



2009 -2020, updated 2013

**CLIMATE CHANGE**

# Strategy

## What is Climate Change?

The earth is surrounded by a blanket of gases, which keeps its surface warm and able to sustain life.

These gases, usually referred to as greenhouse gases, include carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane, nitrous oxide and fluorocarbons.



There is good scientific evidence to show climate is changing because of emissions of greenhouse gases resulting from human activity. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) concludes "It is extremely likely that human influence has been the dominant cause of the observed warming since the mid-20th century" (IPCC, 2013).

The bulk of emissions derive from our demand for energy. The largest contributor is carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), emitted when fossil fuels are burnt to meet those demands. There are also other emissions attached to industrial processes and agriculture. (Committee on Climate Change, 2013a)



At the same time, increased deforestation means that the trees which help to absorb CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere are being cut down.

Thomas Stocker Co-Chair of the IPCC Working Group said: "Continued emissions of greenhouse gases will cause further warming and changes in all components of the climate system. Limiting climate change will require substantial and sustained reductions of greenhouse gas emissions." (IPCC, 2013)

### The National Position

The 2008 Climate Change Act established the world's first legally binding climate change target. It aims to reduce the UK's greenhouse gas emissions by at least 80% (from the 1990 baseline) by 2050. (DECC, 2013).



If we are to cut emissions by 80% by 2050, there will have to be major changes in how we use and generate energy. Energy efficiency will have to increase dramatically across all sectors. (DECC, 2011)

### Why do we need a Climate Change Strategy for Rushcliffe?

Everyone has a role to play, whether as a consumer or in business. There will always be a demand for energy, but the way we use it, and the amount we use, needs to change. (Committee on Climate Change, 2013b)



In the East Midlands it is predicted that by 2080 our climate will have warmer summer and winter temperatures, increased winter precipitation and potentially much reduced summer rainfall (UKCIP, 2013). The impact of these changes will affect all of our residents and businesses.

We all need to work together to reduce our carbon emissions in Rushcliffe.

The Committee on Climate Change says Local Authorities have a crucial role in contributing to emissions reductions and helping the UK meet its carbon budgets targets, they are well placed to drive and influence emissions reductions in their wider areas through the services they deliver, their

role as social landlords, trusted community leaders and major employers, and their regulatory and strategic functions (Committee on Climate Change 2012).

Rushcliffe Borough Council is committed to tackling climate change and to making a major contribution to reducing greenhouse gas emissions for the Borough. We recognise the challenge we all face and the action that we need to take to ensure Rushcliffe remains a great place to live now and in the future. This climate change strategy and its associated action plan sets out what we will do about climate change.

## Think global and act local - Reducing Rushcliffe's carbon footprint

**Lifestyle choices** - Of our CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in Rushcliffe, during 2008:

- 29% is emitted by **heating, lighting** and using **electrical appliances** in our houses (in 2011 this amounted to 2.1 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per person per year or 33%);
- 28% is emitted by **travelling** (in 2011 this amounted to 2.2 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per person per year or 35%);
- 10% is emitted in the production and consumption of **food** and
- 11% is emitted by the production and disposal of the **goods** we buy (Ricardo-AEA 2013 and SEI, 2008).



Overall in Rushcliffe in 2011, the emissions of carbon dioxide amounted to 6.3 tonnes per person per year (accounting for all energy used, purchases and travel) this is less than the national average of 6.9 tonnes per person, however its more than our neighbours in Nottingham City who emit an average of 5.1 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub> per person (Ricardo-AEA 2013).

Imagine leaving forty 40 watt lights on in your house all the time. That's how much energy each person in Rushcliffe uses.

As a Local Authorities we are working to reduce Rushcliffe's carbon footprint, by using planning and other policy levers to ensure that buildings and local infrastructure are energy efficient and resilient to increased risk of flooding, water stress and overheating. We will provide green spaces to keep Rushcliffe cool and to absorb heavy rain. We will ensure an effective emergency response after extreme weather events. We will also continue to look at our own estate and reduce the emissions from our operation.

We will encourage businesses to consider climate change in operating their business and when planning the location and design of their buildings, and the effect on supply chains or services.

You can do your part by seeing how you can reduce the energy you use in your home, how you travel, the types of food and goods you buy and by avoiding producing waste wherever possible. Advice is provided on our website at [www.rushcliffe.go.uk/energy](http://www.rushcliffe.go.uk/energy)

## Our Key achievements to date....

Since we first published a Climate Change Strategy in 2009, by working with our partners, the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in Rushcliffe have reduced by 11.3% (Ricardo-AEA 2013). Emissions from the councils operations have reduced by 21.4%.

The Climate Change Action Plan, which runs to 2020, is now at 83% completed. Some of the highlights

**RUSHCLIFFE - GREAT PLACE • GREAT LIFESTYLE • GREAT SPORT**

include:

- The Warmstreet Scheme was run working with other authorities and installers this provided insulation and energy efficiency measures, leading to householder savings of almost £100,000 and a carbon reduction of over 500 tonnes of carbon.
- Partnership working on fuel poverty £30,000 in external funding secured by the Council enabled the funding of the Housing Choices project, delivered by Rushcliffe Community Voluntary Service. This ensures that some of the Councils most vulnerable residents receive advice and assistance regarding energy efficiency and tackling fuel poverty.
- Alternative energy has been promoted through community groups in West Bridgford, Radcliffe on Trent and Sutton Bonington. By Dec 2012 386 properties had fitted solar panels.

## How are we going to tackle climate change?

We will continue to work with our partners and the community, leading the way in reducing the impacts of climate change. Our key actions are to:

- Setting policies and targets to reduce emissions and providing leadership
- Reducing council emission from its estate and business operations
- Engaging with businesses to encourage reduced emissions
- Engage with social and private housing providers to encourage reduced emissions
- Engaging with the community to encourage reduced emissions
- Encouraging schools
- Providing links to advice
- Seeking funding to tackle climate change
- Using planning and building control to reduce emissions

Our full action plan can be viewed online at [www.rushcliffe.gov.uk/energy](http://www.rushcliffe.gov.uk/energy).

To view our on-going reports on progress please see the Green House Gas Report and our Home Energy Conservation Act reports online at [www.rushcliffe.gov.uk/energy](http://www.rushcliffe.gov.uk/energy). We also provide advice on what householders and businesses can do to reduce their energy use is also available.

## References

- Committee on Climate Change (2013a) *Tackling climate change* online at [www.theccc.org.uk/tackling-climate-change](http://www.theccc.org.uk/tackling-climate-change)
- Committee on Climate Change (2013b) *Using Energy more efficiently* online at [www.theccc.org.uk/tackling-climate-change/reducing-carbon-emissions/what-can-be-done/using-energy-more-efficiently](http://www.theccc.org.uk/tackling-climate-change/reducing-carbon-emissions/what-can-be-done/using-energy-more-efficiently)
- Committee on Climate Change (2012) *How local authorities can reduce emissions and manage climate risks*, online at [www.theccc.org.uk/publication/how-local-authorities-can-reduce-emissions-and-manage-climate-risks](http://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/how-local-authorities-can-reduce-emissions-and-manage-climate-risks)
- DECC (2013) *Policy - Reducing the UK's greenhouse gas emissions by 80% by 2050* online at [www.gov.uk/government/policies/reducing-the-uk-s-greenhouse-gas-emissions-by-80-by-2050](http://www.gov.uk/government/policies/reducing-the-uk-s-greenhouse-gas-emissions-by-80-by-2050)
- DECC (2011) *The Carbon Plan: Delivering our Low Carbon Future* online at [www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-carbon-plan-reducing-greenhouse-gas-emissions--2](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-carbon-plan-reducing-greenhouse-gas-emissions--2)
- IPCC (Sept, 2013) IPCC PRESS RELEASE - Human influence on climate clear, IPCC report says, online at [www.ipcc.ch/news\\_and\\_events/docs/ar5/press\\_release\\_ar5\\_wgi\\_en.pdf](http://www.ipcc.ch/news_and_events/docs/ar5/press_release_ar5_wgi_en.pdf)
- SEI (2008) *REAP v2 Experimental release: 15-10-08*; online at: <http://www.resource-accounting.org.uk/downloads>
- Ricardo-AEA (2013) *Local and Regional CO2 Emissions Estimates for 2005-2011*, online at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-authority-emissions-estimates>
- UKCIP (2013) *Key Findings* online at [www.ukcip.org.uk/essentials/uk-impacts/key-findings](http://www.ukcip.org.uk/essentials/uk-impacts/key-findings)