
Environment & Green Issues and Equalities April 2022 update

The science tells us we shouldn't be investing in the fossil fuel industry

Renewable energy

Wind energy



Tidal energy



Solar energy



A lot of people's understanding of renewable energy is extremely out of date. Solar and wind are the cheapest energy sources available. Technically and economically, ***we have 95 percent of the technologies we need to transition everything today*** - transition ASAP to 100% renewable wind – water - solar (WWS), energy efficiency and energy storage. <https://cleantechnica.com/2022/02/21/renewable-energy-zero-blackouts-millions-of-new-jobs-mark-z-jacobson/>

The government is renewing its domestic extraction in the North Sea. More support for North Sea oil extraction's argument, helps with energy security and extracting in our own back yard rather than from other fossil fuel nations. It tries to argue its position that it will not impact the national or global climate commitments or targets. The UN and International Energy Agency (IEA) beg to differ and said, ***“all fossil fuels need to stay in the ground now and there can be no new extraction if we are to hit the world's net zero targets or limit warming above 1.5 degrees.”*** Environmental campaigners say, “this approach in the North Sea, even if its alongside nuclear and renewable, violates the spirit of climate change and the Leadership the UK is trying to establish.

Nuclear Power

Boris Johnson wants nuclear power to provide 25% of the country's electricity. The UK could build up to seven new nuclear power stations in a bid to boost its homegrown energy supply in the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. In 1997, it produced 26% of UK power. ***Hinkley Point C is due to open in June 2026 and will cost between £22bn and £23bn. It is the most expensive global energy project that won't deliver immediate reduction.***

Renewables are already, at most, half the price of Hinkley, and while Hinkley will only get dearer, the cost of renewable energy will only come down.

“Nuclear is the wrong technology at the wrong time for sorting out all the challenges that we face. Nuclear industry's continuing inability to overcome its longstanding problems (on costs, construction delays, nuclear

waste, security issues, proliferation and so on), challenges the idea that we're going to need new nuclear power to get us to a Net Zero economy by 2050. Some environmentalists may still be taken aback to discover that the Government's principal case for nuclear power in the UK today is driven by the need to maintain the UK's nuclear weapons capability – to ensure a 'talent pool' of nuclear engineers and to support a supply chain of engineering companies capable of providing component parts for the nuclear industry, both civilian and military."

Jonathon Porritt veteran sustainability campaigner [https://www.greenpeace.org.uk/news/nuclear-power-climate-change-jonathon-](https://www.greenpeace.org.uk/news/nuclear-power-climate-change-jonathon-porritt/?source=GA&subsource=GOFRNAOAGA034J&gclid=EAlaIQobChMlvaXP4bf69glVi-3tCh1ctATnEAAYAiAAEgll9PD_BwE)

[porritt/?source=GA&subsource=GOFRNAOAGA034J&gclid=EAlaIQobChMlvaXP4bf69glVi-](https://www.greenpeace.org.uk/news/nuclear-power-climate-change-jonathon-porritt/?source=GA&subsource=GOFRNAOAGA034J&gclid=EAlaIQobChMlvaXP4bf69glVi-3tCh1ctATnEAAYAiAAEgll9PD_BwE)

[3tCh1ctATnEAAYAiAAEgll9PD_BwE](https://www.greenpeace.org.uk/news/nuclear-power-climate-change-jonathon-porritt/?source=GA&subsource=GOFRNAOAGA034J&gclid=EAlaIQobChMlvaXP4bf69glVi-3tCh1ctATnEAAYAiAAEgll9PD_BwE)

*The UK is unlikely to meet its 2050 target for net zero emissions because **the government has no clear plan to decarbonise heating and insulate homes, a cross-party committee of MPs has warned.** The government needs to help develop low-carbon heating technologies, scale up the market for heat pumps and support gas boiler engineers as they reskill to carry out the conversion work, according to the report by the House of Commons' business, energy and industrial strategy committee. <https://www.ft.com/content/759591ed-611e-442f-beb7-c72148e2d341>*

Uttlesford

As a council we have pledged to take local action to prevent a climate and ecological catastrophe through the development of practices and policies, with an aim to achieving net-zero carbon status by 2030 and to protect and enhance biodiversity in the district.

Our action plan shows what we'll be doing to achieve net-zero carbon status by 2030.

We declared a climate emergency in 2019 and we have pledged to take local action to prevent a climate and ecological catastrophe through the development of practices and policies which aim to achieve net-zero carbon status by 2030 and to protect and enhance biodiversity in the district.

The Action Plan

The themes and priorities for the action plan have already been identified in our Climate Crisis Strategy. <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/7103/Climate-change-strategy>

Our Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) is the vital next step in moving on from a statement of intent and overall approach, and into specific actions. <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/media/11267/Climate-Change-Action-Plan/pdf/CCAP-UDC-11.01.22.pdf?m=637787291832170000>

Progress

The Action Plan has 38 components, and the scale of the task to turn each one into a worked-up plan, actually delivering, is considerable.

So far there are:

- 11 actions for delivery in March 2022 (Phase 2 of the CCAP)
- 13 actions for delivery by December 2022 (Phase 3 of the CCAP)
- 10 action points that fall in 2023, 2025 or are ongoing

Three action points are complete.

A special thanks to our Climate Officer Chloe Fiddy for her hard efforts in getting our plan completed.

AIR QUALITY/TRANSPORT

Uttlesford

Uttlesford District Council has been awarded more than £500,000 by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to bring forward a series of projects to tackle air pollution and improve opportunities for sustainable travel.

The funding, totalling £517,124, comes from the Air Quality Grant, which helps councils develop and implement projects to benefit schools, businesses and communities and reduce the impact of dirty air on people's health.

There were two lots to bid for, the first related to projects linked to local Air Quality Action Plans and the second for projects to improve public awareness in local communities about air pollution risks and the projects that deal with particulate matter. Our bid consisted of multiple measures that could have been for both, but we settled on lot 2. We are both surprised and very pleased with the success of the bid.

In short, our proposal (Saffron Walden Clean Air Initiative), included a range of measures to reduce pollution in the market town. Typically, cities and other locations receive all the funding and attention, but problems exist in small historic market towns due to old road networks that impede traffic flow.

The proposed range of measures focus on the following actions and initiatives

- Awareness, education and behaviour change;
- Clean air pilot schemes such as zero emission delivery service, electric and e-cargo bike hire etc;
- Traffic management schemes; and
- Increased AQ monitoring

Our outcomes include

- i) reduced NO2 & PM emissions to improve local air quality & ensure no exceedance within the Saffron Walden AQMA
- ii) development of air quality interventions for Saffron Walden that can be replicated in similar historic market towns elsewhere
- iii) raise awareness of air quality issues in the town
- iv) residents educated on the health impacts of poor air quality and behaviour change.

We expect that payment will be made in May and we are currently looking at our project plan to deliver initiatives to the Saffron Walden community. Cllr Pepper would like to thank the Officers involved in securing this vital funding.

Help us plan improvements to walking and cycling in Uttlesford



We're developing a new walking and cycling infrastructure plan and want to identify projects that can be delivered to transform active travel provision in the local area.

Go to our online survey and give us your suggestions on the improvements you'd like to see - it could be a new safe crossing, a new cycle lane or slower traffic speeds.

We've already had over 1,600 contributions and are keen to hear from you.

https://uttlesfordlcwip.commonplace.is/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

BIODIVERSITY

Uttlesford Tree Scheme

The total number of trees planted as part of the Tree planting Initiative 2021-22 was 34. The number of native hedging plants planted was 2,038. The total expenditure was £6,409.29. The planting extended over 7 parishes.



Hedge planting being undertaken at Lime Avenue, Saffron Walden

A breakdown of the planting undertaken is set out below.

Tree Planting Initiative 2021-22

Lime Avenue Open Space, Saffron Walden

1,394no. native species hedging plants.

Cost: £2,491.50

Wicken Lea Open Space, Newport

6no. hornbeam trees.

Cost: £1,417.24

Saxon Way Open Space, Saffron Walden

1no. hornbeam tree.

Cost: £128.00

Ardley Crescent Open Space, Hatfield Heath

624no. native species hedging plants.

Cost: £1471.55

Saffron Walden Museum Grounds

5no. Yew and 5no Box.

Cost: £97.50

Little Canfield Business Park

1no. lime tree.

Cost: £114.00

Stebbing Parish Council

10no. hornbeam.

Cost: £250.00

Felsted Parish Council

5no. oak

Cost: £350.00

Clavering Parish Council

1no. oak.

Cost: £57.00

Unfortunately, two significant woodland planting proposals prepared did not come to fruition as the relevant parish council and residents' management company decided not to proceed with these schemes (Molehill Green, Takeley; Wicken Lea, Newport). I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved, in assisting with our biodiversity crisis.

ENERGY

Uttlesford

The council, together with Citizens Advice, has also put together some handy winter guidance, on how to save money on energy bills, as well as useful contacts of organisations that can help <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/keeping-warm-in-uttlesford>.

Solar Together Essex



Solar Together is an Essex County Council scheme that helps buyers through the process of purchasing high-quality solar panels, offering lower prices than the open market and pairing up residents with trusted suppliers.

Solar Together Essex helps residents to save money on both installation and future energy bills.

Register for free and without obligation for a personal recommendation by 15 March.

https://solartogether.co.uk/essex/home?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery#

Save money on your energy bills

If you live in Uttlesford and find it hard to heat your home and worry about your energy bills, a Green Homes Grant might be able to help.

The scheme can help you make improvements for a warmer home that's kinder to the environment and will help you to reduce your fuel bills.

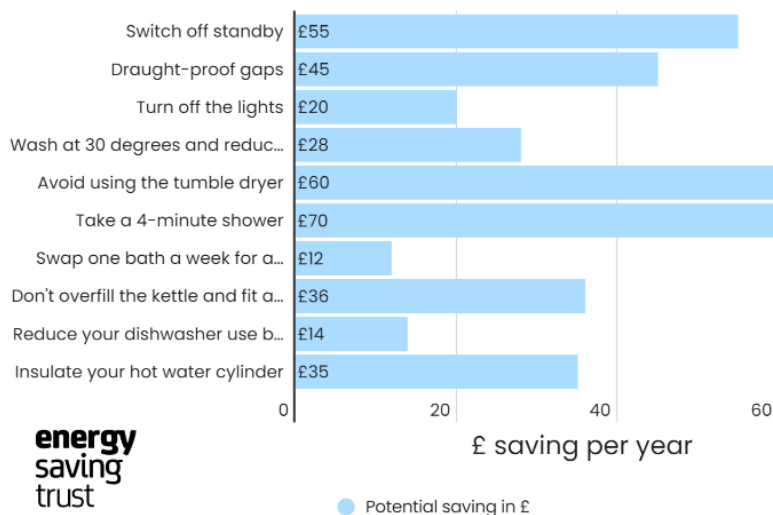


You could qualify for help if you live in an energy inefficient home, which is owned or privately rented, and you are in receipt of benefits or are on a low income.

https://surveys.est.org.uk/s/GreenHomesGrantSchemeLAD/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

How much could you save?

Add up the potential £££ savings available for each energy saving action.



*Savings are for a typical three-bedroom, gas-heated home in Great Britain, using a gas price of 7.4p/kWh and electricity price of 28.3p/kWh (based on April 2022 price cap). Water savings are based on average occupancy. This household is projected to spend a total £1,970 on energy annually, including standing charge. Figures updated March 2022.

<https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/hub/quick-tips-to-save-energy/>

Carbon Brief analysis say that if all households turn down their thermostats by one degree it would eliminate the need for Russian gas

WASTE

Uttlesford



Local litter - Dunmow bypass

On my last local walk and in aid of the **Great British Spring Clean**, I decided to pick up some litter, along the way. My walk brought me out onto the Dunmow bypass. I was disappointed to see, that litter

had been discarded in a lovely small woodland. Many public walkways are on private land and it's disheartening to know that we are allowed this privilege and that some people display no thought towards the landowner or the surrounding biodiversity. The roadside verge was no better. Glass & plastic bottles, cans and paper had been most likely been thrown out of a passing car. It takes very little effort to carry a spare bag in your car (for unwanted rubbish) and put it your grey bin. I only collected a small section of the Dunmow bypass and in my village but several days later, there was litter tossed in the same location! When our Waste Officers can visit schools to discuss waste and the importance of recycling, we can ask students their thoughts on what we can do as a district, to raise awareness of the harm litter can have on the surrounding environment and our local wildlife. I'm very grateful to our local litter community groups and the many individuals who spend their own time, picking up local litter. Thank you for trying to keep our district clean and green.

Uttlesford recycling rates

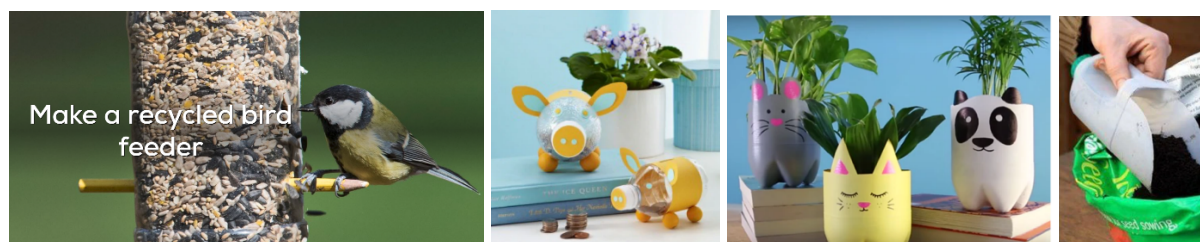
2020/21 Total % waste types	Tons	% of total	2021/22 Total % waste types	Tons	% of total
Food Waste	3298	9.56%	Food Waste	3069	11.04%
Garden Waste	3959	11.47%	Garden Waste	4300	15.47%
Recycling (Green bin)	11075	32.10%	Recycling (Green bin)	7416	26.68%
Residual (Grey bin)	15599	45.21%	Residual (Grey bin)	12272	44.16%
Street Sweepings	574	1.66%	Street Sweepings	734	2.64%
TOTAL:	34505	100.00%	TOTAL:	27791	100.00%

The amount of cardboard packaging materials during 2020/21 increased, as a result of more online shopping. The quantity of food waste generated within the district has also grown and both changes are thought to be connected to changing consumer habits during the pandemic.

Great British Spring Clean 25 March – 10 April.

Keep Britain Tidy estimates that two million pieces of rubbish are dropped every day across the country, which equates to 23 items of rubbish being dropped every second. The organisation also found that **taxpayers are paying out £1bn every year to cover the cost of street cleaning**, while the RSPCA announced recently, they receive an average of 14 calls a day about wildlife harmed by litter, but it acknowledges that the actual number of animals affected by rubbish is likely to be much higher.

Reuse plastic bottles



oshbottle.com/blogs/fosh/60-ways-to-reuse-plastic-bottle

Plastic Packaging Tax

You will need to pay Plastic Packaging Tax if you have manufactured or imported plastic packaging components which contain less than 30% recycled plastic. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-if-you-need-to-register-for-plastic-packaging-tax>

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

Uttlesford

Local Plan

Uttlesford District Council is working hard to develop a new Local Plan that will shape how the district grows and is protected over the coming decades.

Officers are now developing and compiling a raft of evidence, including heritage, landscape, infrastructure and employment, and are working with members, expert consultants and colleagues at Essex County Council on the next draft of the Local Plan - known as the **Regulation 18 Local Plan** - which will go out to wider consultation in the summer. This is the next opportunity for the public to comment.

Residents are encouraged to find out more about the local plan or sign up to receive regular updates by subscribing to the e-newsletter service - visit www.uttlesford.gov.uk/new-local-plan.

Biodiversity Net Gain

Biodiversity Net Gain is an approach to development that leaves biodiversity in a better state than before. Where a development has an impact on biodiversity it encourages developers to provide an increase in appropriate natural habitat and ecological features over and above that being affected in such a way it is hoped that the current loss of biodiversity through development will be halted and ecological networks can be restored.



https://www.iceniprjects.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/220310_Biodiversity-Net-Gain-Briefing-Note_v1_pages.pdf

LATEST EQUALITIES UPDATE

Community Listening Events

- **Menopause The Last Taboo** – 15th March 2022, lunchtime workshop facilitated by Lesley Salem Over The Bloody Mood, 80+ registered 30+ attended recording of the workshop available until 15th April 2022 for staff via the UDC Intranet. UDC staff also

- have access to the OTBM Menopause handbook via the intranet.
 - The 2nd **Celebrating Women event** scheduled for 22nd March 2022, which included presentations from Next Chapter a Domestic Abuse charity, Snapping The Stiletto on their Radical Women project and other work with Saffron Walden Museum, and Active Essex along with their This Girl Can Ambassadors , was unfortunately, cancelled due to poor take up, despite all the publicity across our social media platforms and newsletters.
 - **Conversations ongoing with Out House an LGBTQ+ organisation** with the aim of putting on an interactive event which will focus on young people across Uttlesford.
- **Sign Language Week 14-20 March** was promoted via the UDC website and on social media platforms.
 - **The West Essex Inclusion project Buddy Up** was first introduced during the Celebrating Diversity Disabilities event in January, the project has now gone live, information has been shared across our social media platforms and can be found on our website <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/diversity-listening-events>.
 - **Essex Equality Network** met on 24th March 2022, scheduled to meet again in June 2022
 - **Essex Faith Covenant** met 21st February 2022, scheduled to meet again on 25th April 2022

Armed Forces Covenant

- The application for the ERS (Employer recognition Scheme) Silver Award has been drafted, with feedback received from EA - Regional Employer Engagement Director Kristina Carrington, the application would be submitted before the deadline 13th April 2022
- Essex Civilian Military Partnership Board scheduled for 20th April 2022
- Armed Forces Covenant Conference scheduled for 18th May 2022, Manchester

Local Strategic Partnership

- H&WB Board scheduled to meet 6th April 2022
- EEST met on 17th January 2022, next meeting scheduled for 28th April 2022
- C&F met on 3rd March 2022, next date to be confirmed
- CSP met on 10th March 2022, next meeting scheduled for 9th June 2022