



# Char Valley Parish Council's Climate and Ecological Emergency (CEE) Action Plan

1<sup>st</sup> edition: 15.1.2020  
2<sup>nd</sup> edition: 31.3 2021

- This is updated and amended action plan that the Climate & Ecological Emergency (CEE) working party asks CVPC to consider as its response to the climate and ecological emergency that it acknowledged in June 2019.
- The plan is based on our response to Dorset Council's own CEE Strategy and Action Plan. These actions are designed to reduce our carbon emissions and our impact on the climate and environment and to help build a stronger, more resilient, thriving local community.
- The plan will remain under continuous review as conditions change and as Dorset Council amends its own Action Plan.

## outline proposal –

[We already know](#) the planet is facing a life-threatening climate and ecological emergency. While the Char Valley may be a *relatively* good place to be for the next 20-30 years, it may also be affected in that time by changes to the [Gulf Stream](#), [melting ice caps](#), other [serious climate changes](#), and the [critical loss of pollinator insects](#) (any of which could lead to severe flooding, power outages and food supply problems).

Large-scale, [climate-led population upheavals](#) and migration will almost certainly cause significant political, economic and social disruption (think of the problems caused by small-scale migration from the Middle East in recent years). Climate-related crises (drought, fires, flooding, crop failures) elsewhere in the world could have serious knock-on effects. This kind of disruption could – but will not necessarily – occur in the next 2 decades.

Two responses are needed from all of us as individuals/families/communities and from local authorities:

- a) **Mitigate the worst effects of the emergency.** We all need to reduce our impact on climate and the environment in the hope that we can, collectively, avoid the most severe effects of climate change, environmental degradation and species loss.
- b) **Adapt, build resilience and prepare for major change.** We all need to prepare for inevitable social, economic and political change. In building resilient communities to face problems in the future, we can also build thriving communities that work better now.

For a **parish council**, this means that we must do three things:

- 1) **Put our own house in order.**
- 2) **Lead and support action by the community.**
- 3) **Work to bring about change at the next layer up.**

12 detailed actions for CVPC appear on the next two pages. They draw on and combine suggestions made by other councils and organisations and our own response to the situation locally.

## 12 actions –

### a) Mitigate the worst effects of the emergency

CVPC does not own council buildings or run local transport, so there is little we can do as a council to reduce carbon emissions. As a result, our main proposals concern what we can do to support the local community (b) and to encourage change at county (and even national) level (c).

1. **Put our house in order.** Continue to support local planning applications that minimise carbon emissions and other impacts on the environment/climate and actively support local farmers in their efforts to adapt to climate change and develop forms of regenerative agriculture.
  - **ACTION 1: CVPC will seek formally and informally to ensure that planning applications and other local schemes (transport/highways/sewage) do not increase carbon emissions locally. It will argue for changes to reduce the climate impact of any local building or development proposals and, wherever possible, ensure that they have Zero Carbon impact and are climate resilient.**
  - **ACTION 2: CVPC will actively support small and large planning applications for new renewable energy schemes in the area, *provided they meet rigorous low-carbon standards.***
2. **Lead and support action by the community.** Inform, educate and encourage everyone in the parish to reduce their impact on the climate and the environment, with advice on lifestyle choices, etc.
  - **ACTION 3: CVPC (working, wherever possible with neighbouring parishes and local organisations) will support the creation of a ‘local green guide’ to include advice and resources for residents who want to reduce their carbon footprint, take action to reverse wildlife and biodiversity loss and build strengthen their local community. It could include a guide to local suppliers and resources and could help to start local groups working on car-sharing, tool-sharing, energy-saving etc.**
3. **Work to bring about change at county level.** Working and liaising with the Dorset Association of Parish and Town Councils, Bridport Local Area Partnership and Dorset Climate Action Network, and monitoring local actions being taken in response to the CEE, use our collective influence to achieve changes in Dorset Council’s policy and practice on public transport, energy efficiency, pollution, verges and use of chemical insecticides, etc.
  - **ACTION 4: Press Dorset Council to implement its Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy and Action Plan (CEESAP) faster, with more ambitious carbon-neutral target dates for both the Council and the county at large.**
  - **ACTION 5: Press Dorset Council to adopt a visionary Public Engagement Programme, working with town and parish councils and other interested local organisations, on the ‘indirect actions’ that will address the 98% of the county’s carbon emissions for which DC is not directly responsible. This programme should feature a ‘Vision for Dorset’ which draws on projects like the clean river and wildlife corridor projects happening in our parish.**

## **b) Adapt, build resilience and prepare for major change**

1. **Put our house in order.** Use our communications to make the parish council a focal point for the community.
  - **ACTION 6:** Use the CharValley.org website to share information, resources, ideas and news; to offer help and lifts; to organise bulk purchases, etc. Allocate a section of the site to CVPC. This is a community resource now and an active preparation for more self-sufficiency/resilience in future.
2. **Lead and support action by the community.** Help set up and support local farmers and new initiatives to grow food locally, encourage car-sharing, support wildlife, clean up the river, build links between farmers and others, and strengthen sustainable community structures, etc.
  - **ACTION 7:** Continue to support the River Char and Lifelines Community Projects and any other projects where the community/residents seek to buy/repurpose land/field(s) in the parish for use as allotments/orchard/forest garden or to create small-scale live/work spaces and similar schemes that enable residents to work locally.
3. **Work to bring about change at county level.** Use our collective town/parish council influence to press DC to look beyond carbon control measures and put in place policies and practices on food, transport, housing and employment that help to build sustainable, self-reliant local communities, create sustainable and regenerative agricultural practices at landscape level and build a better co-ordinated green transport infrastructure for residents and tourists (in line with its 27 Nov. 2019 [decision](#) to amend its Climate Emergency to be a 'Climate and Ecological Emergency'.)
  - **ACTION 8:** Press DC to stop using neonicotinoid pesticides – [responsible](#) for serious decline in the insect population (including bees and other pollinators) AND glyphosate herbicides (like Roundup – [carcinogenic](#) and [dangerous to the insect population](#)). [Currently DC uses both.]
  - **ACTION 9:** Press DC to 1) implement an ethical banking and investment policy and 2) divest from all companies and funds that extract, process or profit from fossil fuels.
  - **ACTION 10:** Press DC to remove economic growth from its list of strategic goals (on the grounds that we are already depleting natural resources fast and further economic growth can only exacerbate that problem).
  - **ACTION 11:** Press DC to stop immediately [the process of selling estate properties](#), to retain all its estate properties and to make them the centrepiece of a county-wide demonstration and education project to support biodiversity and environmental regeneration and demonstrate good practice in sustainable and regenerative agriculture.
  - **ACTION 12:** Press DC to initiate a county-wide project to improve management of the county's rivers/streams to reduce pollution, improve water quality, increase biodiversity and limit the impact of flooding.