

Declaration of a Climate Emergency and the council's response

This Council endorses the evidence that climate change is beginning to seriously affect the health and wellbeing of residents and the environment in East Herts and that these negative impacts are set to increase.

This Council is of the view that the consequences of the global temperature increasing by more than 1.5°C are so severe that humanity's number one priority must be to prevent this from happening.

This Council recognises it must use its powerful voice to advocate on behalf of local communities and habitats, lead change, improve resilience and inspire residents and businesses to act to protect our precious district from the impacts of Climate Breakdown.

This Council therefore:

- declares a Climate Emergency
- strengthens its resolve to act by bringing forward its commitment from 2030 to March 2027 to reduce its own carbon footprint to an absolute minimum and to identify a pathway to offset its residual carbon, so that the council will be able to continue providing high quality services but with net zero carbon emissions
- prioritises carbon offsetting investment within East Herts to maximise local benefits
- commits to publishing annual eco-audits of the council's progress to net zero carbon that residents and businesses will be invited to scrutinise and input to, including through an annual meeting
- commits to providing advice and assistance to East Herts residents and businesses to inspire and encourage their own shifts away from carbon producing activities
- commits to ensuring council policies and practices, including commercial operations and investments, are compatible with its

drive to achieve net zero carbon, including through the review of the District Plan

- recognises that bold action to tackle the Climate Emergency can deliver economic benefits to local people and businesses in terms of new jobs, economic savings and market opportunities
- commits to seeking inward investment to support efforts to achieve net zero carbon by the council, residents and businesses
- calls on all levels of government to do everything within their powers to limit the negative impacts of Climate Breakdown, while recognising that this Council will not sit back and wait for national government intervention.

Proposed by Councillor Tim Hoskin

Seconded by Councillor Miriam Swainston