



ALTON CLIMATE ACTION & NETWORK INPUT TO SHAPING EHDC'S STRATEGY TO ADDRESSING THE CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT EMERGENCY (Feb 2020)

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Commitment to zero carbon neutrality by 2040 & 45% reduction GHGs by 2030

The next 10 years are crucial for tackling the climate crisis, with widespread recognition that greenhouse gas emissions must fall at least 45% by 2030 to keep global warming below 1.5C. The IPCC considers catastrophic climate change to be increasingly inevitable if global heating exceeds 1.5C. We want EHDC to review this year its climate emergency declaration and –

- **Conduct a baseline audit of current greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs)** in order to be able to assess progress in reducing them over time. Progress against this baseline should be measured and reported on to the public every year.
- **Commit in its climate change strategy to achieving:**
 - **By 2030** at least a 45% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions across all operations under its own control
 - **By 2040 zero carbon neutrality** across all operations under its control
 - Set intermediate targets at 3 yearly intervals over the decade to 2030
- Residual carbon emissions to be mitigated by carbon sequestration – tree planting etc.

Adopting a 2030 target would strengthen EHDC's reputation and position in: co-operating with other local authorities, at county, district and local levels; and in applying for external funding, e.g. from central government or the National Lottery. At present, EHDC is an outlier amongst councils in Hampshire in not having a declared net zero target.

Top priorities – EHDC responsibilities

1. **New buildings:** EHDC should aim to achieve by 2030 **Passivhaus standards** in all new buildings through the process of granting planning permission. Passivhaus standards of energy efficiency in the fabric of new buildings are the only way of minimising as far as possible the demands on electricity supply from renewable sources, which has to be the only type of power permitted in future. This will take time because the airtightness and ventilation requirements necessitate an upskilling of the workforce; EHDC should contribute to this upskilling in any way it can.

EHDC should lobby national government to insist on local authorities being given the right to insist on higher building standards, at least until the proposed 2025 improvements to the national Building Regulations are brought in, to act as a catalyst to ensure that builders gear up their skills in energy efficiency in the fabric of buildings. The Council should also require the installation of electric charging points, solar panels, rain / grey water harvesting solutions.

2. **Existing buildings:** Most housing and commercial buildings are of course not new-build and will need to be retrofitted to minimise energy and water use, and make them as well adapted as possible to combat extreme weather events such as heat waves.

EHDC should:

- Ensure that their own building stock – both domestic and business - is retrofitted to the highest standards, reducing power and water consumption.
- In the year 2020/21 undertake a building conditions survey across the district in co-operation with community groups or town/parish councils, to identify key neighbourhoods which would benefit most from retrofitting to reduce GHGs; and estimate the costs of an average retrofitting package per building
- Also in 2020/21 EHDC should investigate the retrofit approach from Dutch company Energiesprong with the National Energy Foundation, which has been tried and tested in Nottingham (one of the

UK's leading cities for sustainability)? <https://www.ashden.org/winners/the-national-energy-foundation-and-energiesprong-uk> "The Energiesprong approach treats the whole house in one go, dealing with electricity, heat, hot water and ventilation to deliver a home that has net-zero or very low energy use. Whole new walls and roofs are manufactured off-site and delivered with doors and windows already fitted. These sections can then be fitted around the existing house, giving a new exterior and bringing its insulation and airtightness up to the required standards." It has been called "Pay as you Save Retrofit".

- In 2021/22, provide funding for an initial trial of a package of measures in high-need neighbourhoods, including external wall insulation and the fitting of eco-heating where appropriate
 - At the same time, provide advice to all property owners of the importance of retrofitting in responding to the climate emergency, the options which would be effective for their buildings and details of any grants available.
- 3. Community energy:** EHDC should promote and enable community renewable energy projects. These have been shown to be a major factor in building community cohesion and persuading people to adopt other environmental measures in their everyday lives. Examples of community renewable projects include large-scale solar installations (with batteries) and district heating schemes.
- 4. Supporting climate community action** by fostering and funding climate action groups, and in particular ensuring that the criteria for EHDC's "Supporting Communities Fund" from April 2020 include supporting community action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve the natural environment.
- 5. Green Spaces:** Communities (local groups of volunteers) are keen to rewild green spaces with wildflowers, hedges and trees.
- In 2020/21, EHDC should agree a "memorandum of understanding" with community groups in centres of population such as Alton, so that each can take stewardship of at least two patches of green space owned by the Council, to improve their biodiversity over a 2-year period, with a review and extension of timescale at the end of 2 years if the scheme has worked, and a wider roll-out.
 - Notices for display on patches of green space to be supplied by EHDC to explain the need to protect our local biodiversity, especially pollinators, and reassure the public that this is a policy decision and not neglect.
 - EHDC to work with parishes and town councils within the district to make more land available for community allotments, so that people can grow some of their own food. This could be funded from developer's contributions.
 - Ensure that the Council's contractors do not use pesticides and herbicides that harm pollinators (e.g. glyphosate)

Other proposals

- 1. Divestment:** EHDC to divest from any financial institutions that support fossil fuel industries and to make it clear why they are divesting when they do so.
- 2. Land use:** EHDC to work with local farmers to promote land and soil management techniques that restore exhausted soils and allow biodiversity to return to the land thus increasing natural carbon sinks at the same time as increasing crop yields.
- 3. Transport:** EHDC to work together with HCC and other neighbouring local authorities to ensure local people are provided with viable public transport options that allow them to leave their cars at home and thus significantly reduce a major source of greenhouse gas emissions. Pedestrianisation of shopping streets and a review of cycle routes should also be carried out to make cycling a safe and enjoyable experience for shorter journeys.