

Burton Bradstock Parish Council Parish Council Sustainability Policy Statement

Purpose of Paper:

- To explain why Burton Bradstock Parish Council should respond to the challenge of climate change and the need to move toward more sustainable ways of living:
- To propose a sustainability policy statement for Burton Bradstock Parish Council with associated actions for implementation.

Reccomendation: For the Parish Council to adopt the sustainability policy statement and as a Council actively pursue the associated actions.

The case for action:

The scientific evidence from the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is unequivocal. Climate change is already happening and poses a major threat to our long-term prosperity and well-being. Managing the threat requires a wide spread and rapid move away from the use of fossil fuels.

The scale of this challenge means that all sectors of the community have to be involved in meeting targets for reducing emissions and adapting to climate change.

The Local Government Association in a recent report has said:
“Tackling climate change must be at the centre of local government’s vision for their communities. It is not another priority amongst the 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.

Acting now will avoid the future economic costs of climate change. The development of a low carbon economy also offers major economic opportunities.

Government is urging local councils to take action. Other Parish Councils are already taking action, see:

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/environment/climatechange/uk/publicsector/parish/pdf/ActOnCO2.pdf>

DRAFT SUSTAINABILITY STATEMENT:

Our vision for Burton Bradstock is that of a thriving community that is environmentally sustainable and socially just – As a Parish Council we recognise that urgent action is required to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and manage the impacts of climate change.

ASSOCIATED ACTIONS

As a Parish Council we will show our sustainability commitment and leadership by:

1) Appointing a Parish Sustainability champion, helping to spread information about climate change impacts , share learning through parish events/ newsletters and encourage adaptation and mitigation actions,

2) Knowing the size of the problem and annually monitoring change – The Parish Council will produce a carbon footprint/ and climate change action plan for the Parish (This is a Parish Plan action!).

3) Embedding sustainability in all Parish Council decisions and actions - starting by:

a) Systematically reducing the carbon footprint of Parish Council activities, achieved by auditing the carbon emisisions from Parish Council operations/properties and developing year on year actions to reduce emissions;

b) Using planning powers under the Climate Change and Sustainable Energy Act 2006 to promote sustainable development, low-carbon lifestyles and development that is resilient to climate change in our parish;

c) Using the Parish Council procurement activity to both reduce our direct carbon footprint through the purchase of energy efficient, low carbon intensive goods and services and by influencing our supply chain through setting demanding standards and/or changing tender practices.

There is a lot more we can do as a Parish Council. This list of actions is a good start.

Appendix 1 –Background Information

A role for local government in responding to climate change?

Local Councils are showing their commitment to this important issue by signing The Nottingham Declaration on climate change (2000).

The Nottingham Declaration, see:

<http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/housingbuildings/localauthorities/NottinghamDeclaration/>

West Dorset District Council has signed up to the Nottingham Declaration.

The Local Government Association has recently published a report setting out recommendations for local councils.

see: <http://www.lga.gov.uk/lga/publications/publication-display.do?id=20630>

The LGA report concludes that:

“Tackling climate change must be at the centre of local government’s vision for their communities. It is not another priority amongst the 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.

The LGA think Local Councils can improve:

Leadership – local councils are well placed to lead their communities

Capacity – Making full use of council powers – political, human and financial

Transparency – if councils are to gain the maximum local support and momentum for change, it will be vital to increase the level of transparency and scrutiny.

Engagement - Local government has the unique democratic mandate to engage other organisations and the wider community in tackling climate change. The precise nature of this engagement will vary from place to place. Collectively local government has a significant footprint.”

Local Communities are willing to respond. A recent survey by Friends of the Earth in the SW reveals a massive surge in community activity on climate change across the South West. See:

http://www.foe.co.uk/england/news/south_west_climate_activity.html

- Over **250 community groups** are involved in activities around climate change.
- Between them they involve over **25,000 people**, who give their time almost entirely voluntarily.

The scale and breadth of this activity shows how great is the public’s appetite for positive action on climate change.

Appendix 2 –some examples of what Parishes are doing in response to climate change.

Greening Gamblesby village hall

In Gamblesby, a small farming community in Cumbria, the village hall closed down because it needed renovation. To give it new life, the village hall committee and local people decided to commit to using renewable energy materials to improve efficiency. Low-energy lighting was fitted and locally-sourced sheep wool insulated the walls and roof. The committee realised that a ground source heat pump (moving heat stored in the earth into the building via pipes buried underground) would provide environmentally-friendly heating, and be cheap to run. This fitted in with plans to renovate the car park. Costs were kept to a minimum by the community doing much of the work themselves. Energy efficient buildings can look like any other.

For more information on Gamblesby village hall portal:

www.est.org.uk/uploads/documents/cafe/cafe%20case%20study%202022.pdf

Village energy days

Villages around Daventry in Northamptonshire tell people about energy efficiency measures and grants. Participants get an energy efficient light bulb when completing a Home Energy Check. Local children give a presentation at the events, building on special lessons in their schools. So far, at least 20% of villagers regularly attend the energy days, and about half the attendees take up measures via grants and discounts. The events are funded by Daventry District Council, and suppliers and installers of energy give their time free of charge.

More information on Daventry energy days:

www.est.org.uk/uploads/documents/cafe/cafe%20case%20study%207.pdf

Go Zero – towards a zero waste society

Go Zero is a community project based in Chew Magna that raises awareness of the environmental and social impact of our everyday actions. It offers affordable and sustainable solutions to reduce and conserve resources and energy, to contract the carbon footprint. It has focus groups covering transport, energy, recycling and consumption. Go Zero is raising local awareness of the link between energy consumption and carbon dioxide emissions, has produced a local food guide and is producing a parish energy audit and transport plan.

For more information on Go Zero :

www.gozero.org.uk

Community oil deliveries

In the tiny hamlet of Waterrow in Somerset each of the scattered households used to order its oil independently, so oil tankers made separate trips for each delivery. This issue was raised through the local action planning process of a parish plan. As a result, the village established a joint ordering process, so just one tanker comes in for everyone. An oil delivery 'hotline' is up and running so local residents who need oil simply call in their orders by the 15th of each month. This has led to a win-win situation with cheaper delivery for local residents and less traffic on the Waterrow roads.

For more information on Waterrow's parish plan

www.ruralcommunities.gov.uk/files/Parish%20Plans%20Case%20Studies.pdf

Appendix 3 – Some definitions

Ecological Footprint

In order to live, we consume what nature offers. Every action impacts on the planet's ecosystems. This is of little concern as long as human use of resources does not exceed what the Earth can renew. But are we taking more?

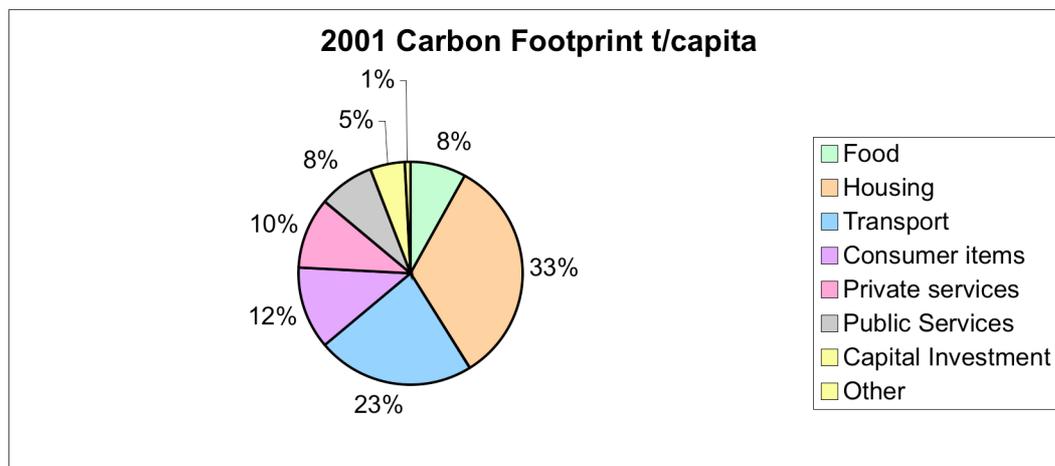
Ecological footprinting is a measure of how much land and water area we require to produce the resources we consume and to absorb our wastes.– the approach calculates the amount of productive land/sea required to provide our needs and expresses it as global hectares.

In South West England our eco-footprint is 5.24 global hectares (gha). Expressed another way we would need three planets to provide for our lifestyles if everyone used the earth's resources at the same rate as us. The world average is 2.2 gha and our 'fair share' would be 1.8 gha.

Carbon Footprint

Our carbon footprint is a measure of the green house gas emissions resulting from our use of resources. The larger our carbon footprint the greater the emissions of climate changing gases into the atmosphere.

A 'fair carbon share' for every person who lives in the South West has been calculated at **4.1 tonnes**. The latest figures for the SW region (2005) show that if we divide the total regional carbon emissions by the number of people in the region each person is responsible for 8.8 tonnes.



This carbon footprint for West Dorset shows where carbon emissions are generated. Emissions from housing(33%) and transport (23%) are the two biggest sources of carbon for us in West Dorset.

Calculate your own carbon footprint, see:
<http://actonco2.direct.gov.uk/index.html>

MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION

Actions to combat climate change fall into two related but equally important areas:

- mitigation of the causes – by reducing greenhouse gas emissions; and
- adaptation to the effects – by adapting to the unavoidable climate change resulting from the increased concentrations of gases from human activities.