

Ash-cum-Ridley Parish Council

Climate Change Policy

Ash-cum-Ridley Parish Council recognises that it has the privileged position of being the lowest tier of local government and therefore has the opportunity to influence and encourage both residents and local organisations to make a positive contribution to tackling the climate emergency.

It is widely acknowledged that the warming of the planet's climate is accelerating and the latest report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has issued the warning that we have only ten years to limit climate change in order to avoid an ecological catastrophe.

The impacts are being felt around the world as humans have already caused some irreversible climate change, as an example we are already seeing sea level rises as a result of melting glaciers and species loss/extinction due to habitat degradation. The IPCC has stressed that it is pivotal that any global temperature rise is limited to 1.5°C in order to narrowly avoid some of the most severe impacts, but it is recognised that this requires a 'rapid and far-reaching transition' in the way we use land, energy, buildings and transport.

The IPCC are clear that ambitious actions are required to be taken by national and sub-national authorities, civil society, business and local communities in order for global warming to be limited.

Objectives of Policy

The Climate Change policy sets out five overarching objectives:

- 1. Community Engagement:** To engage with residents, schools and local businesses to promote opportunities in increasing resilience to ongoing climate impacts and changing consumption habits
- 2. Energy and Heat:** To reduce energy demand, improving energy efficiency and where possible, utilising renewable, low or zero-carbon technologies to provide energy and heating.
- 3. Economy, Housing and Waste:** To support the local economy to ensure existing homes and any new developments are climate resilient whilst reducing consumption along with re-using and recycling materials and resources
- 4. Transport:** To promote walking, cycling, public transport and electric vehicles within the parish
- 5. Food and Land:** To promote sustainable land management, including tree planting to help absorb carbon & water

Achieving our Objectives

Ash-cum-Ridley Parish Council acknowledges that it does not have a vast quantity of land within its possession neither does it operate many direct services. It is therefore essential that the Parish Council works in partnership with our local organisations and groups along with the higher-tier local authorities in order to achieve the aims of this policy.

To achieve this, the Parish Council established a Climate Change Working Group in 2021, initially comprising of parish councillors and representatives from New Ash Green Village Association. The membership of the Working Group is not however limited to these, and is open to all local organisations and stakeholders that wish to play a relevant part in achieving the objectives of the policy.

In order to track progress in achieving the objectives of this policy the Parish Council will complete the following:

- 1. Action Plan:** The Parish Council will maintain a 'live' action plan that sets out what actions will be taken in the parish to achieve each objective. The Action Plan will be compiled with local groups, organisations and stakeholders contributing actions they can fulfil too. The Action Plan will be published on the Parish Council website.
- 2. Climate Change Working Group:** The Parish Council will continue to convene the Working Group on an annual basis, inviting all stakeholders to participate, in order to monitor progress of achieving the objectives of this policy

Policy Review

The Climate Change Policy and its overarching objectives will be reviewed by the Parish Council every three years. The Climate Change Working Group may provide recommendations to the Parish Council on any suggested amendments in the intervening period.