



Hampshire  
County Council

Ms Chris Holloway

Hampshire Climate Action Network

*Economy, Transport and Environment  
Department*

*Elizabeth II Court West, The Castle  
Winchester, Hampshire SO23 8UD*

Tel: 0300 555 1375 (General Enquiries)

0300 555 1388 (Roads and Transport)

0300 555 1389 (Recycling Waste &  
Planning)

Textphone 0300 555 1390

Fax 01962 847055

[www.hants.gov.uk](http://www.hants.gov.uk)

Email [Sustainability@hants.gov.uk](mailto:Sustainability@hants.gov.uk)

Enquiries to

Climate Change Team

Tel

7<sup>th</sup> September 2020

Dear Ms Holloway and all represented community groups,

Thank you for your letter about the important issue of climate change, specifically regarding Hampshire County Council's 2050 target for carbon neutrality.

Hampshire County Council is committed to taking achievable action on its climate change commitments and, as you will be aware, has aligned with the UK Government's target of being carbon neutral by 2050. This time-frame will enable the County Council to realistically deliver on its commitments, as the County Council places great store on delivering on what we say we will deliver, rather than publicly committing to something that we cannot achieve.

It is important to note that the target for carbon neutrality has been set for the whole Hampshire County area which will require the County Council to lead and influence across all sectors where it may have limited direct control. This makes the 2050 target a credible one. By utilising the changes in national policies and the funding available between now and 2050, this will enable the County Council to take action in the areas where it has influence but less direct control. Successfully tackling climate change will involve working collectively with stakeholders, such as public sector partners and businesses. Importantly, a key principle within the County Council's strategy is to accelerate delivery on climate change where appropriate, based on dependencies such as national policy and funding, but acceleration will also require a joint effort amongst stakeholders.

I would like to highlight that for the Hampshire County Council owned estate, which is under more direct control, progress towards a separate target of a 50% carbon emissions reduction by 2025 is ahead of the plan, as demonstrated [here](#).

Please also note that The Committee on Climate Change recognises that: 'for most sectors 2050 currently appears to be the earliest credible date.' You can view the [full document here](#).

Specifically addressing point 3 in your letter, we would like to reassure you and the represented groups that our carbon pathway and budgets remain in line with the Paris Agreement of limiting global warming to 1.5°C. The target to be resilient to the impacts of a 2°C rise in temperature is reflective of our pragmatic approach to be thoroughly prepared across all of our services to the changing climate. We recognise that climate change has already had a significant impact in Hampshire, including flooding and extreme weather events which have caused damage to homes, infrastructure and our natural environment. It also has much deeper, longer term effects on health and wellbeing. For these reasons, resilience is at the core of our response to climate change, ensuring that any actions taken to reduce emissions do not increase our risks to climate impacts. Furthermore, with reference to point 9, actions which have co-benefits will be prioritised, such as improving health and improving air quality. The Hampshire County Council climate change strategy for 2020-25 can be viewed [here](#).

I hope that this is helpful in explaining our approach in responding to climate change. I do recognise that the measured approach that we are taking will not satisfy everyone, but I am also not convinced that setting an earlier date is prudent if it is not deliverable. However, we will only achieve carbon neutrality through collaboration across all sectors of Hampshire i.e residents, community groups, business and local government etc. and therefore I welcome your letter, and the challenge therein, to make sure that we are clear, and delivering, on our objectives.

Yours sincerely,

Climate Change Team  
Hampshire County Council