

Colgate Parish Council's Climate Action

Plan

Adopted 13th February 2023

Foreword

The news in 2019 was dominated by coverage of the climate and nature crises, and the risks they pose to our lives. More than 240 councils declared a climate and nature emergency in response, committing to cut their greenhouse gas emissions as fast as possible and do what they can to help restore nature.

But since then, our lives have been dominated by the health and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and more recently the cost-of-living crisis. The government has set out its plans to “level up” the country – tackling longstanding geographical inequalities. Councils are on the front line of all these issues.

But the climate and nature crises haven't gone away. Acting on them can't be put on the back burner. Fortunately, many of the measures needed to deal with the climate and nature emergencies will also tackle inequalities and benefit our health. These include:

- Improving our housing so that everyone can afford to keep warm in winter and buildings can withstand rising summer temperatures.
- Increasing good quality cycling and walking infrastructure to improve health and reduce carbon emissions and air pollution.
- Increasing the amount and quality of urban green spaces to restore nature, benefit wellbeing and provide connecting corridors for wildlife.

Due to the sheer scale of the inequalities that exist, inequalities that are at risk of increasing as energy bills and food prices rise, a joined-up approach to tackling these crises is vital. For example:

- People who are most marginalised – both in the UK and across the world – have done the least to cause climate breakdown but are the most affected by its impacts.
- People on lower incomes, and particularly people of colour, suffer most from the lack of green space in our towns and cities. The same communities are also more likely to face fuel poverty and suffer more from air pollution, despite being less likely to own a car.
- Young people's future is most at risk from climate breakdown and the decline of nature, and they've been disproportionately impacted by the economic impact of COVID-19, with high levels of unemployment.

What our council will try to do:

Putting climate and nature at the heart of decision making

Our goal is to ensure that the climate and nature emergencies are a major component in all our decisions so that we can cut emissions over the next 10 years, and that inclusive engagement with citizens ensures that the changes made are sustainable. We will...

1	Check whether all our decisions would help to meet national and local net zero carbon targets, improve air pollution and protect and restore nature.	
2	Identify a councillor as Climate and Nature Champion, who is required to publish an annual public report on progress in meeting climate change and nature ambitions	
3	To provide a budget for the furtherance of sustainable initiatives	
4	Encourage and support where possible Parish led community climate and environmental initiatives	
5	Align all our council statutory and non-statutory plans, policies and guidance with our climate, nature, goals, including areas such as procurement in line with Horsham DC and West Sussex CC goals	
6	Where practical review and improve how we involve citizens in our existing decision-making processes.	

Raising money

Our goal is to have sufficient resources to invest in the changes needed to restore nature and meet climate goals.

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| 7 | Use legal and planning mechanisms such as Section 106 agreements, the Community Infrastructure Levy, and other mechanisms to help fund climate and nature actions where appropriate | |
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Transport

Our goal is to meet air pollution standards and climate goals. We will...

8	Enable a rapid shift to electric vehicles by facilitating the installation of electric vehicle charging points.	
9	Continue to work towards the lowering of speed limits within the Parish	

Energy

Our goal is to enable and support the growth and use of renewable energy, ensure energy is not wasted. We will...

10	Encourage the installation of renewable energy such as solar thermal, PV or heat pumps within the parish by providing information and guidance resources within the council website.	
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Waste

Our goal is to be a sustainable consumption and zero-waste area, where all waste is minimised, recycled or reused as part of a circular economy approach. We will...

11	Aim to send no waste to landfill or incineration.	
12	Promote community sharing and reuse to reduce waste and unnecessary consumption	
13	Provide a recycling facility for items not recycled/collected by the District Council	
14	Ban the use of single-use plastic within council operations	
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Influencing others

Our goal is to encourage and support other entities with their contribution to addressing the climate and nature emergency. We will...

16	Use council memberships of Local Enterprise Partnerships to ensure all their decisions are in line with the rapid growth of the green economy, climate reduction pathways and nature restoration plans. (Applicable in England only.)	
17	Where applicable use influence with others, for example with schools to ensure the buildings are zero-carbon, the environment is central to teaching, and purchasing is green	

Land use and nature

Our goal is to ensure everyone has access to nature in nearby green spaces and to restore nature to help draw down carbon pollution from the atmosphere. We will...

18	Where possible to ensure existing trees are properly protected through planning decisions, in order to store carbon and support nature,	
19	Where applicable protect existing local green spaces, the green belt and locally designated nature sites and ensure public access to local authority owned green spaces,	
20	Where applicable manage council-owned land and road verges to increase biodiversity and draw down carbon pollution, including through reduced pesticide use and increased planting of wildflowers.	
21	Implement any Local Nature Recovery Strategy from Horsham DC and Sussex CC	
