



Harden Village Council

Climate Emergency Plan 2020-21

In 2019, Harden Village Council became one of the first rural communities in Yorkshire to declare a climate emergency, joining hundreds of larger councils (including Bradford) and the UK Parliament. We're now keen to work with local residents, groups and partners to bring this to life.

We based our declaration on our belief that all communities, including ours, have a part to play in averting this crisis, and scientific evidence showing: -

- we are likely to have only a decade left to turn the corner on emissions, to keep the Earth under a 1.5 degree temperature rise¹;
- going above 1.5 degrees will be devastating, causing mass harm, suffering, death and extinctions across the planet²;
- we are currently on course to hit a 2.4 - 4.3 degree temperature rise by 2100³;
- we are already feeling the effects of a destabilised climate, including making flooding and extreme weather more common in our part of the world.

The UK Government has committed to legally binding targets for net zero carbon emissions by 2050⁴, but experts argue, and the Government has said, we need to act more swiftly⁵.

Our overall aims

We want work with local residents, businesses and community groups to help Harden become carbon neutral by 2030, so we deliver least harm and maximum benefit to the environment. This will ensure our village is playing its part in addressing the global crisis, while benefitting local health, wellbeing, inclusion, resilience, our surroundings and nature.

We believe that this is especially important as we look to recover and 'build back better' from Covid-19.

We also want to share what we're doing with others, helping to show that rural communities too can play an important part in moving towards net zero emissions, reducing pollution and enhancing the natural environment.

¹ <https://www.carbonbrief.org/analysis-how-much-carbon-budget-is-left-to-limit-global-warming-to-1-5c>

² https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/sites/2/2019/05/SR15_SPM_version_report_LR.pdf

³ <https://climateactiontracker.org/>

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/pm-theresa-may-we-will-end-uk-contribution-to-climate-change-by-2050>

⁵ <https://www.independent.co.uk/environment/climate-change-uk-carbon-target-global-warming-a9073256.html>

Our broad commitments

- Put the emergency at the forefront of discussions and decision-making, ensuring negative environmental impact is avoided, minimised or mitigated;
- Establish actions and principles for working with and supporting local residents, groups and businesses to be more sustainable, progress against which will be assessed regularly;
- Call on the Government and Bradford Council to provide the resources and powers so that our village can make its contribution to the UK's carbon reduction targets and help avert the emergency.

Areas of activity

We have identified five key areas where we can make, and influence, progress: -

- Nature and green spaces
- Transport and travel
- Waste and pollution
- Shops and food
- Homes and energy

Our plans in 2020-21

- Complete our Neighbourhood Plan, ensuring sustainability and climate are at the forefront, following local consultations showing how much residents care about the environment (we aim to move towards a referendum on the Plan likely to be in May 2021 due to current restrictions);
- Deliver regular communications to promote involvement in these actions, gathering input and views, and promoting individual actions and awareness;
- Continue progressing with Bradford MDC and neighbouring villages steps to improve walking, cycling and public transport as alternatives to driving, for local residents and our visitors, with consideration to local needs and the challenges from Covid-19;
- Support and promote campaigns and initiatives in our area to reduce waste and plastic, and encourage local residents and businesses to do so too;
- Encourage tree/hedge planting and biodiversity opportunities and set up events and initiatives as and when possible;
- Encourage and support local volunteering and other initiatives to connect people with nature and encourage pride in our local green spaces;
- Research sources of emissions and draw on other councils' examples and our local knowledge to draw up a 10-year framework for our village becoming carbon neutral.