



WARMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL CLIMATE STRATEGY ACTION PLAN 2024-2029

CONTENTS

Executive Summary.....	3
Warminster Town Council's Spheres of Influence.....	3
Introduction.....	5
Seven Actions.....	7
Making a Start.....	8
Transport.....	9
Homes and Built Environment.....	10
Energy.....	10
Natural Environment, Food and Farming.....	11
Resources and Waste.....	11
Green Economy.....	11
Carbon Neutral Council.....	11



View from Battlesbury Hill

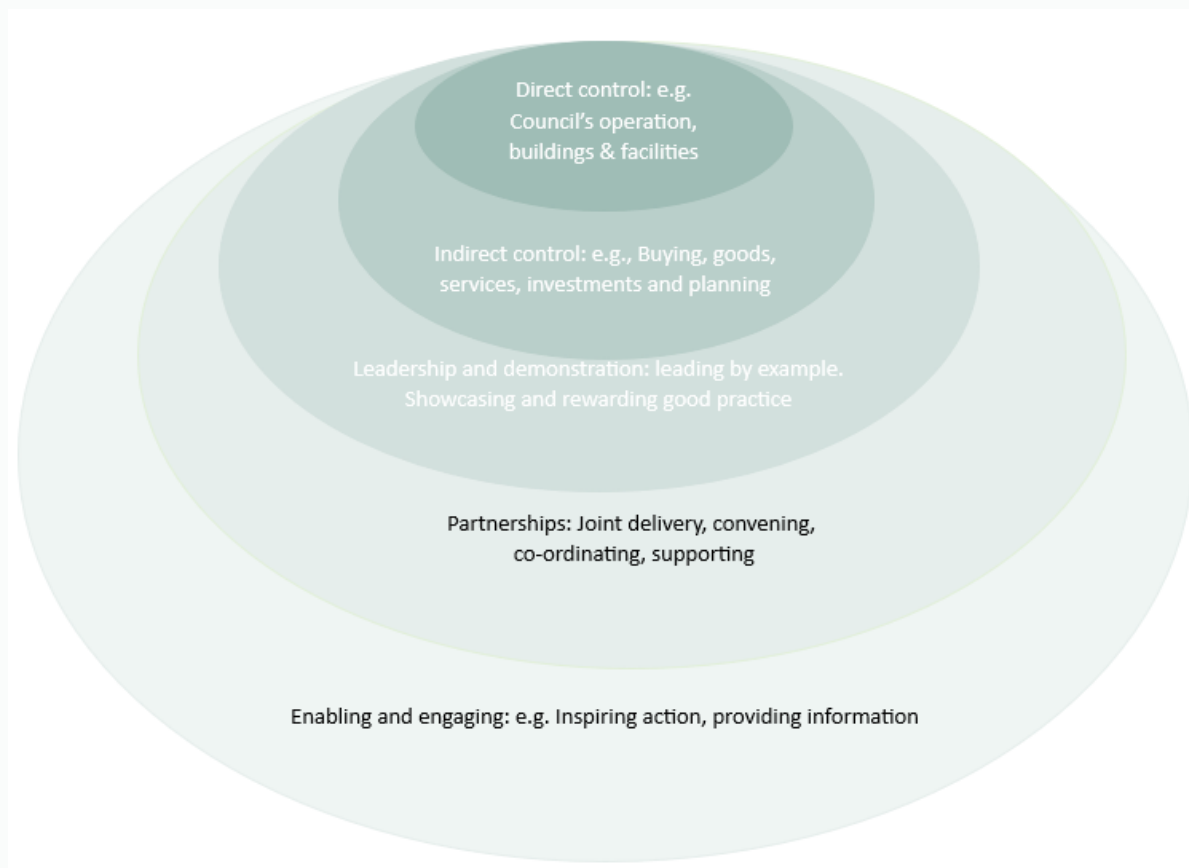
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Warminster Town Council recognises that the Climate Strategy Action Plan follows on from the Climate Change Strategy and the Warminster Pledge.

The purpose of this action plan is to set out a series of projects and the tasks/steps that need to be carried out to reach the goals. It seeks to identify the organisations who we will collaborate with in order to carry out each task, a time scale and what measures will be used to evaluate progress. It identifies areas of focus for the period from 2024 to 2029. It will be reviewed each year to measure what progress has been made.

Warminster Town Council has limited resources and limited powers. The action plan tries to set out specific things the town council can do. It also sets out things that the wider community can do. The action plan's ambition is to take measured, deliverable steps to reduce the amount of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases the town council is responsible for emitting. It is important to recognise the town council's spheres of influence and recognise that not everything can be achieved. Whilst it can encourage others to do likewise, it cannot force people to do things and it cannot fund some of the major changes needed. However, it can lead by example and engage with partners and the community to inspire action and provide information.

Warminster Town Council's Spheres of Influence



The Action Plan is not a plan to turn the whole of Warminster into a zero-carbon community, but it is there to assist in that process, particularly by concentrating on very local issues. For example, the Government or Wiltshire Council haven't the knowledge to bring forward plans to improve cycleways in Warminster, but we have and when we do, we can tap into any funding on offer from Wiltshire Council and/or the Government.

Forward

Climate change, another problem amongst so many. At a time when so many people are worried about the cost-of-living crisis and are facing a winter of hardship, it might be thought people have enough to cope with, without the added issue of climate change. However, no matter how bad the current problems, the issue of climate change won't go away. Some of the problems we face today stem from failing to act sooner on climate change. We must take action now.

About this document

This document has deliberately been kept simple and succinct to encourage a wide readership. The council's climate webpages complement the strategy.

It is widely agreed that climate change is a massive problem. As a town council, we cannot change the world, but we can play our part.

There are some actions that need to be taken at a global level, some by national government, some by councils like Wiltshire and some by national businesses. There are also actions that need to be taken at a very local level, by the town council, by local organisations, by families and individuals.

Warminster Town Council will support the Government and Wiltshire Council in their efforts to combat climate change.

Warminster Town Council will also take actions of its own and it will strive to provide local leadership by example, by encouragement and by spreading ideas.

This action plan is not about having a 'perfect' council while ignoring the wider community. Nor is it about imagining that the town council has the powers, resources, and ability to bring about all the changes locally that are needed.

This is about working with the community so together we can achieve a common aim.

This makes public engagement and buy-in from organisations and businesses critical to its success.

This strategy is not perfect, and it is not an exhaustive list, but this is a living document that can be changed and updated as things are achieved, as circumstances change, as knowledge increases, and as funding sources and new opportunities unfold.

INTRODUCTION

Speaking about the urgent need for greater collective climate action at the COP26 UN climate conference, David Attenborough said: “If working apart we are a force powerful to destabilise our planet, surely working together we are powerful enough to save it...in my lifetime I’ve witnessed a terrible decline. In yours, you could and should witness a wonderful recovery.”

Climate change is happening now. We can see some of the consequences virtually every day in the news. Extreme weather events, floods, heat waves, wildfires, rising sea levels, droughts. Climate change impacts on ecosystems - damaging the fragile webs of life that interlinks people, landscape, animals, and the environment.

Climate change impacts on people. It has economic impacts, health impacts, the environment can’t be separated from human welfare and happiness. It will change what crops countries can grow and reduce crop yields. Climate change will increase competition for food, land, and other resources. It will displace millions of people from their homes and cause mass migration.

It can be tempting to think or hope that climate change mainly affects other people in other countries. In some countries around the world, the impacts have been even worse than here in the UK. But the truth is that what happens in other countries and to other people impacts on us in the UK. The UK is not immune to the effects of climate change and unless action is taken, the problems the UK faces will worsen.

Climate change can seem overwhelming - even if you want to play a part in combating it, it can seem impossible to know where to start. It may seem futile to do your bit if others are not. It is easy to look at “others” be it; other people, the government, businesses, other countries, billionaires, councils, the list goes on - and in many cases they may appear to be failing to act with the sense of urgency and radicalism that many think is required.

However, none of that will change if we do nothing.

If you are not convinced climate change is real and happening and incredibly harmful, then this document is unlikely to persuade you otherwise.



Emissions

Throughout this document we use the term 'carbon' and 'carbon dioxide'. Carbon is not harmful in itself but is used as shorthand for carbon dioxide - the gas responsible for 80% of global warming. Other greenhouse gases also contribute to climate change, such as methane and nitrous oxides. While carbon dioxide (CO₂) is the largest component, we need to stop all greenhouse gases from accumulating in the atmosphere. The actions that we put in place will also decrease the other main greenhouse gases.

An average person in the UK will be responsible for 5.2 tonnes of CO₂ emissions per year.

Did you know?

If you make a return trip to Rome
 by train you will emit 0.01 tonnes of CO₂e
 by car you will emit 0.16 tonnes of CO₂e (with four people travelling)
 by plane you will emit 0.44 tonnes of CO₂e





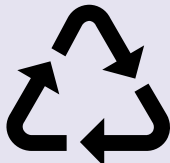


A return flight to Orlando (Florida USA) will emit 2.1 tonnes of CO₂.
 That's 40% of what a typical person will be responsible for in a year in just two flights.

Can't we just plant more trees to absorb CO₂?

If an area the size of Wiltshire was completely covered with trees it could absorb only 1/3 of our county's annual emissions.
 Planting trees will help but alone it cannot be a solution.

SEVEN ACTIONS

Warminster Town Council is not acting alone. Wiltshire Council has identified seven areas for action and Warminster Town Council has used these same seven categories to group actions that are being taken. The categories are transport, homes and the built environment, energy, natural environment, resources and waste, green economy, natural environment, and a carbon neutral council.

	<p>Transport - Zero emissions transport is a necessary priority, since transport produces the largest proportion of emissions in the county. Achieving zero emissions surface transport in Wiltshire is a challenge which will require action across all areas, with a significant role played by zero emissions vehicles, in conjunction with reducing trips and shifting modes. Warminster Town Council can play its part.</p>
	<p>Homes and the Built Environment - It seems undeniable that all new buildings need to be as near to net zero carbon as possible. They should be built to use less energy and be run on low carbon sources of electricity and heat. Existing buildings need to be retrofitted to cut energy use and to switch to low carbon sources of electricity and heat. All buildings also need to be able to cope with the impacts of climate change.</p>
	<p>Energy - We need to reduce the amount of energy we use. When we do have to use energy, it should be low carbon forms of energy. This includes energy from microgeneration.</p>
	<p>Natural Environment, Food and Farming - A healthy natural environment is crucial to achieving net zero and providing ways for people and wildlife to adapt to the stresses of climate change. Central to our challenge is the efficient and sensitive use of land for all our needs - local food production, preserving habitats, generating energy, absorbing carbon dioxide, and providing homes.</p>
	<p>Resources and Waste - Using the waste hierarchy 'reduce, reuse, recycle, recover energy' helps reduce the energy and emissions associated with extracting, manufacturing, transporting, and storing all the products we use.</p>
	<p>Green Economy - We want to grow a net zero, climate resilient economy in Warminster. This includes opportunities for training and more jobs in green sectors, as well as building up supply chains to enable objectives in our other delivery themes.</p>
	<p>Carbon Neutral Council - Warminster Town Council aims to become a carbon neutral organisation. The council's role also extends to providing leadership and opportunities to share knowledge and learn from one another.</p>

MAKING A START – Steps Warminster Town Council has already taken

The town council wishes to show leadership by example. The town council has already taken steps to reduce its environmental impact. For example, the council:

- has switched to a green energy supplier for all the buildings it runs.
- has installed solar panels on the civic centre, central car park public toilets and the boat house.
- uses biodegradable cups in the Pavilion Café.
- uses composting in the Lake Pleasure Grounds.
- has timer switches on the lights e.g., in the Lake Pleasure Grounds
- sells biodegradable doggy bags at the Civic Centre
- has recycling bins in the Lake Pleasure Grounds and in council buildings.
- works in partnership with the Warminster Area Board and Wiltshire Council on their climate change agenda/actions.
- has pledged to strive to become a carbon neutral organisation by 2030.
- has supported the provision of a water refill station by the library.
- introduced a Green Civic Award - to recognise public action on the environment.
- transitioned the council vehicles to electric.
- strives to incorporate sustainability considerations in all decision making.



The Lake Pleasure Grounds and Smallbrook Meadows are significant contributors to biodiversity in Warminster. If the town council takes on management of further land from Wiltshire Council, it will seek to increase biodiversity and reduce carbon emissions.

The town council is working to embed environmental considerations in the next Neighbourhood Plan and Town Centre Master Plan; encompassing things such as: environmental standards for new houses and development. The town

council has employed consultants to help with this process with the explicit intention of securing stronger environmental measures.

The town council has an earmarked reserve for climate change, which currently stands at £10,000. This can be used to fund appropriate schemes.

TRANSPORT

Zero emissions transport is a necessary priority for Wiltshire Council and at a more local level, since transport produces the largest proportion of emissions in the county. Achieving zero emissions surface transport in Wiltshire is a challenge which will require action across all areas, with a significant role played by zero emissions vehicles, in conjunction with reducing trips and shifting modes.



At a town level, where we can switch to making journeys by foot or bicycle

Buses reduce congestion and improve air quality. A double-decker bus can take up to 75 cars off the road and switching just one journey in 25 to the bus would save two million tonnes of CO2 emissions. Choosing a bus more often, strengthens this mode of transport as a more sustainable, inclusive, and accessible form.

Concessionary bus passes are available for older and disabled residents, which currently entitles the holder to free off-peak travel on local services from 9.30am to 11pm Monday to Friday, plus all day weekends and bank holidays.

Wiltshire Day Rover tickets, other ticket promotions and contactless payments are also available. The Wiltshire Day Rover ticket provides one day's unlimited travel on nearly all local bus services in Wiltshire, across approximately 200 routes in the county.

The Connecting Wiltshire: Bus, website (<https://www.connectingwiltshire.co.uk/getting-around/bus/>) provides useful information for planning a trip by bus, journey planners and live traffic, bus and train updates.

New conventional petrol and diesel cars and vans will be banned from sale in the UK from 2035.

HOMES AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

It seems unquestionable that all new buildings need to be as near to net zero carbon as possible. They should be built to use less energy and be run on low carbon sources of electricity and heat. Existing buildings need to be retrofitted to cut energy use and to switch to low carbon sources of electricity and heat.

All buildings also need to be able to cope with the impacts of climate change. Warminster has a mass of listed buildings and an important historic heritage.

Over 1,000 new houses are planned for Warminster as part of the West Urban Extension. Unfortunately, they were given the go ahead under old regulations, but we will use what influence we have to press for construction with the highest possible environmental standards.



ENERGY

We need to reduce the amount of energy we use. When we do have to use energy, it should be low carbon forms of energy. This includes energy from microgeneration.



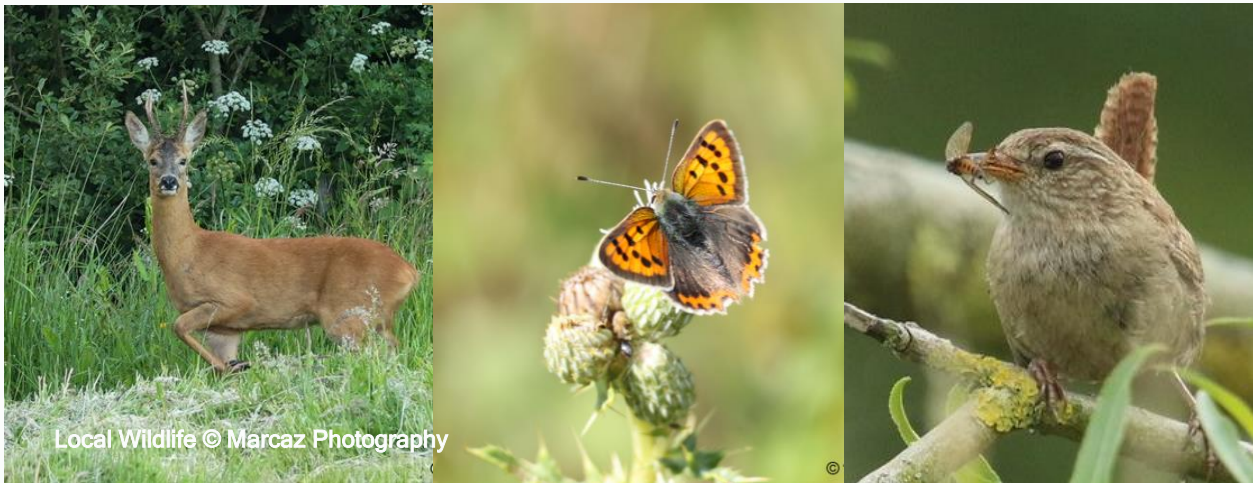
Warminster is unusual in that it has an industrial scale biodigester on the edge of the town. Malaby estimates that they currently generate renewable electricity equivalent to supplying approximately 35% of Warminster's households. From the start of their operations in May 2012 to the end of July 2022 they have generated 70,659 MW (70.7 GW) of renewable electricity.

Research by Cooper et al, Bath University 2021) "GHG Assessment of Bore Hill Biodigester (Malaby Biogas Ltd)", estimates Green House Gas (GHG) Emissions Savings: 21,198 Tonnes of CO₂eq (Based on 300gCO₂eq/kW). This means their operations are not just carbon neutral but carbon negative.

Malaby Biogas has raised the issue of Local Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs). If there is interest from the town council or other local organisations and business to buy their electricity direct from Malaby Biogas, then Malaby can look into the rules and regulations to see if they can establish a PPA which would be suitable. Unfortunately, existing consumer protection regulations mean that it isn't possible for them to sell electricity directly to householders.

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND FARMING

A healthy natural environment is crucial to achieving net zero and providing ways for people and wildlife to adapt to the stresses of climate change. Central to our challenge is the efficient and sensitive use of land for all our needs - local food production, preserving habitats, generating energy, absorbing carbon dioxide and providing homes.



Local Wildlife © Marcaz Photography

RESOURCES AND WASTE

Using the waste hierarchy 'reduce, reuse, recycle, recover energy' helps reduce the energy and emissions associated with extracting, manufacturing, transporting, and storing all the products we use.

GREEN ECONOMY

We want to grow a net zero, climate resilient economy in Warminster. This includes opportunities for training and more jobs in green sectors, as well as building up supply chains to enable objectives in our other delivery themes to be met.

CARBON NEUTRAL COUNCIL

Warminster Town Council aims to become a carbon neutral organisation. The council's role also extends to providing leadership and opportunities to share knowledge and learn from one another.

"The final chapter is ours to write. We know what we need to do. What happens next is up to us." David Attenborough.

Warminster Town Council Climate Strategy Action Plan 2024 to 2029

Priority Key:  One to two years  Three to five years  Potential

CPWG - Cycle Path Working Group




NPSG – Neighbourhood Plan Working Group

PAC - Planning Advisory Committee

WC – Wiltshire Council

PROW – Public Rights of Way

LHFIG – Local Highways and Footways Improvement Group

	Project	Task(s)	Partnership Working	Evidence of progress
TRANSPORT				
	Instigate the enhancement and development of the cycle path network.	Extend & improve cycle path infrastructure and connectivity.	CPWG. NPSG.	Increased number of cycle paths and signage plus existing ones well maintained.
		Explore opportunities for new permissive cycle routes.	CPWG. WC.	
		Develop and promote cycle path maps.	CPWG. Warminster Community Hub.	
		Improve cycle path signage.	CPWG. WC.	
	Create covered secure cycle parking.	Investigate options for locations and funding.	CPWG. WC. Trans Wilts Partnership.	Submission of covered secure cycle parking proposal to council.
	Instigate the enhancement and development of footpaths & public rights of way (PROW).	Improve and maintain footpaths and PROW.	PROW Volunteers.	Increased number of footpaths with better signage and well maintained.
		Investigate the extension of footpaths and PROW.	WC. Area Board/ LHFIG.	
		Improve footpath path signage.	WC. Area Board/ LHFIG	

	Project	Task(s)	Partnership Working	Evidence of progress
	Encourage a shift towards electric vehicles by increasing the number of public electric vehicle charging points (EVCP).	Work with WC and other providers on audit of possible locations.	WC. Charging Point Providers.	Increase in number Wiltshire Council EVCPs (currently one rapid charging point in Central Car Park).
		Direct the public to Wiltshire Council EVCPs.		
		Apply for grant funding.		
	Encourage the use of public transport with the aim of reducing Warminster's carbon footprint.	Promote public car sharing/ green commuting/public transport.		Evidence of social media/website/press coverage.
		Consider option of WTC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> sponsoring minibus service. introducing Dial a Ride scheme. 	Parish Councils. Community Volunteers.	Feasibility report to be produced.
	Encourage walking and cycling to work, shops and for leisure – to reduce issues with parking, traffic congestion and poor air quality.	Promote foot and cycle paths.	Warminster Community Hub. Warminster Walkers.	Evidence of social media/ website/press coverage.
		Promote the Cycle to Work Scheme.		
		Support and promote local walking groups and routes.	Warminster Community Hub. Warminster Walkers. Visit Wiltshire and other tourism organisations	
		Promote footpath maps.	Warminster Community Hub.	

	Project	Task(s)	Partnership Working	Evidence of progress
			Warminster Walkers.	
		Provide more information about greener transport opportunities; website to include co-ordinated public transport options from/to Warminster with links to different options, timetables etc.		
		Encourage community car-pooling and car-sharing.		
		Produce safe route maps, including information about CCTV coverage.	Warminster Community Hub. Warminster Walkers.	
	Encourage walking and cycling to schools – to reduce issues with parking, traffic congestion and poor air quality.	Promote – footpaths, pedestrian safety, and cycle routes.	WC and local schools.	Evidence of social media/ website/press coverage.
	Working from home options for council staff to reduce miles travelled.	Implement, where appropriate, increased working from home for staff.		Increase in number of days working from home per year.
	Improve broadband connectivity.	Support and promote schemes to upgrade aerials & improve broadband connectivity.		Applications for improved connectivity to be supported by WTC.
	Encourage 'Shop Local'.	Promote 'Shop Local'.	Warminster Business Network.	Retailer feedback.
HOMES AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT				
	Environmental & climate sensitive factors to be considered as part of Neighbourhood/ Local plan review.	All aspects of the Neighbourhood Plan to take environmental and climate issues into consideration.	NPSG.	Finalised documents.
	Maximum green/environmental protection to be insisted upon in planning applications.	Monitoring of submitted planning applications to ensure compliance. Include a presumption in favour of renewable planning applications.	WC.	Positive impact on planning applications

	Project	Task(s)	Partnership Working	Evidence of progress
	Design codes for new housing and developments to take environmental issues into consideration.	Ensure future developments include space for bike storage, EVCPs, bat and bird bricks, and solar panels.	NPSG.	Impact on new development.
	Planning applications to be judged against the policies set out in Warminster's Neighbourhood Plan and Design Guide, and to include a completed Development Checklist.	All aspects of Warminster's Neighbourhood Plan to be considered when planning applications are being reviewed and commented upon.	NPSG. WC.	Positive impact on planning applications.
	Promote future-proof of all newbuild homes re energy use and generation, insulation, and grey water/run-off water collection/re-use in pre-applications and applications from developers.	Monitoring of planning decisions to measure progress.	WC.	Positive impact on planning applications.
	Help residents to understand retrofitting of homes.	Promote grants and funds available.	WC	Evidence of social media/ website/press coverage.

ENERGY

	Green energy usage.	Promote the benefits of switching to green energy tariffs to residents and businesses, and provide information on green energy providers, while also encouraging energy reduction.		Evidence of social media/ website/press coverage.
	Advice on improving home energy efficiency.	Work with providers.	Home energy providers.	Uptake figures.
	Invest in solar panels on council owned/ controlled properties.	Create proposals and seek funding opportunities.		Installation of solar panels.
	Electric tools.	Continue switch of council tools to electric where appropriate		Increase in number of electric tools used.
	Renewable electricity generation.	If the opportunity arises, increase renewable electricity generation (and associated technologies such as storage) within Wiltshire by working in partnership with others, including community energy groups.	Community energy groups and relevant businesses.	Evidence of social media/ website/press coverage.

RESOURCES AND WASTE

	Project	Task(s)	Partnership Working	Evidence of progress
	'Green events'.	Promote community engagement with 'green events'. Example events: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zero Waste Week. Cycle to Work Day. Meat free Mondays. 		Increase in sign-up to events.
				Evidence of social media/ website/press coverage.
	Highlight environmental initiatives to the local community.	Organise an annual event to promote environmental activities to the public.		One event per year held.
	Sharing of equipment and ideas between councils.	Work with other town and parish councils to share equipment	Town and parish councils.	Record of initiatives undertaken.
	Become a paper reduction council.	Reduce paper usage on an ongoing basis.		Reduction in paper purchases.
	Encourage recycling in council spaces.	Posts on social media		Drop in non-recycled waste
	Keep the use of single use plastics to a minimum.	Promote alternatives		Reduction in plastic purchases.
	Facilitate not-for-profit community groups with environmental initiatives.	Engage with interested parties on developing projects such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repair shop. Community fridge/larder scheme. Allotment/garden surplus scheme. Second hand clothes scheme. Clothes swap and change event. 	Warminster Business Network. Warminster Community Workshop. Warminster Action Group. Food Bank. Allotment Association.	Delivery of projects.
	Encourage businesses to recycle, reduce, and reuse.	Explore options including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reduce single use plastic. introduce cross-over schemes between shops, residents, and town council such as recycling cardboard, or coffee grounds within a community compost scheme. 	Warminster Business Network.	Delivery of schemes.
	Support schools to develop their own green initiatives.	Survey schools to collate information regarding the current green initiatives they are involved in.	WC and schools.	Closer partner working between WTC and schools.

	Project	Task(s)	Partnership Working	Evidence of progress
		Disseminate survey findings to schools to support sharing of best practice.		
GREEN ECONOMY				
	Support local groups and businesses with their green agendas.	Highlight direct opportunities for grant funding for community groups/businesses to apply for in support of their green agendas.		Applications and grants target - three per annum.
		Continue with and promote annual Green Civic Award & Environmental Award		Awards made and achievements promoted.
		Provide information or signpost groups/businesses to other advice-giving organisations.		Evidence of social media/website/press coverage.
	Encourage public to shop local and increase 'town centre' footfall.	Raise awareness of the community benefits to local businesses and residents of increased levels of local shopping.	Regeneration Working Group.	Allocation of Wiltshire Towns' Programme grant.
		Explore options for holding a street market.		Retailer feedback
	Support businesses in reducing their carbon footprint.	Encourage businesses to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • stock more locally produced goods. • Promote Wiltshire Towns Programme – Wiltshire Marque to local producers and makers (launch spring 2024). • Promote Wiltshire Towns' Programme business support grants (launching winter 2023). 	Warminster Business Network. WC.	Allocation of grant funding.
NATURAL ENVIRONMENT				
	Biodiversity.	Encourage increased biodiversity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommend planting schemes – insect friendly, drought resistance. • Mowing programme – wildflower areas. • Identify areas for public green space enhancement. • Closed cemetery maintenance 		Report of actions taken

	Project	Task(s)	Partnership Working	Evidence of progress
	Address light pollution.	Implement schemes to minimise the impact of lighting and ensure minimum use of electricity around environmentally sensitive areas such as the Smallbrook Nature Reserve.	NPSG.	Evidence that light pollution is considered when planning applications are reviewed.
		Ensure all new planning applications comply with dark skies policy.	PAC.	
	Community gardening and public green enhancements.	Promote use of Warminster allotments and other public growing areas.	Allotment Association.	Increase in enquiries and usage of allotments/public growing areas.
		Identify potential sites to be used as allotments.	Incredible Edible.	
	Tree, shrub, and hedgerow planting.	Seek and promote opportunities to increase planting.		Report of actions taken
	Continue to use Peat free compost.	Use peat free compost in all council planting.		Ongoing.
	Support Wiltshire Council and national schemes designed to directly mitigate climate change.	Promote unitary and national initiatives e.g., grants to businesses.	WC.	Report of actions taken.

CARBON NEUTRAL COUNCIL

	Reduce waste generated by all council buildings/activities.	Identify opportunities to reduce waste across all council operations.		List of initiatives put forward by WTC staff for consideration.
	Recycling.	Increase recycling across all council operations.		Reduce waste generation
	Investigate increasing the installation of renewable energy sources on council buildings.	Create proposals and seek funding opportunities.		
		Consider all options – solar, hydro, and wind.		
	Continue LED lighting.	Install LED lighting in all council owned or maintained properties.		Action.
	Improve carbon literacy.	Train staff and councillors.		Training programme delivered.
	Carbon offsetting.	Implement options for WTC - tree planting, renewable energy sources.		Action.
	Adopt a “think carbon reduction attitude”.	Training		New Initiatives

	Project	Task(s)	Partnership Working	Evidence of progress
	Review procurement policy to put greater emphasis on carbon footprint and ecological concerns	Review of procurement policy		Implementation of review
	Keep staff informed about technical innovations e.g. improvements to battery technology	Staying informed of progress		Take up of new technology
	Take energy efficiency ratings into account when purchasing new equipment	Review energy ratings of existing equipment		Improvement from baseline
	Reduce paper use where reasonable	Review use of paper		Purchase of less paper
	Take online footprint from servers into account when storing information online	Review of online storage		Reduction in server usage
	Share information on steps and actions taken	Liaison and publicity		Take up of actions by others

CPWG - Cycle Path Working Group

NPSG – Neighbourhood Plan Working Group

PAC - Planning Advisory Committee

WC – Wiltshire Council

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