



SAFFRON WALDEN
TOWN COUNCIL

Climate Emergency Action Plan

Version	Adopted Policy Date	Minute Reference	Review Date
1	May 2022	FC 076-22	October 2023

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1. Declaring a Climate Emergency Change

At its Full Council meeting on 8th April 2019, Saffron Walden Town Council (SWTC) resolved to declare a climate emergency and committed to the following:

1. To continue to work with the local community, business, schools and the district and county councils with the intention to make Saffron Walden and Essex Carbon Neutral by 2050 following recommendations from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).
2. To commit to continued working with other local authority organisations and appropriate government departments to determine and implement best practice methods to limit Global Warming to less than one and half degrees Celsius.
3. Determines to place this issue on Council Committee agendas to agree strategies and action plans.

In considering local initiatives and actions, the Council further agreed that it should:

- aim to create a truly green town, with new open spaces, more trees, reduced use of plastics and improved connectivity for walking and cycling;
- aim to ensure that new homes are built to high environmental standards to reduce carbon emissions and to make them affordable to run;
- take positive measures to reduce the illegal levels of pollution by improving monitoring, cycling and public transport, increasing vehicle charging points and pushing for road changes, noting the Public Health England advice that they are no safe levels of air pollution;
- support allotments and local food production;
- continue to move towards the use of electric rather than petrol- or diesel-powered vehicles and tools;
- endeavour to hold other authorities to account for their part in this.

In October 2019 and in light of the growing need for communities to act, and to act now, the Town Council amended its resolution; aiming to be carbon neutral by 2030.

Recognising that words are cheap and easy, the Town Council is aware that a climate change declaration must be backed up and supported by actual, local tangible action; otherwise there is no point. To that end, SWTC has already undertaken the following:

- Reduced mowing and hedge cutting in its public open spaces, allowing the growth of flora and fauna
- Working with the local church in its furtherance of becoming an “Eco-Church”, in the creation of wildflower areas

- Restricted the use of glyphosate in Town Council managed green spaces
- Planting of new hedges and trees. We have hosted a series of community tree planting days in 2019 and 2020, attracting over 50 community volunteers.
- Purchase of battery-operated gardening tools and equipment (rather than petrol); this is not only having a positive impact on the environment but also is of benefit to our employees
- Replacement of petrol and diesel vans and cars with electric vehicles
- To continue supporting allotments and the provision of local food produce. We will provide allotments to both the public and the community. We will continue working with Dig-it Community Group in their outreach projects with the provision of allotment space. We will support local food producers through our market and retail sales at the Tourist Information Centre
- Built and installed bird and bat boxes
- Supported litter campaigns and local walk to school days
- Removed the use of plastic cups in all our venues
- Installed 10 drinking fountains in and around the town centre

Whilst we do not have any power or authority over the creation of green spaces, we lobby developers and the local planning authority to improve the quality and value of public spaces in new developments. As a principle, the Town Council will adopt new public open space to ensure that it is maintained and managed in an appropriate and environmentally friendly manner.

We lobby Essex County Council (the local Highway Authority) to improve connectivity for walking and cycling in and around town. We are clear and forthright about what action must be taken to achieve a greener, cleaner town. We make representations in new planning applications to try to ensure the Department of Transport's hierarchy of use is maintained in putting pedestrians first and cyclists second. We ask developers to provide porous and easy access from their development into town.

We work alongside and support local community groups and activity related to environmental protection and preservation. We supported local young people in 2019 when they held a climate change demonstration, we engage with an environmental community group, Saffron Walden Against Climate Change (SWACC).

The Town Council promoted the “Clean Air Day” in October 2020, raising local awareness and asking people to make a change or commitment to their way of life to improve local air quality. Our market stall was very well received with residents pledging to make tangible changes to their ways of life in order to protect our world.

We are analysing the Council’s carbon footprint, identifying any particular areas where further improvements can be made in our working practices and how we can achieve our net zero target. This analysis includes a review of the energy consumed in our buildings, by our machinery and our vehicles.

The Town Council acknowledges there is still much to do but that every little step and every individual contribution helps towards reducing our global impact on climate change. To quote from David Attenborough “*Real success can only come if there is a change in our societies and in our economics and in our politics*”. Saffron Walden Town Council remains committed to reducing its carbon emissions and will continue to work with and support individuals and community groups in their efforts to this same goal.

2. Plan

2.1 Aims

1. Saffron Walden Town Council (SWTC) to be neutral with respect to its impact on the climate by 2030.
2. Saffron Walden town emissions to be neutral in line with Government policy by 2050 at the latest and ideally before that and to reduce each year in line with the Uttlesford's Environment and Climate Change Framework projections, through actions taken by individuals, businesses and other organisations facilitated, promoted and supported in part by SWTC.

2.2 Actions

The actions have two strands, the first having a Saffron Walden Town Council focus to achieve the first aim, the second to work with others to deliver on the second aim.

2.2.1 Focus

SWTC's carbon footprint can be considered to arise from:

- Events such as Christmas lights switch on, Remembrance Day,
- Buildings, principally the use and hire of the Town Hall, Golden Acre Community Centre and other venues and spaces
- Vehicles and other transport used
- Management and upkeep of open spaces managed by SWTC
- Services such as the operation of the market and Tourist Information Centre

The carbon footprint arises directly from fuel used in each of these and indirectly through the plant, machinery and services bought in.

Our plan is to undertake the following actions.

2022-23: Identify and prioritise carbon reduction projects; achieve quick wins.

1. Analyse Saffron Walden Town Council's carbon footprint in each of the above areas.
2. Set a carbon budget for 2022-23 onwards, consistent with UDC's Framework
3. Identify mechanisms for reducing and eliminating the carbon footprint of each area by 2030, including quick wins.
4. Evaluate options based on criteria including feasibility, effectiveness, timeliness and cost. For example, migration to renewable electricity contracts would be feasible, since they are

available, effective, can be undertaken rapidly within the time period, but may incur an additional cost.

5. Prioritise options taking account of the outcome of the evaluation and Council resources and overall cost.

6. Define an implementation programme specifying projects including objectives, milestones (including timing), expected outcome, anticipated approach to be followed and resource requirements.

7. Implement quick wins, identifying actions that may be taken immediately, and implement those actions including for example: waste recycling and minimisation of air pollution, moving to a energy provider that provides 100% renewable electricity

2022 - 2025: Implement the projects arising in the first three years.

1. Implement projects from those as above.

2. Review the implementation programme each year and modify as necessary.

For the whole period

1. Continually monitor, audit and evaluate progress on the action plan.

2. Institute an awareness campaign through the website, newsletter and social media about the activities being undertaken by SWTC and external bodies in Saffron Walden potentially with case studies from elsewhere.

3. Attend Climate Summits and other meetings when invited by Uttlesford District Council, Essex County Council or other reputable hosts or partners.

2.2.2 Saffron Walden area focus

1. Hold a quarterly People's Forum (a public workshop) to report on SWTC's progress in reducing its own carbon footprint and to receive reports of the external projects facilitated or supported by SWTC. This report does not seek to prescribe dates and times for any such meetings, identifying the increased difficulties and complexities of hosting such events during the current Covid-19 pandemic, although at time of writing these restrictions are currently eased.

2. Identify opportunities where SWTC can usefully facilitate and support the community in achieving the projections in the Uttlesford Environment and Climate Change Framework. These may be projects that can be undertaken by individuals, businesses or community organisations.

3. Identify external parties that can initiate and manage projects associated with these opportunities. These may be community organisations or individual businesses.
4. Assess how SWTC's role in each project and, subject to approval by Council agree with external bodies.
5. Hold a meeting every two months with the relevant external parties to review the progress with each opportunity.

3. Governance

Overall authority to proceed is vested in Council and a Working Group will act for an on behalf of Council in the implementation of the Council's overall aims and strategies. The Working Group's role is to bring proposals to Council for review and approval. Action is then taken by SWTC in accordance with the approval given and to include the following:

1. Report to Council on completion of each stage in the identification and prioritisation of the carbon reduction projects during the action plan period to receive the assessment, and approve the evaluation of options, prioritisation of options and the subsequent implementation programme.
2. Request approval from Council for detailed plans and subsequent decisions arising from individual projects during the plan period.
3. Request approval from Council for any revisions to the implementation programme during the plan period.
4. Request approval from Council on SWTC roles in external projects.
5. Provide a quarterly report on progress against the plan.
6. Provide an annual report on achievements in the previous year to be presented at the May Council meeting.

4. Collaboration

SWTC will act in the context of policy, regulation and initiatives set at international, national government, Essex County Council (ECC) , and Uttlesford District Council levels (UDC). In this respect, SWTC will seek to collaborate with ECC and UDC to ensure consistency and to avoid duplication in actions taken at the different levels.

5. Officer resource

Consideration must be given to the provision of officer support to the Working Group. The officer's role is to support the working group in assembling meeting agendas, undertaking research associated with particular initiatives, to track progress, to liaise with external parties as appropriate and to minute meetings that take place. There is no current resourcing available to SWTC to fulfil this role.

The work, particularly in research, will be highly constrained by the availability of time from the officer charged with the role. Therefore, the estimate of the level of resource will be a compromise based on officers' overall availability given other responsibilities. At this stage the proposal is for an officer to be available one day a week to support the Working Group (i.e. 20% of an FTE).

to identify and address local environmental issues which support global climate change action

Through a consultative, informed and democratic process, the action plan identifies issues and makes recommendations which will positively impact the local environment and contribute to addressing climate change on a national and global scale. Saffron Walden Town Council (SWTC) will lead on all initiatives, working in partnership with a range of individuals and community groups.

SWTC will exercise the power of GPC¹, having regard to UK legislation², international policy and an awareness of global trends and initiatives. Objectives will align with the UN Sustainable Development Goals³ (UN 2020a,b) (Appendix A)

Key to Action Plan:

Priority
High
Medium
Low

Time Frame
Short: 3-6 months
Medium: 6-18 months
Long: 18 months-3 years

¹ GPC: An acronym for the General Power of Competence. See Glossary of terms for further information.

² This includes The Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019, Local Development Plans, the United Nations 2020 climate and energy package; including a range of binding legislations and a commitment for a "20% cut in greenhouse gas emissions (from 1990 levels), 20% of EU energy from renewables, 20% improvement in energy efficiency" (European Commission, 2020)

³ The UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG): "*the blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. They address the global challenges we face, including poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, peace and justice*" (UN, 2020b). See Glossary of terms for further information

Objective 1: Decision Making

This objective is woven throughout the UN SDGs, particularly supporting Goal 16

Council decisions will recognise the importance of climate change, having due care and consideration to this action plan. Decisions will actively support and enable a commitment to local and national climate change; no decision will be contrary to, or undermine this commitment

	Commitment		What we will do	Partners	Priority	Time Frame	Local Positive Impact / Opportunities	National / Global Impact	Challenges / Tensions
1	Reduction of the Council's carbon footprint	1a	Analyse the Town Council's carbon footprint, establishing current emissions and enabling an informed reduction; aiming towards a zero output by 2030	Utility providers		Medium	Actions will demonstrate commitment	Leading by example, may encourage others <i>"even for giant problems you need to start somewhere"</i> Childs ⁴ (2020)	Costly? Problems identified outside of SWTC's control
		1b	Better inform ourselves about climate change through education, training and mentoring	Environmental Groups - both local and national		Medium	Leading to better informed and educated responses	SWTC identified as a national leader on climate change	

⁴ Mike Childs: He has a keen background in environmental issues, sparked from witnessing environmental damage to his town when young. He graduated from York University and whilst there was the first Green Party deputy-president of the Students' Union. He joined FoE in 1989 and has an impressive and progressive career with them, he is currently the Head of Science, Policy and Research. Having led on a number of initiatives and campaigns for FoE, he is deemed a credible and knowledgeable source of reference on environmental matters.

	Commitment		What we will do	Partners	Priority	Time Frame	Local Positive Impact / Opportunities	National / Global Impact	Challenges / Tensions
		1c	Appoint a local climate-change Ambassador				Providing a lead focus		Political?
2	Put climate change at the heart of our decision-making process	2a	Reports and activity will consider the impact of proposals on the local environment and climate change	-		Short	Continued focus on primary objective Improved project delivery	Others may follow this example	
3	The importance of climate change and resilience will be instilled throughout the community	3a	Provide regular free of charge, public training and information sessions	CSE ⁵ UDC ⁶ EALC ⁷ BID Local and national environmental groups		Medium (and ongoing)	A call to action; residents and businesses will be engaged and encouraged to participate/support	The power of individual action must not be underestimated, as demonstrated through the actions of Greta Thunberg ⁸	Cost Trainers Climate-change deniers
		3b	Encourage community leadership and ownership	Residents and businesses in SW			Harnessing of community leadership and involvement across all demographics		

⁵ CSE: An acronym for the Centre for Sustainable Energy. See Glossary of terms for further information on their work

⁶ UDC: An acronym for Uttlesford District Council. See Glossary of terms for further information

⁷ EALC: An acronym for the Essex Association of Local Councils. See Glossary of terms for further information

⁸ Greta Thunberg: A Swedish activist who has made global news and managed to influence international bodies, corporations and governments. See Glossary of terms for further information

	Commitment		What we will do	Partners	Priority	Time Frame	Local Positive Impact / Opportunities	National / Global Impact	Challenges / Tensions
4	Community consultation and engagement	4a	Develop a community engagement and outreach strategy	CSE UDC Community Community groups ⁹ Local and national environmental groups		Medium	Issues will be “real”, linking everyday matters to national/global concerns, i.e. shop local to reduce car emissions, thereby reducing global warming; diesel vehicles are one of the main contributors to air pollution (Greenpeace 2020) ¹⁰	A knowledgeable and engaged community will exert additional pressure throughout the democratic/elected process ¹¹	Action by 3 rd parties may be slow

⁹ There are many groups and clubs in Saffron Walden but those whose aims and objectives include environmental matters and the protection of the earth include Saffron Walden against Climate Change (SWACC), the Business Improvement District (BID), Saffron Walden Initiative (SWI), Essex Wildlife Trust and St Mary’s as an Eco Church. See Glossary of Terms for further information about their work

¹⁰ Greenpeace: An independent environment group, established in 1971 in the UK. They take “peaceful, non-violent direct action” (Greenpeace 2020), with direct action physically stopping an immediate environmental wrong. In the 1970s, they were very much considered rebellious anarchists although their ethics are based on peaceful intervention, taking a lead from the passive movement of The Quakers. In 1986, they established a laboratory at Exeter University and now carry out extensive research and fact-based investigations in to climate change and environmental matters. Their long-standing and pioneering environmental work asserts them as a credible source of reference. Their See Glossary of Terms for further information.

¹¹ Concurring with the principles of community engagement and governance and as demonstrated through Shery Arnstein’s Ladder of Community Participation. An active and engaged community will grow in strength, confidence and ability to influence local issues.

Objective 2: Protect, Enhance and Create Green Spaces

Supporting UN Goals 3, 13, 15

We will protect, enhance and create publicly-accessible green space in Saffron Walden

	Commitment		What we will do	Partners	Priority	Time Frame	Local Positive Impact / Opportunities	National / Global Impact	Challenges / Tensions
1	Protect, enhance and create existing green space	1a	Identify and designate ¹² Local Green Space ¹³	UDC Landowners - request agricultural land to create POS		Medium	Land remains publicly accessible and protected from development	Contribution to the world's green community and open spaces	Landowners may object to designation
2	To manage green space delivered through housing developments	2a	Inform all parties in the planning process ¹⁴	UDC ECC ¹⁵		Medium	Areas maintained to SWTC's standards and environmental policies ¹⁶ Residents of new developments will not be liable for additional management fees ¹⁷	Areas left to wild	Developers may retain land

¹² This will be designated in the Town Council's emerging Neighbourhood Plan: Established through the Localism Act 2011, a Neighbourhood Plan allows Town and Parish Councils the opportunity to influence the local built and planned environment. See Glossary of terms for further information.

¹³ Local Green Space: Using the NPPF, (paragraphs 99-103 refer), a Neighbourhood Plan can identify and designate community green space which is significant to the community (NPPF, 2021: 98-103) See glossary of terms for further information

¹⁴ This includes UDC as the local planning authority, Essex County Council as the Highway Authority, developers and landowners

¹⁵ ECC: An acronym for Essex County Council

¹⁶ This includes a reduced cutting regime, purposefully allowing some grassed areas to be grow wild, allowing for bugs and wildlife, in accordance with Plantlife's recommendation and the "Blue Heart Campaign"

¹⁷ Often, where a local authority or council does not maintain newly created open space within a housing development, a 3rd party Management Company is established (often an off-shoot of the developer) to maintain the green areas and public open spaces. This will be at an additional annual cost to the householders within the development area; effectively a further tier of local taxation for residents

	Commitment		What we will do	Partners	Priority	Time Frame	Local Positive Impact / Opportunities	National / Global Impact	Challenges / Tensions
3	Support biodiversity	3a	Establish wild flower areas	Community ECC ¹⁸		Long	Increased flora and fauna	Supports UK Government aims ¹⁹ ₂₀	Possible reduction in usable public space
		3b	Reduce grass cutting				Allowing natural growth of grass and longevity of bugs		Preference for traditional cutting regimes
		3c	Distribute wildflower seeds (free) to residents	Residents			Local residents encouraged to participate in climate change action, engaging all family members		Cost
		3d	Create bug hotels, bat/bird boxes	Schools Churches			Provision of ecosystems for pollinators, bugs, birds and small mammals		
		3e	Install beehives in secure areas	BEG			Bees pollinate flowers, crops and are important to the eco-system	Supporting the national bee population	Minimal number of locations. Queries around ownership responsibility /PLI

¹⁸ As the owners of some grass verges and highway land in Saffron Walden

¹⁹ On 28th September 2020, the Prime Minister Mr Boris Johnson, committed to protect 30% of the UK's land by 2030. This will protect biodiversity, reduce wildlife decline and support the environment (DEFRA, 2020)

²⁰ Works will also accord with Blue Heart's and Plantlife's campaign to encourage residents, councils, schools and community groups to get involved with re-wilding and re-flowering gardens and grass verges

	Commitment		What we will do	Partners	Priority	Time Frame	Local Positive Impact / Opportunities	National / Global Impact	Challenges / Tensions
4	Identify tree planting opportunities	4a	Plant 500 new trees in the next 5 years	UDC Landowners Community Environment Agency Woodland Trust		Long	Trees prevent flooding ²¹ ²² Pollution reduction Aesthetically pleasing	<i>“Trees are the ultimate carbon capture and storage machines”</i> (Woodland Trust 2020b)	Long-term maintenance and management of trees can be costly ²³ Land availability
		4b	Repurpose an area to create a community orchard	As above Schools/nurseries			Community orchard will provide a place for children to learn about and experience wildlife/nature		As above

²¹ *“Trees reduce flood risk from the top to bottom. Lots of raindrops that land on leaves evaporate straight into the air- so less water reaches the ground. And, leaves intercept rainfall, slowing the rate that water flows into rivers and reducing the risk it’ll burst its banks”* (Ecologist, 2019) See Glossary of Terms for further information

²² Some areas of Saffron Walden are vulnerable to flooding, as identified in information received September 2020 from the Environment Agency (2020a)

²³ Trees must be managed in accordance with the Health and Safety Executive’s (HSE) guidance “Management of the risk from falling trees or branches” (HSE, 2014); this potentially adds an additional £20,000 to the Town Council’s precept being monies for an annual tree survey plus associated works, representing approximately 2% of the precept budget

Objective 3: Tackling Plastic

Supporting UN Goals 6, 11, 12

Working with residents, community groups and businesses, we will reduce, reuse and seek to eliminate plastic from Saffron Walden

	Commitment		What we will do	Partners	Priority	Time Frame	Local Positive Impact / Opportunities	National / Global Impact	Challenges / Tensions
1	Reduce plastic in Council venues	1b	Cease the use of plastic ²⁴ in Council venues and re-use plastic packaging ²⁵	Venue hirers TIC ²⁶		Short	Leading by example	Supports global initiatives	None
2	Introduce a “Plastics Charter” for the retail and business community	2a	Encourage businesses to pledge 3 ways to reduce plastic	Retailers businesses BID Carbon Trust		Long	Reduction in waste packaging to landfill ²⁷ Tangible, identifiable action	Landfill reduction ²⁸	Requires town-wide participation
		2b	Re-evaluate suppliers, recognising the volume of packaging used in the supply chain ²⁹	As above					Suppliers reluctant to change

²⁴ For example, cease the use of plastic, disposable cups and buy glass-bottled milk rather than plastic packaging

²⁵ Packaging may be reused in the Tourist Information Centre which sells products from its shop and online

²⁶ TIC: An acronym for the Tourist Information Centre

²⁷ Approximately half of the household waste in Essex is sent to landfill sites (Love Essex 2020b) *“This untreated waste releases harmful gases, which are a major factor in global warming. Not only that, but landfill is also an expensive means of waste disposal, with landfill tax charged on every tonne which is disposed of in this way. In 2012, Essex County Council paid over £19.56 million in landfill tax, with this figure set to rise considerably over the coming years”*

²⁸ Landfill sites contribute to the world’s pollution (Friends of the Earth 2020d). See Glossary of terms for further details on landfill sites

²⁹ *“Up to 90% of an organisation’s environmental impact lies in the value chain”* (Carbon Trust 2020a)²⁹

	Commitment		What we will do	Partners	Priority	Time Frame	Local Positive Impact / Opportunities	National / Global Impact	Challenges / Tensions
3	Discourage single-use water bottles	3a	Install water fountains throughout town	BID Love Essex ³⁰ ECC UDC		Medium	Easily accessible, free water supply (although note the need to preserve water) ³¹	Landfill reduction	Costly? Must not conflict with the need to preserve water
		3b	Sell reusable water bottles at the TIC ³²						
		3c	Encourage retailers to subscribe to a water pledge ³³	Retailers Businesses BID					

³⁰ Love Essex: A CiC established by Essex County Council to raise awareness of plastic pollution and to encourage the community to reduce its consumption of plastic

³¹ Savethewatercleanclever campaign which notes the need to save our individual, daily use of water. *“The Environment Agency is warning that the UK could face serious water shortages within the next 25 years”* savethewatercleanclever (2020). Save the Water, Clean Clever is an initiative led by Finish (a dishwasher and tablet manufacturer) and supported by credible organisations such as National Geographic, Love Water (a conglomerate of 40 environmental groups and charities) and Cranfield University. The campaign is supported by prestigious, knowledgeable and influential environmental campaigners and is considered a credible source of reference

³² Tourist Information Centre (TIC) is a facility wholly managed and funded by Saffron Walden Town Council

³³ Water Pledge: where a retailer will refill a reusable cup of water from their own premises, thereby encouraging the use of refillable receptables and discouraging 1-use plastic bottles

Objective 4: Green Travel

Supporting UN Goals 3, 7, 8, 11

SWTC will promote, support and encourage the use of public transport, walking, cycling and energy efficient vehicles

	Commitment		What we will do	Partners	Priority	Time Frame	Local Positive Impact / Opportunities	National / Global Impact	Challenges / Tensions
1	Support the use of electric vehicles	1a	Convert Town Council vehicles to electric by 2030			Long	Reduction in petrol/diesel vehicles	Reduction in CO2 levels ³⁴	Mining of lithium batteries is harmful to the environment Lithium is disposed into landfill sites ³⁵
		1b	Promote and support community use of electric vehicles	Car manufacturers. Community				As above	
2	Support and encourage the use of public transport	2a	Lobby developers to pay appropriate public transport contributions	UDC ECC		Long	Improved bus service resulting in fewer car journeys	Reduction in air pollution Improved accessibility to public transport ³⁶	Bus services are generally privately operated, funded by ECC, with an ever-reducing subsidy ³⁷

³⁴ Cars emit a number of poisonous chemicals including carbon monoxide, sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxide all of which are harmful the planet and the mankind (The National Geographic Society 2020). The National Geographic Society is a reputable source of information, given its long establishment (founded in 1888); it is one the of world's largest non-profit educational and scientific organisations in the world; it focusses on geography, archaeology, natural science and the environment.

³⁵ Lithium can only be disposed to landfill leading to soil and water pollution; at the present time lithium cannot be recycled

³⁶ Thereby creating a more mobile and active community

³⁷ As evidenced in a bus study / survey in Saffron Walden, D Corke (2018). The results evidenced that most bus services are heavily subsidised by ECC, given they would otherwise run at a loss to the private operator. ECC therefore subsidises bus usage in Saffron Walden by an average of £5 per passenger journey. In recognition that ECC operates increasingly within a challenging budget, it is feasible that ECC may remove the subsidy to save budgetary expenditure and therefore the service may cease to operate

	Commitment		What we will do	Partners	Priority	Time Frame	Local Positive Impact / Opportunities	National / Global Impact	Challenges / Tensions
		2b	Establish a “Hop N Stop” bus service, operating in the town centre	UDC ECC Developers				Reduced traffic congestion and idling cars	Lack of S106 funds Requires buy-in from UDC and ECC
3	Encourage and improve pedestrian and cycling accessibility	3a	Ensure developers ³⁸ provide permeable, safe and attractive footpaths to adoptable standards ³⁹ which remain a public right of way ⁴⁰	UDC ECC Developers Ramblers Community		Medium	Schemes will comply with the DfT ⁴¹ user-hierarchy; prioritising pedestrians then cyclists (DfT, nd:8)		
		3b	Continue lobbying for better and improved pedestrian and cycling provision generally in and around SW	UDC ECC		Short and ongoing	Improved footpaths and cycling facilities for local residents	Reduction in traffic	Requires other authorities to understand local requirements and commit to addressing needs
		3c	Support “Walk to School Days” through social media and other communication channels	Schools Environmental Groups		Short and ongoing	Reduction in local traffic during peak travel times	Reduced traffic congestion and idling cars	Lack of local support Bad weather

³⁸ Through policies within the emerging Neighbourhood Plan

³⁹ Adoptable Standards: meaning to a standard as defined by the Local Highway Authority, Essex County Council

⁴⁰ As defined in the UK Government’s “Rights of Way and Accessing Land” (2020)

⁴¹ DfT: An acronym for the Department for Transport. This user hierarchy prioritises pedestrians in new developments, cyclists are second, public transport is third, followed by private car usage and then lorries

	Commitment		What we will do	Partners	Priority	Time Frame	Local Positive Impact / Opportunities	National / Global Impact	Challenges / Tensions
		3d	Support and promote national “Clean Air Day”, raising awareness of small, local action and commitment	Community BID		Medium	Improved local awareness, identifying the positive benefits by small, individual action	Contribution to the global reduction	

Conclusion

“The science states that no major government is doing enough to address climate and ecological breakdown” (Collective for Climate Action⁴², 2020). The Town Council is of the opinion that the environment and our very future cannot wait for a collective international action; we must act, and we must act now at a local level. Whilst individually our efforts may seem insignificant, collectively the impact is greater, stronger and more powerful.

Through people like Greta Thunberg and David Attenborough, we have witnessed power and influence wielded over politicians and governments; this must continue. The Dalai Lama⁴³ (nd, quoted in Philosiblog, 2020) writes *“A genuine change must first come from within the individual, only then can he or she attempt to make a significant contribution to humanity”*. A “call to action” of individuals to make lifestyle changes and the implementation of a local action plan are vital in order to lead, endorse and demand global action.

⁴² The Collective for Climate Action: A UK based group of public sector employees (non-political) who seek to bring change from within their respective roles in the public sector. Winners of the “Global Public Service: Team of the Year Award” in 2019 asserting their credibility as a bona-fide organisation and a source of reference

⁴³ The Dalai Lama: A spiritual leader in Tibetan Buddhism, representing Buddhist values, customs and traditions

Appendix A: Summary of UN Sustainable Development Goals

(2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development)

Goal	Primary Objectives
Goal 1 - No Poverty	To reduce the number of people globally living in poverty. This number had decreased from 36% in 1990 to 10% in 2015 but since Covid-19, this figure could be increased by 8%. To ensure that all have access to basic services, control over their land, for the poor and vulnerable, to “reduce exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events” , UN (2020d)
Goal 2 - Zero Hunger	To end hunger across the world by 2030, ending all forms of malnutrition; to double agricultural production; to ensure sustainable food production systems, UN (20220e)
Goal 3 - Good Health and Well Being	To support healthy living including a focus on reducing maternal mortality rates, improving childcare and family support services; to support healthcare workers; to “substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination” UN (2020f)
Goal 4 - Quality Education	To offer quality, free childcare to all children; to ensure “all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development”, UN (2020g)
Goal 5 - Gender Equality	“End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere”; to ensure all have access to economic resources, land ownership, natural resources, UN (2020h)
Goal 6 - Clean Water and Sanitation	To improve water quality, reduce water pollution; to provide free and accessible water for all; to “restore water-related eco-systems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes” UN (2020i)
Goal 7 - Affordable and Clean Energy	To support and expand infrastructure enabling modern and sustainable energy services; to “double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency” UN (2020j)
Goal 8 - Decent Work and Economic Growth	To improve economic production, to create more sustainable production environments “to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation”; to protect the rights of the employee; to promote sustainable tourism; to focus on work for young people, UN (2020k)
Goal 9 - Industries, Innovation and Infrastructure	To “develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure” including retrofitting of existing systems; to improve internet connectivity globally; to increase the number of people employed in research and development, UN (2020l)
Goal 10: Reduced Inequalities	To provide equality for all regardless of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion, economic or other status; to support lesser developed countries in their decision-making processes; to better manage migration of people, UN (2020m)
Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities	To ensure fair and equitable access for all to safe, affordable housing and basic services; to provide sustainable systems; to safeguard heritage; to improve air quality; to consider waste management UN (2020n)
Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production	To sustainably manage the use of natural resources; to reduce the use of chemicals and waste and to reduce its release into the environment; to “substantially reduce waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse”; to “ensure that people everywhere have the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature”; to address and reduce the use of fossil-fuel subsidies, UN (2020o)

Goal	Primary Objectives
Goal 13: Climate Action	To “integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning”; to improve education on climate change, UN (2020p)
Goal 14: Life Below Water	To reduce marine pollution; to address “the impacts of ocean acidification”; to end overfishing; to improve ocean health; to “enhance the conservation and sustainable use of oceans” UN (2020q)
Goal 15: Life on Land	To conserve, restore and sustain freshwater eco systems; to promote sustainable management of forests; to halt deforestation; to conserve mountain ecosystems; to reduce the degradation of natural habitats; to halt the loss of biodiversity; to prevent extinction of threatened species; to “integrate ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning, development processes”, to combat poaching, UN (2020r)
Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions	To reduce violence and violence related deaths; to address illicit arms flow; to reduce state corruption and bribery; to “ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative democracy-making at all levels”; to improve global governance; to improve public access to information; to “promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development” , UN (2020s)
Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goals	This objective is split into five core objectives, being Finance, Technology, Capacity Building, Trade, Systemic Issues with each objective summarising the support and mechanisms available through the UN partnership for delivery of all other goals, UN (2020t)

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Glossary of Terms

Arnstein, Shery

Arnstein worked at the US Department of Housing, Education and Welfare in the 1960s-70s. Through this work and her analysis of public participation, she wrote the highly influential journal article in the American Planning Association “Ladder of Citizen Participation”. Her papers and work noted the lasting effect of public participation in policy making. The public influence could therefore be seen in policy making relating to urban planning, public policy and other public realms. Arnstein’s ladder of participation has been reprinted more than 80 times in academic publications and translated into numerous languages. Arnstein’s ladder is

still used to this day by those involved in consultation, engagement or public awareness and academics as a credible means of reviewing and analysing community participation.

Attenborough, David Sir

He is an English broadcaster and natural historian. He is widely respected in his field and in recent years has sparked considerable interest and recognition in his campaign for climate change. His series 'The Blue Planet' (2001), 'State of the Planet' (2000), 'Changing Planet Earth' (2006) and 'Our Planet' (2019) address environmental issues including global warming. He has been very critical of the global inaction to address global warming, making a series of impassioned pleas for international action to address climate change

Business Improvement District (BID)

Established under The Business Improvement Districts (England) Regulations 2004, No 2443 BIDs were established by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. Establishment of a BID area is via a ballot process and in accordance with the legislation (Regulations 1-9 of the Act detail the requirements). Once BID areas are established, those qualifying businesses in the BID area must pay a levy, which is added to the business rates bill as collected by the Rating Authority (in Saffron Walden this is Uttlesford District Council). A BID may only be dissolved by the same Rating Authority (as per Regulation 18 of the legislation). The primary objectives of BIDs is to deliver additional services to local business, this may often include clustering of services (such as utilities, bin emptying, printing) or promotion/marketing of the area generally. BIDs may not deliver a service already offered by a local authority, although they may add to any existing service.

British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC)

The BBC is a British public service broadcaster; it is the worlds' oldest and arguably most respected national broadcaster. It is primarily funded through the annual TV licensing fee, charged to all who receive live TV broadcasts. The fee is set by the British Government with the work of the BBC operating under an agreement with the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. Much has been written about the impartiality of the BBC (given it is funded through Government) but this should not detract from the high quality, award-winning service.

Carbon Neutrality

"Carbon neutrality means having a balance between emitting carbon and absorbing carbon from the atmosphere in carbon sinks. Removing carbon oxide from the atmosphere and then storing it is known as carbon sequestration. In order to achieve net zero emissions, all worldwide greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions will have to be counterbalanced by carbon sequestration" (European Parliament, 2020)

Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE):

Formed in 1926, it is a pressure group whose primary aim is to limit urban sprawl and creep.

Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE)

An independent, national charity which seeks to help, inform and support individuals and organisations in their use and consumption of energy. CSE works closely with a range of 3rd parties including the UK and local government bodies and is currently working with the Society for Local Council Clerks to further support and educate local councils on energy efficiency

Council and Community Action in the Climate Emergency (CACE)

Established in Australia in 2017, a lobby group to encourage all levels of government across the world to declare a climate emergency followed by a climate action plan

Committee on Climate Change (CCC):

A statutory body, established under the UK's Climate Change Act 2008. It provides independent, expert advice to UK governments, advising how to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Its Chair is Lord Deben and membership includes experts in the fields of climate science, economics, behavioural science and business. Its members have a duty to act impartially and objectively in their advice to government.

The Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)

A Government Ministerial Department responsible for the protection of the environment, food production, agriculture, fisheries and rural communities. It covers the UK and Northern Ireland

The Department for Transport (DfT)

A Government Ministerial Department responsible for the UK's transport network. The DfT supports English local authorities with advice, policy, guidance and funding for the maintenance of road networks. They support and develop new major transport schemes and manage approximately 4,300 miles of major roads and motorways via Highways England

The Ecologist Journal

Originally produced as a paper journal in the 1970s it now has a strong online presence and seeks to offer advice, guidance, news and academic advice to those involved in and with an interest in environmental matters. With hundreds of thousands of subscribers, it leads on international climate change and environmental matters

Eco Church

"As part of our mission to share God's love, we have formed an Eco-Team at St Mary's to explore how we can better care for God's creation. This is in line with the Fifth Mark of Mission according to the Anglican Communion, which is 'to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth.'" (St Marys Church, 2020)

Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC)

The County Association of the National Association of Local Councils. The EALC offers local advice, guidance and support to local councils in Essex, working alongside and in conjunction with NALC (see glossary of terms for the work of NALC)

Essex Wildlife Trust

A conservation charity covering the county of Essex. They are committed to protecting wildlife and the natural world. It was founded in 1959 by volunteers and they currently have direct responsibility for the management and preservation of over 8,400 acres of parkland and open spaces in Essex.

Environment Agency (EA)

Established in 1996 and based in Bristol, the EA is a public body coming under the responsibility of DEFRA (see Glossary of terms). It has responsibility for a range of environmental matters including the regulation of the waste industry, fisheries,

conservation, ecology and flood risk management (which it often does alongside the primary authority for flood management, for Saffron Walden this would be Essex County Council)

Friends of the Earth

Established in 1969 in USA, its primary purpose is to highlight, inform and educate the world on protecting the planet. They campaign locally, nationally and globally on changes to protect the local environment, to adopt alternative energy solutions and to fight for environmental and social rights globally. They fight for sustainable policies, lobbying governments around the world. Far from being just a local, noisy voice, FoE has worked with international governments including the IPCC and a number of international companies to support their sustainable programmes. Their experience, partnership working and governmental advice asserts their credibility as a credible and proven source

The Guardian Newspaper

A British newspaper, established in 1821. It is commonly considered to be a left-wing, liberalist tabloid paper whose primary target audience is middle aged, middle classed individuals. It has won the Newspaper of the Year Award at the Annual British Press Awards and in 2018 was acknowledged in an Ipsos Mori Poll for its digital content and for being the most trusted newspaper. The Guardian averages 8th - 10th place in statistics evaluating most read papers (both print and online). Considered by Media Bias Fact Check to be a trusted and respected newspaper.

General Power of Competence (GPC)

Introduced as part of the Localism Act 2011, the GPC equips town and parish councils with additional powers and authority to act innovatively in delivering outcomes for the communities which they serve

Greenpeace UK

An independent environment group, established in 1971 in the UK. They take “peaceful, non-violent direct action” (Greenpeace 2020), with direct action physically stopping an immediate environmental wrong. In the 1970s, they were very much considered rebellious anarchists although their ethics are based on peaceful intervention, taking a lead from the passive movement of The Quakers. In 1986, they established a laboratory at Exeter University and now carry out extensive research and fact-based investigations in to climate change and environmental matters. Their long-standing and pioneering environmental work asserts them as a credible source of reference.

Landfill sites

An area of land designated for waste disposal, often starting life as a hole in the ground which is then filled with waste. Sites take waste arising from commercial, industrial and household activities. The harmful effects of landfill sites have been recognised for many years; they emit methane into the atmosphere which (in large doses) is harmful to people. Contaminated, wet soil leaks leachate into the watercourse causing further environmental harm and damage. The management of landfill sites is strictly monitored and controlled by legislation and industry regulations

Local Green Space (LGS)

LGS is a designation in Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans and is a means of registering land against development. The land must be demonstrably useful and important to the community.

Local Council

Refers to Town or Parish Councils who are the tier of local government at the lowest end and most often, at the most engaged end with public consultation. Local Councils do not (ordinarily) determine planning applications but they may seek to influence the Principal Authority. Local Councils have a statutory right to comment on applications but are not statutory consultees

Localism Act 2011

Introduced in 2011 by a Conservative Government, the Localism Act devolves greater powers to councils, providing them with more control matters in their community; the Localism Act has particularly supported councils in their control of housing (for example, creating new and different opportunities for local authorities on social housing) and planning decisions (for example, abolishing regional spatial strategies, amendment to the Community Infrastructure Levy and neighbourhood development orders. The Localism Act also introduced the General Power of Competence for local councils

Local Government Association (LGA)

The LGA is the national membership body for some 335/339 councils in England. Membership includes district, county, metropolitan, unitary authorities and London boroughs. It represents local government on national government matters, aiming to influence national government. It is a politically-led organisation with representation from all major UK political parties

Local Plan:

Key documents from Planning Authorities which set out a vision and framework for the future development of the area. The Local Plan must follow statutory procedures and the authority must engage with the local community in the consultation and preparation of the plan. "The Local Plan provides a degree of certainty for communities, businesses and investors, and a framework for guiding decisions on individual planning applications." DCLG (2015)

The National Association for Local Councils (NALC)

It is the only national body to represent the interests of local councils. It works with County Associations (Saffron Walden sits in the Essex Association of Local Councils forum), representing the sector at national level but also providing help, support and guidance on local issues. It has an accreditation service (the Local Council Award Scheme) which sets industry standards with applying councils having to meet set criteria and requirements.

The National Geographic Society

One of the world's largest non-profit scientific and educational organisations in the world. It covers a broad spectrum of responsibility and interest including geography, archaeology, natural science, environmental and historical conservation and world culture/history.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):

This sets out the government's planning policies for England, providing the framework for other policies (including local plans and policies). Last updated February 2019.

Neighbourhood Plan

Introduced under the Localism Act 2011, c.20, part 6, chapter 3. A neighbourhood plan seeks to put decision making on planning matters to the local community. Once adopted, a neighbourhood plan forms part of the suite of documents in the Local Development Plan along with the Local Plan

Participatory Democracy

Participatory Democracy (PD): a form of governance which widens the depth and breadth of citizen involvement in the political system. Citizens determine policy and governance decisions; politicians are simply required to act according to this will.

Bevir⁴⁴ (2013, p173) describes PD as “*a contingent product of the institutionalism and communitarianism*”, noting the adopted role and responsibility of the individual and family units in the process.

Plant Life

“Plantlife is a British conservation charity working nationally and internationally to save threatened wild flowers, plants and fungi. We own nearly 4,500 acres of nature reserve across England, Scotland and Wales. We have 11,000 members and supporters and HRH The Prince of Wales is our Patron” (Plant Life 2020)

Principal Authorities:

The name given to authorities who are either County Councils in England, District (or Borough) Councils or Unitary Councils (where the role of county and district councils has been combined). The Principal Authority will ordinarily determine planning applications for their area

Renewable UK

Previously operating under the name of ‘British Wind Energy Association’ (est 1978), Renewable UK represents the UK’s wind power, wave power, tidal power, wave and tidal energy industries. Renewable UK supports these industries in the promotion and use of renewable electricity.

Residents’ for Uttlesford:

A new political group formed in 2014 largely in response to and in opposition of poor planning practices at Uttlesford District Council. In May 2019 following local elections, Residents’ for Uttlesford became the majority party at UDC; UDC is the Local Planning Authority.

Saffron Walden against Climate Change (SWACC)

A Saffron Walden local action group, established in 2018 by a group of young mums who felt inspired to do more than learn about climate change; they wanted to take decisive, physical action in their locality. They are supported by a number of other community groups including Saffron Walden Town Council (it is not known if this group has continued into 2022)

⁴⁴ Mark Bevir: A renowned and recognised academic on political theory. He is a Professor of Political Science and Director of the Centre for British Studies at the University of California, Berkeley, USA. He has published over a dozen books on political governance along with numerous scholarly articles on similar subjects.

Saffron Walden Initiative (SWI)

“Saffron Walden Initiative is an independent, non-political, non-profit making Company. Membership is open to anyone who cares about the lovely market town of Saffron Walden” (SWI, 2020). The SWI directly organises a number of community events in town including an annual summer dance, town tours and small environmental projects to improve the town

Thunberg, Greta

A teenage Swedish environmental activist who first found fame and notoriety in campaigning outside the Swedish Parliament (August 2018), in a call for stronger action on climate change. Her demonstrations sparked an international wave of support, with children across the world becoming engaged in climate change matters, campaigns, protests and petitioning governments to improve climate change. Thunberg has attended several international UN conferences, famously addressing the UN Climate Action Summit in 2019; her speech being broadcast worldwide. She has received global recognition for her campaigning and ability to inspire young people in campaigning and actively making a positive contribution in raising awareness of climate change and the need to cut global emissions

Uttlesford District Council (UDC):

A District Council in north-west Essex, covering a predominately rural district including the market towns of Saffron Walden (in the north) and Great Dunmow (in the south). It also includes the village of Stansted, home to London Stansted Airport, along with numerous other villages, ranging in size and population. The Council employs approximately 300 Officers. Its neighbouring districts include South Cambridgeshire to the north, East and North Hertfordshire to the west

United Nations (UN)

The UN was founded in 1945, post WW2, its purpose is detailed within the UN Charter (signed in 1945), with a primary focus on international peace and security, promotion of equal rights, international co-operation in solving international problems. In recent decades, it has focused on climate change, sustainable development and humanitarian/health emergencies. There are 143 Member States

United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG)

The UNSDG meets twice a year, the primary focus of the group is to form policy and decision-making processes on matters relating to international development and the environment.

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

“The Sustainable Development Goals are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and improve the lives and prospects of everyone, everywhere. The 17 Goals were adopted by all UN Member States in 2015, as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development which set out a 15-year plan to achieve the Goals” (UN 2020a)

World Health Organisation

Established in 1948 by the UN, its primary objectives are to promote and support global peace, health, security and equality. WHO works across a number of world government bodies and agencies, including the UN