migrate, while increases in ocean temperatures are damaging aquatic environments such as coral reefs which host more than a quarter of all marine species. Reefs also provide protection from flooding and sustain fishing and tourism industries. Their disappearance will have drastic consequences for humans and wildlife alike.
- Climate change is also affecting the land around us. More droughts and floods, as a result of climate change, could mean we have less land available for food production and more limited water supplies.
- This may seem like a daunting problem - but we can prevent it from getting much worse through the choices we make as individuals and by changing the behaviour of businesses, neighbourhoods and society as a whole.

of climate change? What is the impact of these changes in your local area as well as in the wider world?

- Find out about what other people are already doing to tackle climate change. What immediate actions can you take to reduce your 'carbon footprint'? How could your school or neighbourhood act to reduce its collective carbon footprint?
- Once you have identified the problems, choose one issue that you will focus on. For example, you could focus on restoring waterways, producing clean energy or collecting local data for farmers to help them better manage their crops. Make sure you focus on an issue that is relevant to your local neighbourhood.
- We know that small actions can lead to big changes, so think about how you can encourage people in your neighbourhood, your school or your local government (for example, the local council, the mayor, or your local MP) to take action on climate change. Identify the people and organisations you could work with to make things better.

Here are some examples of proposals that could meet this design brief:

- a. A set of pollution sensors located on busy roads that help gather and share data about air pollution.
- b. A campaign that encourages the local government to protect and restore local rivers while providing an educational experience for local visitors.
- c. A service that makes it easy and fun for people to walk or cycle for short distances instead of using cars or buses.

How should you approach this brief?

Your design brief is to: **Design a proposal which supports and engages your local neighbourhoods to respond and adapt to the challenges of climate change.**

- Focus on your local neighbourhood. What are some of the problems your neighbourhood is facing because

