

North Hertfordshire District Council Climate Change Strategy Completed Actions 2020

REDUCING OUR CARBON FOOTPRINT

- **We have engaged a consultant to help identify the Council's current carbon footprint.**

- We have received a report detailing the carbon emissions from our main sites and buildings, as well as energy efficiency measures and possibilities for investment in renewable energy which could help the Council reduce its carbon footprint.
- We have created an action tracker based on the energy efficiency measures recommended in the report.
- We are also having the emissions related to the Council's vehicle fleet, grey fleet, commuting, water, and waste assessed, and expect to receive similar reports for these elements which lay out the opportunities for carbon reduction.

- **The Council has made the switch to renewable electricity and green gas to power and heat our buildings.**

- **The Council has worked with Stevenage Leisure Limited (SLL) to eliminate single use plastics from Leisure Centres and Swimming Pools.**

- Blue plastic overshoes were removed from Royston Leisure Centre and Hitchin Swim Centre on 13/12/2019 and 24/02/2020 respectively.



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- **Changes to the Taxi and Private Hire Licensing Policy were approved to limit emissions. These changes included:**

- No idling points system introduced to enforce against drivers who do not comply.
- Restricted use taxi ranks - when the infrastructure is in place, it is intended to restrict use of prime location taxi ranks to environmentally friendly vehicles. This serves both as an incentive for licence holders to purchase environmentally friendly vehicles and addresses the issue of vehicle emissions in residential areas such as town centres.
- Require all new and replaced vehicles from 2028 to be ultralow emission vehicles (uLEVs) – this allows trade time to prepare ahead of the government target date with local regulation.

- **The council's Community Safety Team have replaced their vehicles with new, hybrid, Ultra Low Emission Vehicles**

- **Regular meetings are now taking place to engage with the local community about public transport.**

- Forum meetings are being held regularly, with the most recent having taken place in January 2021.

- **Our Estates & Asset Management have placed increased emphasis on introducing green clauses in leases and other property agreements.**

- **As part of the 'Sustainable North Hertfordshire', we have worked to develop and support policies that encourage electric vehicle use and other 'cleaner air' initiatives.**

- For example, we carried out a consultation to inform the development of an Electric Vehicle Strategy and are looking at options for electric vehicle charging infrastructure.



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- **We have committed to using the Section 106 Sustainable Transport Funds** we currently hold for measures that encourage cycling and walking as well as public transport.
- **We have made a successful submission for Hitchin to be part of the Intalink Feasibility studies.** This is a collaboration between Hertfordshire County Council, bus rail operators, district and borough councils in order to improve the bus network and user experience.
 - This will see bus priority measures in Hitchin from 2022-2023.
- **Letchworth Garden City and Royston have been approved for inclusion in the first round of the Sustainable Travel Towns Programme.**

LEADERSHIP ACROSS THE DISTRICT

- **We have continued to engage with individuals and the community**, to act as a sounding board on community ideas and projects, and to seek evidence and views as appropriate through our Cabinet Panel on the Environment. The panel has held the following meetings:
 - 7 July 2020: Introductory Session - Reducing Emissions from Transport and Travel
 - 9 September 2020: A New 'Normal' - Recovering from the Pandemic (to include biodiversity, air quality, and council operations moving forward)
 - 17 November 2020: Food Waste, Waste, and Recycling (to include food waste reduction and capture from the residual stream)



LEADERSHIP ACROSS THE DISTRICT

- **We have invested in glassware and related commercial cleaning equipment for events at Hitchin Town Hall, in order to avoid plastic.**
 - Where glassware is inappropriate for an event, we have replaced plastic vessels with compostable alternatives.
- **We have appointed a Waste Awareness Officer to increase public awareness of waste and recycling issues.**
- **We have installed nine new on-street recycling bins in Royston Town Centre.**
- **We established Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Events**, to help residents dispose of their electrical equipment to be repurposed/recycled. These events have currently been put on hold due to the pandemic.
- **We led environmental health action days** such as those held on the 9/12/2019 in Letchworth and the 3/12/2019 in Hitchin. (with topics including dog fouling, fly tipping, and dumping of waste).
- **The Corporate Policy Team have created a regular update of actions that support the Council's aim to reduce its impact on the environment.** This is posted to the Council's website on its 'Climate Change' page in order to keep residents informed.
- **A Green Space Audit has been completed.**
 - This has identified areas within the district where biodiversity can be encouraged through annual 'cut and lifts', wildflower meadows, hedgerows, woodland edge creation and tree planting.



PARTNERSHIP WORKING

- **We continue to work within the Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership (HCCSP)** which brings together representatives from Hertfordshire County Council, all 10 district councils, the Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, as well as external stakeholders and experts such as water companies and the Herts Middlesex Wildlife Trust, to tackle climate change in the county.

- As part of this partnership we have led the Biodiversity Subgroup which seeks to explore ways of conserving and improving biodiversity in Hertfordshire.
- We have produced a scoping document for a county-wide biodiversity baseline. This will enable us to understand the state of biodiversity in Hertfordshire as well as lay the foundations for exploring what and where are the key opportunities for increasing biodiversity.

- **We took a role at the virtual HCCSP annual conference on the 3rd December to highlight the strategic work of the partnership.** All ten districts informed the attendees of the work of the sub- groups and answered a range of questions at the Q&A plenary session.

- **We have worked with Hertfordshire County Council to deliver new cycle stands in the district as part of the Department for Transport Emergency Active Travel Fund.**

- **We have continued to work with Hertfordshire County Council to develop a Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan.**

- **We have continued to work with Plastic Free Letchworth and Plastic Free Hitchin to deliver Plastic Free Communities.**

The Climate Change Strategy has been reviewed in 2021 and these achieved outcomes are in line with targets set in the previous year. Impact will be measured and monitored annually, and a full evaluation will be undertaken in 2025.

