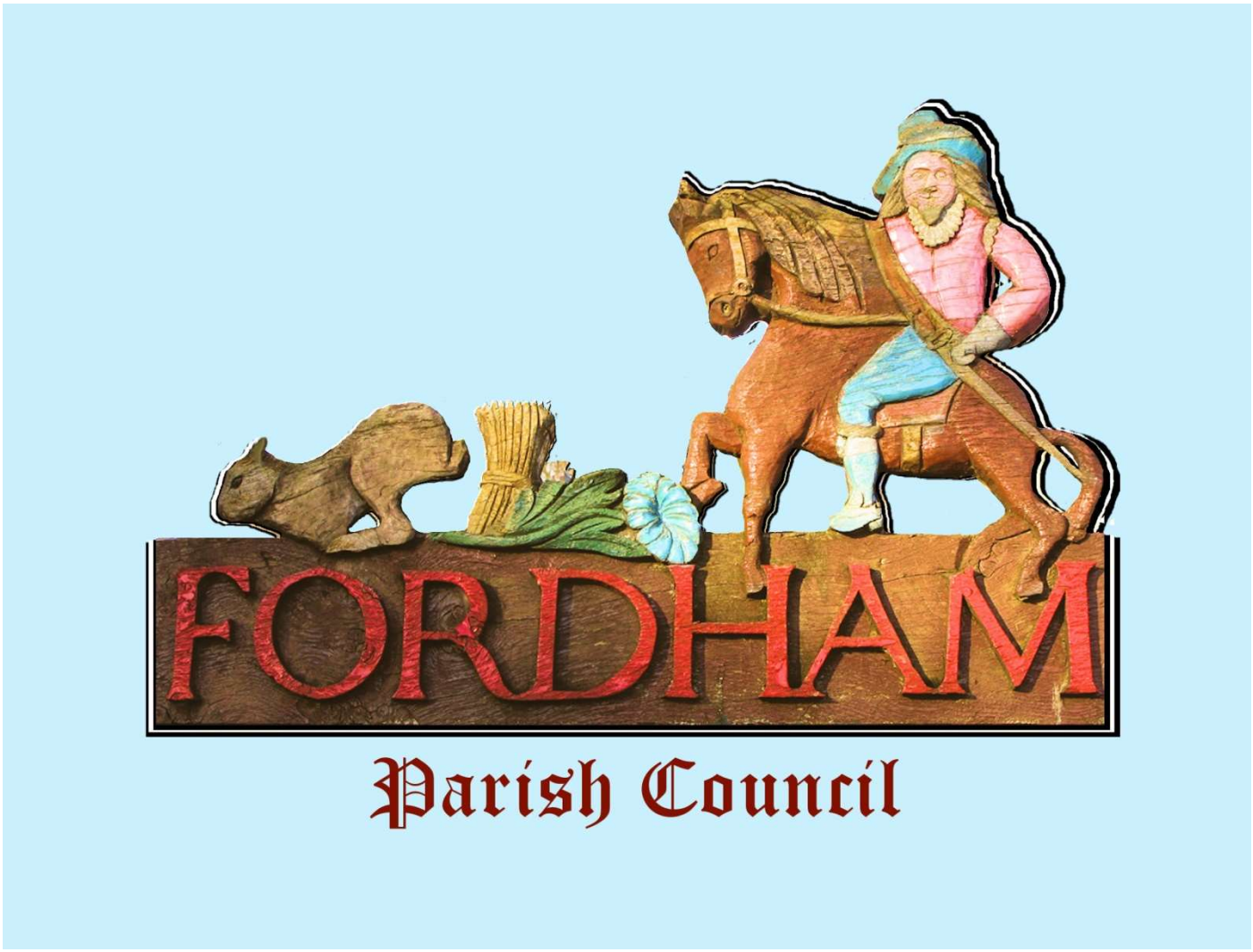


Environment and Climate Change Strategy for Fordham

May 2025 - Fordham Parish Council

Environment and Climate Change Strategy - Fordham

May 2025

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1. The Purpose of this Strategy

This strategy summarises Fordham Parish Council's approach to the Environment, Climate Change and Net Zero' It clarifies our aims and objectives and sets out an action plan with targets. Climate change is probably the most important issue facing us on planet earth and collectively we need to address it.

The 2008 Climate Change Act committed the UK government, by law, to reducing Climate damaging gas emissions by at least 100% of 1990 levels (net zero) by 2050.

Question: What does the above mean?

It means that we, in the UK, along with most other countries in the world have committed to changing the way in which we live on this planet in order to reduce our emissions to 'Net Zero' (ie we do not emit more than we consume) Examples of emissions are from: cars, heating, electricity generation, food production, manufacturing. Examples of where these gases are consumed are: Trees, grass, soil, carbon capture. Carbon Dioxide is the main climate damaging gas.

Question: Why do we need to do this?

Climate damaging gases such as carbon dioxide are destroying the ozone layer that protects our planet from much of the heat from the sun. This means that the planet is gradually heating up. This heating up is causing ice to melt which in turn raises sea levels and potentially causes widespread flooding. In addition it causes the weather to become more erratic with floods, storms of increasing severity.
Flooding is a real danger for many parts of the UK. The picture below shows where the new coastline might be if the Fen flood defences are overcome by a combination of rising sea levels (35cm higher by 2050) spring tides and strong winds. – The red is seawater!!



There are many initiatives going on at different levels to mitigate Climate Change. Examples are shown below:

National level

- Transition to EVs (electric vehicles) / Hydrogen / alternative fuels.
- Removal of coal and gas from our electricity generation mix.
- Removal of gas, oil and other dirty fuels from our heating fuel source mix.
- Mandating Low carbon buildings through the planning system.
- Recycling targets.
- Tree planting.
- Carbon Capture.
- Providing funds to allow people and organisations to implement green initiatives.

Local level

- Traffic reduction.
- Active travel.
- Tree planting / re-wilding / green spaces.
- Mandating 'greener' buildings through the planning system.
- Improved recycling actions.
- Replacing high carbon transport with low carbon.
- Upgrading buildings with insulation, solar and heat pump systems.

Question: What should the Parish Councils be doing to help?

For a Parish Council there are 3 areas to consider:

- Things that the PC owns or manages such as buildings, vehicles, land etc.
- Things in the wider Parish area, such as woodlands, churchyards, rivers etc, where the PC does not own or directly manage but has an interest in.
- The residents and businesses of the Parish.

Each area produces pollution and climate change emissions and needs action to protect our environment. Many PCs have done work in the first 2 areas. Few have done much in the 3rd area.

2. Definition of popular phrases

There are a number of phrases in use that are explained below:

- '**Net Zero'** The world / the country / the parish all emit gases that damage the ozone layer – these are called 'greenhouse' gases and are emitted as we carry out our daily lives. (Transport, Heating, Electricity generation, manufacturing, food production are the main areas). Each world / country / parish also consumes these gases (trees, grass, soil, carbon capture technology)

'Net Zero' is defined as when emissions and consumption are in balance. This will only be achieved when we stop burning Fossil fuels (oil, gas, petrol, diesel, LPG)

- '**Climate change' -** The greenhouse gases that are damaging our ozone layer are causing our climate to change. It is getting warmer. The weather is getting more erratic and extreme. Sea levels are rising. Many areas are at greater risk of flooding. – **This is climate change.**

- '**Climate emergency'** – A famous Swedish Activist (Greta Thunberg) created a wave of activity in 2017 when many governments and councils declared ' Climate Emergencies' and from this many initiatives were launched – including the COP conferences that advance the cause of battling climate change when they meet every year.

- '**Carbon neutral' -** A person or thing is carbon neutral when its emissions and consumption of greenhouse gases are balanced.

- '**Carbon footprint'** – A person or thing has a carbon footprint which is defined as its greenhouse gas emissions minus its consumption. An average person in the UK has an annual carbon footprint of between 10 and 12 tonnes of CO2 per annum.

- '**Food miles**' – The number of miles your food travels from its place of production to your house. This should include the places of production of the raw materials that go into the food. Every mile travelled creates emissions.

- **'Embedded Carbon'** When a product is made / grown / transported / stored / sold there will be some carbon emissions associated with the action. By the time the product is at its place of use the emissions will have accumulated as a result of the actions. This is called 'Embedded Carbon' – for example an average petrol car has an embedded carbon level of 8.5 tonnes of CO2 (14 tonnes for an electric car)

3. Aims and Objectives.

Recognise that our parishioners and local businesses are the biggest contributors to our current local Carbon Footprint.

This is important to understand to enable any initiatives to be correctly targeted. This does not mean that other areas should be ignored. In fact most Parish councils have already done work in these areas:

- Parish buildings have been upgraded, insulated, heat pumps fitted and possibly solar installed.
- Re-wilding and tree planting has been done in many areas to help increase consumption of greenhouse gases.

Increase awareness and understanding.

The level of awareness and understanding is very low for most people and this cannot magically be changed. It is a long hard process to gradually improve it by repeated campaigns. Each time a few people will be enlightened and gradually a momentum will build and encourage others to 'get what it all means'

Change people's behaviour and make greener choices.

Once people begin to understand what it is all about, then the next step is to change people's behaviour and to make greener choices. This change can be in many forms - small or large. Examples are:

- Smaller changes.
    - Grow your own vegetables = reduced food miles = less embedded carbon.
    - Plant shrubs, trees and grass in your garden = increased CO2 consumption.
    - Buy locally grown food when you shop = reduced food miles = less embedded carbon.
    - Increase your recycling rates and sort recycling properly = less landfill and less incineration = Less CO2 emissions.
- Larger changes.
    - Upgrade your house with insulation, solar, heat pump systems = lower energy use = electricity instead of gas/oil = lower carbon footprint.
    - Transition to an EV = lower lifetime emissions.
    - Use public transport / active travel = lower carbon footprint.

Define the role of the Parish Councils.

Parish councils cannot force people to adopt greener lives, but they can:

- Run campaigns to increase awareness in the parish.
- Give access to accurate information to help people make the right decisions.
- Provide guidance about grants and loans.
- Showcase progress and successes to help build momentum.

4. What are the biggest sources of emissions for people in the UK?

Each person in the UK has an average Carbon Footprint of between 10 and 12 tonnes per year. The top four areas are shown below:

- Transport = 30% (3.1t) – Petrol / Diesel Car 1.7t, Public transport, flying etc makes up the rest.
- Food production and waste = 25% (2.8t) - This includes emissions from growing the food, processing it, transporting it, selling it and disposing of it.
- Domestic energy consumption = 20% (2.2t) - This is mainly for heating / cooling and cooking.
- Consumption of goods and services = 15% (1.9t) – Every product (eg clothes, furniture) or service (eg banking, cleaner) a person uses has embedded carbon emissions (ie emissions whilst making that product or delivering that service)

In 1970 the average Carbon Footprint was 14 – 15 tonnes so some considerable progress has been made despite the increase in our standard of living since then (and the associated higher consumption of 'things').
The main reasons for the reduction are:

- More efficient / cleaner transport.
- Removal of coal from the generation of electricity and home heating and the dramatic increase in Renewable generation.
- Better insulation in buildings.
- Better awareness of how to be more energy efficient.
- Increased recycling rates.

The next section gives guidance as to how people can do more to reduce their Carbon Footprint.

5. Reducing Fordham's Carbon Footprint

The table below shows the big areas of a person's Carbon Footprint and actions that can be taken to reduce these.
The %'s in the last column are an example of how you can reduce your Carbon Footprint

- Switch to an EV =10% reduction.
- Grow your own food = up to 5% - 1% for a typical vegetable garden.
- Upgrade your home insulation (Loft, walls, floors,) = up to 8.1% - 5% for this person.
- Upgrade your boiler to a new Gas boiler or Heat pump = 4% New gas / 12.6% Heat Pump.
- Buy 2nd hand clothes = up to 5% - 2% for many people.

This is the spreadsheet that you can use to calculate your own Carbon Footprint



Carbon Footprint Scorecard.xlsx

Footprint area	Current emissions per year	Proposed Actions	Likely reduction in your Carbon Footprint (Tonnes / %) per year	What is your Score?
Transport	30% of total / 3.1T	1) Move to an EV	1) An EV will save around 1.1T per year (10%)	**10.0%**
		2) Public Transport	2) Replacing a petrol car with public transport would save around 1.5T (13.5%)	
		3) Do not fly	3) A 0.27T (2.4%) saving	
		4) Active travel (walk / cycle)	4) If 25% of your daily travel was 'Active' then the saving would be 0.55T (5%)	
Food and waste	25% of total / 2.8T	1) Grow your own food	1) Saving around 0.55T (5%)	**1.0%**
		2) Select food that is grown locally	2) Saving around 0.33T (3%)	
		3) Select supermarket food with lower food miles on it	3) Saving around 0.33T (3%)	
		4) Switch to a more plant based diet	4) Being a vegetarian would save 0.7T (6.3%)	
		5) Reduce your food waste and recycle more	5) A 50% reduction saves 0.17T (1.5%) 5) Improved recycling rates saves 1%	
Energy use in the home	20% of total / 2.2T	1) Upgrade your home insulation	1) Saving around 0.9T (8.1%)	**5.0%**
		2) Upgrade your boiler	2) Saving around 0.44T (4%)	**4.0%**
		3) Reduce your thermostat temperature by 1c	3) Saving around 0.22T (2%)	
		4) Upgrade your windows / doors	4) Saving around 0.4T (3.6%)	
		5) Change your heating system to a Heat Pump	5) Saving around 1.4T (12.6%)	
		6) Instal a solar panel system	6) Saving around 1.4T (12.6%)	
		7) Instal a battery system and use off peak electric	7) Saving around 0.5T (4.5%)	
Goods and services	15% of total / 1.9T	1) Avoid clothes with high embedded carbon (artificial fibres)	1) Saving around 0.22t (2%)	
		2) Buy products made in this country (= lower miles and cleaner energy)	2) Saving around 0.22T (2%)	
		3) Buy 2nd hand clothes	3) Saving around 0.55T (5%)	**2.0%**
Others	10% of total / 1.1T	1) Plant 38 trees	1) Saving 1T (9%)	**1.0%**
		2) Stop mowing your lawn	2) Depending on the size of your lawn it may save 100kg (0.9%)	
For those with an above average footprint		1) 2 x petrol/diesel cars	1) Additional 1.7T (15%) Put -15% in box	
		2) Oil / solid fuel heating	2) Additional 3T (27%) Put -27% in box	
Total	**100%/11.1T**		**Your Carbon Footprint reduction (%)**	**23.0%**

6. Parish Council Action plan

This section maps out the action plan for the coming years. This is summarised in a table at the end of this document.

Council Assets

- Manage any assets (buildings, equipment, land etc) in an environmentally friendly way to ensure that pollution and carbon emissions are kept to an absolute minimum.
- When replacing or upgrading assets ensure that these replacements are as environmental friendly as can be afforded.
- **New Pavilion** - An example is the proposed new Pavilion that will replace 2 old pavilions that are at the end of their lives. This pavilion will be built to a budget that will include as much equipment, to reduce our carbon footprint, as we can afford. This may include:
    - A Solar Panel array of up to 30kw to help power the pavilion and to reduce our running costs (by selling any surplus back to the grid)
    - A Heat Pump that scavenges heat from the outside air to heat the interior, thus reducing the consumption of electricity, partially powered by solar. This Heat Pump can also be used to cool the interior during the summer months. This form of heating / cooling will substantially reduce running costs.
    - Battery storage to store some of the solar output and charge at cheap overnight rates to power the heat pump and the EV chargers.
    - EV chargers – to provide charging facilities to the local population who cannot charge at home (at low home charge rates)
    - Rain water recycling facilities to reduce consumption of fresh water (and reduce running costs)

The wider Parish

The Parish Council has a role to play in the wider Parish. The overarching objective must always be to improve the Parish in ways that will reduce it's overall Carbon Footprint and to do so in an Environmentally friendly way.

Examples of recent work are:

- Planting bulbs at the school – in some borders around the playing field.
- Planting bulbs and seeds at the entrances to the village (10 planting areas)
- Refertilising the recreation ground grass areas to promote stronger growth.
- Planting trees and scrubs on the Recreation ground.

Future actions:

- The Nature Recovery plan contains a set of actions to help in this 'environment' area.
- Take advantage of any new Grant funding that becomes available to enhance this area.
- Encourage the use of trees and shrubs in all planning applications.

- Encourage the deployment of renewable equipment (Heat Pumps, Solar, Rainwater recycling etc) in all planning applications.
- Encourage the prompt reporting of any pollution problems in the parish.

Parishioners

Remember that this area is the source of most of the Parish's Carbon Footprint. Any actions in this area will therefore have the most impact. It is important to recognise the following:

- People, generally, have a low awareness and understanding of the Environment and Climate change and this must be tackled first. It is a continuous activity that gradually educates people.
- Once people better understand then the second task is to change their behaviour / home to be more 'green'. This again is a continuous activity that slowly yields results.

The Role of the Parish Council in this area can be defined as:

- Run campaigns to increase awareness in the parish.
- Give access to accurate information to help people make the right decisions.
- Provide guidance about grants and loans.
- Showcase progress and successes to help build momentum.

Examples of recent work are:

- Home energy efficiency (one on one) workshops held in March 2025 – this has resulted in around 20 people gaining awareness and understanding. Many of these people are now applying for grants to help them and making improvements to their homes.
- Work with the 'Home Energy' team at East Cambs District council to run a campaign in the autumn of 2025 to further promote the take up of council and Government grants.
- Run a publicity campaign throughout the year to encourage people to ask for help to work out how they could make their behaviour / homes more 'green'
- Develop a Carbon Footprint Scorecard (Section 5 of this document) to use as a tool to help people understand what their footprint currently is and how it can be improved.
- Set up a joint Parish council forum to share ideas and plans to promote the Environment and Climate Change.

Future Actions:

- Work with schools to educate children about the Environment, Climate Change and Net Zero to help increase awareness.
- Continue to run campaigns across the parishes to improve awareness and motivate people to become more 'green'.
- Work with East Cambs council (and others) to improve awareness of the grants available and their takeup.

- Work with individuals to help them decide how to reduce their Carbon Footprints and guide them along their journey.

Local Businesses

There is a mix of small and large businesses within the parish. Each of them has a Carbon Footprint which will be much larger than an individual parishioner. Just as individuals should be looking to reduce their Footprint so should businesses. The following are 'greener' choices that could be made:

- Switch heating to a Heat Pump or similar greener choice.
- Reduce production energy usage.
- Consider Solar / Wind turbine / batteries.
- Reduce water usage through recycling of rainwater.
- Encourage employees to share their cars / provide buses.
- Encourage active travel. (Cycling, walking etc)
- Look at forming partnerships with other businesses to share ideas and solutions.

How can the Parish council help in this?

The Parish council has access to expertise on Energy Efficiency and this could be used to assist in reviewing options for the business. Businesses could also work with the Parish council to educate and guide its employees to make 'Greener' choices.

7. Summary of our Vision for Environment, Climate Change and Net Zero

The journey to Net Zero in 2050 seems a long one (25 years to go) In this country we have halved our climate damaging emissions since 1990.

However getting to Net Zero by 2050 will need:

- New technology.
- Top down mandates from the government (EVs, Heat pumps, New build housing rules and more…)
- Bottom up 'Greener choices' from the population.

Fordham Parish council intends to play its part by:

- Running campaigns to increase awareness in the parish.
- Giving access to accurate information to help people make the right decisions.
- Providing guidance about grants and loans.

- Working with schools and businesses to educate and guide.
- Showcasing progress and successes to help build momentum.

Looking at the map of East Anglia in section 1 of this document the idea of Fordham ‘by the sea’ may seem attractive.

However the consequences (loss of agricultural land, population displacement etc) is not at all attractive – especially when this would be replicated round the world.

Instead we all should strive to do our best to ensure the world can adapt in time to manage its future.

Appendix 1 Summary Action Table

The following table captures all of the actions contained in this strategy document. This will provide a base for us all to measure our progress, adapt as we go, learn from our failure and shout about our successes.

Action Area	Action	Owner	Status / Target
Council Assets	Manage any assets (buildings, equipment, land etc) in an environmentally friendly way to ensure that pollution and carbon emissions are kept to an absolute minimum	Parish council	Ongoing
	When replacing or upgrading assets ensure that these are as environmental friendly as can be afforded	Parish council	Ongoing
	New Pavilion - An example is the proposed new Pavilion that will replace 2 old pavilions that are at the end of their lives. This pavilion will be built to a budget that will include as much equipment, to reduce our carbon footprint, as we can afford	Parish council	Being planned / 2026
The wider Parish	Creation of new planting areas at the school and 5 (10 planting areas) entrances to the village	Parish council	Completed
	Refertilising the Recreation ground to promote growth	Parish council	Completed
	Planting trees and Shrubs at the Recreation ground	Parish council	Completed
	Complete actions in the Nature Recovery strategy relating to Climate Change	Parish council	Ongoing
	Apply for any grants and loans that may help reduce Fordham's Carbon Footprint	Parish council	Ongoing
	Encourage the specification of trees and shrub planting as well as the use of climate friendly equipment and construction methods in all planning applications in the parish	Parish council	Ongoing
	Encourage the prompt reporting of any pollution / emission problems in the Parish	All	Ongoing
Parishioners	Home energy efficiency (one on one) workshops held in March 2025 – this has resulted in around 20 people gaining awareness and understanding. Many of these people are now applying for grants to help them and making improvements to their homes	All	Completed

	Work with the ‘Home Energy’ team at East Cambs District council to run a campaign in the autumn of 2025 to further promote the take up of council and Government grants.	Parish council	Autumn 2025
	Run a publicity campaign throughout the year to encourage people to ask for help to work out how they could make their behaviour / homes more ‘green.’	Parish council	Ongoing
	Develop a Carbon Footprint Scorecard (Section 5 of this document) to use as a tool to help people understand what their footprint currently is and how it can be improved.	Parish council	Ongoing
	Set up a joint Parish council forum to share ideas and plans to promote the Environment and Climate Change.	Parish council	Completed
	Work with schools to educate children about the Environment, Climate Change and Net Zero to help increase awareness.	Parish council	Summer 2025
	Continue to run campaigns across the parishes to improve awareness and motivate people to become more ‘green.’	Parish council	2025 - 2026
	Work with East Cambs council (and others) to improve awareness of the grants available and their takeup.	Parish council	2025 - 2026
	Work with individuals to help them decide how to reduce their Carbon Footprints and guide them along their journey.	All	2025 - 2026
Local Businesses	Provide publicity and guidance to business to help them on their ‘Net Zero’ journey (perhaps developing Carbon Footprint Scorecards for each business)	Parish council	2025 - 2026
	Help businesses to help their employees (using individual Carbon Footprint Scorecards) on their ‘Net Zero’ journeys.	All	2025 - 2026