



GILLINGHAM TOWN COUNCIL

The Town Hall, School Road, Gillingham, Dorset SP8 4QR

Climate Change and Carbon Management Policy

1. Introduction

In May 2019, Dorset Council declared a Climate Emergency, acknowledging that the Council needs to act on the causes and impacts of climate change. In June 2019 Gillingham Town Council passed a resolution in support of Dorset Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency.

In November 2019, Dorset Council updated this to a Climate and Ecological Emergency so that the protection and enhancement of Dorset's natural environment and wildlife biodiversity is also considered in their climate emergency mitigation work.

2. Objectives

Gillingham Town Council's objective is to support Dorset Council in its Climate Change action plan by committing to further reduce the Town Council's carbon footprint and to identify actions which could be considered as part of a Carbon Management Plan, with the long term aim of achieving a zero carbon Gillingham.

3. Aims

3.1 Gillingham Town Council will aim to reduce all types of pollution, CO2 and other harmful emissions by reducing the consumption of energy and water across all council activities by:

- a) using the Dorset Council LCD carbon footprinting toolkit to calculate the Council's baseline carbon emissions, against which to measure its progress towards carbon neutrality;
- b) reviewing the Council's carbon footprint annually (at least) and creating an action log to enable the Council to produce a funding plan to ensure continued improvements can be implemented;
- c) auditing, monitoring and reviewing the Town Council's operations;
- d) producing, monitoring and reviewing a carbon management plan and programme of action;

- e) reducing the need for heating by ensuring that all Council owned buildings are efficiently insulated;
- f) reducing the reliance on gas central heating and switching to alternative renewable heating options such as air source heat pumps, solar and/or biomass so far as is practical;
- g) investigating funding opportunities for the installation of alternative renewable energy technologies;
- h) switching to battery powered tools for use by grounds staff as they needed replacing;
- i) switching to electric powered vehicles when older vehicles are at the end of their useful life;
- j) incorporating rain-water harvesting/collection on all buildings where practical;
- k) using green energy suppliers for gas and electric at all council owned buildings.
- l) using more energy efficient lighting solutions where possible.

3.2 Minimise the impact of travel by:

- a) utilising more sustainable options;
- b) encouraging residents and visitors to walk by improving connectivity and supporting the aims of the Gillingham 'Walkers are Welcome' initiative;
- c) encouraging the use of bicycles by improving connectivity and introducing cycle racks in town centre locations;
- d) meeting virtually where possible to reduce the need to travel.

3.3 End the use of single use plastics by:

- a) assessing and monitoring the use of plastic by each Town Council department;
- b) educating and informing Councillors and members of staff on how to reduce the reliance on single use plastic;
- c) working with suppliers to reduce the need for plastic packaging;
- d) supporting the water bottle refill scheme.

3.4 Plan and adapt the town to build resilience to adverse weather and climate change risks by:

- a) committing to training officers and Councillors and connecting with other towns, councils, organisations and companies, to share and learn from their experiences;
- b) working with the Environment Agency and the Local Resilience Forum to reduce the impacts of flooding through the careful management of land use;
- c) encouraging water efficiency to reduce the impact of drought;
- d) adapting to extreme heat events by supporting the increase of vegetation such as trees, green roofs and green open space within settlements.

3.5 Minimise the production of waste and adhere to the principles of the waste hierarchy: 'Reduce, Re-use, Recycle' by:

- a) using materials from sustainable sources;
- b) replacing existing litter bins with recycling litter bins where practical;
- c) reducing the reliance on paper, aiming to operate 'paperless offices' as soon as it practical to do so.
- d) providing electronic copies of Agendas, Minutes and all other materials;
- e) using the overhead projector and/or other appropriate technology, to display information during meetings, rather than providing printed copies;
- f) using recycled paper where it is not possible to work effectively and efficiently using electronic copies;
- g) reinforcing the message that reducing waste is preferable to recycling, while saving money and resources;
- h) supporting recycling, reuse and repair schemes available in Gillingham.

3.6 Protect, conserve and enhance our town's built environment and distinctive heritage by:

- a) encouraging environmentally sensitive development through good planning policies and approaches to listed buildings and the effective application of building regulations;
- b) supporting the aims of the Conservation Area Appraisals.

3.7 Protect, conserve and enhance the town's natural environment and its biodiversity whilst improving our parks and open spaces, public rights of ways and green corridors by:

- a) working with Dorset Wildlife Trust to monitor and review Biodiversity Action Plans;
- b) monitoring and reviewing the council's Pollinator Action Plan;
- c) planting more trees and more hedges for wildlife;
- d) supporting the creation of community orchards;
- e) supporting the protection of irreplaceable and valued trees and investigating opportunities from commercial enterprises and residents to offset carbon credits locally;
- f) supporting the principals of the Tree Charter;
- g) working with the Environment Agency and local Flood Wardens to reduce the impacts of flooding through the careful management of land.

3.8 Encourage all new buildings to be designed and built with sustainability in mind by:

- a) supporting the aims of Policy 3 and Policy 22 of the North Dorset Local Plan Part One and any superseding plan when considering planning applications;
- b) supporting the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework so that sustainable development is brought forward in a positive way;
- c) viewing planning applications for renewable energy favourably;
- d) keeping councillors informed, as decision makers, in the reality of the science and mitigation of climate change.

3.9 Work towards Fairtrade Town status by meeting the following five goals:

- a) Passing a resolution to support Fairtrade and agree to serve Fairtrade products whenever possible.
- b) Working with retailers to ensure a range of (at least two) Fairtrade products are readily available in the area's retail outlets.
- c) Working with local workplaces and community organisations to support Fairtrade and encourage the use of Fairtrade products whenever possible.
- d) Support events to raise awareness across the community.

- e) Support the local Fairtrade steering group to ensure the Fairtrade campaign continues to develop.

4. Review

This Climate Change and Carbon Management Plan Policy, was reviewed by the Finance and Policy Committee on 19th June 2023 for approval and adoption, minute no. 544a and ratified by Full Council on 26th June 2023.

This policy will be reviewed annually or when there are changes to legislation, whichever is the sooner.

5. References

- Dorset Council Climate and Ecology Emergency Strategy and Action Plan. Available via the Dorset Council website [HERE](#)
- Centre for Sustainable Energy www.cse.org.uk
- Centre for Alternative Technology www.cat.org.uk
- Gillingham Town Council's Pollinators Action Plan
- Gillingham Town Council's Biodiversity Action Plans
- Gillingham Town Council's Public Open Spaces management plans
- Refill scheme www.refill.org.uk
- Fairtrade Foundation www.fairtrade.org.uk

Signed:
(Mayor of Gillingham)

Date: