



Buckingham Town Council Climate Emergency Action Plan

At Full Council on the 15th July 2019 Members AGREED:

“That Buckingham Town Council declares a climate emergency and commits to encourage Buckingham to become carbon neutral. This will help to raise the profile of this vital issue and secure external support and funding. It is also proposed that Buckingham Town Council also signs up to the Covenant of Mayors to track our progress and link with towns around the world who are cutting emissions. Our aim is to make the Town Council carbon neutral by 2030 and encouraging the town’s population, organisation and businesses to work with us in that aim.”

Local Councils that have declared a climate emergency tend to do so to provide leadership and help educate their communities about both the threat of and solutions to the climate crisis. This should then act to harness “people power” to make that change possible at all levels, especially driving higher levels of government to act and ultimately force them to pull the economic and legislative levers needed to reverse global warming and restore a safe climate.

This action plan sets locally determined actions with measures to deliver the objectives both within the Council and across the town. The actions are measurable with targets that hold the Council to account. This Climate Emergency Action Plan is an over-arching pledge that identifies the following priority areas of change:

Objectives

- a) Energy - to reduce energy demand, improve energy efficiency and convert to renewable, low or zero carbon technologies for energy and heat.
- b) Transport – to promote walking, cycling and public transport. Accelerating the move to Council owned electric vehicles.
- c) Food & Land - to promote sustainable land management, including tree planting to help absorb carbon & water.
- d) Economy, Housing & Waste – to support the local economy to ensure existing and new homes are climate resilient whilst reducing, re using and recycling materials and ongoing resources e.g. water
- e) Community Engagement - to engage local people in accelerating their own responses and building resilience to ongoing climate impacts.



Buckingham Town Council's Climate Emergency Action Plan

Community Engagement - to engage local people in accelerating their own responses and building resilience to ongoing climate impacts.				
	Action	Measure	Responsibility	Update
1.	Creation of a Climate Emergency webpage to enable discussion, idea sharing and extend public awareness of the issues.	Number of visitors per year	Resources Committee	Creation of a link to the section on the climate emergency on the council's website should be promoted by a permanent banner at the top of the home page and the website pages relating to the environment should be more interactive to encourage more public involvement.
2.	Information can be made available to maximise public awareness and access to information	Number of contacts made	Resources Committee	Annual public information displays at Annual Town Meeting, Spring Green Fair and Celebrate Buckingham.
3.	Encourage practical action by local people through proactive communication campaigns.	Number of visitors per year to webpage	TC&E and Environment Committee	<p>Monthly social media content planning sessions allow for a regular programme of environmental campaigns and initiatives.</p> <p>The office has engaged with local schools to discuss our Action Plan and how they can get involved in community climate action.</p> <p>As a way of generating further engagement, competitions and awards for innovative approaches to tackle the climate emergency are promoted by the council.</p>
4.	Consultation on the Buckingham Neighbourhood Plan refresh		Planning Committee	Consultation rolled out in 2023/24.



	will enable detailed consultation on the proposed changes.			
5.	Encourage the formation of Local Climate Action Groups.	One formed	Climate Champions	Buckingham boasts a Community Climate café and Repair café, who meet (individually) every month and also attended Celebrate Buckingham to consult on the public's climate priorities.
6.	Host a public meeting on the issue.	One per year	Climate Champions	The Town Council host an information stall on climate change at every public event in Buckingham, as deemed appropriate. Feedback from each event is to be reviewed in line with the objectives of the Climate Emergency Action Plan's objectives.
Energy - reduce energy demand, improve energy efficiency and convert to renewable, low or zero carbon technologies for energy and heat				
	Action	Measure	Responsibility	Updates
7.	Implement an Energy Audit of all Council buildings and vehicles.	Actions implemented	Resources Committee	Procuring clean energy wherever possible and reducing the amount of energy that must be procured. The Town Councils aims to achieve the best value in terms of pricing, but also maximising value from these contracts, including a review of the carbon footprint of the supply and an environmental performance of the supplier.
8.	Change BTC energy provider to renewable/ green tariffs	Moved to green tariffs by 2022/23	Environment Committee	Solar Panels installed October 2021 at Lace Hill, utilising clean energy and reducing the amount of energy that must be procured.



9.	Offset carbon emissions by planting more trees (whenever possible)	One tree planting project per year	Environment Committee	Over the last five years the Town Council have planted 1,782 new trees in Buckingham with support from community groups, Tree Wardens, and residents.
10.	Investigate the environmental impact of Town Council events	Publication of Environmental Impact Assessment for each relevant event	Town Centre & Event Committee	The Town Council have introduced an Environmental Impact Assessment for Town Council led events with over 400 participants/attendees, as part of the existing Events Management Plan. A summary of which, is reviewed by TC&E Committee.
11.	Minimise the climate impact from development and encourage a low carbon economy through our Neighbourhood Development Plan by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage a sustainable pattern of development supported by a low carbon transport infrastructure • Promote sustainable design in and in the overall town by interrogating every planning application (large or small) with our developing set of 'zero carbon planning questions' • Protecting against the needless destruction 	% of new builds in the parish to be low carbon properties	Planning Committee	To be considered through consultation on the Buckingham Neighbourhood Plan refresh. Consultation to be rolled out in 2023/24. Draft design guide prepared which takes account of this.
		% of new builds in the parish to be low carbon properties	Planning Committee	



	and/or removal of tree from our parish			
12.	Install renewable energy generation on Council owned buildings	Installation of Photovoltaic Panels on all the Lace Hill Centre, The Community Centre and the new cemetery building (once constructed).	Full Council and Resources Committee	Greenway Solar Panels commissioned and installed 55 Trina Solar Vertex S 380W all black split cell mono photovoltaic (solar) panels at the Lace Hill Sports and Community Centre.
Economy, Housing & Waste – to support the local economy to ensure existing and new homes are climate resilient whilst reducing, re using and recycling materials and ongoing resources e.g. water				
	Action	Measure	Responsibility	Update
13.	Provide recycling facilities at all Town Council Events and within Town Council owned buildings.	One mixed recycling bin per event	TC&E /Environment	Recycling bins are now being provided at all Town Council events. Noting the success of recycling Biffa bins at Music in the Market & Bandjam. Recycling in all BTC offices (including Lace Hill Centre’s public areas) now implemented.
14.	Work with and support litter picking initiatives around town including the increased promotion of annual River rinse events.	One Town Council event per year in addition to the two annual river rinses.	TC&E Committee	Community Litter Picking kits are housed at the Town Council’s depot and Buckingham Library for community use. The equipment is in regular use by community groups, including weekly litter picks by Councillors and pupils at Furze Down School.



14	Investigate possibilities of rainwater harvesting for all new town council buildings and use the water for planters and hanging baskets	One per new build (owned by BTC)	Resources Committee	To be considered within the construction design stage of the new cemetery buildings.
15.	Promote the installation of the water bottle refill station in Chandos Park and the national refill initiative	Number of interactions through Social Media	Environment Committee and Resources Committee	<u>Water bottle refill</u> station installed and positively received.
16.	Actions implemented to eliminate the use of single-use plastics within Council offices/buildings.	No purchases of single use plastics	Resources Committee	The Council no longer purchases single use plastic items for events and for use within its offices. This is written within the Town Council's Sustainable Purchasing Policy and within its Traders' Booking Form. The plastic-free message was promoted as part of the 'Rubbish Campaign' and launch of the water bottle refill station in Chandos Park.
17.	Implement waste education and promotional campaigns.	Number of interactions through social media and with groups including schools	Resources Committee	The last two Local Democracy Week events have focused on Climate Change and the office met with both senior schools to further discuss how they can get involve in Climate Community Action. The Office Apprentice ran a Recycling Mosaics competition with the Buckingham School to create artworks for display in the Tourist Information Centre.
18.	Request a carbon footprint of any Town Council investment and seek to reduce this by switching to investments supporting renewable energy projects and eco-enhancements.	Measure and publish low carbon emission certification	Resources Committee	To be considered within the next review of the Investment Policy Strategy.



19.	Buy local, fair-trade, recycled, plastic free, repairable and sustainable products wherever possible/available.	Consideration of a procurement strategy	Resources Committee	Wherever possible sustainable materials will always be sourced from local providers. July 2021: Full Council adopted a <u>Sustainable Purchasing and Procurement Policy</u>
20.	Ask grant applicants to consider the impact on the environment of their project and any steps they can take to mitigate them. Members to consider these responses when allocating grant funds.		Resources Committee	From 2021/21 each applicant must state how their organisation is working to reduce the environmental impact of their project.

Transport – to promote walking, cycling and public transport. Accelerating the move to Council owned electric vehicles.

	Action	Measure	Responsibility	Updates
21.	Explore more bike parking facilities around the town, including local schools and businesses.	Additional cycle racks with each development	Planning Committee	All new development housing has either a shed big enough to house a bike, or (for flats) a room for cycle parking, generally at the rate of 1 per flat.
22.	Consider holding an event that promotes cycling around the town	To be considered on a future agenda of TC&E	Town Centre & Events Committee	Cycling and walking trails are promoted through the Tourist Information Centre and will be publicised at the Spring Green Fair. The Spring Green Fair 2023 featured a stand from Dr Bike, offering cycle repairs and second hand bike sales.
23.	Replace BTC owned vehicles and green spaces equipment with suitable electric models when existing petrol, and diesel vehicles come to the end of	Replace each vehicle at the appropriate point in its lifecycle.	Environment Committee	One Electric van, leased Summer 2020. Aim for full replacement of all vehicles with electric alternatives by 2030. Once the new cemetery is up and running there are plans to purchase other electric powered machinery, such as ride-on mowers.



	their usable life, aiming for full replacement with electric vehicles by 2030.			
24.	Refurbish and promote the town's benches to assist walkers to take short rests. Advertise Buckingham as a 'pedestrian friendly town' on the Council's 'Walks and Maps' section of the website.	Replace each bench at the appropriate point in its lifecycle.	Environment Committee	Walking trails regularly promoted via Buxplore along with healthy outdoor activities. Greenspaces team have refurbished or repaired a number of park benches throughout the town and will be installing five additional picnic benches in Bourton and Chandos Park.
25.	Work with Buckinghamshire Council to extend/ improve cycle/ walking network		Full Council	The Greenspaces Team have maintained walking and cycling routes across BTC land holdings and under agreement with others. The Town Council have provided feedback to Buckinghamshire Council to support the introduction of a cycle scheme between Gawcott and Buckingham via the Emergency Active Travel fund.
26.	Work with Buckinghamshire Council on increasing EV charge points on public land		Full Council	Buckinghamshire Council have agreed to install 8 charging points in Cornwall's Meadow and Western Avenue.

Food & Land - to promote sustainable land management, including tree planting to help absorb carbon & water.

	Action	Measure	Responsibility	Updates
27.	Finalise Flood Plans with local partners	Number of contacts established	Environment & Resources Committee	Meetings have been held between Buckinghamshire Council and the Town Council to discuss how to ensure a coordinated response to future flood plans. Flooding advice has been added to the Town Council website. All properties
28.	Advise residents on steps to increase resilience	Increased number of residents	Environment & Resources Committee	



		signed up to the Flood Warden Scheme		at risk will be written to each year with details of the Council's plan and sources of support.
29.	Promote the community flood warden scheme	Increased number of residents signed up to the Flood Warden Scheme		
30.	Protect and enhance native species and habitats. Promoting and supporting opportunities for environmental enhancement and regeneration	One environmental campaign per year	Environment Committee	Installation of <u>wildflower boards in Bourton Park</u> to promote the planting of native wildflower species (April 2021). Thousands of native <u>Woodland bulbs</u> were planted around Bourton Park in September 2020 and a second bulb planting event is planned for Winter 2023. Six new bird boxes are installed in Bourton Park by volunteer, Michael Hunt. Providing nesting sites for small birds and monitoring biodiversity in our parks. Tiny Forest installed within Bourton Park 2023.
31.	Support local food production including the provision of more allotments for people to grow their own food.	Number of allotment holders at the new Tingewick Road Allotment site	Full Council	The Town Council continues to signpost new applicants to the Allotment society and <u>Edible Woodland</u> and is working with Buckinghamshire Council on potential sites for community gardening sites. Creation of edible planters/troughs outside the community centre and cattle pens. The new system of planting should require less watering and be tolerant of the hotter summers caused by climate change. Once the plants have established, the planters will be advertised as a community herb garden, encouraging residents/visitors to help themselves.
32.	Seek adequate garden space or community spaces for growing food in all future development.	One community space per new development	Full Council and Planning Committee	To be reviewed within the refresh of the NDP.



33.	Purchase (where possible) locally produced and fair-trade food for the Council's use and civic events.	All BTC events	Town Centre & Events Committee	Incorporated within planning for all Town Council events. Referencing the Town Council's Sustainable Procurement Strategy
34.	Review of grass verges and hedges to identify areas to be trimmed less and later in the year to support more wildflowers and insects	To be considered within Greenspaces Strategy and Management Plan for Parks	Environment Committee	The grass cutting plan is reviewed annually by Environment Committee in March. The paddocks and sections of the bypass are cut later in the year to support and promote biodiversity. Large sections of the Bypass are planted with wildflower seed, and many rare wildflowers and orchids have been spotted growing within our unmown sections of the grass verge. If patches of wildflower are identified within the cemetery or roadside verges, they are avoided by the mowers and left to go to seed. E.g., Bee Orchids on the Gawcott roundabout.
35.	Each year allocate a section of land to be planted with wildflowers.	One per year	Environment Committee	The Town Council has planted the equivalent of 16 tennis courts of wildflowers since 2017. Wildflowers were distributed at 2023's Spring Green Fair and Celebrate Buckingham.
36.	Plan a new eco-friendlier cemetery to include planting more trees and wildflowers.	Measure and publish plans and low carbon emission certification	Environment Committee	To enable this, a sustainable design approach is to be taken in all aspects of the new cemetery. In particular; to reduce energy demand, improve energy efficiency and convert to renewable, low or zero carbon technologies for energy and heat as well as recycling materials and ongoing resources e.g. water.
37.	Work with the Tree Wardens, in promotion of the Tree Charter.	5 new Tree Wardens signed up per year.	Environment Committee	Tree Wardens are regularly contact by the Planning Clerk for input into Tree Applications and several Wardens took part in March 2023's Tiny Forest tree planting event in Bourton Park.