

GRIMLEY PARISH COUNCIL

International Runaway Global Heating Extinction Emergency

Adopted by Grimley Parish Council 18th November 2019: Date reviewed by PC: November 2022. Clerk reviewed Feb 2024 – amended to include more recent Gov reports and initiatives. Clerk reviewed Nov 2024 – ditto.

Mission Statement

Our Declaration is about creating a better and sustainable future for ourselves and our children, that will enhance our community, environment, local economy and our overall well-being.

Background introduction

Following the 2018 IPPC Climate Change report which warned that humanity has only 12 years to take emergency action in order to prevent global warming greater than 1.5°C (largely ignored by world governments), and the Government's failure to take meaningful action after amending the Climate Change Act 2008, Grimley Parish Council declares that it recognises the urgency of addressing this **global heating extinction crisis**.

The previous version of this declaration referred simply to 'climate change', but unless we define more exactly the nature of the threat, we will never be able to manage it. The specific wording and detail of 'global heating extinction emergency declarations' are important politically, even when they can't include cast-iron commitments to deliver very significant climate changing reductions.

Only 70 MPs and peers attended an emergency climate briefing by the UK government's chief scientific adviser in parliament on 11th July 2022. It is three years since the UK Parliament declared a climate emergency, and, at the time of publication of this declaration (2022) ministers were still not heeding scientists' dire warnings about the climate emergency and MPs are still not all fully informed about the latest climate science. These concerns were not adequately addressed in The UK 2023 Net Zero Growth Plan which attempted to set out an update to existing carbon neutral strategies, focusing on the scale-up and deployment of technologies for decarbonising homes, power, industry and transport. The recently published "UK's plans and progress to reach net zero by 2050 - Research Briefing (26 September 2024) noted that low-carbon technologies are becoming cheaper, although uptake remains low, and there is an increasing need to focus on how the UK adapts to climate changes that have already happened.

The Parish Council acknowledges that whilst its ability to take direct action is very limited, this Council will exercise further action through information, education and influence.

According to the Local Government Association by mid-2022 around 300 councils had declared a climate emergency.

What are other councils doing? Councils nationwide are acting to:

- reduce their own carbon emissions and seek to lead local level action to reduce carbon emissions.
- work with partners and local communities to tackle the impact of climate change on their local area.
- increase biodiversity,
- improve the quality of life of their residents and the local environment.
- encourage a change in mindset in order to more readily reach local goals and objectives.
- work with local schools to ensure that age-appropriate messages are delivered and importantly to tackle 'climate anxiety' amongst young people.
- support the message of inspiring hope and movement towards positive change.
- support council advisory body statements on the right to protest whilst confirming that it is for individuals to decide on the appropriateness of their actions.

Objectives.

Grimley Parish Council will pursue and support the delivery of five objectives:

First. A significant and ongoing reduction in the use of energy in buildings, transport, food, and consumption across the parish. This contributes to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, pollution and biodiversity loss. The consumption of energy, particularly fossil fuels is a primary cause of Climate Change.

Second. The regeneration and rebuilding of our natural ecosystems which will contribute to drawing down carbon from the air into carbon stores in our soils, woodlands and grasslands. Such action in our gardens, allotments, woodland, grassland, verges, wetlands, farmland etc will also contribute to the enhancement of biodiversity, wildlife, flood/drought mitigation, pollution reduction.

Third. Promote and support adaptation measures to reduce the risks to our community arising from Climate Change. Areas of our parish are regularly inundated by floodwater with distressing impacts to homes, businesses and farmland. The forecast with climate change is for the frequency and severity of such occurrences to increase. More extreme weather events, rising temperatures, and expanding ranges of new species of insects, birds, plants etc will have pose a threat to our familiar native species of wildlife, crops and farm animals.

Fourth. Lobby and support urgent efforts to de-carbonise energy and insulate homes, focused on households in fuel poverty to ensure people can cope with the worsening cost of living crisis.

Fifth. Campaign to get government to give parish councils more finances and powers to invest in projects supporting climate friendly initiatives. At present, the parish council has no legal power to invest or support many climate crisis mitigation measures and currently taking action on climate change is not a statutory requirement for any level of government.

Grimley Parish Council will have full regard for the above Objectives, specifically in:

1. The management of Parish staff, land, commons and greens.
2. Contracts and the commissioning of projects.
3. Promoting local food production, businesses and enterprises.
4. Commenting on planning applications, developments – green spaces, transport, infrastructure.
5. Information to individuals and parish businesses, organisations and schools in our area.
6. Information to wider authorities and colleagues, lobbying higher tier councils and Government.
7. **Creation of an Environment Working Party of local volunteers**, in order to harvest resident ideas on changes that can contribute towards a more sustainable, climate friendly Parish.
8. **Work with residents to create a list of small scale, achievable projects** identifying specific targets and actions that will be developed by the council, residents and Environmental Working Party.

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