

Walton Parish Council

Climate and Ecology Action Plan 2022

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Setting the Scene

Walton Parish is situated to the southwest of Warrington, adjacent to Stockton Heath. Walton consists of two areas: known as Lower Walton and Higher Walton. Each of these areas has a distinct history that dates back to medieval times. Those who routinely drive through our Parish along the busy A56 may not be aware of the attractive qualities of Walton as not much of it can be seen from the main road. Of all the Parishes in Warrington, Walton is one of the smallest in terms of resident population and one with the largest area of green spaces – including Walton Hall & Gardens - of which we are very proud. Any resident in Walton is only a short walk from open countryside, canal tow paths and some of the most attractive park land in the region.

We are bounded by the Manchester Ship Canal to the North, and the Bridgewater Canal passes through our parish in the south. Additional water courses mean we are already affected by occasional local flooding.

As a Parish Council we pride ourselves in protecting and nurturing our environment for both current residents and future generations. In recent years we have been proactive in planting trees in all areas of our community and maintaining the visual appearance with regular 'litter picks' through our Litter Network and installing and maintaining flower planters at key road junctions around the Parish.

In terms of demographics. A good proportion of our housing is family homes, many with gardens.

The council are responsible for the QE Playground field, and additional triangles planted with trees.



About this plan and our approach

The plan has been developed by the Climate and Ecology advisory group and will be managed by this group, with recommendations made to Parish Council.

We recognise that climate change is a global issue, but we will be focussing on local actions for our community and our residents.

We will ensure that our actions are specific and have impact.

We will carry out a full review of the action plan annually and will aim to meet monthly to review progress, address any issues, and adjust the action plan as required.

We see this plan as a living document. Our approach to tackling climate change and ecological degradation will evolve over time, taking into account national and international change, and adapting to the actions taken by other organisations.

We will review evidence of benefit from our own actions and adjust our ongoing action plan as appropriate.

Stakeholders

A stakeholder is a person, or group, or organisation, who may have an interest in our Action Plan. We will consider, in more detail, how to engage with these stakeholder groups to progress our plan.

The list includes, but is not limited to:

- Parish Councillors
- Borough Councillors
- Warrington Borough Council
- Residents of Walton and neighbouring areas
- Community Groups in Walton (including youth groups)
- People visiting the parish
- People passing through the parish
- Landowners and tenants

Our priorities

1. Helping the CO2 balance
 - For example actions to reducing CO2 production locally reducing energy consumption, and sequestering carbon by planting
2. Taking local action to mitigate the impact of climate change
 - for example to support ecological biodiversity
3. Carrying out our role as a Council with a climate and ecology focus and act as a good role model

Take actions locally to help address the CO2 balance

The parish council do not own any buildings or vehicles. We will focus our efforts on this priority on sequestering carbon and encouraging energy saving, helping our residents to reduce energy consumption where we can.

Mitigate the impact of climate change

We recognise that as a small Parish Council our reach in terms of preventing global climate change is limited. However, we feel there is a lot we can do to mitigate the impact of climate change locally.

Carrying out our role as a Council with a climate and ecology focus

We already take into account environmental concerns in our business. As part of this action plan we will formalise this approach to ensure that all our decisions and actions will be viewed through an environmental lens and the sustainable action is prioritised wherever possible.

We will consult local residents on key environmental issues, supported by our regular newsletter, new website, and our social media presence.

We are a semi-rural parish with a lot of surrounding countryside. As such we do have a good amount of wildlife considering we are so close to a major town. A healthy environment both needs, and supports, biodiversity and we will take action where we can to encourage and protect wildlife in our parish.

Initial Action Plan – local, focused and measurable

These are initial actions to give our plan some scope. We will develop a detailed living action plan, and this will be managed by the group. Actions will start as 'IDEAS' and the status will change as the action progresses.

Action	Action Priority – When?	Target	Measuring Success	Lead (EXAMPLE)	Status
Trees for Walton – a sustainable programme of tree planting to soak up carbon. We will seek to support residents and local groups to plant trees and hedgerows. Initially the focus will be on finding locations for planting.		100 trees as an initial target – and a hedgerow - to sequester an estimated 1000 tonnes of carbon	Number of trees planted Estimated carbon soaked	David Yousuf Amanda	INVESTIGATION
Create a plan to engage with stakeholders – keeping the right people informed and involved in the right way.				Amanda	IDEA
Create a simple framework to guide the Council and other working groups in their actions and decisions		All council business to go through the 'eco lens'	Annual consideration of the overall environmental impact of council business	Steph	IDEA
Create an environmental section for residents on our new website with information to share out on social media		At least one post per month	Growth in resident engagement	David	IDEA

Plant Wildflowers, including in our static planters. Particularly for pollinators		xxxxsqm of wildflowers planted	Sqm of wildflower planting	Sharon	IDEA
Help the local hedgehog population		Increase hedgehog reports on the map from x to y	Number of hedgehogs reported	Amanda	IDEA
Support residents to reduce their energy consumption		At least one energy blog per quarter	Resident feedback	Steph	IDEA
Investigate provision of electric charging points in the parish		Investigate this. 1 charging point in Walton	Estimated carbon saved	David	IDEA
Consider the impact of lighting on energy use and wildlife		Investigate and research the impact and options	TBC		IDEA
Reduce air pollution for residents near the Chester Road swing bridge		Promote no idling in the queue	Estimated carbon saved	Amanda	IDEA
Expand and enhance the existing Walton litter network (this is a Business as Usual activity)		Increase involvement to 100 residents Quarterly litter picks	Bags of litter collected Subjective assessment of improvement	Amanda Sharon Steph	IDEA
Support residents to reduce traffic speed		Speed measures in place on 1 road in the parish	Estimated carbon saved from speed reduction	Sharon	IDEA
Take action to reduce the invasive impact of Himalayan Balsam					
Support local environmental activities such as Earth Day in Stockton Heath.					