



CONSERVATIVE COUNTY COUNCIL CANDIDATES' RESPONSE

TO BISHOP'S STORTFORD CLIMATE GROUP QUESTIONS

- 1) The FoE analysis of progress on addressing climate change in different local authority areas across England and Wales (Dec2020) says that EHDC has made average progress on addressing climate change. Researchers at the Tyndall Centre say that East Herts should reduce its carbon emissions by at least 13% per year. What would be your priorities in reaching the HCC target of zero emissions by 2030?**

The priority for Conservative-run HCC in meeting its ambition to reduce carbon emissions is to tackle the emissions from the existing HCC estate. The Conservative-run county council has secured £23.5m funding from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund. The Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme enables public sector organisations to tackle climate change by delivering capital energy efficiency schemes and heating decarbonisation projects. This funding means the county council can now deliver several sustainability led projects at a number of its sites including its school estate, fire stations, libraries and main office buildings. Some of the many projects include the installation of Solar Panels across 128 Council owned buildings, the installation of an Air Source Heat Pump across our Mundell's estate and the delivery of improved cavity wall insulation across a further 15 school sites. In addition, there will be the installation of modern, energy efficient boiler systems at various schools across the county – locations to be confirmed. The funding will also allow for improved building insulation and other building improvement schemes. This is the first of many projects a Conservative administration at County Hall will deliver over the next year to meet its ambitious goals outlined in its Sustainable Hertfordshire Strategy.

Conservative-run East Herts Council has reduced its own carbon emissions by 25% since 2009, and has set itself the target of being carbon neutral by 2030. East Herts continues to work to reduce its carbon emissions further, including by investing in sustainability measures across its estate (e.g. implementing LED lighting, staff use of e-car club). The redevelopment of our local leisure facilities will also reduce carbon emissions by 49 tonnes of CO₂ a year moving forward. East Herts Council is also supportive innovative green energy schemes such as the Hertford Hydro project.

- 2) Transport is the biggest source of greenhouse gas emissions in the UK. In E Herts 43% of emissions come from transport. Here in Bishops Stortford and Sawbridgeworth congested roads and poor air quality (in particular at Hockerill and in Sawbridgeworth) have become the norm. What would you do to address this issue which is so harmful to the health and well being of the population here as well as to that of the planet?**

Air quality has improved over the past ten years but pollution still exceeds legal limits, particularly near busy roads. Our ambition is to deliver clean air for all by 2030. This local ambition supports the Government's commitment to achieving tough new goals and improvements in local air quality through the Clean Air Strategy and the 25 Year Environment Plan by 2030.

The Conservative government has set a target to end the sale of new petrol and diesel cars by 2035, and the rise of electric vehicles across the county will bring significant improvements in air quality. Your local

Conservative District Council is also installing 54 new electric vehicle charging points in the new car park in Bishop's Stortford, with more to come in the future to improve our local electric vehicle infrastructure.

Your Conservative councillors will:

- Work with district and borough councils, as well as other partners (such as the NHS, parish and town councils) to reduce pollution hotspots and exposure.
- Develop a countywide air quality strategy.
- Develop a spatial planning Informative Note for new developments to deliver air quality improvements.
- Promote walking and cycling over car travel with our highways teams.
- Promoting the uptake of low emission vehicles and charging infrastructure.
- Deliver net zero carbon emissions for local authority transport operations by 2030.
- Work towards zero carbon emissions for Hertfordshire's transport network by 2050.
- Embed sustainable transport policies in Local Plans and prioritise the needs of sustainable travel within every planning decision.
- Facilitate an appropriate EV charging network across Hertfordshire (54 new electric charging points are being installed in the new car park in Bishop's Stortford).
- Cycle way from Stansted – Harlow – Roydon – Lea Valley (SHLV) area.
- Joined up cycleway Flich Way – Bishop's Stortford.

3) Home heating: In East Herts 33% of emissions come from housing, only 44% of homes are well insulated, individual gas boilers continue to be installed in the new developments in Bishops Stortford and Sawbridgeworth. A detailed Heat Decarbonisation strategy is essential. What would be your priorities here?

Your local Conservative Councils will:

- Develop and deliver programme of training on carbon neutrality / sustainability.
- Train existing and new heating engineers in heat pumps, hydrogen boilers, smart system controls, digital platforms, building integration, energy efficiency, retrofit coordination and surveying, building performance assessment and monitoring.
- Encourage Passive House or Zero net Energy Homes.
- Encourage developers to use Air Source Heat Pumps.
- Engage with main contractors to understand their current commitments towards carbon reduction.
- Provide and promote energy efficiency grants/support.
- Work with local MPs to promote the case for investment in sustainability interventions in East Herts.
- Ask our energy companies to develop a regional net zero energy strategy – especially covering the delivery of zero carbon heat and resilient networks.

4) Biodiversity: The recent report by the Herts and Middx Wildlife Trust (Hertfordshire's State of Nature) calls for 30% of land in Hertfordshire to be restored for nature by 2030. How would you address this ?

The Sustainable Hertfordshire Strategy includes ambitious targets to improve biodiversity on the Council's land by 20% by 2030 and improve wildlife on land and water across the county by 20% by 2050. These

ambitions are to be delivered via specific actions detailed within the action plan. Work has already begun on scoping out the need for a countywide biodiversity baseline. This work will help us to establish the situation and identify opportunities for improvement.

Hertfordshire County Council incorporates this aim to improve biodiversity into its major projects. When HCC built its new 'super site' recycling centre near Ware, more than 1,500 trees were planted at a nearby site and a new wildflower meadow created to offset the environmental impact of the construction work.

YOUR LOCAL BISHOP'S STORTFORD CONSERVATIVE CANDIDATES

FOR HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

6 MAY 2021



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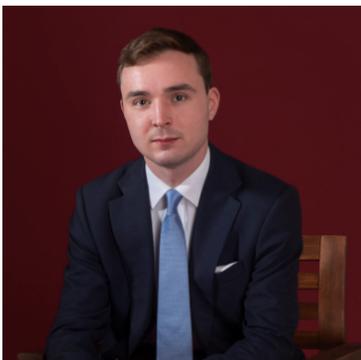
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