

Calne Without Parish Council (CWPC) welcome the commitments made in the draft Climate Strategy and the initiatives currently in progress. However, we believe that the Strategy needs to be more ambitious and specific, underpinned by measurable targets. We offer the following suggestions specific to our locality under the six strands and would gladly work in partnership with Wiltshire Council to achieve these.

Transport;

We agree that Transport is a priority for the Climate change strategy and although transport is not primary activity, very few people travel for the sake of it, they travel to access facilities, shopping, leisure and probably most importantly employment. That is usually at peak times causing congestion and greater emissions and low air quality.

A characteristic of Wiltshire is that at least in parts, including the Calne area, housing growth over many years has been allowed to massively outstrip the growth (or lack of it) in local employment. The result is that a large part of the working population commutes long distances by car often to towns well outside the county. In Calne for instance the 2011 census showed that 73 % of Calne residents in employment commuted predominately by car to locations outside Calne. A large proportion of which (35%) commuted even longer distances by car to locations outside Wiltshire's boundaries.

Astonishingly, whilst the climate strategy indicates the 15% of Wiltshire households do not have access to a car, even in 2011 only 5.3% of households in Calne Without did not have access to a car. Whilst 5.4% of households had access to 4 or more cars. This is a damning indictment of a planning system which has created such an imbalance between housing and employment and has caused such huge reliance on the private car.

Planning policies need to change so that there is not just a drive to build houses anywhere regardless of the location of employment but instead a requirement to build the right type of housing much closer to employment opportunities so that unlike now, public transport and other green modes are a viable option to travel to work.

Even if all cars are powered by sustainable electricity car travel is still not sustainable; demand for car travel will continue to grow causing congestion particularly in peak times in urban areas including towns in Wiltshire. There will be huge pressure to build new and bigger roads to relieve ever growing congestion using more concrete, cement, tarmac and steel not to mention building roads over valuable land. The use of these resources including the land is unsustainable. Government and highway authorities need to introduce 'road pricing' to provide some restraint to a scarce commodity - road space where ever growing demand is constantly outstripping supply.

We would like to offer suggestions in the following ways:

- The strategy pertaining to produce Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans for Wiltshire and the three major settlements needs a clear timescale and target so that it will enable at least **22%** of commuter journeys to be made by bike by 2030.
- Calne Without needs a safe cycle route around the Parish including between Calne and Chippenham such as the Chippenham to Calne Railway route – needs longer leases and investment.
- Dedicated cycle lanes on A4 between Calne and Chippenham with regular maintenance of footpaths to ensure accessibility.
- Kingsbury Green Academy to Cherhill View – we suggest a joint cycle and walking route.
- A commitment to local funding to support repair/upgrade of footpaths and cycle routes and clear timescale of promotion and engagement with the public.
- Wiltshire currently has 140 EV charging devices available. According to the Climate Change Committee, Wiltshire will need 2469 by 2030. That is over 290 new chargers needed per year, or ~25 installed every month starting Jan 2022. Do you have a delivery plan to achieve this target?
- A bus at least every 10 minutes between Calne-Chippenham during peak hours is required to make commuting by bus appealing.
- Bus times need to arrive at Chippenham railway station 5 minutes before, and depart 5 minutes after every train during peak hours to truly enable commuters to/from Bristol, Bath, Swindon and London to solely commute via public transport.
- Buses need spaces/racks available on them for bikes to enable remote areas to link with public transport by bike.
- An evening bus service during peak social hours, e.g. Thurs/Fri/Sat evenings to and from rural areas to Calne, Chippenham, Devizes is suggested.

Additional requests;

- A moratorium on major road infrastructure - instead of enabling more cars on the road, divert the resources to public transport, cycle and walking infrastructure.
- Rail network development in Corsham and Devizes needs to progress – engaging with network rail.
- Creation and/or publicity for local remote working hubs, with easy walking/cycling commuting available to them.

Homes and the built environment

We welcome the commitments made in the draft Climate Strategy and the initiatives currently in progress, such as existing council owned properties being amended and offering energy efficient measures to the more vulnerable of society via energy companies.

However, we believe that the Strategy needs to be more thorough and contain solid commitments with timescales. With recent events such as drastic temperature changes and natural climate disasters there is an urgent need for action. In the next 10 years there are high demands to try and prevent a climate emergency and sadly WC will need to double their number of current insulated homes (currently 42%) and install 8564 eco- heating systems per year to reach the official target (41605) by 2030.

We offer some suggestions to take a far more active and measurable role in improving the development of renewable energy in the county:

- Clear targets for rural parishes to ensure all homes are well insulated to EPC Level C+.
- Eradicate fuel poverty in social housing by upgrading insulation and heating systems.
- Develop a heating and energy efficiency strategy for the area, including identify skills and training development priorities to install our share of 1 million eco- heating pumps needed.
- WC Strategy states on p22 ‘Use the LP review as an opportunity for zero carbon standards in new builds; stronger policy on adaption and mitigation; and improved policies on other aspects such as water use and well-considered site layouts’. The WC climate strategy must be the fundamental policy of this to ensure affordable housing for those that need it. NOT an opportunity for developers to make money by building unnecessary homes without energy sustainable methods.
- Cambridge City Council has led by example by requiring higher standards for privately built new homes and ensuring housing built on council land is extremely energy efficient (PDF). This something WC could implement especially as new standards are due to be brought in by Future Homes Standard in 2025.
- Require buildings built on council land to be extremely energy efficient, using the Passivhaus standard or similar which is already being used by York and Exeter councils.
- Appeals to owners/ occupiers of Wiltshire homes of advice on renewable energy (such as NEST or HIVE heating, solar energy, smart meters) and grants on the Warm Homes Discount Scheme with the central government.
- Training hubs/ courses to Parish and Town councils so that local homeowners can approach to apply for grants.

We do not need a handful of people doing eco methods perfectly; we just need thousands doing it imperfectly. This is where Wiltshire Council has the most powerful opportunity to raise awareness and support lifestyle changes within businesses, locals, and future generations to support sustainable utilization and conscious practice that we are currently in a climate emergency which will not be stopped unless this happens.

Natural Environment, Food and Farming;

We welcome the 5 objectives stated in the document and the need to recognise and value the historic, cultural and working environment that makes Wiltshire a very special place. CWPC concurs with the focus areas as follows:

- The roll out of the Community Environment Toolkit
- The Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy
- Tree planting on Wiltshire Council land
- The development of a Wiltshire Council Tree & Woodland Planting Strategy

In all of this work it is important to work with all the stakeholders, communities and farmers on ways to reduce emissions from food and farming.

We need;

- Clear timetables and urgent action to achieve the objectives and to realise the focus areas

CWPC would like to support this development in the following ways;

- We now have a Climate Emergency & Environment Working Group and are working on a range of local issues
- Our plan is to engage with the local farming community to raise awareness of the challenges facing all of us in food and farming production. We will encourage different farming methods to prevent soil erosion. Local food production will be encouraged with distribution through markets and local shops. Support will be given to farmers to plant more hedges and trees.
- We will launch an educational programme with local schools, college and the community to share ideas and work together to protect our environment.
- We will engage with our local community to consult on the desire for allotments and local community orchards from residents from across the parish.
- Every effort will be made to encourage more local walking and cycling to reduce carbon emissions from cars and buses.

We also make the following points;

- 10% of Wiltshire is woodland. In other Local Authorities it is as much as 26%, we will work to extend the woodland area in Calne Without and Wiltshire. We require Wiltshire Council to establish clear targets and advice on tree planting and for this programme to begin immediately.
- On average 278g of meat and dairy is consumed per day per person. We need a 20% reduction in this consumption by 2030. We call upon Wiltshire Council to encourage the consumption of more plant-based diets among residents and to encourage schools and care homes to provide meals containing less meat and dairy.
- We need Wiltshire Council to recognise the role of canal and river trusts play in natural flood management of our river catchment and biodiversity. This requires clear targets and timescales.

Energy;

It is apparent that there are currently a significant number of proposals for solar farms and battery storage schemes, particularly in the north of the county. This is a positive indication of the viability of developing significant renewable energy generation and the appetite for investment. However, these schemes are clustered around the existing grid infrastructure, creating tensions with local communities, and with Wiltshire Council undertaking an essentially reactive role in determining applications.

We consider that Wiltshire Council should be taking a far more active role in shaping the development of renewable energy within the county by:

- Establishing an overall target for renewable energy generation capacity within the county to be met by 2030, taking account of Climate Emergency commitments, impact and competing land priorities.
- Determining the optimum blend of technologies and scales to meet this target, from small-scale installations through to large (50MW+) plants.

- Collaborating with the energy sector, landowners and communities to establish the optimum locations for the siting of large-scale plants, in considering mitigation of landscape, social and environmental impacts.
- Working with the energy sector to facilitate the development and upgrading of the grid and substation infrastructure to accommodate these locations.
- As the county's largest landowner, engagement with the Ministry of Defence must form part of this approach.

In conjunction with this overall Strategy, Wiltshire Council should also take an enabling role in the promotion, development and implementation of Community Energy Initiatives within the county. This would involve establishing a team to provide expert advice and technical assistance to community groups, parish and town councils seeking to develop Community Energy schemes. In addition to practical advice and support with grant-funding applications, this should also include support with procurement, legal issues, financing and the management of risk.

To be consistent with taking this leadership role, we also believe that it is important that Wiltshire Council divests from any investments in fossil fuels and seeks similar disinvestment by the Wiltshire Pension Fund.

Green Economy;

We are pleased that Wiltshire Council have a vision of a sustainable green economy and CWPC are looking to support this with initiatives such as community equipment and domestic appliance rental to encourage the circular economy.

We would welcome training and education for young people in 'green skills' and believe this should be supported by Wiltshire Council increasing employment capacity in key sectors.

We require;

- Wiltshire Council to further facilitate 'Shop Local' campaigns by improving the quality and infrastructure of small town centres, such as Calne, so that residents have no need to travel further; currently the provision locally does not enable this. Capping Business rates at an affordable level would enable small independent businesses to flourish and therefore create attractive and prosperous town centres. This would also include discounts for sustainable businesses.
- We would like to see the creation and/or publicity for local remote working hubs, with easy walking/cycling commuting available to them.

Waste;

We welcome the three objectives and two areas of focus laid out in the area of waste management in the strategy and the four ways Wiltshire Council (WC) will use its influence and partnerships. We believe WC has the power to reduce waste and develop a circular economy, discouraging wasteful lifestyles that create environmental problems overseas as well as at home, BUT that this can only be delivered and accomplished in partnership with all sectors of society – individuals, businesses and organisations.

WC can make sure waste management is as effective as possible, increasing the quality and amount of recycle streams as well as modelling best practice in its own operations and encouraging individuals, businesses and organisations to minimise waste through a robust Delivery Plan with baselines, targets and timescales for achievement. It is imperative that WC lead and act as a facilitator enabling others to deliver.

CWPC would like to offer our support in the following ways:

- By joining the Countryside Climate Network. (page 4) We now have a Climate Emergency and Environment Working Group and are working on a number of ideas so would be able to readily contribute.
- Local educational / raising awareness / information giving events: We are working with Calne Area Board, Sustainable Calne, Friends of the Marden Valley and Calne Town Council to put on an Eco Fest on Saturday 6th November to kick start this area of work.
- Friends of the Earth published baselines state that 43% of household waste in Wiltshire is reused, recycled, or composted which is commendable, but in contrast 66% of household waste is reused, recycled, or composted in the best performing similar local authority area.
- They state that 68% of waste in Wiltshire should be reused, recycled, or composted by 2030 according to the Climate Change Committee, which advises the government. This evidence shows more needs to be done and of course the clock is ticking so action is needed urgently.
- Top level SMART objectives and timescales must be included in the final strategy in regards to waste management. This would also convey the urgency of the issue. For example, instead of “potentially extend the scope of recycling collections, to include food waste” (area of focus page 30) it would be better to see a clear commitment that “50% of household waste (including food waste) will be reduced by 2023 through x, y and z.”
- Education is fundamentally important to raise awareness and support behaviour change in the general public, in the business community and in the next generation through schools and colleges. There is a need for a specific timescale of engagement by WC with business, organisations and communities to support sustainable consumption and production.

In summary CWPC would like to thank Wiltshire Council for the extensive work that has been completed on the Climate Emergency Strategy; we hope that you are able to accommodate our suggestions and look forward to working with you on this critical issue.