

Bishop's Stortford Climate Group – Local Elections 2023

Liberal Democrats, Miriam Swainston

If I am elected I will be pleased to call for EHDC to reaffirm its commitment to its Climate Change Motion, review progress and strengthen its policies. I have been a firm believer in the risks of climate change since I was studying A level sciences in the late 1970s and have been very frustrated by how long it has taken for more people to take this seriously.

As a Science teacher I sought to help my students understand the evidence available and to be able to make proper assessments of whether data was properly interpreted.

I personally am lucky enough to be able to afford an EV but still only use it when necessary; walking or taking the train when I can.

I agree that EHDC should make necessary updates to the local plan, requiring new developments and home extensions to be net zero, and will push for that to happen if I am elected.

Personally I consider the current proposals for the redevelopment of the Old River Lane site to be preposterous and absolutely support calls to reevaluate this. The council should certainly consult local residents more and ensure that the development has the lowest possible impact on the environment both in terms of its carbon footprint and the waste and pollution created.

Regarding management of parks and green spaces, I consider 'No mow May' to be excellent idea as are green corridors and I would be pleased to support their implementation throughout the district.

I am a member of The Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust and also regularly contribute to Greenpeace.

As a teenager I was strongly influenced by Rachel Carson's seminal work 'Silent Spring'. Since then I have been committed to reducing, and where possible phasing out, pesticide use. I have had a garden for 38 years and everything has been grown without the use of pesticides. It is certainly far safer for both humans and wildlife if weeds are controlled without recourse to herbicides. Therefore I would be keen for EHDC to follow the Pesticide Action Network UK plan to phase out pesticides within three years.

I hope this makes it clear that I have a strong personal commitment to caring for the environment and that I'm not just paying lip service to your questions.