

## Basingstoke District Association of Parish & Town Councils

Meeting & AGM - 29 September 2022

### Climate Change Update – working with communities & grant opportunities

**Alison Zarecky**  
Climate Change Officer, BDBC

[Slide deck](#)

#### **Slide 1**

Alison explained she was going to:

- provide a brief update on our progress in implementing the borough's climate change and air quality strategy
- the approach to how Parish & Town Councils can be supported and feedback on the questionnaire that had been sent out following our last BDAPTC meeting
- discuss the availability of grants and loans to support residents

#### **Slide 2**

Alison reminded members that Basingstoke had declared a climate emergency in September 2019 setting 2 ambitious targets:

- 1) To become carbon neutral in its operations by 2025
- 2) To help the Borough become net zero carbon by 2030

The Climate Change and Air Quality strategy is published on the website.

#### **Slide 3**

Alison gave an update on how Basingstoke is doing against Council emissions:

From a Baseline of 2018 / 2019 have reduced by 2/3<sup>rd</sup>s

How?

- buying renewable electricity / energy
- Consolidating office space
- Improving property in terms of installing LED lights and other energy efficiency measures.

Some way to go, but doing well.

#### **Slide 4**

Alison explained that the Council Leader had agreed that the Council was going to offset our emissions because we may not be able to get down to zero and we don't know how closely we will get.

Cllr Bound would like to backdate it so that we are taking full responsibility for our own emissions.

The Council were going through a process of auditing all our properties and looking at energy efficiency improvements that can be made.

### **Slide 5**

Alison explained the pie chart showed the territorial carbon footprint of the whole borough.

So although the Council itself was doing quite well in terms of what they were doing, the Council emissions only represent less than 1% of the whole borough emissions.

The Council can lead by example and try to enable, support and inspire.

Everyone in the Borough have a part to play ... Businesses, any ori Parish & Town Councils and residents.

Most emissions come from Transport (46.7%) and Homes & Buildings (29%).

### **Slide 6**

Alison explained that with this being a huge challenge, the Council were offering the following support, enabling and inspiring action:

- Promoting grants and schemes for residents and businesses to reduce their carbon footprints
- Rolling out electric vehicle chargers, off-street and on-street
- Shaping plans for future walking, cycling and public transport links
- Supporting residents and communities – toolkits, best practice and guidance
- Increasing awareness through campaigns such as ‘Clean Air Basingstoke’ and events including ‘Basingstoke Green Week’

### **Slide 7**

Alison outlined other new initiatives to tackle borough wide emissions

- Actively exploring the potential for an ‘electric car club’
- Creating a new ‘Green Team’ to provide in-person and remote support to residents and small businesses

### **Slide 8**

Alison referenced the E-questionnaire sent out earlier in the year to all Parish & Town Councils and Community Groups.

Feedback had been sought on what Councils had been doing, key priority areas, communication channels for residents and what was needed from the Councils

14 responses received from parish & town councils – which was a disappointing response rate.

Would welcome the feedback from the other Parish / Town councils to get the bigger picture.

### **Side 9**

Given there was a relatively small response rate – the percentages may not be that meaningful.

Most of respondents had made a commitment at their council meeting of some kind to develop an emergency plan, but not many had specific climate change objectives, which was then reflected in quite a

number of people wanting to have some sort of help in a workshop with suggestions of where to focus their activity, setting objectives and where to concentrate.

Regarding Climate Change –

- 26% felt very knowledgeable
- 36% felt quite knowledgeable
- 21% felt somewhat knowledgeable
- 7% felt not very or not at all knowledgeable

### **Slide 10**

Insulating homes or buildings; biodiversity and protecting green spaces; promoting renewable energy; reducing waste and promoting green travel were seen as priority areas for the majority of respondents.

Agriculture and sustainable food consumption were not considered a priority by any respondent

All respondents had a website and a community noticeboard; 64% printed a newsletter and 29% produce an E-newsletter regularly; 86% used Facebook, 21% used Instagram and Twitter.

### **Slide 11**

Alison outlined the barriers to taking action that had been suggested were:

- Overwhelming amount of information
- Difficult to know where to start/focus
- Lack of knowledge in some areas
- Lack of volunteers to carry out activities
- Lack of a point of contact/leader to drive a programme
- Lack of policy from central government and council red tape
- Accessing and navigating funding opportunities
- Engaging with residents to change behaviour - they have other priorities, too busy, confusing – has to be made easy and ideally save money too

### **Slide 12**

Alison explained what support Parishes wanted from BDBC

- 50% wanted links to useful webinars
- 86% wanted updates on grants generally
- 43% wanted a forum or workshop to discuss climate change topics – particularly goalsetting
- 57% wanted better online resources
- Other suggestions were photos/text for social media posts, websites or articles for newsletters

### **Slide 13**

Alison explained that there was a Basingstoke Area Sustainability Group which was made up of 14 parishes, that meets every 2 months online on Teams.

The next meeting is scheduled for 2 November 4pm with topics – energy, retrofit, heat pumps.

Evening meetings could be scheduled if that was better for those wishing to attend.

Minutes are available via the BDAPTC website.

All Parish & Town Councils were welcome to attend.

#### **Slide 14**

Alison provided a summary of some of what was happening across the various parishes – calling out a few of the examples that were showing on the slide.

#### **Slide 15**

Alison ran through the Financial support for residents and community groups for energy efficiency, information that is readily available on the BDBC website.

In terms of installing heat pumps – the boiler upgrade scheme (which is a Government scheme) provides £5000 - £6000 off the cost of a heat pump – which will bring down the cost quite considerably.

Up to £3000 Homeowner Grant scheme for homeowners on means tested benefits.

Up to £25,000 for a Community Group loan for any community group wanting to make any kind of energy efficiency improvements or sustainability wise.

Up to £3000 Homeowner loan scheme & a Landlord Grant.

#### **Slide 16**

Alison explained that the information on this slide was of important benefit to residents.

The Green homes grant.

- Up to 25,000 pounds for properties that are off gas and up to 10,000 pounds for properties that are on gas.
- On gas, you need to be earning £30,000 or less income totally a year with an EPC of D, E, F or G.
- Agility Eco / Warmer Homes Team would survey the property & look to put in solar or insulation and maybe even a heat pump to hopefully bring them up by 2 levels.

It was important for Parish & Town Councils to promote this to appropriate residents within their areas

#### **Comments from the Parish / Town Councils**

Julian (Dummer) – in the development in Dummer the contracts said that there couldn't be solar panels on the roofs of the new properties and they all have gas boilers. Many cases have been found to have little or no insulation and will therefore have a very poor EPC.

Alison suggested that she would take this back to the team for further investigation.

Alan (Ashmansworth) wanted to thank Alison for the amount of work she has done to help drive massive changes within the Borough Council. He also raised the point that in Ashmansworth, which is a conservation area, could they put insulation in now and put solar panels on the property? Also, the properties don't have gas and none of them are designed for heat pumps.

Alison suggested that she would take this back to the team for further investigation