

UP HATHERLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Cheltenham, Gloucestershire



Climate and Environmental Policy

Adopted: 19/05/2026

Reviewed: 06/01/2026

Next Review Due: 05/01/2029

Introduction

Up Hatherley Parish Council (the Council) declares that we are in a climate and ecological emergency. Local government at every level has a duty to take action, and parish and town councils have a unique role to play in leading by example and supporting their communities.

This policy sets out the Council's commitment to reducing its environmental footprint, adapting to the risks posed by climate change, and working with partners and residents to create a resilient, sustainable community.

The Council acknowledges its statutory **Biodiversity Duty** under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (as amended by the Environment Act 2021). That policy should be read alongside this document.

Aims

The Council will:

- Lead by example in cutting emissions and minimising environmental harm.
- Embed climate and environmental considerations into all decisions, policies, and services.
- Support community initiatives that reduce emissions and build resilience.
- Strengthen adaptation to risks including flooding, drought, heatwaves, and food insecurity.
- Report transparently on progress to residents.

Council Commitments

1. Governance and Decision-Making

- Environmental impact will be considered in all reports to council and committee.

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- A climate and environmental risk entry will be included in the Council's Risk Register and reviewed quarterly.
- Council policies (e.g. procurement, land management, events) will be aligned with this policy.
- Progress against this policy will be reported annually at the Council's Annual Meeting.

2. Carbon and Energy

- Measure and monitor the Council's carbon footprint, beginning with buildings, energy use, and travel.
- Improve energy efficiency of Council buildings through retrofitting, insulation, and low-carbon heating where feasible.
- Switch to renewable energy suppliers for Council premises.
- Reduce business mileage, encourage sustainable transport, and provide facilities for active travel (bike racks, EV charging points where possible).

3. Land, Assets and Biodiversity

- Manage Council land to improve biodiversity, sequester carbon, and increase resilience to extreme weather.
- Increase tree planting, hedgerows, and wildflower meadows, with a target for net habitat gain.
- Ensure grounds maintenance contracts specify environmentally sustainable practices.
- Phase out the use of harmful pesticides and peat-based products.
- Work with local groups to deliver conservation projects and habitat corridors.

4. Waste and Resources

- Reduce waste generated by Council operations and events.
- Ban single-use plastics at Council-managed facilities and events where practicable.
- Improve recycling and composting provision in Council-owned premises and public spaces.
- Require contractors and suppliers to minimise waste and use sustainable packaging.

5. Community and Engagement

- Hold at least one annual public event (or consultation) focused on climate, environment, or sustainability.

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- Support community food resilience through allotments, orchards, gardens, and food-sharing schemes.
- Work with schools, youth groups, and volunteers to promote awareness and action.
- Encourage local businesses to adopt sustainable practices.
- Partner with principal authorities, neighbouring parishes, and environmental organisations to deliver projects.

6. Adaptation and Resilience

- Assess local climate risks (flooding, heatwaves, drought, severe storms) and publish findings.
- Develop and maintain a local resilience plan (linking to Community Emergency Plan).
- Promote community preparedness and support vulnerable residents in extreme weather.
- Encourage local food production and supply resilience to reduce dependence on long chains.

Funding and Delivery

- Allocate resources in the annual budget to deliver climate and environmental commitments.
- Apply for external grants and funding opportunities to support projects.
- Publish an annual Climate and Environment Report outlining actions, progress, and future priorities.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly. The Council will publish progress updates, with key actions reported in the Annual Report to residents.