

NEWS RELEASE



GREEN SHOOTS OF PROGRESS WITH FOCUS ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Folkestone & Hythe District Council continues to make good progress in its efforts to improve its eco-friendly credentials.

The authority declared a climate and ecological emergency two years ago this month (24 July). Since then work has been ongoing on a series of measures to help protect the environment both now and in the future – including a commitment to hit a net-zero carbon emissions target by 2030.

These include:

- Converting all streetlights for which the council is responsible to LED – these are highly environmentally friendly and efficient. They also cause less light pollution compared to traditional bulbs. This work is ongoing.
- All cabinet reports now include a climate impact statement – meaning any environmental effect of decisions is taken into account. There is also an increased focus across the council with training introduced for all staff.
- Committing £40,000 to deliver around 60 on-street electric car charging points on lampposts in various locations across the district in a joint project with Kent County Council.
- Mulching and composting 95% of the council's in-house green waste to reduce the need to buy compost, as well as the amount of water or pesticide needed around newly-planted shrubs or bushes.
- Promoting and encouraging energy efficiency in properties across Folkestone & Hythe by the private sector housing team through various initiatives while also ensuring tenants are supported.
- Reviewing our mowing regime to increase biodiversity and reducing cutting in specific areas to encourage pollinators. Bee friendly signs have been installed in these areas to explain what we are doing.

Cllr Lesley Whybrow, F&HDC Cabinet Member for the Environment, said: “When we announced our commitment to net-zero carbon emissions we knew it was not going to be an easy and instant fix.

“But we have a carbon action plan – as endorsed by cabinet – and we are confident that progress is being made to putting our own house in order and working towards encouraging our residents and businesses to do what they can too.”

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced the council into a new way of working – as has been the case for organisations across the district. This has inadvertently saved 368 tonnes of carbon due to the reduction of commuter and business miles. Whilst this has benefits by reducing overall levels of carbon emissions this saving will not be

considered as a reduction against the council's carbon action plan as it is part of the wider impact of the organisation. A review of what the workplace should look like in the future is now underway.

F&HDC Leader Cllr David Monk added: "Looking to the future we have much to do, but we are delighted that whole-hearted support has been given to ensure that climate implications are considered in all decisions made by cabinet and full council."

For more information about the progress made to date, visit folkestone-hythe.gov.uk/climatechange

ENDS

Notes to Editors:

For more information, please email communications@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

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Corporate plan themes

You may have noticed the new badge at the top of this release. We've introduced four new themes with which we're going to be badging our activity going forward. These four themes (detailed below) link to our service ambitions in [Creating Tomorrow Together – our new Corporate Plan from 2021 - 2030](#).



The way our contact centre works is changing. From 1 June, it will be open weekdays between 10am-4pm (telephone lines) and 10am-5pm (web chat service).

This is to ensure all enquiries can be dealt with efficiently, including the ever-increasing numbers we receive through our MyAccount service online. There you can find out more about bin collections, council tax and housing benefit – as well as make payments and submit applications for parking permits. Join the thousands who have already signed up by visiting folkestone-hythe.gov.uk/myaccountinfo

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