



# Climate Emergency Statement of Intent The Green Framework

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NB. Appendixes for information in separate document 1



## **Climate Emergency Statement of Intent The Green Framework**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Brixworth Parish Council followed the lead from West Northants Council (WNC) and declared a Climate Emergency in July 2021(21/5544). WNC is formulating a 'Sustainability and Climate Plan' in line with the UN 17 Sustainability Goals, and Brixworth Parish Council is committed to actions that will support the aims of WNC action plan.

As part of the action resulting from declaring a climate emergency, Brixworth has established a climate action group (BCAG). BCAG membership includes residents and councillors to develop a plan to help the parish address the emergency locally.

This framework explains Parish commitments and aspirations in greater detail with the aim of becoming a net zero carbon parish council by 2030. This is in line with West Northants Council UK 100 pledge and its wider pledge to achieve net zero status for the whole of the West Northants area by 2045. It should be noted that the UK government has a 2050 pledge which is built into law.

This framework is a statement of intent for the Parish which is to be used as a guide to inform the reader of council's intentions to help fight climate change, and also as a resource, to aid the implementation of actions council will formally consider in the future.

The Green Framework Plan will be reviewed at least annually by BCAG, and in line with climate change and legislation, and any amendments approved by council.

Any climate action projects which require financing, will be considered by council when necessary, with a view to adding a Green Framework fund into the 2024/25 budget.



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### **2. HOW CAN THE PARISH TACKLE THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY?**

Brixworth Parish Council can:

- Support and engage with West Northants Council and central government on initiatives to tackle the climate emergency
- Ensure that parish decisions taken have considered their climate impact, environment and biodiversity impacts
- Work with the Brixworth community on climate and environmental initiatives
- Provide climate and environment information received from BCAG, WNC and the government via the Parish Council website, social media, public meetings and events.
- Lead by example – by demonstrating the climate and environmental impacts of projects are assessed and reviewed.
- Encourage use of The Cycle to Work Scheme by promoting local WNC safe cycling routes
- Promote safer cycling and walking opportunities within the village.

### **HOW DOES THE PARISH ACHIEVE NET ZERO CARBON?**

Firstly, through BCAG Brixworth Parish Council, will review the WNC Emissions Report 2021-2022 regarding carbon footprint information with a view to extrapolating data for the parish.

A net zero community would achieve sustainability by:

- utilising power with maximum efficiency and getting it from renewable sources such as wind and solar. This may include utilising supply from sustainable suppliers, taking into consideration the 'greening of the grid'. This is likely to lead to financial as well as environmental benefits.
- reducing the mileage covered by carbon fuelled vehicles
- encouraging the changeover to electric/hybrid/green fuel (such as hydrogen) vehicles
- reducing waste and plastic consumption
- support local businesses by encouraging buying food from local sources
- considering financial benefits of installing renewable energy sources locally, saving tonnes of carbon emissions every year

The government is offering grants for improved window glazing, home insulation, and heat pumps, and plan to phase out gas boilers. There is also an initiative to introduce hydrogen into gas to reduce nitrogen oxide and reduce pollutants, as well as initiatives to install home charging points for electric / PHEV vehicles. Brixworth Parish Council will endeavour to promote these offerings via its website and social media to inform residents of what is available to combat climate change.

Our goal with the Green Framework is to inform Brixworth residents, support them in reviewing their behaviours to reduce carbon emissions, and to help build resilience against the adverse impact of climate change. The Framework clearly sets out council's intent of how it will aid the parish/community to work towards net zero and proposed actions of how to achieve this.



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### **3. WHAT THE PARISH HAS ACHIEVED SO FAR (as at April 2023)**

Brixworth Parish Council has:

- Acknowledged that we are in a state of climate emergency and supported the creation of the Green Framework
- Supported the planting of trees, hedgerows and wildflowers around the village of Brixworth
- Initiated a liaison with WNC and other parishes (Welford and Burwell) and similar groups (CAWN) to share information on tackling climate change
- Agreed a liaison with BCAG to pool resources
- Agreed to endeavour that all BPC facilities should become net zero carbon as soon as possible or when they are upgraded
- Applied for a CPRE grant to plant new hedgerows
- Through BCAG, engaged with local schools and youth group to undertake projects through school assemblies and Scouts meetings.

### **4. HOW THE PARISH INTENDS TO IMPLEMENT THE FRAMEWORK**

#### **4.1 WHAT THE PARISH AIMS TO DO SHORT TERM (By March 2024)**

- Establish the Parish Council's own carbon footprint (properties, grass cutting, mileage etc.)
- Encourage residents to identify their own carbon footprints through readily available online calculators
- Look for suitable parish land for tree, hedgerow and wildflower planting, and maintain existing mature trees that are sited away from housing on parish land
- Set up a survey to gain local opinion, and to raise awareness
- Encourage buying local produce
- Establish more wildflower verges
- Work with the community and local environmental groups
- Liaise with the gardening and allotment group
- Explore the Carbon Literacy Project's Parish Council training programme with the aim of gaining a Bronze level or higher Carbon Literacy Certificate for the council.

#### **4.2 WHAT THE PARISH AIMS TO DO MEDIUM TERM (By December 2027)**

- As consultees, support any building of 'green' homes in Brixworth
- Support a community car sharing scheme
- Reduce paper consumption further
- Develop further tree, hedgerow planting and wildflower conservation areas
- Work with West Northants Council to establish proper joined-up cycle routes from Brixworth to surrounding communities.
- Support the provision of better bus routes and more frequent services
- Engage with WNC on their EV strategy – make sure Brixworth gets our fair share of resources. The aim will be to encourage other businesses to deliver to Brixworth by EV
- Ensure any parish facilities have climate change technology at the heart of any proposals for upgrading, maintenance or replacement.



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- Explore the Carbon Literacy Project's Parish Council training programme with the aim of gaining a Gold level or higher Carbon Literacy Certificate for the council.

### **4.3 WHAT THE PARISH AIMS TO DO LONG TERM (By December 2030)**

#### **To reach the aim of becoming net zero, the council will need to strive towards:**

- That local homes and businesses are made dramatically more energy efficient, with carbon-free heating sources, by promoting knowledge of Government Incentive schemes for insulation, boiler replacement with heat pumps, replacement double glazing etc.
- The parish has 100% clean electricity and renewable energy generation
- The parish is much less reliant on fossil fuel driven transport, with more transport sharing and improved public transport infrastructure
- Encouraging adoption of electric vehicles by providing charging points on Council properties, in line with West Northants Council Grant Funding opportunities.
- Promoting healthier lifestyles based on locally grown food, more walking and cycling, and sustainable local farming economy
- Exploring possibilities for locally owned solar and wind turbines
- Becoming a net zero council
- Encouraging the Carbon Literacy Project's Parish Council training programme with the aim of gaining a Platinum level or higher Carbon Literacy Certificate for the council.

### **5. EMERGENCY CONTINGENCY PLANNING**

Brixworth Parish Council will support West Northants Council, public utilities and other relevant authorities to put in place 'Planning for Emergencies' such as severe flooding and other climate-driven risks to Brixworth.

Like many other areas of the UK, Brixworth is also threatened by extreme weather events. As storms intensify, the village may be at risk of flooding from both excessive sudden precipitation and extreme temperatures.

The council will support the development of mitigation plans:

- For rainfall that exceeds storm-drain capacity, the council will work with WNC and other local councils.
- That identify areas at risk of flash flooding
- That enable Brixworth Parish Council to suggest and support schemes for residents to receive some financial help to buy water butts
- That support any initiatives for new housing to include planned rainwater harvesting. This will take water out of the drain system and save it for food growing in drought seasons.
- That allow for consultation with the local sewage works which may help to show where the dangers lie locally
- That support activity where, in case of extreme temperatures and sudden storm surges, the parish council has to flag up warnings to residents, local/national infrastructure and to county planners.
- Where the council needs to, work with West Northants and other councils and, using realistic scientific forecasts for timing, plan evacuation centres for Brixworth residents who need to move to places of safety.



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- In order to support WNC as they consider planning for evacuees from other parts of the area that may be needed.

### 6. CONCLUSION

The world will not fall apart tomorrow but gradually over time, and not in our lifetimes, however the long-term damage to the planet can only be reversed if action is taken now. Even small steps by individuals and groups will make a difference, the more that is done now and the more people that do it, the greater the difference will be. Implementing this framework will benefit the parish. Everyone can make their own small contribution in their own garden or in areas where they work as a community. Schools, sports clubs, and village organisations can all adopt elements of this and can help bring this framework to life.

Brixworth Parish Council is committed to this Green Framework and strives towards achieving all the above. The council will endeavour to inform our residents and work towards the required infrastructure being in place. The Brixworth Community needs to mobilise in response to the climate emergency, and it is the Parish Council's responsibility to support and lead by example.

### 9. ABOUT US

#### ***About Brixworth Parish Council***

Parish Population: 5766 (2021 census) Households: 2000+

Land Area: 3896 km<sup>2</sup>

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Brixworth Climate Action Group and Brixworth Parish Council would like to thank Burwell Parish Council for sharing with us their own Climate Action pledge to use as a template.

We would also like to thank the local people of Brixworth who have started an avalanche with their own efforts to combat what may seem like an insurmountable threat to our future, and who have inspired and contributed to this framework.

*N.B. This document was approved by Full Council on the 29th June 2023. Minute Ref 23/6248*