



CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY

UTTLESFORD

2020-2024



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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. The effects include heat stress on our built and natural environment. The intensity and frequency of storms and rainfall, flooding and heatwaves is increasing.

Regulatory and statutory targets set out in the 2008 Climate Change Act to reduce carbon emissions by 80% from 1990 by 2050, this was subsequently revised and adopted by Government to net zero by 2050.

The Council declared a Climate Change and Ecology Emergency and committed to develop 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 to develop a new action plan. We recognise that education is key and to be successful we must engage all sectors of the community.

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 engages the support of residents and businesses.



Climate and Ecological Emergency Motion

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

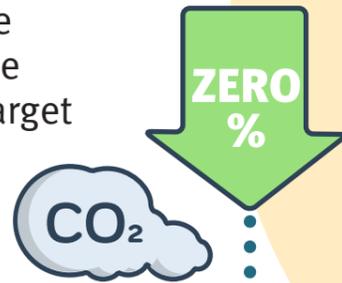
Council resolves:

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

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Uttlesford Action on Climate Change: What you can do

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



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



Buy local



Walk, cycle or scoot to school



Encourage your school to be an Eco-School



Create a Bio-diverse habitat

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



Buy green energy from your energy company



Join the local Green Business Network



Request a free waste audit from the Council



Holiday locally



Bio-diversity, create a wildlife garden



Save water. Fit a water meter. Install water butts



Green fleet vehicles



Apply for Green Grants



Carry out carbon audit

If you visit in Uttlesford:



Use electric vehicle charging network



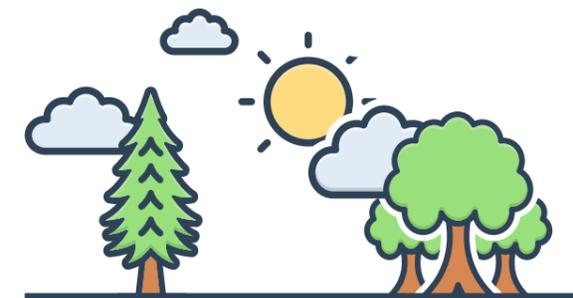
Use public transport, cycle or walk



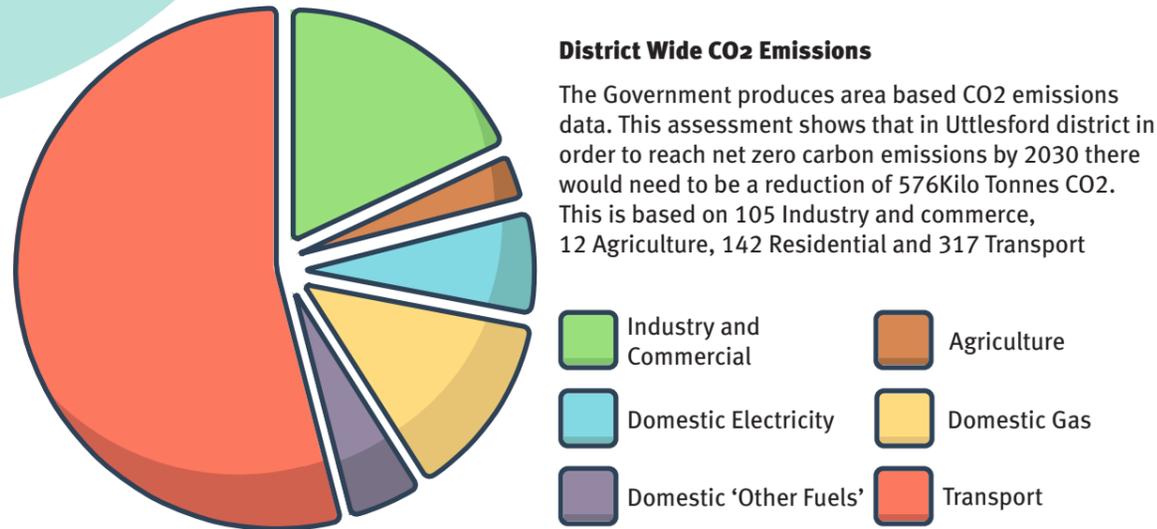
Take your litter home or recycle in our segregated bins



Look out for locally produced and Fairtrade food

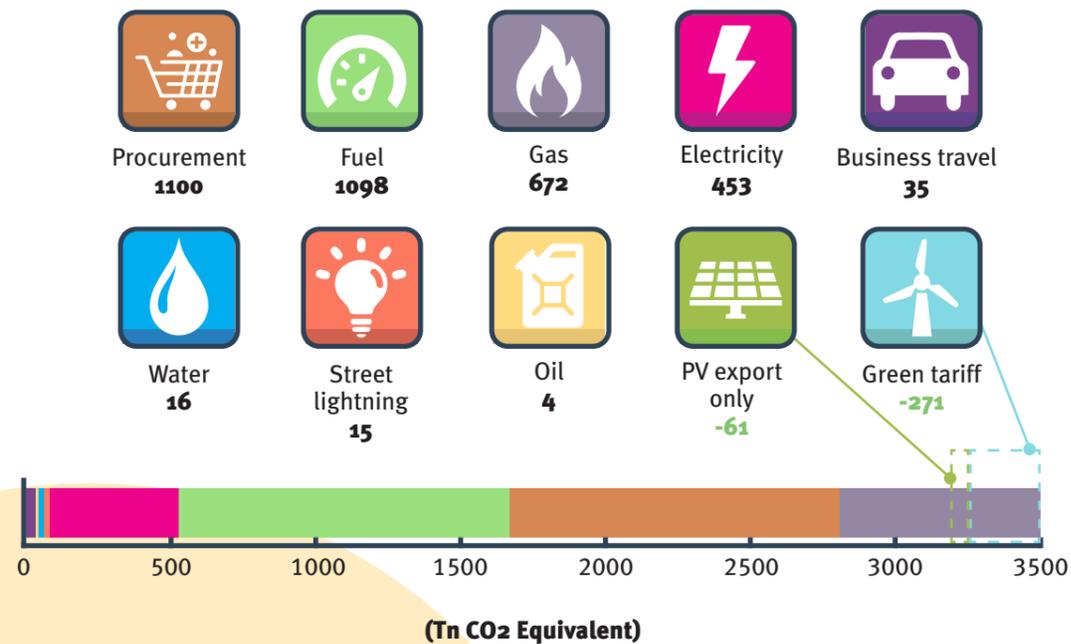


Progress on Reducing Carbon Emissions



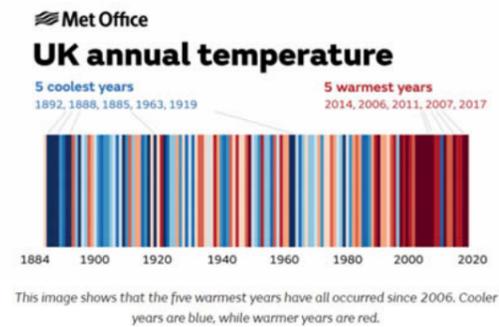
Council CO2 Emissions

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.



1. What do these climatic changes look like in Uttlesford district?
2. 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.



4. Typical autumn and winter is milder and wetter with an increased frequency and intensity of extreme precipitation events.
5. 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

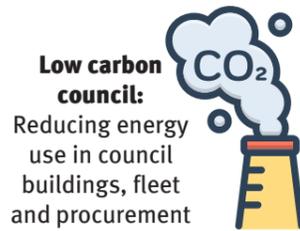
Key Objectives and Priorities in tackling Climate change



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



Education:
Knowledge, training and skills for sustainability



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

Green infrastructure:
Protecting parks, trees, gardens and countrysides 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.



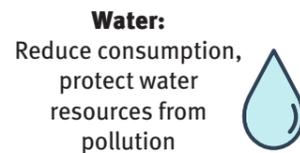
Council:
Keeping essential services running



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



Public health:
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



Surface flood water:
Improving drainage and storage

Resources

The resources for delivering the Climate Change Strategy action plan will be from a variety of sources. There are a number of actions that are part of both Council and partner organisation work streams which are funded within existing budgets, such as waste recycling, with staff and arrangements with partner organisations in place to deliver them.

Some actions require capital or revenue bids for internal funding. The Council has agreed to a 4 year investment programme to deliver a range of projects that will reduce carbon emissions, protect biodiversity and adapt to the impacts of climate change. Business cases will be prepared and evaluated to determine project value for money. This may include infrastructure projects such as solar panel installations or energy efficiency improvements to the Council's estate or investment in green fleet vehicles.

There are actions dependent on existing external funding streams where the role of the Council is to facilitate delivery of the scheme. These projects are delivered by both Council officers and partner organisations. Other actions will require new bids for external funding and the Council may either submit bids or be part of a consortium.

Communities play a key role in the action plan. There are activities that require an overseeing co-ordinating body, in these instances the Council takes a facilitating role, supporting projects which will be delivered by volunteers and the local community.

Governance

Following the Climate and Ecological Emergency motion a Member led group was formed as the Climate Change Working Group, chaired by the portfolio holder for Environment. This group reports into Cabinet and Full Council and steer the direction of the Council in addressing the issues from the climate motion. This group is supported by an officer group and advice from subject matter experts.

The climate change agenda has been split into key priority areas and subject groups formed with a Member Chair, they focus on particular issues of concern including planning and development, ecology, sustainable transport, energy, etc. Their task is to consider the issues in the district, consider the issues and gaps, identify actions and the resources required to implement change. These sub groups are steered by and report back to the Climate Change Working Group.



Action Plan

The Action Plan reflects our approach to District leadership of climate action and sets out comprehensive measures based on the key priorities and objectives of the Council. These are to be delivered in 2020-2024 in partnership with Government, regional agencies, local businesses, organisations and communities and residents. These actions build on and complement an extensive range of existing work covering all areas of Council and partner activity on climate change.

The Action Plan has measures to reduce carbon emissions, deliver sustainable development, provide sustainable transport infrastructure, improve air quality, protect biodiversity and habitats and promote and improve environmental stewardship. They will seize the green economy opportunities offered to the district and develop new green sector skills and jobs, improve health and adapt to the impacts of climate change with stronger, more resilient, communities.

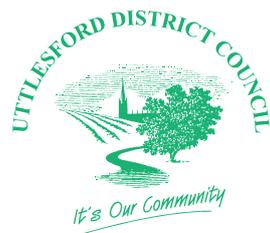


The actions go through a robust feasibility process to ensure both value for money, significant carbon saving, ability to deliver change and be completed in a timely manner on budget. The Council engaged independent verification of projects to ensure it carried out due diligence on the range of measures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

The measures set will be monitored against challenging targets that hold the Council and its partners and the wider district to account. The actions will be monitored and progress reviewed regularly to ensure delivery of the objectives.

There are a number of areas of focus for actions in the plan. These include: Waste and Recycling, Energy, Planning and Development, Sustainable Transport, Ecology, Adapting to Climate Change and encouraging behaviour change through Education and Engagement.

The Council must play a leadership role through its own activities and work streams in tackling climate change, however the whole district must play its part. The significant change with this new strategy and action plan is enhanced communications and engagement to engage and promote effective and practical action with residents, communities and businesses.



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