

# **Chart Sutton Parish Council – Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy**

## **2023**

Chart Sutton Parish Council Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy supports Maidstone Borough Council's Strategy which aims to respond to increases in greenhouse gases, pollution to waterways, and mass extinction events. Maidstone Borough Council aims to be carbon neutral by 2030 with targets to strengthen local protection and enhancement of species, habitats and ecosystems services. The strategy supports International and National contexts including International goals of limiting global warming to no more than 1.5C above pre-industrial levels, as called for in the Paris Agreement (adopted in 2015). To keep global warming to no more than 1.5C, greenhouse gas emissions need to be reduced by 45% by 2030 and reach net zero by 2035 and achieving net zero emissions by 2050. The UK government has committed to cutting emissions by 78% by 2035 and achieving net zero emissions by reducing CO2 emissions by 45% from 2010 levels by 2030 and reaching net zero by 2050.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the UN body for assessing the science related to climate change, warns there is only 12 years for global warming to be kept to a maximum of 1.5C beyond which even half a degree will significantly worsen risks of drought, floods, extreme heat and poverty for hundreds of millions of people globally. Chart Sutton Parish Council (CSPC) is committed to a review of how its activities can protect and enhance Local, National and Global climate change and biodiversity initiatives. CSPC recognises that day to day operations can impact both directly and indirectly on the environment. CSPC aims to protect and improve biodiversity of the area through good management and by adopting best practice wherever possible. Communities need to change to a more sustainable lifestyle to reduce carbon emissions and to help build resilience against the adverse impact of climate change.

### **1. Transport**

CSPC will support campaigns for better public transport, safe walking and cycling through our village and the levelling up of rural areas in terms of access to sustainable transport. CSPC will support the provision of electric charging points when considering local transport plans, new businesses and building applications.

### **2. Building**

CSPC will promote insulation retrofitting schemes and the potential for Combined Heat and Power systems, low carbon heating schemes to residents and businesses, water efficiency measures and District Heating scheme developments across the parish eg by including relevant information in newsletters and on our website.

CSPC will assess all planning applications in the context of renewables and affordable clean energy and insist that the maximum building energy performance standards possible are included in all new development proposals. Specifically, CSPC will consider all planning applications in the light of its agreed green/biodiversity criteria. CSPC will only support planning applications which ensure all surface water for any new development is dealt with by sustainable drainage systems/plans.

CSPC will support habitat creation and restoration by encouraging the development of greenspace networks and corridors and to encourage habitat creation in new development.

### **3. Generating Renewable Energy**

CSPC will aim to support renewable energy generation by providing information, promoting grants and saving schemes to local residents and businesses and support renewable energy generation in any new developments in the parish.

### **4. Reducing waste and energy used in processing**

CSPC will promote pride in our local area by organising semi-annual litter picking events, encourage local residents to volunteer and to aim to report fly tipping.

CSPC will aim to support and develop local clean energy projects. CSPC will act on behalf of the parish to lobby for change at a local level to reduce carbon emissions and promote projects that allow this to be done.

CSPC will aim to organise Energy Saving advice surgeries for the local community, possibly in conjunction with other parishes, and work with Maidstone Council Environmental leads to ensure CSPC is included in any local initiatives.

### **5. Adapting to Climate Change**

CSPC pledges to make CSPC carbon neutral by 2030.

CSPC will support planting of trees in appropriate locations for carbon capture and food.

CSPC to engage with local businesses to seek their engagement in the reduction of fossil fuels, improving biodiversity and minimising pollution.

### **6. Enhancing and increasing Biodiversity**

CSPC will, where possible, adopt biodiversity friendly land management and habitat creation for land within CSPC ownership and encourage other local businesses to do the same.

CSPC will promote tree planting wherever possible and take steps to protect existing trees, woodland and hedgerows. CSPC will aim to improve biodiversity where possible by encouraging pollinating insects by designating set areas of wildflowers and consider verges and other public land suitable for reducing maintenance to increase these natural feeding areas.

CSPC will ensure the maintenance of footpaths and public areas balance the needs of habitat management. This includes cutting less grass and verges allowing for an increase in rewilding instead. This will reduce the need for mowing, reducing carbon emissions and costs, and will help support biodiversity, carbon sequestration and our struggling insect population. Households will be encouraged to take similar steps to achieve similar benefits

CSPC will be active in reporting activities that are suspected to be causing environmental harm (air, water and noise pollution) to the relevant regulatory body.

CSPC will eliminate the use of glyphosates in sensitive areas such as those rich in wildlife, play areas and dog walking areas.

## **7. Making our Estate Carbon Neutral**

CSPC will consider undertaking an annual energy survey in any Chart Sutton community building to identify any areas that energy can be saved or generated with renewables eg switching to a 100% renewable energy electricity provider and LED lighting.

## **8. Communications**

CSPC will provide relevant information and messages on the CSPC website and via newsletters to encourage local residents to act eg the Chart Sutton Village News.

CSPC will ensure that certain Parish Councillors are suitably trained in biodiversity and climate change issues, related to their role, so they play their part supporting the parish and local residents.

CSPC will encourage support from key stakeholders and the wider public on enhancing biodiversity and addressing climate change

## **9. Decision Making Processes and Governance**

CSPC will provide information on relevant training for Councillors.

CSPC will ensure biodiversity and climate change are an agenda item for monthly parish council meetings and progress is monitored and tracked to ensure actions are being taken.

CSPC representatives will collaborate with other local parishes through a local environmental group (Parish Council Environment Network - 'PCEN') to work collectively and with the Maidstone Borough Council lead to maximise local impact. CSPC PCEN representatives will share minutes and feedback to CSPC Councillors at CSPC meetings and inform the parish of progress through occasional articles in the Village News.

Author

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Adopted by Chart Sutton Parish Council on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2023