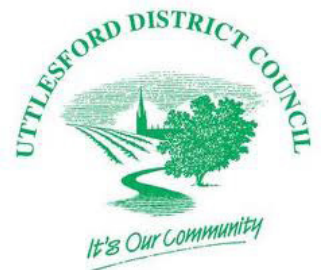


UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

CLIMATE LOCAL STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN 2015-2018



Foreword from Councillor Susan Barker

Uttlesford District Council has been actively progressing the climate change agenda for many years. In 2006 the Council signed the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change, in 2007 we were one of the first authorities to take part in the Carbon Trust's Local Authority Carbon Management Programme and in 2007 produced our first Climate Change Strategy followed by our Natural Resource Management Strategy.

This Climate Local Strategy replaces the former Natural Resource Strategy 2010-2013. The new strategy will cover the period 2015 - 2018, setting out our objectives and a framework for local action on climate change and energy over the next four years. We intend to lead by example, as an organisation the Council will continue to review and reduce the impact it has on the environment and that of the services it delivers in the district. We will support our residents, communities and businesses in building climate resilience to the impacts of climate change, reducing carbon emissions and costs from energy use. We will address the associated issues of fuel poverty and health and wellbeing and economic resilience. The Council will continue to work in partnership with local groups, organisations and businesses to deliver action and help the district mitigate and adapt to climate change.

Increasingly extreme weather events, both locally and globally, reinforce the case for action. The climate both locally and globally is fundamental to almost all aspects of our lives: it directly affects our ecosystems, food, water, health and wellbeing, homes, leisure, economy and trade, infrastructure and services.

The UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) published 2014 report on climate impact states "increasing magnitudes of warming increase the likelihood of severe, pervasive and irreversible impacts". The IPCC chairman Rajendra Pachauri commented "Nobody on this planet is going to be untouched by the impacts of climate change,"

Cllr Susan Barker
Cabinet Member for Environment at Uttlesford District Council

Climate Local Uttlesford District Council

Our commitment to taking action in a changing climate

We recognise that our council has an important role to help our residents and businesses to capture the opportunities and benefits of action on climate change. These include saving money on energy bills, generating income from renewable energy, attracting new jobs and investment in 'green' industries, supporting new sources of energy, managing local flood-risk and water scarcity and protecting our natural environment.

We will progressively address the risks and pursue the opportunities presented by a changing climate, in line with local priorities, through our role as:

- Community leader - helping local people and businesses to be smarter about their energy use and to prepare for climate impacts;
- Service provider - delivering services that are resource efficient, less carbon intensive, resilient and that protect those who are most vulnerable to climate impacts;
- Estate manager - ensuring that our own buildings and operations are resource efficient, use clean energy, and are well prepared for the impacts of a changing climate.

In signing this commitment, we will:

- Set locally-owned and determined commitments and actions to reduce carbon emissions and to manage climate impacts. These will be specific, measurable and challenging;
- Publish our commitments, actions and progress, enabling local communities to hold us to account;
- Share the learning from our experiences and achievements with other councils; and
- Regularly refresh our commitments and actions to ensure they are current and continue to reflect local priorities.



Cllr Howard Rolfe Leader of Uttlesford District Council
Uttlesford District Council

1. Introduction

The Council is committed to taking action on the issues that surround climate change. Since signing the Nottingham Declaration in 2006 we have worked on energy saving and carbon reduction both within our own organisation and across the district to tackle fuel poverty. We have worked to ensure development in the district is sustainable and building resilience to climate change impacts. Climate Local is an opportunity to build on the work that has been done to date and to put together a new plan of action to map out our future activities.

Uttlesford District Council is a predominantly rural district area with 2 market towns and a number of villages and hamlets. The towns have a number of industrial and commercial areas. The district also contains the busy international Stansted airport. The district has two key road transport routes, the M11 and the A120 and contains 6 train stations on the West Anglian main line.

Climate Local is a Local Government Association (LGA) initiative. It is a framework for local authorities to drive and support local authority efforts to both reduce their own carbon emissions and district wide emissions and to improve both authority and community resilience to the effects of the changing climate and extreme weather. It has direct links to health and wellbeing and the socio-economic agenda in tackling the social issues surrounding fuel poverty and food poverty. It also prioritises protecting local businesses and supporting the local economy.



2. Background

In January 2012, the UK Government published the UK Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA) to provide further information to policy makers on the risks and opportunities from climate change and the vulnerability of the UK. In its summary it states the following:

"We know that the world's climate and weather is continually changing, resulting in both long and short term variability – and that these natural variations often have significant effects on our lives. 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.

Evidence collated by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change shows that the recent observed increases are very likely (over 90%) due to rising concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere caused by human activities. In central England, temperatures have risen by about a degree Celsius since the 1970s, with 2006, then more recently 2012 being the warmest year on record.

In the UK, we currently expect a shift towards increased storm events and generally wetter winters, and a greater proportion of precipitation to fall as heavy events, such as the winter 2013/14 prolonged precipitation. The UK Climate Projections published in 2009 (UKCP09) suggest that there is a greater likelihood that summers will be drier, but these projections cover a range of outcomes including wetter summers and drier winters."



Lower Street, Stansted Mountfitchet
(Dunmow Broadcast Feb 2014)

A Summary of Climate Change

Sustainability East and ClimateUK have produced the document 'A Summary of the Climate Change Risks for the East of England', to coincide with the publication of the UK Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA) 2012.

The document identifies a number of local threats:

- Increased temperatures may lead to increased levels of mortality and morbidity due to heat exposure as the East of England is in the warmer part of the UK and so will be more affected.
- Changes in water availability, particularly reductions in the summer, may lead to increased water shortages affecting the supply for the public, businesses and industry.
- This is a significant issue for the East of England as one of the most vulnerable regions, with limited aquifers.
- Increased frequency of flooding is expected to lead to increased number of deaths, injuries, damage to buildings and infrastructure and loss of business continuity.



Elizabeth Way, Saffron Walden
(Saffron Walden Reporter 7th Feb 14)

Drivers

There are numerous drivers behind the Council's need to develop the strategy and implement its actions:

- 12 of the last 14 years have been the warmest globally since records began;
- 4 of the 5 UK's wettest years on record have been since 2000;
- Prolonged precipitation storms and floods of summer 2012, 2013 and 2014;
- Statutory local authority reporting on Home Energy Conservation Act;
- Potential for energy shortages from 2015 onwards;
- Progressing the Health and Wellbeing agenda;
- Supporting the local economy, local businesses and employment;
- Meeting Corporate priorities;
- Changes in legislation and updated climate data;

- Need to build resilience from increasing changes in weather patterns;
- Need to reduce carbon emissions;
- Government identification of local authority role in tackling climate change and
- National carbon budgets, but no local targets in place.

Changes to our climate will affect parts of our community and economy in different ways. For example, there may be direct local agricultural economic impacts on food yields or crop choice in our district which is predominantly rural. Beneficially, hotter summers are expected to increase visitors to the district and revenue from outdoor tourism. There may also be less obvious and indirect effects. Power outages from increased storms could affect businesses, households and public services alike, causing disruption.

Reacting to current climate or extreme weather events is expensive. As an illustration of how costly this can be, the UK floods in 2007 were estimated to have cost businesses £740 million. This is on average around £100,000 per affected business, taking on average 27 weeks to return to normal operating capacity. Some did not survive at all. (Defra, 2012 CCRA, Evidence report)

The floods of winter 2013/2014 have had a significant financial impact on the insurance industry. According to the figures from the Association of British Insurers (ABI) in March 2014 "Winter floods to cost UK insurance industry £1.1bn".



St Johns Road, Stansted
(Herts and Essex Observer 28th Oct 2013)

Our objectives

The Council has a number of existing and emerging priorities where climate change and energy have a direct impact. These include: Protecting our environment; Improving the health and wellbeing of residents; Supporting local businesses and the local economy and ensuring that development is sustainable.

In order to address these priorities and the issues surrounding climate change, set out below are our key objectives:

- **Reduce Council carbon emissions and energy/fuel use and costs across our estate:** reduce energy costs and improve fuel security;
- **Adapting the Council to Climate Change Impacts:** Build climate resilience in our organisation, across our estate, operations and services;
- **Reduce district-wide energy consumption and carbon emissions:** Reduce energy consumption, energy costs and carbon emissions across the district for residents, communities and businesses and tackle fuel poverty to improve health and wellbeing of our residents; and
- **District wide adaptation to Climate Change Impacts:** Support our residents, communities and businesses in building resilience to changing weather

Many of the Council's current policies, strategies and plans include actions that directly or indirectly reduce the impacts of climate change, such as our Procurement Strategy, Asset Management Strategy or Local Plan. These will be supported by direct actions on the key areas identified in the objectives above. The issues and areas of action surrounding these objectives are detailed below.

1. **Reduce Council carbon emissions and energy/fuel use and costs across our estate:** reduce energy costs and improve fuel security;

There is a need to reduce energy use and carbon emissions to reduce costs and support the wider issues of CO2 related climate impacts and improving fuel security. Since signing the Nottingham Declaration the Council has successfully implemented measures to reduce its own CO2 emissions by over 1162 tonnes, some 31% from its 2006 baseline. This was achieved through a combination of energy saving measures across the estate, operations and services with the Carbon Trust's Local Authority Carbon Management Programme.

As part of DECC's (Department of Environment and Climate Change) annual reporting requirements for local authorities under the Sharing Information on Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Local Authorities' Own Estate and Operations, Uttlesford District Council collates and submits its energy use and carbon emissions setting out progress. The results are published each year on both DECC's website and the Council's website.

The Council strives to lead by example and we will continue to progress this work through introducing new measures to reduce our energy and fuel consumption, coupled with increasing green energy generation across the Council's estate.

2. **Adapting the Council to Climate Change Impacts:** Build climate resilience in our organisation, across our estate, operations and services

The Council like any organisation is subject to the effects of climate change, whether it is the direct impacts of extreme weather on the delivery of services and operations or wider impacts when procuring goods and products and long term concerns.

The Council carried out an internal climate impact risk assessment for its organisation based on 2009 UK Climate Projection data. We identified risks, which are being built into business plans and the corporate risk register. This will enable the authority to build resilience in its estate and in the delivery of its services and operations to extreme climatic conditions.

The risk register will be updated looking at recently identified impacts and reflecting any changes to services to ensure that the Council has robust measures in place to protect its assets and can continue to deliver its services for the public without interruption.

3. **Reduce district-wide energy consumption and carbon emissions:** Reduce energy consumption, energy costs and carbon emissions across the district for residents, communities and businesses and tackle fuel poverty to improve the health and wellbeing of our residents;

Energy consumption, energy costs and carbon emissions across the district for residents, communities and businesses and tackle fuel poverty to improve health and wellbeing of our residents.

Data from DECC's official statistics estimate that CO2 emissions in 2012 for tonnes CO2 per capita in Uttlesford District stood at 7.6t CO2, a reduction on previous years due to an extensive variety of factors. We are addressing this and the associated issues across a number of sectors.

Fuel poverty data in 2012 compiled by DECC using their revised methodology indicates that in Uttlesford District there are 7,849 or 9.4% of households in fuel poverty. This is the highest figure in Essex, however it is below the national average of 10.4%. Across the district we have implemented energy and carbon reduction measures in homes. Under the Council's HEEP (Heart Essex Energy Partnership) scheme over 900 energy efficiency measures were applied to residents homes, saving 7,697 tonnes carbon.

In order to continue to support residents we are rolling out the government Green Deal/ ECO (Energy Company Obligation) delivery programme to target energy inefficient properties and deliver better health outcomes for residents in the district, essential to reduce cold weather related illness and winter mortality. Residents are now offered the opportunity to reduce utility bills by switching energy provider through the Council run Essex Energy Switching scheme.

In addition to the above programme we are forging stronger relationships with key partner organisations (including NHS, public health authority, Clinical Commissioning Group, Citizens Advice Bureau, AgeUK, Rural Community Council for Essex, Local Councils) to enable information to be shared where vulnerable residents are identified to ensure they are able to benefit from grants and support available.

The Council requires the development of new build properties to meet high sustainable standards. We work with housing providers to ensure that new affordable housing is built to high energy efficiency standards to minimise heating costs for residents, especially the vulnerable and those on low incomes.

We will support the local economy by working with local businesses to reduce energy consumption and utility costs. We will encourage the growing green business sector and the creation of local skills and jobs in this industry.

We will work with external organisations, local communities and businesses to identify and develop actions and implement carbon reduction measures and renewable energy generation opportunities across the district. We will encourage businesses to take up green travel plans for their staff and fleet vehicles.

The Council has increased its recycling rate to 54% in 2014, compared to 46% in 2006. A total of 16,516 tonnes of waste was taken to landfill in 2006, in 2013 the total was reduced to 12,900 tonnes, substantially reducing the amount of waste going to landfill. We will continually strive to reduce this level.

The council has introduced split body refuse vehicles to collect different types of waste in one visit. This has the benefit of reducing vehicle mileage and carbon emissions.

4. **District wide adaptation to Climate Change Impacts:** Support our residents, communities and businesses in building resilience to changing weather;

In recent years we have experienced extreme variations in weather, extended dry spells and heavy continuous rainfall. To protect our district the Council will continue to work with the Environment Agency and local councils to prepare their communities for climate change impacts, providing advice and support.

Changing weather patterns, more frequent extreme weather and rising temperatures have direct implications on our health, and also pose challenges to the way in which the NHS, public health and social care system operates. The Council will raise awareness with residents to improving health, wellbeing and resilience in a changing climate.

The Council will be promoting and offering advice to ensure business resilience to climate change impacts. We will support local businesses in using the online Business Resilience Health Check tool providing both an audit of the business and the identification of measures to adapt to climate change impacts to ensure business continuity.

The Council will refuse unacceptable development in flood plains to avoid increasing future flooding.

Action Plan

The action plan sets locally determined actions with comprehensive measures to deliver the objectives both within the organisation and across the district. The actions are measurable with challenging targets that hold the Council and its partners to account.



Uttlesford District Council Climate Local Action Plan 2015-18

The Council's Carbon Emissions and Energy Reduction					
Aim	Actions	Measure	Target	Timescale	Resources
Reduce the Council's energy use and carbon emissions	engage staff to reduce carbon emissions	DECC greenhouse gas emissions data analysis collection and reporting	no increase in carbon emissions	Ongoing	staff time
	Produce statutory Display Energy Certificates (DEC's)	Measure and publish public building emissions	2 DEC's produced	October (annually)	Staff time, revenue cost for independent verification
Sustainable Transport	Continue with measures in our Green Travel Plan	Level of award (bronze-platinum)	Gold Level (Silver achieved in 204)	On-going	Staff time, other revenue funding including ECC financial support
	Continue with promotion of Cycle Scheme and implementation of the cycle strategy	Number of participants	2 per year	On-going	Staff time
Water efficiency	Identify actions to reduce water use across the estate	Actions implemented	5% reduction by 2018	On-going	Staff time

Adapting the Council to Climate Change Impacts

Aim	Actions	Measure	Target	Timescale	Resources
Protecting the Council's estate	Investigate flood risk issue for Council estate to inform future capital investment in mitigation measures	identification of issues	produce advisory report	April 2016	Staff time
Building resilience into services and operations	Update Council's climate impact risk assessment and integrate risk mitigation into business plans	No. of business plans with measures included Update Corporate Risk Register	Business plans to include risk mitigation where appropriate	Sept 2015	Staff time

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District-wide energy reduction and carbon emissions

Aim	Actions	Measure	Target	Timescale	Resources	
Reduce energy use to address fuel poverty and health related issues and improve health and well being	Promote Essex Energy Switching Scheme	Number of participants	200 per year	January 2016	Staff time	
	Maintain Green Deal ECO scheme to improve energy efficiency in existing housing	Number of measures installed/ homes improved	100 per year	On-going	Staff time, energy company funding	
	Provide advice, support and hold events with partner organisations eg Citizens Advice Bureau, voluntary groups etc	Number of contacts made, events held etc	1,000 residents contacted	On-going	Staff time, partner organisation staff time	
	Promotion of oil clubs across the district	Number of members	15	On-going	Staff time	
	Improve the energy efficiency of the Council's housing stock	Install external wall insulation	Install external wall insulation	50 properties per year	On going	Capital investment included in HRA Capital Programme for 2015-17
		Replace oil boilers with A rated oil boilers or ASHP's (Airsource Heat Pumps)	Replace oil boilers with A rated oil boilers or ASHP's (Airsource Heat Pumps)	40 per year	On going	Capital investment Included in HRA Capital Programme for 2015-17
		Upgrade cavity wall insulation	Upgrade cavity wall insulation	40 per year	On going	Capital investment Included in HRA Capital Programme for 2015-17

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Aim	Actions	Measure	Target	Timescale	Resources
	Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) reporting	Produce report	Submit report	Annual March submission	Staff time
	Work with landlords to improve domestic energy efficiency	Number of landlord forums held	2 per year	On-going	Staff time
	Sign Council services up to Frontline referral scheme	Council is receiving and making referrals	Active participant	March 2016	Staff time
Reduce carbon emissions	Produce local authority services and support information	Level of distribution	3000 per year	On-going	Staff time, publication costs
	Distribute literature on energy and carbon reduction	Number of contacts made	3000 per year	On-going	Staff time, publication/website update costs
	Development to comply with Building Regulations	Number of low carbon properties in the district (compliance with building regulations)	All new build	On-going	Staff time
	Encourage schools to join the Eco Schools campaign	Number of schools supported	2 per year	On-going	Staff time

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Sustainable Transport	Provision and promotion of electric car charging points	Number of points installed	1 per year	March 2018	Staff time, external funding
	Deliver town centre cycle rack programme	No of Installed cycle racks	5 per year	On-going	External funding
	Encourage businesses to implement their own Green Travel Plans	Number of green travel plans produced	3 per year	On-going	Staff time
Water efficiency	Work with water companies to raise awareness and benefits of installing water saving devices and adopting more efficient use of water	Number of water saving devices/water meters distributed/installed	200 by 2018	On-going	Staff time, water company funding

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Aim	Actions	Measure	Target	Timescale	Resources
Economic Development (supporting the local economy)	Increase commercial installation of renewable energy in district by promoting the renewable energy technologies, assist with planning constraints, advise on funding/revenue streams available	Number of businesses supported	5 per year	On-going	Staff time
	Develop Energy Switching Scheme to help SME's reduce energy costs	Number of participants	10 per year	Ongoing	Staff time
Reduce waste/increase recycling	Maintain level of recycling and improve quality of material collected	Raise public awareness	Tonnage of waste diverted from landfill	Ongoing	Staff time and existing waste budget

District wide adaptation to Climate Change Impacts					
Aim	Actions	Measure	Target	Timescale	Resources
Mitigate against climate change impacts (flooding, extreme weather events, storms, high winds and heat waves)	Support local community resilience plans	Maintain local community resilience plans – No. of parishes with plans in place	Annual updates completed	Ongoing	Staff time, local Councils
	Implement countywide community resilience workshop training	Number of plans produced and parish council/town councils trained/supported	Train all councils	Annual programme	Staff time
	Maintain district and community risk register	Mitigation of risks within district	To make sure district and parishes have identified risks	Annual update	Staff time

Community resilience to climate impacts- health and well being	Work with local communities to raise awareness and build resilience to climate change impacts	Number of communities supported	2 per year	On-going	Staff time
	Share data between agencies, both public and private and also voluntary sectors to identify and monitor local vulnerable residents – ie property flood/storm victims	Number of residents supported during/after events	Residents supported where necessary	On-going	Staff time, partner organisation staff time
Natural resources	NHS England (and Met Office) Heatwave Plan and Cold weather plan - as partner organisation promote plans across district	Promotion of plans across district	Annual update	On going	Staff time
	Work with partner organisations to ensure resilience of services to extreme weather and disruption – sharing best practice	Number of response and recovery plans produced	Plans in place	By 2018	Staff time
	Maintain and increase tree canopy cover across Saffron Walden and Dunmow centres providing shade to mitigate urban heat island effect	Growth in tree canopy cover	3% per year	On-going	Staff time, capital investment, grant funding, land

Business resilience (protecting the local economy)	Hold events / sharing knowledge and best practices	Number of events/ campaigns	5 per year	On going	Staff time
	Support local businesses by raising awareness to build resilience to climate change impacts and utilise business climate resilience tools	Number of businesses supported	5 per year	On going	Staff time

