

# Hastings Borough Council

# Climate Emergency

# Strategy 2020

### Executive summary:

This climate emergency strategy and action plan was developed to support the Climate Emergency motion Hastings Borough Council declared during 2019.

### **Our vision is to make Hastings carbon neutral by 2030.**

It covers the borough of Hastings, however, to meet the target of carbon neutrality by 2030, the impact of this strategy, needs to ripple across the wider region.



It aligns with regional policy, most noticeably the [Tri LEP Energy Strategy Energy South2East](#) and responds to analysis and evidence developed by AECOM, consultants commissioned to aid us in delivering a robust action plan which will impact the towns carbon emissions.





This research demonstrates that the town has reduced carbon emissions by 39% since 2005, much of this due to the decarbonisation of the national grid and increasing energy efficiency in buildings.

However, we have a significant journey to travel if we hope to meet our 2030 target, much of this due to our poor housing stock and reliance on gas. Therefore, one of our key actions over the next two years is to identify funding and investment partners to enable us to reduce our energy demand and emissions via retrofit and in retrofit/renewable energy skills development.

Only by working in partnership, delivering funded initiatives and changing behaviour, do we have the opportunity to make significant progress towards this 2030 target.

Our strategy has six priority themes and associated projects which are showcased in more detail within the evidence pack and initial 2-year action plan appended to this strategy, however, outline details are demonstrated in Fig 1. The action plan from 2022-2030 will be developed in parallel to the delivery of this initial 2-year plan.

Priority Theme	Project
 Communication, lobbying and partnership working	Webpage development and communication material Stakeholder engagement via partnership structures Partnership working to develop projects and inform the 8-year action plan Lobbying locally, regionally and nationally to enable change
 Grid decarbonisation	Work with UKPN to support the transition to a smart grid. Planning Policy – enable strategic energy infrastructure

	<p>Reduced energy demand</p>	<p>Identify funding for retrofit Review council assets and initiate retrofit programme of works</p>
	<p>Renewable energy</p>	<p>Commence a new programme of rooftop solar installations on council-owned and 3<sup>rd</sup> party roofs. Develop a business model for carpark rooftop solar Explore ground-mounted solar array sites</p>
	<p>Low Carbon sustainable transport</p>	<p>Contribute to the delivery of 15 public EV charge points in 20/21 Initiate purchase of council own EV fleet Explore options for EV or ULEV fleet for public transport /taxi fleet</p>
	<p>Offsetting</p>	<p>Research and review sequestering CO2 with HBC land management</p>

## **Our vision is to make Hastings carbon neutral by 2030.**

### **1 Introduction**

1.1 The climate is changing due to emissions of greenhouse gases resulting from human activity. The bulk of emissions are a result of our demand for energy, where the largest contributor is carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), emitted when fossil fuels (coal gas and oil) are burnt to meet those demands; other greenhouse gas emissions are associated with industrial processes and agriculture.

### **2 The commitment to tackle climate change**

2.1 The UK has committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and ratified the Paris Agreement which aims to *'strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change by keeping a global temperature rise well below 2<sup>0</sup>C ...and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5<sup>0</sup>C'*. The Climate Change Act 2008 legally commits the UK Government to reduce emissions by 100% by the year 2050, compared with a 1990 baseline. A national environment and climate emergency was declared by Parliament in May 2019.

2.2 The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) special report on Global Warming published in October 2018, considered the impacts and risks associated with 1.5<sup>0</sup>C of global warming in contrast to 2<sup>0</sup>C and described a pathway to reduce emissions to implement the Paris Agreement and achieve 1.5<sup>0</sup>C warming.

2.3 As a direct result of the IPCC report and the growing body of scientific evidence regarding climate change, in 2018 a worldwide movement of climate emergency declarations emerged, with Hastings Council agreeing a motion to declare a climate emergency in February 2019.

### **3 Hastings Climate Emergency**

3.1 As a direct result of the IPCC report and the growing body of scientific evidence regarding climate change, in 2018 a worldwide movement of climate emergency declarations emerged including a range of organisations and councils from around the world. In February 2019 Hastings Borough Council passed a motion to declare a 'Climate Emergency' to:

**Make Hastings carbon neutral by 2030**

**Take advantage of new powers as they are made available to us by the central government**

**Work towards supplying 30% of the town's electricity by 2030**

Update the low carbon and renewable energy policies as part of the Local Plan review to deliver energy-efficient new developments and renewable energy projects

Update the Councils sustainable procurement policy to take account of climate change

Work with partners to increase the EV infrastructure in the town

Reduce the Councils and towns reliance on single-use plastics

Maintain Council land to maximise species diversity and mitigate species extinction

Incorporate an evaluation of climate change implications in all reports to council committees

Appoint a lead councillor 'Climate Change Champion'

Work with partners to help to deliver the climate change emergency commitments

## 4 Journey to Carbon Neutrality and Climate resilience

4.1 The commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions has divided opinion on the pace required to meet the climate emergency. For example, Extinction Rebellion state that we should aim for carbon net-zero by 2025, The UK Committee on Climate Change, the IPCC and UK Government all reference achieving net-zero (carbon neutrality) by 2050.

## 5 Hastings Climate Vision

5.1 It cannot be stated strongly enough that to meet the ambition of the climate emergency motion by 2030 will be extremely challenging, and it is not clear whether within the next 10 years, it is an achievable goal, but what it will do is catalyse innovation, galvanise and engage local communities and businesses in action, and deliver a broad range of projects and ideas that take us on a pathway to being carbon neutral.

5.2 To meet its 2030 target, Hastings will require a level of change that will potentially go faster than national legislation and initiatives set out to meet a 2050 target. Support from Government will be vital in achieving our accelerated goals and will need to be targeted in areas with the most impact to unlock our ambitions.

5.3 However, acting now to work towards carbon neutrality it is the right thing to do given the unprecedented challenge that we all face in a changing climate.

The cost of 'doing nothing' and carrying on as 'business as usual' will only serve to accelerate the impacts of climate change, increasing future costs of climate adaptation and building climate resilience. Action will be required not only by the Council but by every local organisation, business, resident living and working in the borough along with regional and national partners.

### The Council's role in moving towards a carbon-neutral Hastings

5.4 The Council only has direct control over a small proportion of the total emissions of Hastings, and achieving the carbon-neutral target will depend on changes that occur at a regional and national level as well as in local organisations, business, communities and our own lives.

5.5 However, the Council has an important role to play in providing leadership to enable, influence and develop responses to Government policy both at a local and regional level, that will facilitate the journey towards a carbon-neutral Hastings.

5.6 It can lead and drive a conversation with our partners and communities about a strong vision and strategy for our carbon-neutral future, as well as engaging residents and businesses to also take action now.

5.7 Investment will be essential to the future delivery of this plan and the Council can work to ensure that the town is well-positioned for future funding opportunities including those allocated to respond to climate change being signalled by Government and regional partnerships.

## 6 Where are we now – greenhouse (carbon ) assessment

6.1 We want to make sure that our actions to tackle climate change are based on evidence and so we have developed a robust evidence base of the towns current direct carbon emissions (see separate document Hastings Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan Evidence Base). AECOM in developing this evidence base has helped us to understand how Hastings can become carbon neutral. They have undertaken high-level CO<sub>2</sub> projection modelling to show the impacts from a range of committed and planned for trends that are expected to affect the towns carbon emissions in the next 10 years and beyond.

6.2 Much of the focus on reducing carbon emissions is related to those directly arising from buildings and transport in the town, but it is important to note that things we all purchase as residents, organisations and businesses, have a huge carbon footprint. The Council will work to understand the contribution these indirect emissions contribute to the town's emissions.

6.3 The findings from the analysis have been used to inform the development of a prioritised list of projects and activities for a 2-year action plan, enabling cumulative progression towards 2030 carbon neutrality.

6.4 The analysis indicates that the most significant reductions for the towns direct carbon emissions will arise from switching towards the use of electrical heating systems and ultra-low emissions vehicles including electric vehicles, continuing to reduce energy demand through energy efficiency measures and behavioural change and moving to more sustainable transport options such as walking and cycling, as well as generating more local renewable energy.

6.5 The modelling demonstrated that even with the most optimistic assessment of grid decarbonisation, current national policy, reducing energy demand, switching to low emission transport, and uptake of other efficiency measures and generating renewable energy locally, this would reduce total emissions by 77% by 2030.

## 7 Hastings Energy Consumption and associated carbon emissions findings

7.1 Greenhouse gases result from the burning of fossil fuels to meet our demand for energy to heat and light our buildings, commerce and industry and provide transport. The use of gas (46%) and electricity (26%) account for the majority of fuel consumed in the borough, with petroleum use in transport accounting for 26%.

7.2 Our homes account for the highest proportion of energy used, followed by road transport and non-domestic buildings.

7.3 Within our homes, approximately 73% of the fuel consumed is gas and 25% is electricity compared to the non-domestic sector where approximately 56% is electricity and 34% of the fuel consumed is gas

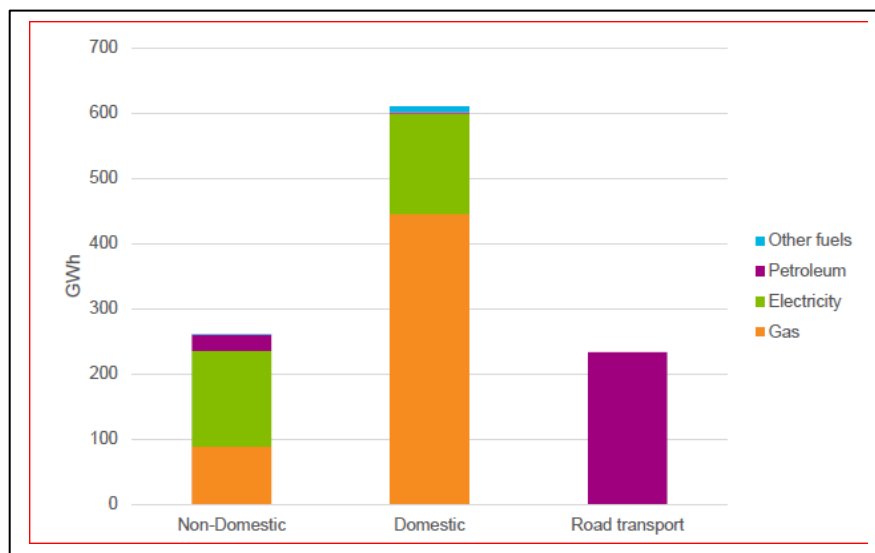


Figure 2 Fuel consumption by sector and fuel type in 2017 (BEIS 2019)

## 8 The towns carbon emissions

8.1 Gas and electricity used in buildings accounts for nearly 70% of the total carbon emissions. Most of the towns emissions come from existing homes (accounting for 49% of direct emissions). Currently, non-domestic buildings account for 24% of the

towns direct carbon emissions with road transport accounting for 26% of carbon emissions.

## 8.2 Recent trend in emissions

Since 2005, we have seen a 39% reduction in emissions from energy and transport in the town. These have been achieved by increasing the supply of renewable generated electricity both nationally (as coal-fired power stations have been replaced) and locally (approximately 6% of electricity in Hastings ) and increasing energy efficiency in existing buildings. Emissions from transport have remained fairly constant.

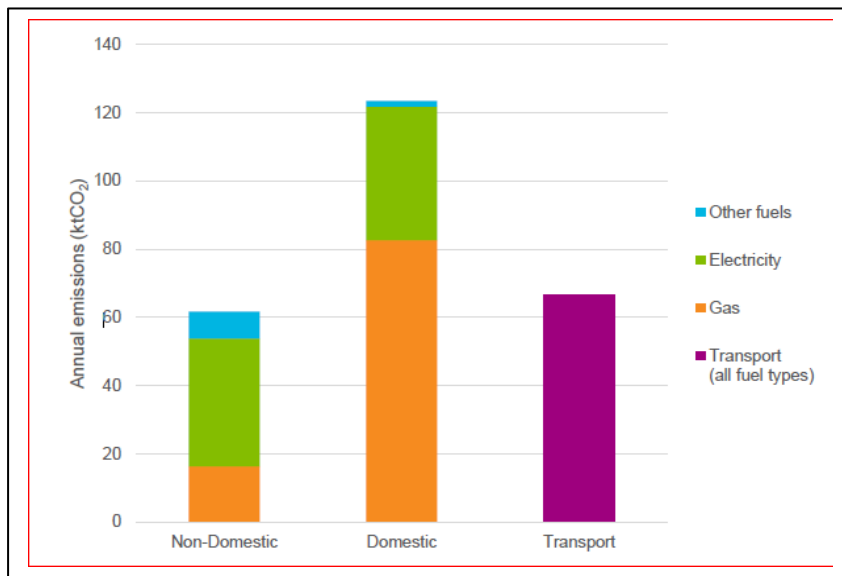


Figure 3 Carbon emissions by sector in 2017 (BEIS 2019)

## 11 The Action Plan - the first two years 2020-2022

11.1 Given the scale, complexity and urgency of responding to climate change, it is proposed that this 'Action Plan' is regarded as living document, that is flexible and responsive to changes in government policy, funding and investment opportunities.

11.2 The 2-year action plan set out, includes a range of actions, linked to our themes and priority areas for the action described in the Executive Summary. During the next 2 years, an action plan that takes us forward from 2022 to 2030 will be developed.

11.3 The local plan cuts across all of the six priority thematic areas. The AECOM study was commissioned to inform the update of the local plan and therefore it's planned adoption by winter 2021 will be fundamental in setting the scene for our pathway to carbon neutrality.



11.4 The public consultation of the local plan which commences in the early summer, will support our communications and lobbying actions. By reviewing local plan policy we can help support reductions in emissions through new and existing developments. Via the local plan we will work with partners in supporting transport infrastructure changes and review moving us forward towards low carbon sustainable transport for the borough. Via site allocations within the new local plan we will support renewable energy initiatives and evidence. And we will also look at land management, and review policy with regards to sequestration.