

# Sherston Parish Council – Climate and Biodiversity Action Plan

Version 1 – 08/12/2022

## Introduction and Context.

Sherston Parish Council acknowledged the climate emergency in December 2020. The aim of our plan is to take action to encourage Sherston to play its part in tackling climate change and halting the loss of biodiversity, and to support Wiltshire Council in its ambition to implement their Climate Strategy and make the county of Wiltshire carbon neutral by 2030.

Our aim is to ensure climate change and biodiversity recovery is at the forefront of all the Parish Council's decisions, purchasing and investments. It is acknowledged that the parish council has limited powers, but that we should use our position to encourage the businesses and residents of Sherston to take positive action to tackle climate change by minimising carbon emissions and promoting biodiversity recovery. The Parish Council will also seek to influence Wiltshire Council to take positive action to tackle climate change and biodiversity loss sooner.

The action plan comprises the following eight subsections:

1. Parish Council Decision Making,
2. Trees and Biodiversity,
3. Development Planning,
4. Waste Management,
5. Transportation,
6. Energy,
7. Community, and
8. Reporting and Review.

The ambition is that this plan will evolve and be enhanced through inputs from the Parish Council, stakeholders and residents.

<b>1.0 Parish Council Decision Making</b>	
<b>Objectives</b>	
1.1	Minimise carbon emissions from Parish Council actions and decisions.
1.2	Minimise carbon emissions from Parish Council purchasing.

<b>Actions</b>	
1.1	Consider climate and biodiversity in all PC decisions and purchases. Avoid negative consequences where possible. Record purchasing decisions to demonstrate impacts on climate and biodiversity have been considered.
1.2	Ensure PC money is invested in low-risk sustainable banks.
1.3	Raise money from the Precept and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) for investment in projects that will have positive outcomes in terms of alleviating climate change and promoting biodiversity.
1.4	Ensure climate change and biodiversity are considered during the assessment of applications to the PC for funding.
1.5	PC to publish and maintain an annual carbon emissions calculation of the PC's activities.
<b>2.0 Trees and Biodiversity</b>	
<b>Objectives</b>	
2.1	Increase tree cover on PC owned land where possible.
2.2	Increase the biodiversity on PC owned land where possible.
2.3	Encourage the retention and increase of tree cover in the parish.
2.4	Encourage improvement in biodiversity in the parish.
2.5	Encourage improvement in biodiversity and water quality in the River Avon.
<b>Actions</b>	
2.1	Where possible, identify areas of the recreation ground where additional trees can be planted for both carbon sequestration and shade in hot weather, design layout and consult with residents.
2.2	Where possible identify areas of the recreation ground where biodiversity can be enhanced, through for example changed grass cutting regime and seeding, design layout and consult with residents.
2.3	Work with the PC's mowing contractor to reduce carbon emissions associated with grass cutting, frequency and area of cut, and ultimately transition to mowers powered by non-fossil fuelled energy.
2.4	Devise a plan to increase the biodiversity of Grove Wood.
2.5	No tree felling on PC land without a PC discussion and vote.
2.6	Where possible, PC to undertake hedge and tree trimming work in January and February to minimise detrimental impacts on wildlife.

2.7	Develop a policy for the use of pesticides and herbicides on PC land, with the aim of minimising their use.
2.8	Communicate to the tenants and contractors on PC land including the recreation ground, the sports field and the allotments the PC's pesticide and herbicide policy defined by action 2.7.
2.9	Promote peat free alternatives for use on PC owned land.
2.10	Ensure tree planting and biodiversity are considered when devising development plans for the Sports Field margins.
2.11	Work with Wiltshire Council and landowners to increase biodiversity of road verges.
2.12	Support the monitoring of water quality in the River Avon.
2.13	Lobby Wessex Water to limit discharges of raw sewage into the River Avon, and to upgrade the local sewage works to reduce the input of nitrate and phosphate.
2.14	Where evidence is present indicating detrimental impacts to the water quality and amenity value of the River Avon, lobby Wessex Water, the Government and the Environment Agency to make improvements.
<b>3.0 Development Planning</b>	
<b>Objectives</b>	
3.1	Consider the effect on climate change and biodiversity during the review of all planning applications and aim to effect positive change where possible.
<b>Actions</b>	
3.1	Aim to support planning applications which will have a positive effect in tackling climate change and biodiversity loss. Challenge planning applications that have a detrimental effect on climate change and biodiversity.
3.2	Ensure subsequent iterations of our Neighbourhood Plan require new developments to be energy efficient, zero-carbon and nature friendly.
3.3	Encourage the designation of sites within the Neighbourhood Plan for trees, renewable energy and nature restoration.
<b>4.0 Transport</b>	
<b>Objectives</b>	
4.1	Minimise carbon emissions from transport.
4.2	Minimise biodiversity loss from transport.

<b>Actions</b>	
4.1	Consult residents to assess whether there is a need for improvements to Sherston bus services, and if so lobby Wiltshire Council to improve bus services from Sherston to the surrounding towns.
4.2	Work to implement 20 MPH limits in Sherston.
4.3	Work with Wiltshire Council or the private sector to install Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points in the village to facilitate the rapid transition to electric vehicles.
4.4	Ensure Wiltshire Council establish a cycle friendly route from Sherston to Malmesbury via Foxley Road
4.5	Work towards improved safe pedestrian and cycle routes from Sherston to Westonbirt Arboretum and Tetbury.
4.6	Continue to promote and encourage access to footpaths by working with landowners and through education.
4.7	Encourage walking to school by working to improve the safety of pedestrian access routes.
4.8	Encourage through education alternatives to the use of fossil fuelled cars including cycling, public transport and electric vehicles.
<b>5.0 Waste Management</b>	
<b>Objectives</b>	
5.1	Minimise the carbon emissions from waste disposal.
5.2	Minimise waste generated by PC activities.
5.3	Minimise the amount of waste disposed of to landfill or incineration.
<b>Actions</b>	
5.1	Lobby Wiltshire Council to improve recycling services so that a greater percentage of materials collected is recycled.
5.2	Encourage Wiltshire Council to introduce food waste collection.
5.3	Aim to minimise waste generated by the PC, maximise the reuse and recycling of any materials generated, and only dispose of as waste to landfill / incineration as a last resort.
5.4	Facilitate collection and recycling for wastes that are not collected by Wiltshire Council where this is feasible.
5.5	Continuing working with the local Coop shop to minimise waste and provide recycling facilities, such as for soft plastics and aluminium cans.

5.6	Encourage the local cafes to minimise waste by implementing schemes such as offering discounts for drinks dispensed into reusable cups, and provide recycling facilities for single use cups and aluminium cans.
5.7	Encourage local residents and business to minimise waste and maximise recycling through education.
<b>6.0 Energy</b>	
<b>Objectives</b>	
6.1	Encourage the use of renewable energy and energy saving in infrastructure and buildings in Sherston.
<b>Actions</b>	
6.1	Working with other interested parties such as Sustainable Sherston, promote the measurements of carbon emissions and footprints by residents and businesses to encourage its reduction.
6.2	Encourage the use of renewable energy and energy efficiency in buildings in which the PC has an interest.
6.3	Encourage through education the transition away from fossil fuels such as oil and gas for heating to photovoltaic (PV) solar panels and heat pumps fuelled by truly renewable electricity.
6.4	Lobby Wiltshire Council and Government to aim to reduce the planning restrictions preventing owners of listed properties from installing low carbon energy such as photovoltaics, solar thermal panels and heat pumps, and energy efficiency measures such as double glazing and insulation.
6.5	Promote schemes available to Wiltshire households for grants or discounts for energy saving improvements such as insulation, solar panels and double glazing.
<b>7.0 Community</b>	
<b>Objectives</b>	
7.1	Work with the local community to tackle climate change and effect biodiversity recovery.
<b>Actions</b>	
7.1	Encourage and support the positive actions of any community climate action groups.
7.2	Promote local food and sustainable businesses.
7.3	Work with local business to encourage them to sign a 'Climate Pledge' to commit to measuring and reducing emissions, and to reach net zero as soon as possible.

7.4	Working with local groups and the doctor's surgery to identify the most vulnerable people in the parish at risk from extreme weather and ensure this is reflected in the Parish Council's emergency response plan.
7.5	Encourage the availability of superfast broadband to residential and business properties in the parish to facilitate remote working and fewer journeys.
7.6	Assisting homeowners to be more energy efficient by working with voluntary groups to provide education, and access to energy audits and advice.
7.7	Join forces and lobby Wiltshire Council for more ambitious and speedier implementation of their climate action plan to reach net-zero by 2030.
<b>8.0 Review and Reporting</b>	
<b>Objectives</b>	
8.1	Maintain and develop this climate and biodiversity action plan, adding it to the PC's calendar of actions.
8.2	Record and report actions and progress in tackling climate change and biodiversity loss.
<b>Actions</b>	
8.1	The PC Climate Working Group to maintain this Action Plan, review progress in implementing its actions and report to the PC annually.
8.2	The PC to familiarise themselves with actions of other forward thinking parish councils and aim to follow best practise.