



MALTON TOWN COUNCIL

CLIMATE & BIODIVERSITY POLICY



**This policy was adopted by Malton Town Council on
30th March 2022 (next review March 23)**

**The policy will be reviewed annually and is subject to change as it
progresses**

Background

Malton lies within the two principal authorities of Ryedale and North Yorkshire and their climate change proposals will be a source of support for Malton Town Council and its plans to become carbon neutral by 2035 and improve biodiversity of owned or managed land.

What is the Climate Emergency?

The intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the UN body for assessing the science related to climate change warns of the need to limit global warming to a maximum of 1.5°C, beyond which even half a degree will significantly worsen the risks of drought, floods, extreme heat and poverty for hundreds of millions of people. There is now scientific consensus on the fact that carbon emissions are causing global heating and the Committee on Climate Change, among others, warn against the idea of complacency.

What is Climate Change: Why is the planet warming?

This warming is caused by a build-up of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases in our atmosphere. The gases trap heat by forming a blanket around the earth – like the glass of a greenhouse. These gases stay in the atmosphere for many years and as they build up, the planet's temperature rises. A warmer world leads to a more extreme climate, with more severe droughts, floods and storms and as the world warms up feedback-loops can accelerate warming: melting polar ice means less of the sun's heat is reflected back into space. Greenhouse gases build up in the atmosphere mainly due to the burning of fossil fuels – coal, oil and gas and by cutting down forests. The Latest Climate Change Science can be found at:- www.friendsoftheearth.uk/climate-change-facts-science-and-impacts

How do we stop dangerous climate change?

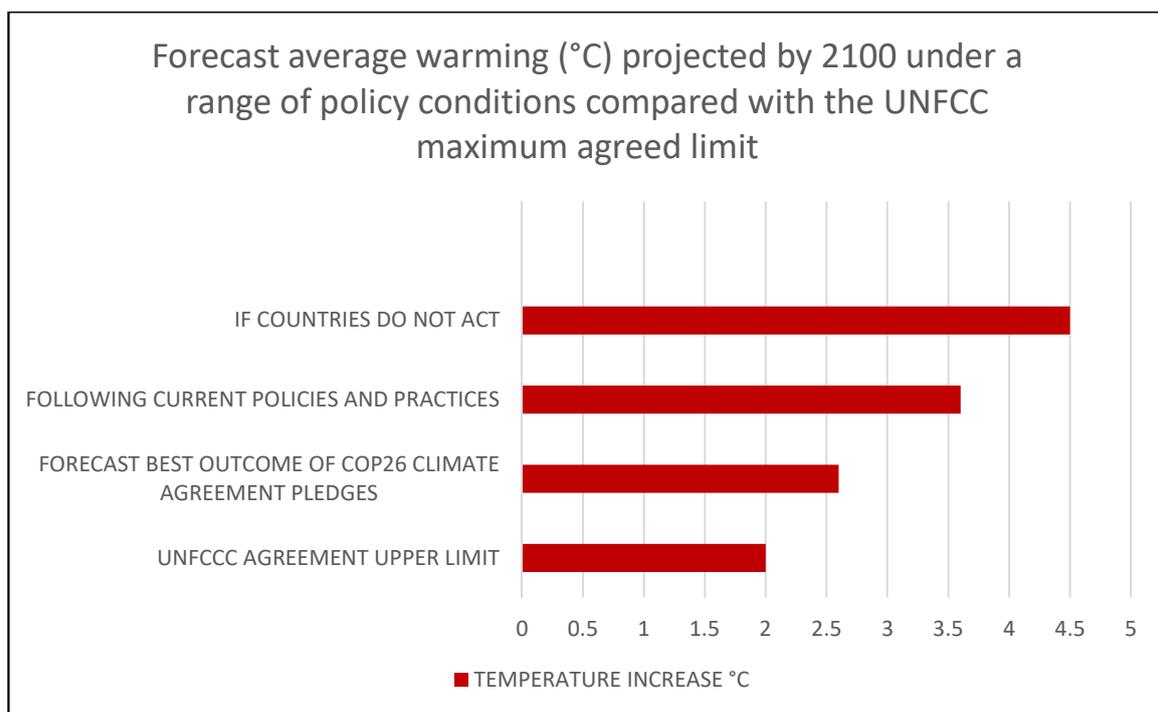
At least 80% of all proven global fossil fuel reserves – coal, oil and gas must stay in the ground to meet the Paris Agreement goals. The Paris Agreement calls for “global emissions peaking as soon as possible and rapid reductions thereafter”. Two of the biggest solutions are being far more efficient in how we use energy, and moving from coal, oil and gas to 100% renewable energy as fast as possible.

The good news is that this is starting to happen and is accelerating fast. Renewable electricity costs have plummeted in the last few years and the amount of wind and solar power is rocketing all over the world. The task is urgent, we need to keep within the 1.5°C of warming and save as many lives and livelihoods as possible. Change needs to happen quickly. But it has to be done in a fair way. We are far more responsible for the global climate change we see today – our economy has been built on exploiting coal, oil and gas. Rich countries also have a responsibility to help poorer countries adapt to climate change and cope with impacts we can no longer avoid.



What difference will climate change make? (Source: 'The Met Office')

- As the world warms, the UK is likely to have hotter, drier summers, and warmer wetter winters.
- Extreme weather events such as heatwaves and heavy downpours could become more frequent and more intense.
- We are already seeing the impacts of climate change, but the level of global warming we reach and when, will depend primarily on the concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.
- Warming weather may not seem like such a big deal, but even the smallest incremental changes in climate can have far-reaching effects.
- Temperatures above 30C for two or more days can trigger a public-health warning. In the 1990s, this happened about once every four years for locations in the South. By the 2070s, projections suggest it could be as frequently as four times per year - 16 times more often if we do not reduce our emissions.
- Summer rain is likely to become less frequent but could be heavier. Without regular rainfall, the ground has a harder time absorbing water when it finally does come, leading to a greater risk of flash flooding.
- Floods will likely become a staple of warming winters as well.
- Steady rain, which is currently a feature of winter months, will probably continue, and total rainfall is expected to increase.
- When the ground is already saturated, waterways tend to rise. Bridges and sewers designed for historical rainfall levels may come increasingly under pressure.
- Warming temperatures could also mean cold spells become less frequent. Snowy winters may become a thing of the past.
- Temperatures below freezing during the day and areas with considerable amounts of snow on the ground may be limited to parts of Scotland by the end of the century if emissions continue to rise.



Importance of Biodiversity

We are part of Nature, not separate from it. We rely on Nature to provide us with food, water and shelter; regulate our climate and disease; maintain nutrient cycles and oxygen production; and provide us with spiritual fulfilment and opportunities for recreation and recuperation, which can enhance our health and well-being. We also use the planet as a sink for our waste products, such as carbon dioxide, plastics and other forms of waste, including pollution.

We also need to reduce activities for which there is presently no decarbonised solutions such as aviation, shipping, cement production and eating beef and lamb.

Introduction

Malton Town Council accepts that a climate and nature emergency exists, accepts the scientific basis behind the International Panel on Climate Change reports, and that Climate Change poses an existential threat to the balance of Biosystems on which the health of the planet is based. The Council will play its part and show foresight and leadership when it comes to the issue of climate change.

Malton Town Council is:

1. Committed to becoming a carbon-zero organisation by 2035 but make significant progress by 2030.
2. Committed to seek ways to facilitate and encourage our community in reducing direct and indirect CO2 emissions and to become resilient to changes caused by the changing climate.
3. Committed to call upon National Government, Ryedale District Council and North Yorkshire County Council to provide powers and resources to make the 2035 target possible.
4. Committed to work with governments to determine and implement best practice methods new plan aims for at least 68% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by the end of the decade, compared to 1990.
5. Seeking to engage and influence the policies of other organisations to encourage them to reduce their emissions and improve sustainability and biodiversity. Acknowledging that ‘business as usual’ is not an option in the face of the climate emergency.
6. Notes the “20 Actions Town and Parish Councils can take on Climate Change” recommended by Friends of the Earth¹, will explore putting those actions into practice, and where suggested actions on Climate change fall outside the remit and responsibilities of Malton Town Council, the Council will always support and work with all other relevant agencies in the drive, locally, regionally, nationally and internationally, towards a zero carbon economy.
7. Upholding Fairtrade principles by using Fairtrade marked produce and products. Malton is a Fairtrade Town.

Immediate actions Malton Town Council can take.

Malton Town Council acknowledges the urgent need for global society to reduce carbon emissions. We recognise the part we must play and commit to taking an active role in achieving this by:

1. Include sustainability, carbon reduction and ethical sourcing within all Town Council decisions, including awarding of contracts, grants and determining funding allocation in future.
2. Supporting and promoting the ‘Take the Jump’ campaign.
3. Include consideration of carbon emissions (both positive and negative) and mitigation strategies, sustainability of development and design and green infrastructure needs in all the Council’s recommendations to planning authority consultations.
4. Demand that maximum building energy performance standards possible in all new development proposals.
5. Recommend that zero carbon standards are adopted in future development via the next review of the Malton & Norton Neighbourhood Development Plan.

¹ [20 actions parish and town councils can take on the climate and nature emergency | Policy and insight \(friendsoftheearth.uk\)](https://www.friendsoftheearth.org.uk/20-actions-parish-and-town-councils-can-take-on-the-climate-and-nature-emergency/)

6. Ensure the maintenance of public areas balance the needs of biodiversity management. Investigate the possibility of a Pollinator Park initiative and installation of swift boxes in suitable locations.
7. Facilitate Climate café events at the Milton Rooms starting in 2022.
8. Promote tool sharing with other community initiatives, recycling/upcycling and the provision of drinking water fountains in the town, exploring external funding streams. Work with local cafes to promote free water bottle fill ups to reduce plastic bottle use
9. Staff and members encouraged to walk, use bicycles, lift share or use public transfer whenever possible when conducting Council business.
10. Care for wildlife, soil and water. Support and lobby for sustainable agriculture and land management.
11. Use vehicles and equipment less and when at the end of their life, choose smaller more efficient replacements.
12. Reduce, reuse and recycle any materials or purchases. Greening administration.
13. Publicise the Town Council Climate & Biodiversity Policy as it is agreed and evolves, including the ambition for community engagement.
14. Purchase local goods/services and avoid air-freighted goods. Implement the use of greener products.
15. Look to introduce a 'Green Burial' area of New Malton and Old Malton Cemetery
16. In the future include a clause to any tender documents to ensure the Council engages with climate friendly contractors. As contractors to supply a copy of their company environmental policy.
17. Transfer to a green tariff energy supplier at the end of the contract term.
18. Creation of a new Climate and Diversity page on the Council's website.
19. Allow large areas of New Malton and Old Malton Cemeteries grass to have meadow cuts twice a year to encourage wildlife and increased biodiversity.
20. Plant more trees in and around Town Council assets and encourage residents and businesses to plant more trees.

Longer Terms actions for the Town Council to consider.

1. Look to replace the Council utility vehicle with a more efficient second hand electric vehicle within the next 3 years.
2. Transfer the Town Council energy supply to a green tariff exclusive company.

How you might make change to reduce your carbon footprint

- Try to buy local seasonal produce as much as possible, starting with at least two meals a week
- Research the science and impacts of climate change and sign up to the “Take the Jump” campaign at www.takethejump.org
- Make personal pledges to walk, cycle, or use public transport to work or regular journey when possible and practical and encourage your friends and family to do the same.
- Work out your own carbon footprint using one of the many easy to use carbon calculators e.g., <https://footprint.wwf.org.uk>
- Do a ‘home energy check’ to find out how you can save energy in my home. <https://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk>. Energy Saving Trust 0800 512012.
- Turn your thermostat down or use a thermometer to reach the lowest possible comfortable temperature, typically between 18-21°C& think about putting on a jumper instead. Wash clothes at a lower temperature.
- Think about reducing your holiday air miles
- Research driving in a greener way through the internet or a lesson on eco-drive ideas.
- Green shop where possible by avoid plastic packaging, buying loose fruit and vegetables. Review purchasing habits regularly. Use local services and contractors where possible.
- Buy products that do not contain palm oil or only where it is ethically sourced. Palm oil production is considered to be a major driver of deforestation of the world’s most bio-diverse forests.

