

**Hart District Council
Climate Change Strategy
2008 - 2011**



Foreword

Welcome to our strategy to tackle climate change in the District.

The earth's climate has always been changing but the rapidity of change and its effects is now becoming one of the most serious environmental challenges for us to address.

Climate Change has accelerated over the last two hundred and fifty years and both meteorologists and climatologists have become increasingly conscious that these changes have become significant. This strategy sets out ideas on what the local community in Hart district can do in delivering action on this urgent issue.

The theories around weather and climate have been rigorously debated by the scientific community for years. Most recently the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) established to assess the scientific, technical and socioeconomic information relevant for the understanding of the current problem produced its Fourth Assessment Report. The IPCC view has evolved since its third report in 2001 and it has concluded that the sorts of phenomena that we have all witnessed locally in recent years, warmer days and nights, fewer cold days, greater variety in rainfall, are all part of a trend set to continue.

This strategy is a local response to this issue and sets out what we want to achieve, but this is just a starting point. All parts of the community, the public sector, private sector, organisations or individuals can contribute: these contributions are vital as it is the many small actions that will add up to make the difference. Please let us know about projects and actions you are taking, these are a valuable part of this strategy.

The strategy provides a framework of the key impacts as they affect Hart District. An Action Plan has been developed which will mitigate the effects of climate change and adapt to the inevitable changes we are now expecting.

Ken Crookes
Leader of Hart District Council

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Climate Change

Climate change is already happening and is potentially the most serious environmental challenge facing us in the 21st century. The scientific evidence from the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is unequivocal. This evidence is accepted by most Governments, including the UK Government.

mitigation & adaptation – the dual challenge of climate change

Avoiding dangerous climate change will require significant cuts in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 (climate change mitigation).

The urgency and scale of this task rightly dominates much of the climate change debate. However, even if we miraculously cut all emissions today and became a zero carbon society, we would still witness a changing climate due to our historical emissions. Whatever we do to reduce emissions, we are committed to at least 30–40 years of climate change.

Ensuring that people, communities, infrastructure, and wildlife are resilient to the unavoidable impacts of these changes is called 'climate change adaptation'.

What we can do about Climate Change

We are not helpless in the face of climate change. We can each try and ensure that we make other people aware of the issues, so that they too can take steps to reduce their impact on the environment. We can find ways to adapt our ways of living to minimise the worst effects of climate change.

By reducing our own impact on the environment, we can all help to reduce the amount of climate change that takes place. We can also try and ensure that we adapt our ways of living so that we can better cope with any change that does occur.

The three themes of:-

- **Lead by example** - educating and encouraging others to take similar steps
- **Adapting** our ways of living to cope with change; and
- **Mitigating** the increase of climate change

are at the heart of this Strategy.

Background

Local Government Association Climate Change Commission

In November 2007 the Local Government Association (LGA) published the report of its climate change commission, "A climate of change". The commission's core message is:

"Tackling climate change must be at the centre of local government's vision for their communities. It is not another priority amongst many that compete for local government leaders' attention. It is now clear from the scientific evidence that it is the single priority which overrides all others, now and for the foreseeable future"

"A climate of change" sets out the scientific evidence on climate change in "the case for action" and contains a number of recommendations. Hart has developed and adopted a climate change action plan which acknowledges, adopts and translates these recommendations into actions locally.

Hampshire Local Area Agreement (LAA)

The new Hampshire LAA which has been submitted to central government for approval contains proposed commitments to three priorities between 2008–2011.

- I. Use material resources more efficiently
- II. Adapt to the consequences of Climate Change
- III. Mitigate progress of Climate Change

What Hart District Council (HDC) has done so far

On 28 September 2006 HDC signed the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change.

In short this declaration states:

"Hart DC acknowledges the increasing impact that climate change will have on our community during the 21st century and commits to tackling the causes and effects of a changing climate on our district."

The seven commitments we made in the Nottingham Declaration form the basis of our local climate change strategy. These commitments are:

- ★ To work with central government to contribute, at a local level, to the delivery of the UK Climate Change Programme, the Kyoto Protocol and the target for carbon dioxide reduction by 2010
- ★ Participate in local and regional networks for support
- ★ Within the next two years develop plans with our partners and local communities to progressively address the causes and the impacts of

climate change, according to our local priorities, securing maximum benefit to our communities

- ★ Publicly declare, within appropriate plans and strategies, the commitment to achieve a significant reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from our own authority's operations, especially energy sourcing and use, travel and transport, waste production and disposal and the purchasing of goods and services
- ★ Assess the risk associated with climate change and the implications for our services and our communities of climate change impacts and adapt accordingly
- ★ Encourage all sectors in our local community to take the opportunity to adapt to the impacts of climate change, to reduce their own greenhouse gas emissions and to make public their commitment to action
- ★ Monitor the progress of our plans against the actions needed and publish the result

Hart's Corporate Plan 2007 -2011 includes climate change in its Key Priority 1 "Enhancing the Environment". Our Corporate Plan Implementation Programme will include detailed actions to deliver on this priority.

The Hart Local Strategic Partnership (HLSP) is a local partnership made up of about fifty local organisations, businesses, and voluntary groups. The HLSP adopted the strategic priorities of its emerging Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) for the future of the district in April 2008. The Strategy includes as its first priority :

"An environmentally conscious community and a sustainable district"

The Council will work with our partners to develop and deliver joint actions to deliver this priority.

A Climate Change Strategy for future activity in Hart District

There are three themes to the Council's climate change strategy.

I Community Leadership and Involvement

Councils are well placed to lead all sections of their community's response to climate change. Our democratic mandate puts us in a unique position.

We will be systematic in our leadership of the local community by providing a powerful demonstration to the rest of the public, private and voluntary sectors. We will do this through our service delivery, regulatory functions, partnership leadership, and place shaping roles.

To ensure that all sectors of the community understand the climate change issue and are taking action about it.

II Adaptation Planning

To ensure that the district is "climate change ready", ensuring we can maximise the opportunities and minimise the costs of climate change.

We will take positive action to mainstream adaptation to the impacts of climate change. We will develop and adopt a climate change action plan detailing the actions we intend to take under this priority. We will commit to the adapting climate change indicator (NI188) in the LAA and set ambitious targets for adapting to climate change.

We will work with partners on the HLSP to provide a wider focus to work on adaptation.

III Mitigation Planning – Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions

To ensure that emissions of carbon dioxide, methane and nitrogen oxides across the district are reduced we will put in place policies and take actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

How we will ensure progress

A detailed action plan has been drawn up, to support this strategy which takes account of the responses and contributions made during consultation. Further details on the actions and projects being undertaken will be available on the Council website.

Managing performance is how the Council will make things happen. We intend to build on our successes and maintain consistent improvement. You will judge us on our ability to deliver what we plan.

We will review the progress we have made against the actions and targets set out in the Action Plan of the Climate Change Strategy and report on how we are doing. We have established clear accountability and responsibility for delivering the aims and actions set out in the Climate Change Strategy:

- The Council will work in collaboration with Local Strategic Partnership to provide a lead to the communities of the district. We will look to the HLSP to establish a Hart Climate Change Partnership to manage the delivery on these objectives in partnership with the Council.
- The Climate Change Panel will recommend adoption of appropriate Performance Indicators and targets against which to measure the delivery of the Action Plan.
- The Climate Change Panel will monitor and manage performance against the agreed local performance indicators and against the key national indicators and those which are subject to commitments in the Hampshire Local Area Agreement.
- Each of the services and agencies involved in the Climate Change Strategy will be responsible for the actions they have agreed to and will monitor delivery.
- The Performance Improvement Board of the Council will monitor progress being made towards our aims and each year overall progress will be reviewed.
- The Climate Change Panel as part of its role in steering the development of the Climate Change Strategy will report to Cabinet on the progress being made each year.
- The Climate Change Panel will work with each of the council's services and with the HLSP to embed monitoring and reporting arrangements to ensure our actions and work are joined up, transparent and accountable to all the communities of the District.
- We will continue to consult and engage with stakeholders in the district and intend to hold an annual Conference to help plan out our next steps for the following year.
- We will review the success of our arrangements to evaluate whether there are more opportunities for us to work better.

Our arrangements for monitoring the progress we are making will be strengthened year on year.