

BROXBOURNE BOROUGH COUNCIL

SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN 2020 – 2024

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FOREWORD

Environmental sustainability is one of the most important issues facing the world today, and the Borough of Broxbourne is no exception. Young people in particular are concerned about what the future might hold for them. This Council is committed to do all it reasonably can to safeguard their future and to protect the Borough's attractive natural environment.

The Council has already taken action. Over the last eight years the Council has reduced the carbon footprint of Council buildings by X%¹ a year through energy-saving measures such as putting photovoltaic panels on roofs and installing a biomass boiler at Laura Trott Leisure Centre. Work is underway to improve air quality, including an Air Quality Management Action Plan for a southern section of the A10 in Cheshunt. Biodiversity in the Borough's parks and open spaces has been protected and enhanced through careful management, for example, restoration of hedges, and grazing by old breed cattle.

The new Local Plan also makes substantial commitments to a sustainable future for the Borough. There is a comprehensive Broxbourne Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan to enable residents to walk or cycle rather than drive, and commitments to seek improvements to public transport. The Plan also requires a net gain in biodiversity at major development sites and protects key habitats in the Borough, improves public access to the countryside, promotes sustainable materials in building and seeks to minimise flood risk from new developments.

However, the Council is determined to do even more to balance the needs of residents today with the consequences for future generations. Following a motion at Council making this commitment, the Council has created an Environmental Sustainability Panel, and has allocated a £50,000 annual budget for the development of environmental projects. Sustainability is one of three corporate priorities in the new Corporate Plan for 2020-2024.

This Sustainability Strategy and Action Plan sets out what the Council will do to achieve a sustainable Broxbourne over the next four years from 2020 to 2024. It describes how the Council will work with residents, other local authorities and local businesses to protect and enhance biodiversity, keep the environment clean and reduce the local carbon footprint.

Cllr Lewis Cocking
Leader of Broxbourne Borough Council

¹ We may not have the data needed to calculate this; if not, it will be replaced by percentage reduction in energy use.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SUSTAINABILITY

There is increasing evidence that humans are consuming natural resources faster than they can be replenished, harming ecosystems and reducing biodiversity across the world. Harmful emissions are making people sick, and have created man-made climate change which is now accelerating, raising temperatures in the climate, melting the polar ice caps and increasing the likelihood of flooding.

Everyone must take action now to live a more sustainable lifestyle, both for their own well-being and for the sake of their children and descendants who will inhabit this planet in the future. The Council is leading the way, establishing the Environmental Sustainability Panel with a budget and commitment to make the Council and the Borough more sustainable, and to help local organisations, businesses and residents to take action too.

LOCAL CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The Borough of Broxbourne is in the southeast corner of Hertfordshire, with London to the south and Essex to the east. It has an area of approximately 5,200 Ha with 291 Ha of open space and parks owned by the Council and an additional 5 Ha of countryside.

The area includes the internationally designated Broxbourne-Hoddesdon Woods complex, a Special Area for Conservation, and the Lee Valley Special Protection Area (SPA) which is on the eastern boundary of the Borough. The Lee Valley SPA has been designated for internationally important numbers of over-wintering wildfowl, especially gadwall, shoveller and bittern. The Lee Valley system is designated as a wetland of international importance. In addition, there are 35 Local Wildlife Sites considered to be of significance for wildlife in at least a district context. The leafy natural environment of the Borough is a significant asset and one of the most important reasons why residents like living here.

The population of the Borough is 98,500 (Mid-2019 ONS population estimate). This is projected to increase to 110,000 by 2033. The new Local Plan aims to accommodate this growth by creating 7,700 new houses and helping to generate between 5,000 and 6,000 new jobs in Broxbourne between 2017 and 2033.

The most significant challenge for the Borough in accommodating such growth sustainably is the growth in vehicular traffic and air pollution from their emissions. Residents rely heavily on cars to get around as, although north-south public transport links are reasonably good, travelling east-west is difficult without a car. With the M25 motorway forming the southern boundary of the Borough, and the A10 running up the middle, there is a significant volume of through traffic as well as local traffic, with congestion resulting in vehicle idling. There are five Air Quality Management Areas in the Borough, three in Waltham Cross near the M25, one in High Road Wormley and one on a southern section of the A10. The A10 location is subject to a Ministerial Direction from the Government. The Direction requires the Council to prepare a business case to improve air quality at this location as soon as possible.

The Council will work closely with Hertfordshire County Council and other local authorities and community organisations in the Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership, which met for the first time in May 2020. The Partnership offers opportunities to work together on issues such as public transport, reducing car use, improving waste management and tree planting. Working together also offers significant scope to improve the reach of public awareness and information campaigns on sustainable living and working.

BROXBOURNE SUSTAINABILITY PRIORITIES AND ACTION PLAN

There are three priorities:

- A sustainable Council
- A greener Broxbourne
- Supporting action by businesses and residents

For each priority there is a set of objectives with tasks. The Environmental Sustainability Panel will monitor progress in implementing the tasks in the action plan.

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A SUSTAINABLE COUNCIL

This priority concerns reduction of the Council's own carbon footprint, and setting an example for others in the Borough. The objectives are:

1. Reduce the carbon footprint of Council buildings
2. Reduce the use of petrol and diesel by the Council and minimise emissions
3. Consider sustainability in use of materials and procurement decisions

Objective 1: Reduce the carbon footprint of Council buildings			
Task	Responsibility	Target	Resourcing
1.1 Obtain expert audit of energy use and recommendations for improvement	Head of Property	By June 2020	Existing
1.2 Develop a programme of energy efficiency measures, which takes account of the recommendations from the audit and decisions about the long-term future of Council buildings.	Head of Property	Begin implementation in 2020/21. Achieve improvement of at least one EPC grade band for Council offices. By April 2024, all new industrial and business premises let out by the Council meet at least Band E requirements for energy efficiency. ²	Capital programme
1.3 Reduce office space requirement by replacing PCs with laptops, introducing hot-desking, and promoting home working, as appropriate.	Head of Property	Reduce office space requirement by 30% by March 2022 ³	Existing
1.4 Increase proportion of gas and electricity supply that are from sustainable sources	Head of Property	At renewal of current energy supplier contract, increase proportion of gas and electricity that has to be from sustainable sources.	Existing
1.5 Reduce waste and increase recycling from Council offices and leisure centres.	Head of Property Facilities Manager	Higher percentage of waste recycled.	Existing

²² Placeholder target – target yet to be confirmed by Head of Property.

³ Target likely to be reviewed due to impact of COVID-19 epidemic; possibly brought forward

Objective 2: Reduce the use of petrol and diesel by the Council and minimise emissions			
Task	Responsibility	Target	Resourcing
2.1 Develop and implement a staff travel plan to reduce car journeys by staff. This may include more use of online conferencing, setting up car sharing and providing bicycles for journeys in-borough – pool bikes for any officer to use, and bicycles allocated to officers in certain roles.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Reduction in car mileage claims by staff b) Switch from car to bicycle for growing proportion of in-Borough journeys by officers c) Car share scheme in operation 	Possible capital expenditure for creation of quiet zones for online meetings in Council offices; and for purchase of bikes.
2.2 Increase proportion of Council fleet journeys, including pool cars, made in electric or hydrogen powered vehicles.	Director of Environmental Services. Treasury Insurance Risk Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Financially viable timetable for replacement of vehicles in place by October 2020 b) Annual reduction in use of fossil fuels by Council fleet c) Electric charging points or hydrogen fuelling points installed for fleet use as required 	Capital programme – allocation would be required for fuelling or charging points and for higher upfront costs of vehicles.
2.3 Maximise fuel efficiency and minimise emissions from Council vehicles running on fossil fuels.	Director of Environmental Services.	Council vehicles follow procedures to maximise fuel efficiency in operation, avoiding idling if possible for example.	Capital requirement to replace vehicles.

Objective 3: Consider sustainability in use of materials and procurement decisions			
Task	Responsibility	Target	Resourcing
3.1 Reduce office paper usage	All heads of service Print Manager	Reduction in amount of paper purchased	Existing
3.2 Purchase locally produced goods where possible and in compliance with financial regulations to secure value for money	Economic Development Manager Head of Finance	a) Local providers of goods and services purchased by the Council identified by October 2020 and circulated to purchasing managers b) Evidence of purchases made from new local suppliers	Existing
3.3 Take account of sustainability in procurement of goods, including whole life and disposal costs, and favour renewable or recycled materials	Head of Finance Director of Environmental Services	a) Modify procurement guidance and training for purchasing managers to ensure sustainability is taken into account, including whole life and disposal costs for goods, and sustainability practices of tenderers to provide services. b) Evidence of sustainability taken into account in purchasing. c) Records show that all timber purchased comes from sustainable sources or is recycled.	Existing
3.4 Buy Fair Trade goods	Leisure Centres Manager Facilities Manager	X% of commodities covered by the Fair Trade scheme (coffee, tea, sugar, cocoa and chocolate, bananas, dried fruit, spices and nuts) are purchased from Fair Trade sources.	Existing
3.5 Increase use of environmentally friendly cleaning products in Council buildings, subject to sanitisation requirements arising from COVID-19 epidemic.	Head of Property Facilities Manager Leisure Centres Manager	Evidence of increased use of cleaning products that do not contain environmentally harmful ingredients such as bleach.	Existing

A GREENER BROXBOURNE

This priority deals with protecting and enhancing the Borough's environment, tackling air pollution and providing more greenery to help offset carbon emissions and add to the enjoyment of residents. The objectives are:

4. Take action to improve air quality
5. Protect and enhance biodiversity
6. Carry out a tree and greenery planting programme

Objective 4: Take action to improve air quality			
Task	Responsibility	Target	Resourcing
4.1 Implement an Air Quality Management Plan for the Borough's five Air Quality Management Areas and for the southern section of the A10, linked to the Ministerial Direction received from government.	Director of Environmental Services Hertfordshire County Council	a) Complete Outline Business Case by 31 October 2020 linked to Ministerial Directions relating to poor air quality (AQMA 6 / section of the A10). b) Complete Air Quality Management Plan for all five Air Quality Management Areas. c) Milestones in the Plan are met	Government funding is being sought for improvement works.
4.2 Implement road junction improvements on the A10 as described in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan in the new Local Plan	Chief Executive, Head of Projects Hertfordshire County Council	Junction improvements completed at: a) A10 with A121 and B198, Waltham Cross b) A10 and College Rd, Cheshunt c) A10 and Church Lane, Cheshunt	Subject to availability of s106 funding and possible Growth Deal funding
4.2 In the programme to increase the number of trees in the Borough (see Objective 6) give priority to areas affected by poor air quality	Director of Environmental Services	Evidence of planting on Council land near areas of poor air quality, e.g. parts of Waltham Cross.	A budget for tree planting has been established.
4.3 Continue to monitor air pollution regularly and take appropriate action on the results in accordance with guidance from DEFRA	Head of Environmental Health and Licencing	a) Monthly air pollution monitoring. b) Annual return to DEFRA. c) Results and action proposed presented annually to the Environmental Sustainability Panel.	Existing

4.4 Ensure that up-to-date warnings about poor air quality are available to residents	Head of Environmental Health and Licencing, Communications Manager	Link to air quality alerts is made available via the Council's website (in place).	Existing
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Objective 5: Protect and enhance biodiversity			
Task	Responsibility	Target	Resourcing
5.1 Implement the new Local Plan, including commitments to minimise the impact of developments on current wildlife habitats and to enhance biodiversity.	Head of Planning	Evidence that biodiversity is considered in determination of planning applications and in Council's own plans for new footpaths and cycle paths.	Existing
5.2 Continue environmental stewardship programme in Cheshunt Park.	Green Spaces Manager	a) Continued grazing by old breed cattle b) Continued grassland management and hedge restoration	Existing
5.3 Continue land management to support bees and other pollinators.	Green Spaces Manager	a) Provide habitats for bees and other pollinators b) Provide plantings to attract pollinators c) Minimise use of pesticides, avoiding neonicotinoids completely. d) Beehives introduced to at least one park or open space.	Beehives may require funding
5.4 Provide information to residents about local flora and fauna to encourage them to support protection of local biodiversity	Green Spaces Manager, Communications Manager, Community Development Manager	a) Information available on Council website by end March 2021 b) Walk leaders identify natural features of interest when leading guided walks.	Existing
5.5 Provide advice to residents on how they can support biodiversity in their own gardens.	Green Spaces Manager, Communications Manager	Information available on Council website by end March 2021, and possibly a feature in <i>Broxbourne News</i> spring 2021 issue.	Existing

Objective 6: Carry out a tree and greenery planting programme			
Task	Responsibility	Target	Resourcing
6.1 Submit a bid for funding from the Government's Urban Tree Challenge Fund.	Green Spaces Manager	Bid submitted by end of June 2020.	Existing
6.2 Implement a tree and greenery planting programme to achieve a significant increase in green cover in the Borough.	Green Spaces Manager	A net increase of 10,000 trees on Council land by 2024 and an improvement in quality and diversity of young trees.	Additional funding will be required
6.3 Engage with local public sector and charitable landowners and with schools to encourage planting of trees and greenery on their land, and provide advice if required.	Green Spaces Manager	Evidence of more trees and greenery planted by others in the Borough.	Existing
6.4 Add colour to town centres, parks and roundabouts by planting more flowers and flowering shrubs.	Green Spaces Manager	Programme of planting in place Visual evidence of flowers and flowering shrubs from spring 2021 onwards.	Additional funding required
6.5 Consider introducing the Tree Warden Scheme ⁴ to the Borough	Green Spaces Manager	Volunteers assist the Council to survey trees, plant and care for them from spring 2021 on.	Existing

⁴ <https://www.treecouncil.org.uk/Portals/0/TC%20Tree%20Warden%20Leaflet%202017.pdf>

SUPPORTING ACTION BY BUSINESSES AND RESIDENTS

This priority is about encouraging and supporting others in the Borough – businesses, organisations and residents – to become sustainable. As community leader, the Council is well placed to identify opportunities, to promote the importance of making changes and to advice on practicalities. The objectives are:

7. Reduce residents' reliance on petrol and diesel vehicles for travel within the Borough
8. Reduce waste and increase recycling
9. Encourage residents further in improving their local environment and adopting a sustainable lifestyle
10. Encourage local businesses to become more sustainable and to develop their resilience to climate risks

Objective 7: Reduce residents' reliance on petrol and diesel vehicles for travel within the Borough			
Task	Responsibility	Target	Resourcing
7.1 Implement the Broxbourne Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan	Head of Planning Hertfordshire County Council	a) New safe cycling paths and walking routes with clear signage and lighting to ensure year-round usage. b) Increase in secure parking facilities for bicycles.	S106 funding? Hertfordshire County Council?
7.2 Help create a network of rapid charging points for electric vehicles.		a) A network of 100 rapid charging points for electric vehicles across the Borough, sufficient to meet the needs of residents who cannot charge vehicles at home. b) Incorporation of electric vehicle home charging points into new developments.	Additional funding required
7.3 Promote walking and cycling to school	Community Safety Manager Hertfordshire County Council	a) Support schools to develop home-to-school travel plans. b) Parking enforcement helps prevent dangerous parking near schools at start and end of school day. c) Cycling proficiency training for children (HCC)	Existing
7.4 Lobby to improve public transport in the Borough and promote the use of low emission buses.	Chief Executive Head of Planning	Lobbying undertaken for bus routes to major housing developments, for Crossrail 2, for a new station at Wormley, and for low emission buses.	Existing

Objective 8: Reduce waste and increase recycling			
Task	Responsibility	Target	Resourcing
8.1 Continue public information campaigns to promote waste minimisation and recycling	Waste Management Officers	Household recycling rate reduces gap with average for Hertfordshire.	Existing
8.2 Provide information on recycling and green waste collection along with the Council Tax bill to households moving into the Borough	Waste Management Officers, Council Tax Manager (Sopra Steria)		Existing
8.3 Promote, and possibly develop, ways of diverting more household waste from landfill, for example, textiles and furniture.	Director of Environmental Services, Waste Management Officers		New routes for diverting household waste would require additional funding.
8.4 Encourage schools to increase recycling, and work through the Herts Waste Partnership to support schools to address waste minimisation, reuse and recycling through the school curriculum.	Waste Management Officers		20% increased uptake of recycling collections by schools.

Objective 9: Engage residents further in improving their local environment and adopting a sustainable lifestyle			
Task	Responsibility	Target	Resourcing
9.1 Consider working with other local authorities in Hertfordshire to recruit enough households to hold an energy switch auction, to secure favourable energy tariffs for local residents.		If viable, an energy switch auction is held with at least 100 participating households from Broxbourne. If not, the Council promotes the London Boroughs energy auction (which does not require London residence).	Existing
9.2 Increase allotment provision and promote the benefits of gardening or working an allotment.	Director of Environmental Services	Increase of 10% in number of allotments in cultivation.	Additional funding required if a new site has to be cleared and facilities installed.
9.3 Participate in Clean Air Day, to promote awareness of air pollution and encourage residents to join the Council in taking action to reduce it.	Communications Manager	At least 200 webpage views and/or requests for information from public	Existing
9.4 Promote World Wildlife Fund's annual Earth Hour, encouraging residents to make pledges to improve the sustainability of their lifestyle, registering the Council's commitments to do so, and switching off lights on or in Council buildings and structures as a visible reminder.	Communications Manager Facilities Manager	At least 100 households each year make sustainability pledges.	Existing
9.5 Provide information on the Council's website to assist residents adopt a more sustainable lifestyle.	Communications Manager	At least 400 page views.	Existing
9.6 Work with local community groups to tackle fuel poverty amongst residents on low incomes, helping them to obtain the winter fuel allowance and funding from energy companies to install energy efficiency measures. .		a) Number of households receiving help with energy efficiency measures. b) Number of households assisted or advised on obtaining winter fuel allowance. c) Participation in Herts Warmer Homes scheme to facilitate the above.	Additional if Herts Warmer Homes requires funding

Objective 10: Encourage businesses to become more sustainable and to develop their resilience to climate risks.			
Task	Responsibility	Target	Resourcing
10.1 Organise an annual event on sustainability for local businesses, to learn about reducing energy usage, sustainable procurement, home working etc.	Economic Development Manager	Annual event held	Existing
10.2 Provide links to guidance for businesses on sustainability on the Council website	Economic Development Manager, Communications Manager	Guidance available on website by October 2020.	Existing
10.3 Promote take-up of grants currently available for Hertfordshire businesses from Low Carbon Workspaces	Economic Development Manager	Take-up promoted at business events and on Council website.	Existing
10.4 Take account of growing opportunities in the low carbon sector in development of the Skills Strategy for Broxbourne with local partners.	Economic Development Manager	Skills Strategy references low carbon sector.	Existing
10.5 Sponsor an annual award at the SME Hertfordshire Business Awards for sustainability in business.	Economic Development Manager	Award offered annually from 2021.	Additional
10.6 Working with partners in the West Essex and East Hertfordshire Digital Innovation Zone (DIZ) to make the case for "fibre to the premises" (FTTP) infrastructure throughout the Borough	Economic Development Manager	Evidence of reporting and lobbying for FTTP infrastructure.	Existing
10.7 Encourage larger businesses in the Borough to develop plans to reduce petrol and diesel vehicle use.	Economic Development Manager	Evidence of guidance provided to local businesses.	Existing