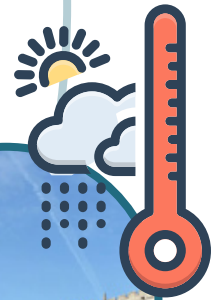




UTTLESFORD CLIMATE CRISIS STRATEGY 2021-2030

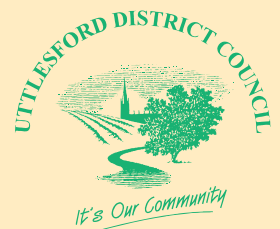


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Foreword

We recognise that climate crisis is a hugely important issue facing not just our residents, but also our environment and the planet. We declared a climate emergency and ecological emergency in autumn 2019 to engage our community and build on the work the Council has undertaken to reduce climate emissions and adapt to a changing climate.

We care deeply about our environment and since the motion at full council we have been working cross party and with representatives from the community to develop a replacement strategy and action plan.

We must take every action possible to prevent local and global changes to the climate before it is too late, we believe that it is everyone's responsibility to do whatever they can to help protect our precious planet for generations to come.

Cllr L Pepper, Portfolio Holder Environment

Climate change is one of the greatest threats facing society, we all have a role to play in addressing the problem.

Cllr John Lodge, Leader Uttlesford District Council

Introduction

Climate events are expected to increase in severity, strength and regularity as carbon emissions continue to rise. The effects include heat stress on our built and natural environment. The intensity and frequency of storms and rainfall, flooding and heatwaves is increasing.

To address this regulatory and statutory targets were set out in the 2008 Climate Change Act to reduce carbon emissions by 80% from 1990 by 2050. In 2015 the UK government joined 195 others from around the world and signed the Paris Agreement. The Agreement legally ratified a commitment to prevent average global temperature increasing by no more than 1.5 °C. In addition to the global agreement, the UK Government amended the Climate Change Act 2008 with a binding target of 'net zero' emissions by 2050.

In 2020 the Government introduced the draft Environment Bill 2020 setting out some of the policy changes that the government is seeking to make to support the UK's climate change objectives. It is expected to be published in late 2021.

The Council declared a Climate Change and Ecology Emergency and committed to achieving net-zero carbon status by 2030 and protecting and enhancing bio-diversity by developing and delivering a new strategy and action plan.

This strategy builds on the work of the Council over the last 15 years and is an opportunity to create a new plan of action with the community to map out our future activities. We have established a cross party working group involving members of the community to develop and shape this new strategy and action plan. We recognise that to be successful we must have a district wide focus and engage all sectors of the community.

The new strategy and action plan will reflect both the national and country strategic picture of the emerging Environment Bill 2020 and Interim Essex Climate Change Strategy as well as the local context of the Local Plan, District Growth Strategy and Corporate Plan. A partnership approach will ensure a collaborative approach to maximise the use of resources and best practice.

The Council needs to prompt an urgent response by the public and it is essential that the communication around the severity of the climate emergency and the action plan to address it is fully engaged the support of residents and businesses.

Uttlesford has the lowest population density of any district or borough in Essex with high levels of car ownership and a restricted extent of public transport, especially in the more rural areas. All these are challenges to achieving sustainable development.

Appendix 1 at the end of the strategy proposes ways for residents, communities, businesses, schools and visitors to reduce their carbon footprint and Help us increase global resilience and reach our target of Net Zero CO2 by 2030.

Climate and Ecological Emergency Motion

In 2019 Uttlesford District Council declared a climate and ecological emergency.

Council resolves:

1. To declare a Climate and Ecological Emergency, acting now to prevent a climate and ecological catastrophe that will greatly impact our children, grandchildren and future generations
2. To commit to achieving net-zero carbon status by 2030 and protecting and enhancing bio-diversity by:
 - delegating the Cabinet Member for Environment and Green Issues to establish an Energy and Climate Change Working Group of Cabinet
 - working collaboratively across the Council and engaging with individuals, community groups, businesses and other partners in the district, including young people who should have a voice to help shape our future
 - lobbying Central Government to urgently provide funding and implement necessary policy changes
 - producing a bold plan of action that is realistic, measurable and deliverable
 - ensuring significant progress has been made to deliver the action plan by April 2023

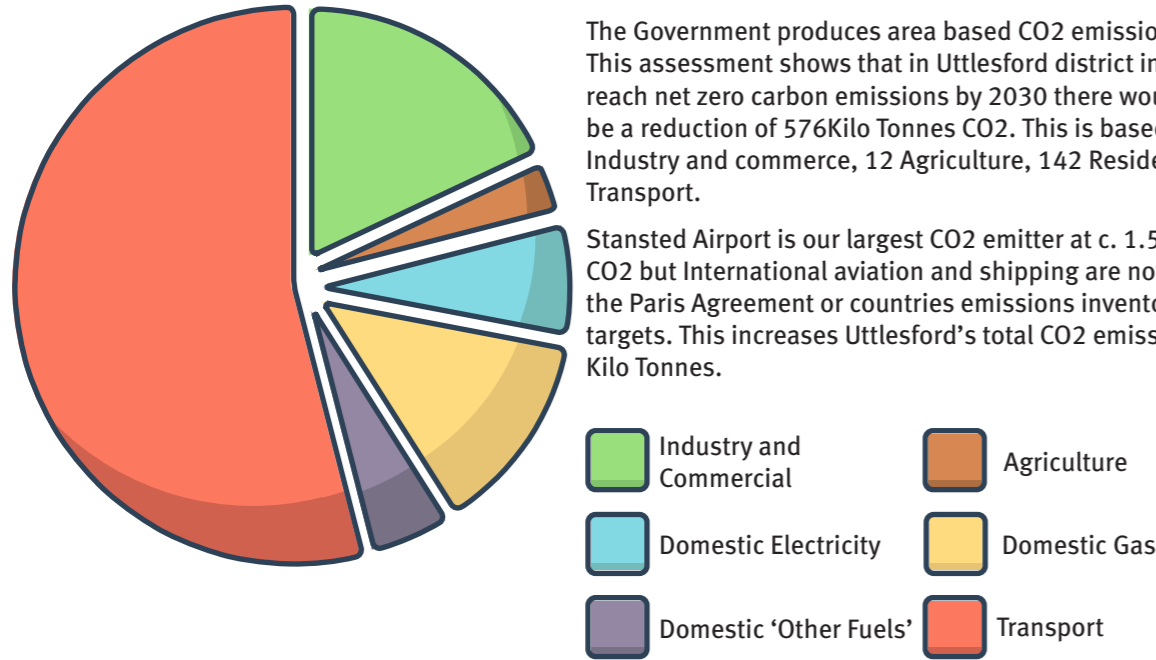
Progress on Reducing Carbon Emissions

Since 2005, domestic and commercial carbon emissions have reduced in the district due to changes to vehicle fuel efficiency, domestic insulation, heating and lighting, energy efficiency improvements to industrial processes and the introduction of renewable energy. The make-up of our Carbon emissions gives us an understanding of where attention needs to be focussed to make the biggest impact.

District Wide CO₂ Emissions

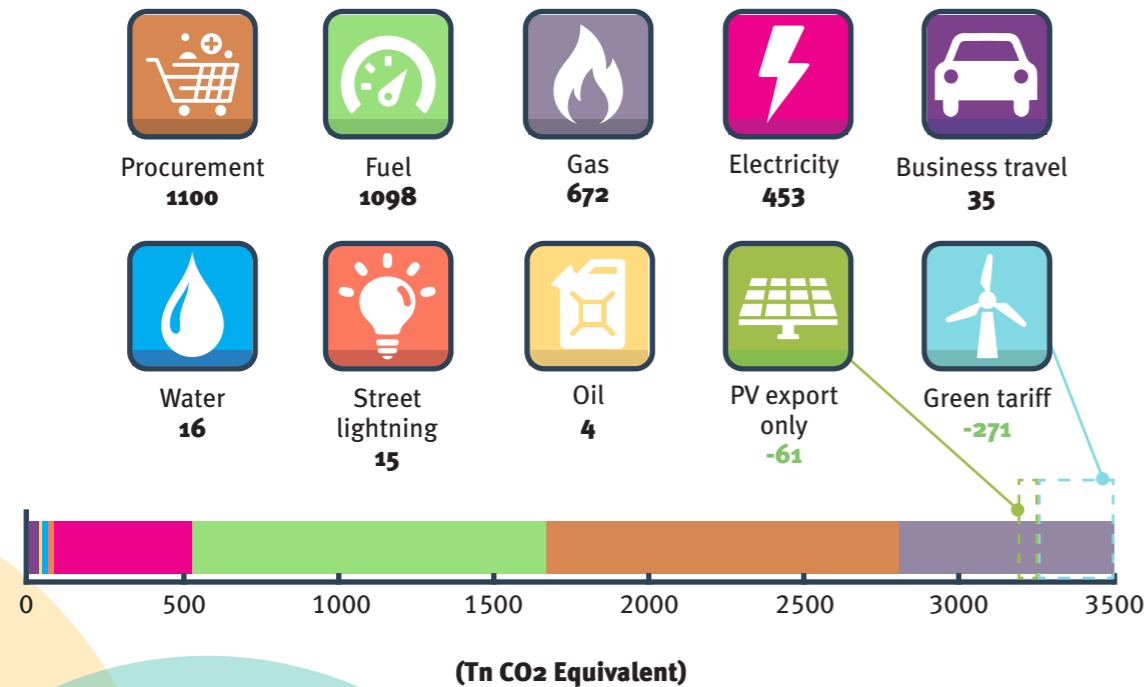
The Government produces area based CO₂ emissions data. This assessment shows that in Uttlesford district in order to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2030 there would need to be a reduction of 576Kilo Tonnes CO₂. This is based on 105 Industry and commerce, 12 Agriculture, 142 Residential and 317 Transport.

Stansted Airport is our largest CO₂ emitter at c. 1.5m tonnes CO₂ but International aviation and shipping are not included in the Paris Agreement or countries emissions inventories or targets. This increases Uttlesford's total CO₂ emissions to 726 Kilo Tonnes.



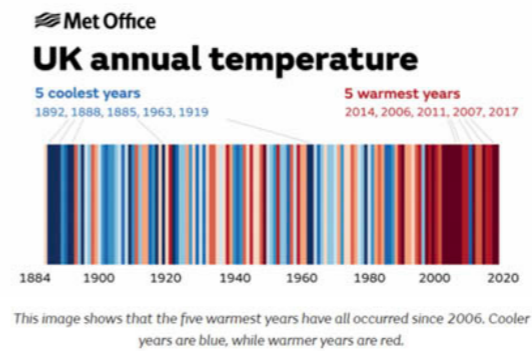
Council CO₂ Emissions

The Council has been monitoring its own direct carbon emissions since 2007 as part of its climate change strategy emission targets. In 2018-19 total emissions stand at 2291 tonnes CO₂, down from 3271 tonnes CO₂ in 2007.



Background

We have seen a rapid global rise in CO₂ levels during the last 100 years. We also know that over the past century there has been a trend towards increasing global average temperatures. Global temperatures are projected to continue rising, which is very likely to cause continued changes in weather patterns, rising sea levels and increased frequency and intensity of extreme weather events. The global temperature changes are reflected in the UK and illustrated in the graph below.



What do these climatic changes look like in Uttlesford district?

It is expected that weather may become more variable which will result in a number of changes. The typical summer will become hotter and drier creating drought conditions with implications for growing crops and pressure on water supplies.



Typical autumn and winter is milder and wetter with an increased frequency and intensity of extreme precipitation events.

Changes to our climate will affect parts of our community and economy in different ways. For example, flooding may force residents and businesses out of their homes and premises or affect highways causing travel disruption.



The rural economy may experience direct local agricultural impacts on food yields or crop choice in our district. Beneficially, hotter summers are expected to increase visitors to the district and revenue from outdoor tourism.

There may also be less obvious indirect effects with detrimental impacts on utilities. Power outages from increased storms could affect businesses, households and public services alike, causing disruption.

Progress on Reducing Carbon Emissions

The Council wants to build on the positive actions within the council and across the district which include installing solar panels on hundreds of properties, insulation measures and boiler replacements.

Key Priorities in Tackling Climate Change

These are some of the priorities the council has identified that can only be addressed with the support of communities, businesses and partners



Travel & transport:
Providing alternatives to the petrol/diesel car



Education:
Knowledge, training and skills for sustainability



Zero carbon council:
Reducing energy use in council buildings, fleet and procurement



Green infrastructure:
Protecting parks, trees, gardens and countryside with climate resilient plants



Sustainable food:
Encouraging local food production and long term security



Development:
Zero carbon buildings

Reducing Emissions (Mitigation)

It is important to reduce carbon emissions from our everyday activities as these are causing the Earth's temperatures to rise and contribute to extreme climate change. The priority areas for Uttlesford are shown here:



Behaviour change:
Making it easy for people to make sustainable choices



Built infrastructure:
Improving the resilience of roads and buildings

Making Changes (Adaptation)

Uttlesford is adjusting to the impacts of climate change to reduce the negative effects and develop any opportunities. We expect summer to be hotter and drier, autumn and winter to be milder and wetter with increased frequency and intensity of extreme precipitation events. These are our priority areas.



Council:
Keeping essential services running



Waste:
Reduce, reuse, recycle



Green economy:
Attracting more sustainable businesses to Uttlesford and helping existing ones save energy and be more sustainable

Water:

Reduce consumption, protect water resources from pollution



Health and wellbeing:
Preventing illness and disease from a changing climate



Tourism:
Preparing hotels and attractions to cope with extreme weather events and adapt to a warmer climate



Community resilience:
Improving drainage and storage

Themes and Priorities

The effects and impacts of climate change cross all aspects of society, economy and environment. To understand the local priorities the Climate Change Working Group identified a number of key themes covering all related aspects of climate change.

Within the themes the group identified a number of priorities that support the delivery of the overall strategy and action plan.

The key themes of the strategy are:

- Resources
- Energy Use
- Planning and Development
- Transport
- Council Assets and Operations
- Natural Environment
- Adapting to Climate Change



Resources

Priorities:

- Protect our natural resources
- Improve air quality
- Waste: Reduce, reuse and recycle
- Water: Reduce consumption, protect water resources from pollution
- Reduce use of single use plastics
- Sustainable food

We must reduce our impact on the world's natural resources, with a focus on fair and sustainable consumption and production and reuse or repurposing where possible. We need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions caused by the production of goods and services and manage carefully the waste we produce. Of local concern is air quality and the need to make improvements particularly in identified areas like the Saffron Walden AQMA.

We need to reduce, re-use, recycle. We will reduce and adapt our current consumption patterns, move away from carbon-intensive one use products such as plastics and activities such as flying and to re-use and upcycle products.

Where carbon emissions cannot be eliminated for businesses and organisations due to unavoidable emissions it can be supported through carbon offsetting or carbon sequestration. This is an area that the Council could provide a role in facilitating between those organisations who want to invest in offsetting measures and those who have verifiable schemes and projects that provide an offsetting opportunity.

The rural nature of Uttlesford District lends itself to the development of new low-carbon income streams for carbon positive rural businesses that can offer surplus carbon credits generated from carbon sequestration (e.g. following tree planting or land use activities) whilst also assisting local firms with unavoidable emissions to achieve net zero.

As a waste collection authority, our role in the reduce, reuse and recycling of materials gives us the opportunity to support consumers and businesses to make better choices about their purchasing and disposal options and this needs to form a core part of our engagement plan. There will be changes to the way that that resources and waste are managed through the Environment Bill.

Energy Conservation



Priorities:

- Increase local renewable energy generation
- Increase the energy efficiency of homes and offices
- Improve energy efficient infrastructure
- Improved broadband in rural areas for homes and businesses

By reducing energy use we can limit the level of carbon emissions in the environment. The burning of fossil fuels for energy releases carbon emissions and other greenhouse gases playing a significant role in climate change. In turn, conserving energy uses less resources, protects the natural environment and reduced emissions result in cleaner air quality.

Heating buildings and hot water currently accounts for nearly 40% of carbon emissions. This makes it the largest source of direct emissions. At least 65% of this heat is supplied by gas, 25% from oil and about 10% from electricity.

To support our district to conserve energy, a sustained engagement programme will be needed with households, landlords and businesses promoting practical ways to reduce energy used and find carbon neutral or reduced carbon alternatives for energy that is consumed.

The green energy sector needs to be supported through engagement with renewable energy installers, energy efficient material suppliers and electrical heating businesses to promote the district as an attractive market for product development and trade.

Some measures will require funding and incentives for home and business owners which will require engagement at a national level to ensure that regulations, powers and subsidy regimes are provided to support the phase out of fossil fuel energy. There will be a need to increase awareness and encourage uptake of emerging technologies, supporting residents and businesses to access opportunities for funding.

Training of new engineers and contractors will be needed to support new technology implementation, including re-training of those currently employed in the building and service industry. There is an opportunity to work with training providers, businesses and further education establishments to increase skills and attract businesses associated with this sector into the district.

The electricity network will need to be upgraded and operated more smartly to serve higher demand. The grid will need to accommodate local micro-generation and electricity storage systems and enable off grid independent generators.

Planning



Priorities:

- Zero carbon buildings
- Reduce energy use in existing buildings by retrofitting energy efficiency measures
- Reduce water consumption in buildings through rainwater harvesting and grey water recycling
- Low energy and low waste construction practices
- New development built with Sustainable Urban Drainage Schemes
- Spatial planning to discourage private car use
- Nature based approach to design to incorporate green infrastructure requirements

Spatial planning in the emerging Local Plan must prioritise walking and cycling and reduce the need for private car journeys. This can be achieved through the connectivity of mixed development uses, focusing on sustainable transport corridors that also encompass biodiversity green corridors and health and wellbeing opportunities.

Making improvements to our existing homes will ensure our current buildings will have better energy and water performance, cutting water and heating demand and therefore carbon. This will also reduce household bills and will support the target to eliminate fuel poverty and end the risk of anyone having to live in a cold home.

With national Government policy once again favourable of stronger carbon neutral and climate resilient standards being set for new developments by individual local planning authorities, it will be important to engage with housing developers as well as making households and businesses across the district aware of what can be expected from modern construction and planning considerations.

We must engage Government on increasing powers and regulations to drive high energy efficiency, water efficiency and climate resilience standards for existing building retrofit and tighten up the enforcement and pace of improvement in the domestic and non-domestic private rented sectors.

Making new and existing homes and buildings energy efficient will play a major role in reducing the district's carbon emissions. The new communities we create or those we improve need to support sustainable living that reduces the need for travel, improves health and protects biodiversity. By 2040 the Council must build over 10,590 new homes, and the locations for these can be found in the new Local Plan.

Transport



Priorities:

- Prioritise walking and cycling
- Improve air quality
- Increase cycle network with separated cycle lanes
- Grow electric vehicle charging network and infrastructure
- Promote accessible rights of way
- Improve digital connectivity to reduce work travel demand

Sustainable transport not only delivers carbon neutrality but has other positive outcomes, including health, well-being and socio-economic benefits for people and for businesses. By its nature, transport is a cross-boundary issue and so how we work with others to organise transport solutions is critical in reducing our carbon emissions.

We know that our transport system is vulnerable to future climate change and at risk from increasing future flood events, and the potential impacts of high temperatures, through melting tarmac, or contorted railway tracks. By ensuring our transport system is climate resilient will make the district accessible and efficient for residents and businesses and visitors.

We need to firstly reduce the amount of vehicles on the roads, with more people using buses, walking and cycling instead of private cars. This would positively impact peoples' health due to reduced air pollution and an increase in exercise, as well as improved transport systems benefiting lower income households.

To meet the Governments 2030 target of phasing out petrol and diesel powered vehicles, converting to electric for most vehicles we will require significant EV charging infrastructure in the district as well as an extensive cycle/walking network that is well lit and usable in inclement weather. For commercial vehicles we will need a transition to biogas or hydrogen models for some larger vehicles like buses or lorries that they are supported by the necessary refuelling infrastructure in the district.

Council Assets & Operations



Priorities:

- Zero carbon emissions across estate
- Tree planting on council owned land
- Electrify the authority's fleet and pilot hydrogen fleet vehicles
- Introduce carbon offsetting of emissions

As an organisation committed to addressing climate change and providing a leadership role we need to reduce our carbon emissions and the energy that we use, prioritise renewable energy sources and manage our services in a sustainable way.

As a Council we have implemented a large number of measures already, climate change is already embedded within our strategies, policies and decision making processes. We have reduced our

carbon emissions year on year since commencing measuring them in 2006 as well as implementing an ongoing programme of carbon reduction improvements. However to meet our ambitious target we have set and to ensure resilience of our services and estate to increasing climate impacts we need to do more.

The Council faces challenges in achieving zero carbon in the delivery of some of its services. The size and nature of our district means that emerging technologies e.g. electric or hydrogen waste collection vehicles will need to be improved before they can be fully implemented and so carbon offsetting will also have to be used as an interim tool to reduce emissions.

We will need to develop new skills and create capacity within the organisation including technological knowledge in reducing carbon emissions, climate emergency training programmes for public services and their supply chains, covering both mitigation and adaptation.

Natural Environment



Priorities:

- Improve biodiversity
- Improve air quality
- Protect and improve water quality
- River catchment improvements for flood resilience and habitat
- Increased rural and urban tree planting

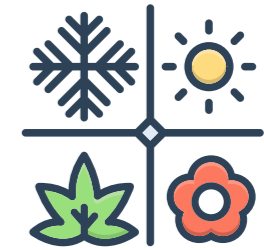
Protecting the natural environment is a priority that not only deliver benefits for climate change but will also impact positively on the physical and emotional health and wellbeing of residents. We face significant losses of insect species and wildlife habitats it is essential that we limit the damage caused to natural habitats and wildlife by climate change, whilst also supporting opportunities for recovery and protection of species. Climate change can spread pests, diseases and non-native invasive species so biological and environmental diversity provides a degree of resilience for natural systems. Developing our green infrastructure, increasing the network of natural and semi-natural areas across the district, will increase the range of ecosystems in both rural and urban settings.

Developing, protecting and enhancing green infrastructure and the natural environment will also help protect urban and rural environments against the impacts of climate change. Amongst other things, it will help improve surface drainage, reducing flood risk, storing and cleaning water and reducing the urban heat island effect.

We will work with our peer groups such as the Essex Wildlife Trust and Essex County Council in making biodiversity improvements by integrating green infrastructure solutions into urban flood management projects and developing wildlife and nature corridors to create connected networks. We will build on the already strong network of volunteers and the wider community to identify opportunities and projects and work with these individuals and groups to support them in making a difference to the living environment.

When the Environment Bill is enacted, it is likely that there will be a requirement for all new developments to deliver a Biodiversity Net Gain of 10%. We will work with developers to ensure that this can be delivered in a manner that supports and enhances the local biodiversity.

Adapting to Climate Change



Priorities:

- Support Communities to build resilience
- Ensure flood alleviation for communities that flood
- No new homes in flood plains
- Improve drought and heat resilience in the district
- Maintain Council Emergency Plan and Parish Emergency Plans
- Prevent the impacts of climate change disproportionately harming the most vulnerable

The weather records of recent years evidence the increase in heat, drought, storm events, intensity of rainfall and flooding. Residents, communities, businesses and the natural environment need support to being able to adapt to these changes.

Today we are completely reliant on a range of infrastructure and services to be maintained to enable homes, businesses and society to function. These include maintaining vital infrastructure services such as electricity, gas, oil, vehicle fuel supplies, drinking water, waste water, transport network, waste collection, phone and broadband networks, and the social infrastructure (such as hospitals, schools, social care services, community services and emergency services) providing essential services to people.

The Council has a direct responsibility through its Emergency Planning role to support and work with communities and businesses to be resilient. A number of Parish and Town Councils have their own emergency plans to plan for and respond to events, and homeowners have put their own mitigation measures in place. We will need to continue the work we are already undertaking to provide emergency planning advice and support to town/parish councils with their own town/parish emergency plans.

It is essential that we build resilience into new development and infrastructure, accommodating issues such as increased rainfall and flooding and heat stress of buildings and infrastructure. Flooding has become an increased risk and it is important to continue working with the lead flooding agencies, to ensure that communities are protected from flooding as much as possible.

There is also a risk that climate change will impact disproportionately on the most vulnerable in our society including long term health impacts and fuel poverty, increasing inequalities. We need to work across partners and communities to identify and mitigate these impacts where we can.

The Essex Resilience Forum, made up of the emergency services and partner organisations including the district councils, through the development of community based partnerships, can enable more efficient resource use and share the costs and risks and reduce system vulnerabilities in a way that is focused on protecting provision of services to the most vulnerable.

Delivering the Strategy

This strategy sets out the Council's community wide shared priorities for almost a decade of transformative climate action.

The Uttlesford Climate Change Working Group and the Essex Climate Action Commission are bringing partners together to provide collective leadership on climate change.

Many people and businesses are already taking action individually, in communities or through various networks. This will need to continue and scale up. People's individual actions, are extremely important, both in direct emissions reduction and in bringing about the changes we need to achieve our goals.

In order to maintain governance, accountability, support and coordination within wider networks, the Uttlesford Climate Change Working Group will continue to provide direction and maintain an overview of the delivery of the strategy. They will also contribute to and support the development of the Action Plan. In respect of those actions to be delivered by others including our partners it is essential there are sufficient staff and financial resources available to deliver actions.

The pace and scale of change for us to deliver the aims and objectives of this strategy by 2030 requires a step change to the previous work undertaken by the Council and its partners as well as our communities. The following conditions for change have been highlighted throughout our strategy and will need to be developed to ensure successful delivery of our priorities.

Engagement

Many people are already taking action as individuals and communities, and they support changes which would help them to reduce carbon emissions. We need to continue to support our communities to engage, feel empowered and to have the tools, capacity and the opportunity to contribute to the overall climate change objectives.

To ensure that the changes are fair and socially encompassing, unintended negative consequences must be minimised so that change is accessible and possible for all. We must all be involved in planning, decision making and delivery of climate action ensuring that different people and community groups with varying needs are heard and addressed. We will engage to develop a shared understanding of climate change and carbon reduction targets and shared commitment to the climate action that we need to take.

In order to support and enable further individual and community action, development of a communication and engagement plan with buy-in from all delivery partners will be essential. This must include plans to ensure that we reflect the views of a wide range of groups. We will also develop approaches to engage with harder to reach groups and our urban and rural communities.

Much work has already taken place at individual and community level. We will work with all partners who have declared, or want to declare, a climate emergency or made public climate change commitments to support them to develop plans.

Funding

To achieve the transformational change set out in this strategy, we will need long-term financial resources. We need to build carbon neutral energy, transport and waste systems and to make the district resilient to the impacts of climate change. Substantial investment must be made to move away from fossil fuel heating systems and in sustainable transport. Some of this investment is already being made with domestic energy efficiency schemes, but we need to increase the scale and pace and support carbon neutral and climate resilient projects.

We need investment to deliver action. Expenditure in carbon reduction can often deliver direct savings, we need to take advantage of identifying and re-investing money saved. We must work with partners to quantify the cost and benefits of preparing for climate impacts and the carbon neutral economy to support the economic viability and stimulate investment for climate adaptation and climate mitigation interventions.

As a District Council, we can seek out and identify innovative and collaborative ways to finance climate change programmes and investment and support partners who require investment to realise projects that will contribute towards objectives. More widely, people and businesses across the district can influence funding through personal spending choices and collectively there will be a need to engage nationally with government and business to support wide scale investment into the green economy.

Collective Action

The District Council will need to deliver actions that require both local engagement and support and influencing partner and stakeholder organisations to ensure policies and programmes and legislation to enable delivery and sustained change.

Climate Change response is happening alongside other competing priorities including health, economic downturn, sustainable economic growth, devolution of local government, adjusting to EU transition and species loss. This strategy needs to consider the juxtaposition of climate change within these priorities and seek to find ways to support the combined objectives.

To succeed in delivering zero carbon emissions by 2030 and adapting to climate change we will require current barriers to change to be addressed nationally to enable climate mitigation and adaptation interventions.

Skills

We need to support everyone to be able to make choices which reduce carbon emissions or increase climate resilience. We need to transform the way in which all of our decisions are made, empowering everyone with specific skills, knowledge and capacity.

In particular, we recognise that the skills and capacity in the construction industry to deliver the scale and pace change needs a dramatic overhaul. We need to make sure we have access to the skills and capacity to implement and maintain these solutions. This will support the uptake of these solutions and also support our local economy and grow the local green business sector.

We need the right skills and resources through strong networks of training and skills sharing. We will also need to enable effective ways of connecting our newly skilled workforce with those with a demand for skills. We need to make sure we take advantage of new innovation and share these with wider networks. In particular, we will need to work with Further Education providers who are likely to deliver much of the training required in the construction and technology sector. With the recent move to online learning we need to support residents in the district gaining access these resources and networks.

Integration of training and requirements for carbon neutral and climate resilient related knowledge and skills into Further Education, apprenticeships and job roles across all of the priority areas; Identification, incentivisation and delivery of skills development training programmes to achieve our delivery theme goals;

We need to support engagement with individuals and communities so that everyone has the skills and capacity to know what to do in an extreme weather events and support their parish emergency plans. This includes a wider understanding of flood risk, knowing the nearest community place of safety or preparing a family or business emergency plan. At organisation level we will explore county wide carbon literacy training programme for local authority officers and consider wider roll-out in other organisations to validate decision making and support delivery of services.

Infrastructure

The way we live and use resources will need to adapt and our weather is projected to also significantly change. Our existing infrastructure will need to remain resilient to these changes in our climate and more extreme weather events. The Council and our partners need to continue to undertake key maintenance processes, such as UDC's drainage ditch management or ECC Highways highway culvert cleaning programme to support flood protection.

We will need new specific infrastructure, in terms of heat, electricity and transport, to meet our zero carbon goals. For example, as we move towards electrified heat and transport systems, we will need significant upgrades to our electricity distribution systems. We will need to engage with UK Power Networks and with Ofgem to enable this to happen. We will need significant new walking, cycling and public transport infrastructure, as well as charging infrastructure for electric vehicles, or other zero carbon fuels.

We will need to build new infrastructure to protect homes and businesses from flooding. This will include grey infrastructure, such as flood walls and rain water storage, but we also need to take opportunities where natural solutions such as leaky dams and reinstated flood plains could be implemented to support flood protection while providing urban cooling, environmental and health and wellbeing benefits. We will need to protect and use our ICT and communications infrastructure to enable the use of smart technologies.

We will work with UKPN to understand future local demand for electricity and to develop a clear plan for investing in upgrades required to the electricity distribution grid. We will require continued engagement with ECC and Environment Agency on flood defence projects and work with developers to implement flood mitigation technology and green infrastructure. To ensure the growth of sustainable transport. We will develop with ECC their countywide plan for electric vehicle charging and hydrogen refuelling infrastructure.

Action Plan

The action plan will follow and be informed by the consultation on the strategy and will build on the reductions in district emissions that have already been achieved in partnership with Government, regional agencies, local businesses, organisations and communities and residents and our determination to tackle the climate emergency by 2030.

The action plan will set out work stream actions by Uttlesford District Council and partner organisations, including work by community groups and will be regularly reviewed to stay abreast of changes in emissions, external influences such as national policy and legislation, and the measures available.

The plan will have measures to deliver wider sustainable development, provide sustainable transport infrastructure, improve air quality, protect biodiversity and habitats and promote and improve environmental stewardship, reduce fuel poverty and improve the standard of housing.

Actions will link into other strategies including the District Growth Strategy and further develop the green economy in the district through the development of new green sector skills and jobs, and will link to our Health and wellbeing programme to improve health and adapt to the impacts of climate change with stronger, more resilient, communities.

New actions will go through a robust feasibility process to ensure both value for money, significant carbon saving, ability to deliver change and be completed in a timely manner on budget. The Council will engage independent verification of projects to ensure it carried out due diligence on the range of measures set out in the action plan.

Measuring and Monitoring

For the Council and the wider district to become zero carbon and climate resilient progress must be measured. We already have an organisation baseline provided by the annual carbon reduction monitoring reports.

Carbon emissions across the district are currently calculated each year by the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy who release local authority wide carbon emissions data. Where there is a time lag in data provision we need a robust monitoring regime to record which interventions work best, which offer best value for money and which provide the widest co-benefits.

An essential part of this strategy is the monitoring, measuring and public reporting to communicate the progress made. Reports on both adaptation and mitigation needs and progress in implementing measures must be produced regularly which will provide stakeholders and the public with transparency about the process.

As one of our key principles is learning and evolving this plan, with revision of the action plan. This will enable us to be agile and expend effort on the most effective interventions.

Given the need to prioritise direct interventions to reduce emissions, offsetting will be considered as we get closer to 2030. However, given the potential lead in times to assemble finance from partners, the potential need for land assembly and other complexities to resolve, we are proposing a review of offsetting requirements in the mid 2020s. Some actions such as biodiversity improvement, adaptation measures or education engagement campaigns are essential to change behaviours and mind sets, but it is difficult to measure the contribution these make to reducing greenhouse gas emissions or improving the natural environment. Success will be measured by their completion and subsequent implementation.

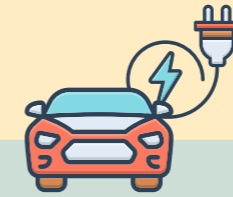
Appendix 1: Uttlesford Action on Climate Change: What you can do

Help us increase global resilience and reach our target of Net Zero CO₂ by 2030.

ZERO %



Buy local



Use electric vehicle charging network



Use public transport, cycle or walk



Take your litter home or recycle in our segregated bins

If you work in Uttlesford:



Turn off equipment when not in use, close windows, use teleconferencing



Car share, cycle, walk or use public transport to get to work or work from home

If you live in Uttlesford:



Insulate your loft and cavity walls, install 'A' rated appliances



Install renewable energy or buy green energy



Grow some of your own food

If you go to school in Uttlesford:



Walk, cycle or scoot to school



Encourage your school to be an Eco-School



Create a Bio-diverse habitat

If you run a business in Uttlesford:



Holiday locally



Bio-diversity, create a wildlife garden



Save water. Fit a water meter. Install water butts



Buy green energy from your energy company



Join the local Green Business Network



Request a free waste audit from the Council



reduce your waste (eg minimise the packaging on goods you buy)



maximise your waste recycling



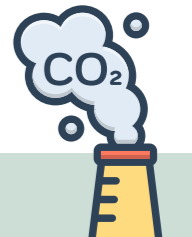
walk, cycle or use public transport, and try not to use your car



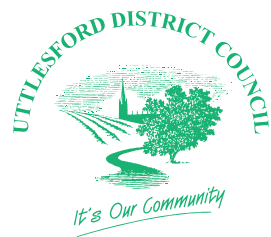
Green fleet vehicles



Apply for Green Grants



Carry out carbon audit



Council Offices, London Road,
Saffron Walden CB11 4ER