

Bishop's Stortford Climate Group – Local Elections 2023

Liberal Democrats, Calvin Horner

Please find below my responses to the questions being asked by the Climate Group of all candidates.

- *If elected, will you call for EHDC to reaffirm its commitment to its Climate Change Motion, review progress towards its target and strengthen its policies?*

I was pleased that East Herts passed a motion on Climate Change, but disappointed that this was watered down from the Liberal Democrat proposal. However, following the election will be the right time for the Council to review the progress made and to take appropriate action to bring it back into line with the targets set. My experience as a County Councillor has shown that constant pressure is required in order to make progress towards net zero, and that this will require more stringent policies to meet the Council's objective to become carbon neutral or better by 2030.

- *If elected, will you push for EHDC to undertake and complete, within one year of the election, a partial update of the Local Plan (LPPU) to require all new developments to be net zero? And to require net zero for domestic extensions when homes are modified?*

The lack of any requirement for new developments to be net zero is reprehensible. If elected I will press for the prompt review of the Local Plan (LPPU) and the inclusion of provisions to ensure this is the case for new developments and the modification of existing properties.

- *If elected, will you push for a full review of the project to regenerate the Old River Lane site, to engage the community and deliver new and exemplary proposals fully in line with the Council's commitment to work towards carbon neutrality by 2030?*

The current proposals for the Old River Lane site need to be withdrawn for a whole host of reasons, but certainly not least on environmental grounds, as it contradicts the Council's own policies. I fully support the Liberal Democrat policy of pausing any development on the site for public engagement and the development of new proposals. If elected I will press for these to be consistent with the Council's commitments on reaching carbon neutrality, which should favour the retention of existing buildings.

- *If elected, will you commit to enhance the management of parks and green space for wildlife, to continue 'No Mow May', and to develop green corridors throughout East Herts?*

The biodiversity crisis is extremely serious, and I support taking measures to tackle the current declines. Insect decline is of particular concern. I would certainly work to improve the management of open spaces to stem and then reverse the reductions in insect numbers, including initiatives like 'No Mow May', wherever appropriate. The opening of green corridors to protect and enhance biodiversity is vital and as an East Herts councillor I would work for these to be developed and enhanced across the district.

- *If elected, will you follow the Pesticide Action Network UK three-year phase-out plan for pesticides?*

As part of reducing the threats to biodiversity in our managed open spaces I would push for the phasing out of the use of pesticides and other chemicals harmful to both insect species and humans and the adoption of non-harmful alternatives. The Pesticide Action Network plan provides a framework for this to be achieved in a sustainable way and if elected I would press for it to be adopted by East Herts District Council. By ending the use of pesticides the District Council would also be an exemplar for other organisations and the public to similarly phase out their use.

