



**Climate Change Action Plan
2022-2030**

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1. Introduction

This document sets out what Corsham Town Council is doing to reduce the impact of climate change on our community through reducing carbon emissions, improving biodiversity, building resilience to extreme weather, reducing fuel poverty and supporting a greener economy.

The document explains the roles, opportunities and drivers for Town Council-led action and sets out the benefits for local people and places.

Our aim is to achieve positive outcomes for Corsham's residents, businesses, visitors and the natural environment.

2. Our Commitment to Action

Climate change is the large-scale, long-term shift in the planet's weather patterns and average temperatures. To avoid significant increases in the average surface temperature, we must cut greenhouse gas emissions and switch to renewable energy sources. We also need to use land more sustainably.

In 2019, the Town Council made a commitment to reduce the carbon footprint of our community in support of Government and Wiltshire Council's targets and commitments to reducing carbon emissions. It held an Environmental Group launch event in November 2019 and established an Environmental Task Group of the Town Council and local interest groups to take action on climate change. The purpose of the group is to influence, facilitate, communicate and carry out projects that will result in a lower carbon footprint for Corsham parish area.

In October 2021, Corsham Town Council declared a climate and ecological emergency stating:

'Corsham Town Council fully accepts the need for urgent action in response to the climate and ecological emergencies that we face. We are committed to reducing the carbon footprint of our community in support of Government and Wiltshire Council targets to reduce carbon emissions. We are implementing a carbon reduction plan for our own operations which will enable us to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2030. From 2022, we will implement a biodiversity action plan to protect and enhance our green and blue infrastructure.'

The Town Council was making progress towards reducing its carbon emissions and managing its resources in an environmentally sensitive way prior to the declaration. Since the declaration, we have been more focussed on environmental issues and carbon reduction across all our activities.

Some of the actions we have already taken include setting up a community focussed environmental task group; implementing a sustainable Covid recovery plan for the town centre and employing a full-time Environmental Project Officer to commission, produce and deliver our carbon reduction plan and biodiversity action plan.

Beyond the Town Council's own assets and services and clear environmental improvements, there are co-benefits of taking action on climate change including economic - job creation, and social - equity and social cohesion, health and well-being, resilience and community engagement.

As a local council we are taking on a leadership role in creating a low carbon and climate-resilient community.

Individual Councillors also have a key role to play in offering vision and direction to local groups; representing local concerns and views; encouraging residents and businesses to participate and facilitating and encouraging coordinated action.

3. How we will achieve our Objectives

Society is dependent on the survival of our natural climate and biodiversity, and we need to acknowledge the impact of the decisions we make.

Consideration of our climate and nature are ingrained in what we do and the decisions we make.

Our goal is to ensure that the climate and ecological emergencies are at the centre of all our decisions, so we reach net zero carbon emissions by 2030.

Our key decision-making processes include listening and engaging with our community; establishing and maintaining partnerships; empowering people and groups; providing support, funding and information; representing, through advocating for change, and looking after the interests of vulnerable people. We will provide transparency and accountability about our goals, actions and progress against targets.

Our key decisions involve considering how we will help meet national and local net zero carbon targets, reduce air pollution and protect and restore nature, as well as deliver on a green Covid recovery.

We will provide carbon literacy training for all Councillors and officers. It is important to ensure that everyone is trained in carbon literacy so they can work towards cutting carbon emissions in their work and make informed decisions.

4. Finance and Resources

Our goal is to have sufficient resources to invest in the changes needed to meet carbon reduction and biodiversity goals. We plan to maximise opportunities to bring investment into the town through external funding mechanisms.

As well as our own resources, we will use planning mechanisms such as Section 106 agreements and the Community Infrastructure Levy to fund climate actions and biodiversity improvement projects.

We will provide a community grant budget which local groups can apply to for funds towards carbon reduction projects.

We will continue to seek to procure locally sourced services and products, or Fairtrade alternatives where available.

We will review our investments with banks and move away from those who have investments in the fossil fuel industry.

5. Community Engagement

Active engagement with residents and businesses is essential in realising the benefits of adapting and responding to the challenges of climate change and in the creation of a low carbon and climate-resilient community.

There are significant opportunities for coordinated action to help deliver local priorities, improve health, save money, boost the local economy, improve the transport system and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment.

The Town Council is developing its Strategic Plan for 2022-2026 which places emphasis on community engagement.

Environment-linked community engagement initiatives already underway include:

- *Leading, managing and administering the Environmental Task Group of Councillors, residents and key stakeholders.*
- *Survey of the local schools on their carbon reduction and biodiversity plans and awareness.*
- *Organising a community Eco Fair to facilitate communication between residents and the Town Council on climate action that people want to see.*
- *Reviewing and improving how we involve residents in our decision-making processes.*
- *Working closely with Corsham Climate Action to promote, support and encourage action on climate change locally and further afield.*

6. Influencing Others

Addressing climate change requires action across the whole of society. By working together, we will be able to share resources and expertise and have a greater impact on cutting carbon emissions locally. Our goal is to encourage and support others with their contribution to addressing the climate and ecological emergencies. We will lobby Wiltshire Council and other local authorities and government for zero carbon planning and delivery of services.

We are adopting a joined up approach with our local parish councils and Wiltshire Council and are an active member of the Area Board's Environment Collaboration Group.

We are keen to involve residents and stakeholders in developing and delivering our Climate Change Action Plan and Biodiversity Action Plan.

We will continue to promote community sharing and reuse to reduce waste and unnecessary consumption.

Residents - Engagement and support from residents is essential in constructing plans and we will involve a diverse range of residents from our community to help ensure a wide variety of ideas are heard and that solutions to problems are found collectively.

Businesses - We will work with local businesses to help to cut energy, water and resource use and encourage them to generate their own electricity where appropriate. We will encourage and support other entities with their contribution to addressing climate change and to increase biodiversity. We are surveying businesses on their progress toward lowering their carbon emissions and will direct them to sources of information, expertise and funding.

Schools – We are using our existing connections with the local schools to find out what they are doing to reduce carbon emissions and increase biodiversity. We are surveying each school on areas which include energy use, travel, school meals and biodiversity. We will encourage and support schools in becoming Eco-Schools.

Community Groups – We will provide information and offer support, guidance and expertise in climate change and environmental issues. Our community grants scheme will encourage applications from groups who are working towards carbon reduction and action on climate change.

7. Buildings

We acknowledge current challenges with gaining permission for energy improvements to our listed buildings: the Town Hall and Arnold House. We will seek to overcome these through innovative retro-fit solutions and close working with Wiltshire Council, as the local planning authority.

Any new buildings the Town Council commissions will be designed to achieve our target of net zero carbon by 2030. This will include the use of sustainable materials, low operational energy and integration of renewable technologies. New Town Council buildings will be exemplar in sustainable, low energy and low carbon design.

8. Transport

Our goal is to significantly increase the proportion of people that travel by walking, cycling and public transport through support of active travel initiatives. The benefits of this include improving local health and wellbeing; encouraging investment by promoting sustainable transport and making a cleaner environment.

Areas we are working on include:

- *Promotion of walking by supporting and promoting local walking groups and routes.*
- *Production of the Corsham Cycling Strategy and investing in the projects within the Cycling Action Plan to increase good quality cycling infrastructure and promote cycling in general.*
- *Reducing car use through measures such as boosting public transport and promoting car-sharing through schemes such as Car Share Wiltshire.*
- *Working to introduce 20mph speed limits or zones in certain locations to make them more cycle and pedestrian friendly.*
- *Encouraging a shift to electric vehicles by supporting the installation of electric vehicle charging points.*
- *Including working from home in the rota for Town Council staff to reduce miles travelled.*

9. Vehicles, Plant and Grounds Equipment

We aim to deliver a transition of our own fleet and machinery to electric.

The Town Council has purchased one electric vehicle which is used daily by the grounds team. When new vehicles are needed, they will be replaced with electric ones wherever possible.

Several items of small machinery and plant have been replaced with electric versions. This includes chainsaws, strimmers and hedge cutters.

10. Energy

Direct

The Town Council is moving to 100% renewable energy for its directly purchased electricity and gas supplies from April 2022.

Energy efficiency measures have been implemented in the Council's buildings but there are challenges in making them even more energy efficient due to their listed building status. We will be working to overcome those issues as part of our Carbon Reduction Plan. We will explore whether energy generation from our property, such as installing solar panels, is feasible.

The Town Council is planning to build a new workshop for its grounds team. The building will have low operational energy use and contribute to our commitment to net zero carbon by 2030.

Indirect

We are encouraging employers and landlords to conduct energy efficiency measures, starting with the larger businesses and premises. So far, these include businesses on Leafield Industrial Estate, MOD Corsham, Corsham Estate, GreenSquare Accord and Co-op.

Improving housing so that buildings can withstand rising summer temperatures, and everyone can afford to keep warm in winter is important to us. We will seek to help owner-occupied homes be more energy efficient by promoting grant schemes and supporting energy companies to provide households with insulation.

We will support the development of renewable energy and energy storage through the planning system, for example strengthening our Neighbourhood Plan policies and when responding to planning applications.

11. Water

Water is a valuable resource. We have installed water-saving devices in the Town Hall and public toilets. Our aim is to further reduce consumption at our allotment sites and in our floral displays by rainwater harvesting, promoting water butts and using more drought-resistant plant varieties.

12. Waste

Our goal is to be a sustainable community where all waste is minimised, recycled or reused as part of a circular economy approach.

The Town Council separates its plastics and cardboard for recycling and food waste is composted. We have introduced a pilot public recycling bin scheme for the town centre and some parks and aim to extend this to all parks and play areas.

The Town Council keeps its single-use plastics to a minimum and encourages its suppliers to follow suit. Stallholders and entertainers at Town Council events are encouraged to use alternatives to single-use plastics.

We support and promote Corsham Recycling Hub at Springfield Campus and publicise Corsham Climate Action and its 'A-Z Re-use and Recycling Guide.'

We will support and promote Refill Corsham, providing free water refills to residents and visitors to the Town Hall, reducing single use plastic bottles. We will encourage more local businesses to join the scheme.

There is currently no separate waste collection for food waste in Wiltshire. The Town Council will encourage Wiltshire Council to introduce such a scheme.

13. Health and Wellbeing

Not everyone is impacted by climate change in the same way. There is a wide range of inequalities which make some people more vulnerable to its effects, such as age, race, disability and levels of income/wealth. We aim to identify those people, groups and places in our community who or which are more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and establish how we will support them.

We will work with others to support those disadvantaged through our Health and Wellbeing Group. Our Environmental Project Officer is working with our Community Services Officer (Health and Wellbeing) on initiatives such as:

- Helping households save money on their energy bills and keep warm by improving the energy efficiency of local homes.
- Helping the most vulnerable by identifying those most at risk from the impacts of extreme weather such as flooding, over-heating and cold.
- Collaborating with partners to promote active, healthy lifestyles and to refer those at risk of fuel poverty to sources of help.

We will target some of our resources for dealing with climate change and biodiversity to vulnerable people and the areas where they live.

14. Land Use and Planning

Our aim is to protect and enhance our own green spaces, making them more biodiverse and ensuring appropriate public access. Our Biodiversity Action Plan (Appendix 2) sets out how we will increase biodiversity and wildlife value and enhance our green and blue infrastructure. We will manage Town Council-owned land in an environmentally sensitive way. This includes minimising pesticide use and significantly increasing planting of trees, shrubs and wildflowers and the creation of ponds.

We will continue to protect our existing tree stock in order to store carbon, support nature, aid flood protection and deliver mental health benefits. Trees will only be felled where they pose an identifiable risk to people or property.

Our goal is to ensure everyone has access to nature and to restore nature to help draw down carbon pollution from the atmosphere.

As part of the review of the Corsham Neighbourhood Plan, we will ensure greater emphasis and focus on the environment and sustainability. The CNP Batscape Strategy will be reviewed and updated periodically. It will be used as a constraint to development and an indicator of the state of our natural environment. We will seek to ensure new homes meet ambitious standards of energy and water efficiency.

Our Neighbourhood Plan seeks to reduce the need to own and use a car by trying to ensure the location and design of new developments is accessible by safe cycling, walking routes and good quality public transport.

Our Biodiversity Action Plan will seek to increase the amount and quality of our green spaces and to restore nature and provide corridors connecting them for wildlife.

We will support and encourage the major landowners in restoring land for wildlife.

15. Delivery and Monitoring

Corsham Town Council's Carbon Reduction Plan and Biodiversity Action Plan will be aligned with our other plans, policies and guidance. Our emerging Strategic Plan 2022-2026 will have a focus on dealing with the effects of climate change.

Our plans will include SMART objectives along with interim and measurable carbon reduction and biodiversity targets.

We will make our plans easily visible by providing information and updates on our website. We are accountable for our actions, and we want to ensure residents know the climate action we are working on and planning.

We will set up a steering group of Councillors and officers to monitor the action plans and ensure timely progress is being made and delivered. The group will meet throughout the year and updates will be provided to all Councillors, staff and the community.

We are working with advisors who will assist us in producing our Biodiversity Action Plan during 2022.

A key target on carbon reduction is about Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions.

We have commissioned an independent carbon footprint report which we will update and report on annually and make sure we are on course to meet net zero carbon for Corsham Town Council by 2030.

6 June 2022

Appendix 1 - Carbon Reduction Plan

Corsham Town Council's Climate Change Action Plan						
Climate action	Target Date	Lead Officer	Total Estimated CO2 savings (tonnes) per year	Scope of emissions	KPI	Comments
Finance and resources						
Ensure all purchasing by the Council is environmentally friendly, buy local wherever possible	Ongoing	BS		3	% of contractors supplying environmental policy	
Ensure the supply chain of everything we purchase is as environmentally friendly as possible	Ongoing	BS		3	% of contractors supplying environmental policy	
Ensure contractors hired by the council are operating as sustainably as possible	Ongoing	BS/JW		3	% of contractors supplying environmental policy	Provide contractors with a copy of our Environmental Policy and ask them to comply
Review use of all chemicals used by CTC (e.g. cleaning products) and seek environmentally friendly alternatives	2021-22	JW/BS		3	All harmful chemicals replaced by environmentally friendly equivalent where available by 2023	
Divest all investments from fossil fuels	2022 onwards	BS/MJ		3	By 2023 no investments in fossil fuels	
Ensure that all staff are fully trained and aware of the Council Environmental policy and promoting best practice for sustainable purchasing.	Ongoing	BS/MJ		3	% staff trained	Set up team training starting from 2022

Community Engagement						
Continue to lead and manage the Environment Task Group to facilitate further climate action projects outside of the council	2021 onwards	BS/DM		N/A	Number of active members and projects taken on by the group	Minutes of meetings uploaded to Town Council website
Hold the Corsham Eco Fair to promote climate action taking place in Corsham through eco-friendly businesses, organisations and community groups	Annually from 2022	BS		N/A	Event taken place 2022 will become an annual event	Event took place on April 2 nd 2022
Survey local schools to find out what climate and biodiversity action they are taking and work to support this action	2022	BS		N/A	Survey completed by all schools	
Influencing Others						
Lobby Wiltshire Council highways for improvements where there is an environmental gain e.g. congestion relief	Ongoing	BS/JW		N/A		
Lobby Wiltshire Council and other local authorities/ government for zero carbon planning policies	Ongoing	BS/KG		N/A		
Offer grants for carbon reduction projects	Ongoing	BS/MJ		N/A	Number of grant applications accepted	
Work with BWCE and Corsham businesses for large solar projects	2021-ongoing	BS		N/A	Number of completed projects	
Air quality monitoring	2021 onwards	BS		N/A	Published air quality report	
Promote the council's climate action through the new website and newsletter	Ongoing	BS		N/A		
Buildings						
Improve the energy efficiency of all Council owned buildings including improving insulation measures	2022-2023	BS/JW		2	Reduce energy consumption by %	Determined by Carbon Footprint Report. March 2022

Install solar panels on Council owned buildings where possible	2023	BS/JW		1	Study completed by March 2023	
Build the Councils net zero-carbon workshop	2021-2023	JW		1	Completed workshop by 2023	Planning permission being sought March 2022
Review Arnold House and agree future use. If retained, improve energy efficiency	2022	JW/DM	4.87	2	Decision made by March 2023	
Review Guide hut/ workshop and agree future use. If retained, improve energy efficiency	2022	JW/DM		2	Decision made by March 2023	
Transport						
Encourage staff to take 'greener' modes of transport to work to reduce individual car use	From 2022 onwards	BS	3.58	3	Employee commuting miles and mode data	Published data in Carbon Footprint Report
Promote the staff cycle to work scheme to encourage 'greener' travel	From 2021 onwards	BS/MJ		3	Employee commuting miles and mode data	Published data in Carbon Footprint Report
Reduce staff travel during working hours by holding online meetings, courses and events	From 2021 onwards	BS/DM	0.75	3	Business miles data	Published data in Carbon Footprint Report
Improve cycling infrastructure through the Corsham Cycling Strategy	Completed in 2021	BS/JW		N/A	Corsham Cycling Strategy complete for 2021-2026	Infrastructure improvements ongoing annual review of completions
Vehicles, Plant and Grounds Equipment						
Replace ground staff fleet with Electric Vehicles	From 2021 onwards	JW/BS	2.76	1	% of fleet low emission	1 out of 4 vehicles change as of August 2021
Replace petrol powered equipment with electric	From 2021 onwards	JW		1	% of equipment low emission	Record litres of petrol used
Energy						
Council audit of carbon footprint	To be completed annually	BS		1, 2 & 3	Carbon data reported annually	Following recommendations in report from Carbon Footprint Ltd March 2022

Switch to renewable electricity for all council owned buildings	Completed in April 2022	JW	7.20	2	100% renewable electricity by April 2022	On target March 2022. West Mercia energy supplies 100% renewable electricity from solar, wind and hydro
Switch to green gas for all council owned buildings	Completed in April 2022	JW	11.16	2	100% green gas by April 2022	On target March 2022. West Mercia energy supplies green gas
Water						
Change to waterless urinals in public conveniences	Completed in 2019	JW		3		Work out water saved
Assess water use at all Council owned sites. Monitor and report on Council water consumption to establish base line consumption	2022	BS/JW		3	Litres of metered water usage reported annually	Bills for metered supplies: Public WC Middlewick allotment
Install water efficiency measures into all new and refurbished Council facilities	2022 onwards	BS/JW		3	Decrease in water usage reports	
Install rain water harvesting measures where appropriate	2022 onwards	BS		3		
Waste						
Introduce recycling bins in public areas and parks to reduce landfill waste	2021-2022	BS		3	Review number of recycling bins installed annually	As of March 2022 seven public recycling bins have been installed
Measure quantity of recycled waste	2022 onwards	BS/JW		3	% of recycling collected	
Measure quantity of all waste going to landfill and set targets to reduce this	2023 onwards	BS/JW		3	% reduction of waste going to landfill annually	
Significantly reduce the use of single-use plastic in council offices and premises	2022-2023	BS		3	% reduction in single use plastic waste	
Achieve Plastic Free Community Accreditation for Corsham	2023	BS		3	Being awarded Plastic Free Community	

					Status by Surfers Against Sewage	
Health and Wellbeing						
Promote grants and funding available to help households improve their energy efficiency	2021	BS/VF		N/A		
Promote active, healthy, sustainable lifestyles to children through activity days held and run by the council	2022	BS/VF		N/A	Completing children's activity day at Beechfield Nature Area	Event took place April 9 th 2022
Land Use and Planning						
Review the Neighbourhood Plan from an environmental and sustainable planning perspective	From 2022	BS/KG		N/A	Review complete	Annual reviews of Neighbourhood Plan in line with changing regulations and environmental planning policy
Plant more native trees and hedgerows	Ongoing	BS		N/A	Number of trees planted annually Refer to BAP	
Phase out the use of pesticides by the Council's ground staff	2022	BS/JW		N/A	Refer to BAP	
Rewilding of grass verges	Ongoing	BS		N/A	Refer to BAP	
Improve the biodiversity of green spaces by planting wildflower meadows	Ongoing	BS		N/A	Number planted Refer to BAP	
Set up a volunteer group to maintain public right of ways	2022	BS		N/A	Group set up and PRoW being maintained	
Allotments- review policies, practices and tenancy agreement and make improvements where possible	Renewed in Jan 2022 with implementation April 2022	JW/DM		N/A	Refer to allotment policies available on Town Council website	
Develop and follow a Biodiversity Action Plan	2022	BS		N/A	Plan in place	In talk with consultants to assist the writing of plan

Delivery and Monitoring						
Review Councils Environmental Policy annually	Completed for 2021	BS		N/A	Review in October 2022	
Create a carbon management plan solely for CTC carbon emissions by establishing a baseline regarding the council's current carbon production. Set reduction targets – implement a plan to achieve these reductions	2022	BS		N/A	Plan in place	Following recommendation in Carbon Footprint Ltd report
Investigate and introduce ISO 14001 Accreditation. This is an environmental management system which enables the council to set objectives and targets, monitor performance and make this information publicly available.	2022-2023	BS		N/A		

Lead officers:

BS- Beth Searle, Environmental Project Officer

JW- James Whittleton, Head of Technical Services

DM- David Martin, Chief Executive

MJ- Maxine Jones, Head of Finance and Administration

KG- Kirsty Gilby, Finance and Planning Officer

VF- Vickie Fauset, Health and Wellbeing Officer

Appendix 2 - Biodiversity Action Plan [under development in 2022]

References

Climate Emergency UK [<https://www.climateemergency.uk/>]

Friends of the Earth [<https://friendsoftheearth.uk/climate/whats-climate-action-plan-and-can-it-help-your-area>]

Local Government Association [<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/climate-change-hub>]

Met Office [<https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/climate-change/what-is-climate-change>]

National Association of Local Councils [<https://www.nalc.gov.uk/our-work/climate-change#:~:text=NALC%20is%20committed%20to%20guiding,online%20survey%20of%20211%20respondents.>]

Wiltshire Council [https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/media/6584/Community-Environmental-Toolkit-March-2021/pdf/26_MARCH_Toolkit_WebMR.pdf?m=637576410403830000.]

Amendments:

Appendix 1 - Typos corrected – djm22/06/22