

Climate Emergency – Woldingham Parish Council meeting

Adopted on 26 April 2023

Woldingham Parish Council was invited to declare a Climate Emergency in February 2020. The Council was due to consider a list of areas the Parish Council and the wider community could consider to tackle climate change; however this was not taken forward at the time due to Covid priorities. The Council is now asked to consider the draft statement and policies / ideas to reduce our carbon footprint. An agreed statement and policies will be drafted following discussion of these and other ideas raised in discussion.

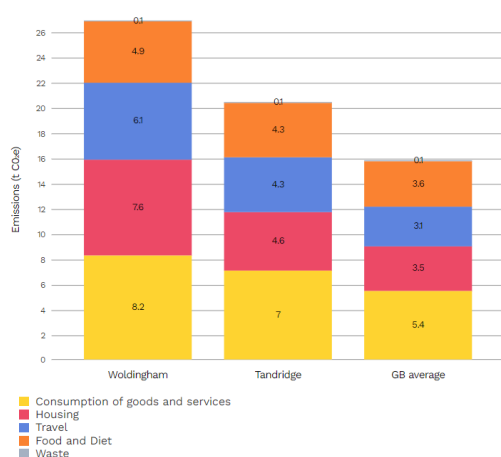
Tandridge Council declared a climate emergency in February 2020 with a pledge to cut its environmental impact and steps to become carbon neutral by 2030. We have contacted the Council to understand where there is potential to support the council in its Climate Change Action Plan through Parish-led activities.

Case for change

The Centre for Sustainable Energy has developed an estimator of a community's carbon footprint that works for parishes wards, district councils and unitary authorities. It draws on more than 30 datasets to estimate the total amount of greenhouse gases produced directly and indirectly as a result of everyday human activities in the given locality - heating homes, using electricity, transport, producing and distributing food, disposing of waste, etc. Woldingham has a much higher consumption footprint across all indicators than the district and GB as a whole. Whilst Woldingham Council does not own any buildings, and has therefore limited direct impact on climate change, the Council can have an influence on activities and infrastructure that can reduce our carbon footprint.

How does your area compare?

Here is what the average consumption footprint for your area looks like per household, and how this compares with the district average and the national average. Note that these per household footprints are averages. Within a larger (e.g. local authority) area you may have neighbourhoods with very different per household consumption footprints and it will be worth looking at more granular data if you are planning area-specific initiatives or messaging.



Draft statement for review:

The Council recognises that there is an Ecological Emergency from escalating threats to wildlife and ecosystems which play essential roles in society and the economy. In response, the Parish

Council intends to take action within the scope of its powers and resources to protect our wildlife and habitats, and to enable residents to benefit from a green nature-rich environment.

We will work with residents, local and wider groups, schools, businesses, Tandridge council and other parish councils to establish and facilitate initiatives that will contribute to significantly reducing carbon and other greenhouse gases where possible.

We will work to conserve and enhance the natural environment, making space for nature and wildlife through the restoration of valued habitats, biodiversity and green spaces whilst protecting key landscape features.

Potential actions for discussion:

Actions arising from the statutory remit of Woldingham Parish Council:

Burial Grounds, Cemeteries, Churchyards:

- Condition of grant to wildflower planting or other schemes to increase biodiversity

Bus Shelters:

- Use to advertise community events and public consultation events

Entertainment and the Arts:

- Take any opportunities to reinforce Climate and Ecology focused actions for Climate and Ecology - on posters etc.
- Use the event licencing process to require events held in the area to be single-use plastic free
- Consider the ecological and carbon footprint of regular events, including taking action to reduce or eliminate the use of single use plastics at these events. Consider transport arrangements, energy use and recycling facilities for these events.

Footpaths:

- Take action to keep footpaths in use and in good order, encouraging community working groups to help.
- Encourage good use and understanding of paths, wildlife, farming and the countryside.
- Ban Pesticide use, discuss with contracted sprayers and/or authorities responsible for using these.

General Spending:

- Commit to using local suppliers wherever possible for the supply of goods and services and consider potential carbon emissions not just price when awarding contracts.
- Maximise use of social media platforms to engage with the community. Accepting that not all parishioners will have access to social media, use printed matter sparingly and target those that will benefit most.

Highways:

- Ensure continued adherence to the absence of road lighting in line with the Woldingham Design Guidance

- Encourage and signpost community transport schemes.
- Take opportunities to plant trees (without reducing visibility) and manage verges for wildlife by encouraging reduce verge cutting.
- Considering sites for communal charging points (in line with Tandridge Action Plan)

Land (Covering acquisition and sale of land):

- Document community assets and evaluate community land uses.
- Consider community land to promote walking and cycling opportunities.
- Continue to use the Woldingham Plan to help implement Climate and Ecological measures.

Litter:

- Support for anti-litter campaigns

Planning

- Further iterations of the Woldingham plan to continue to be in line with climate emergency statement
- Explicitly support Green/Low Carbon planning projects that are in line with the Woldingham Plan
- Use planning tools such as Section 106 agreements, Community Infrastructure Levy and other mechanisms to fund climate actions and nature restoration projects
- Support good Telecommunication/Broadband access.

Recreation

- Consider the opportunities for tree-planting and reduced mowing in public open spaces.