

**Harborough District Council**  
**Climate Local Action Plan**



March 2015

## Harborough District Council's Commitments to Action as a Climate Local Authority

Harborough District Council recognises the risks associated with climate change and has committed to action through Climate Local. Climate change is a cross cutting issue, with implications across the council's priorities. The Corporate Delivery Plan identifies the vision and priorities for council action across the district:

### Our Vision

Working with communities in a vibrant, safe and prosperous district and bringing the best opportunities to all.

### Our Priorities

<b>PRIORITY: Working with communities to develop places in which to live and be happy.</b>	
CO 1	People live in a sustainable environment.
CO 2	The district offers a clean, green and safe environment in which to live, work and play.
CO 3	People have opportunities to access a range of leisure, sport and physical activities.
CO 4	Residents and businesses are informed, included and listened to.
<b>PRIORITY : Provide public services which are effective and deliver value for money.</b>	
CO 5	The Council is efficient and resilient in its service delivery.
CO 6	The Council makes the best use of its assets and resources.
CO 7	Council services are compliant with legal and audit requirements.

**PRIORITY : Encourage a vibrant and sustainable business community intent on prosperity, employment and learning opportunities.**

CO 8	Businesses are able to access Council services easily.
CO 9	Entrepreneurs and businesses are able to access support and advice.
CO 10	Communities have access to better broadband.
CO 11	People have opportunities to access culture and tourism.

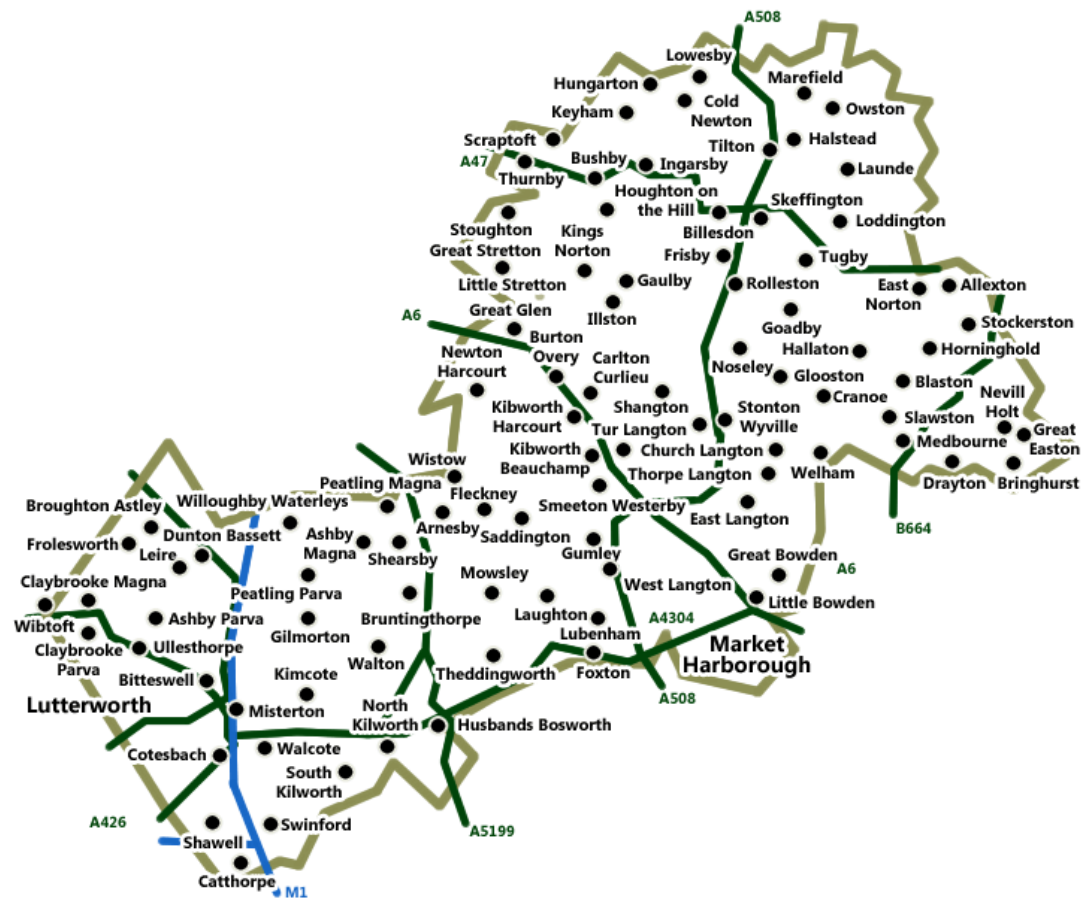
**PRIORITY : Support the vulnerable in the communities where they live.**

CO 12	People live in safe and appropriate housing.
CO 13	People who are most in need are supported.

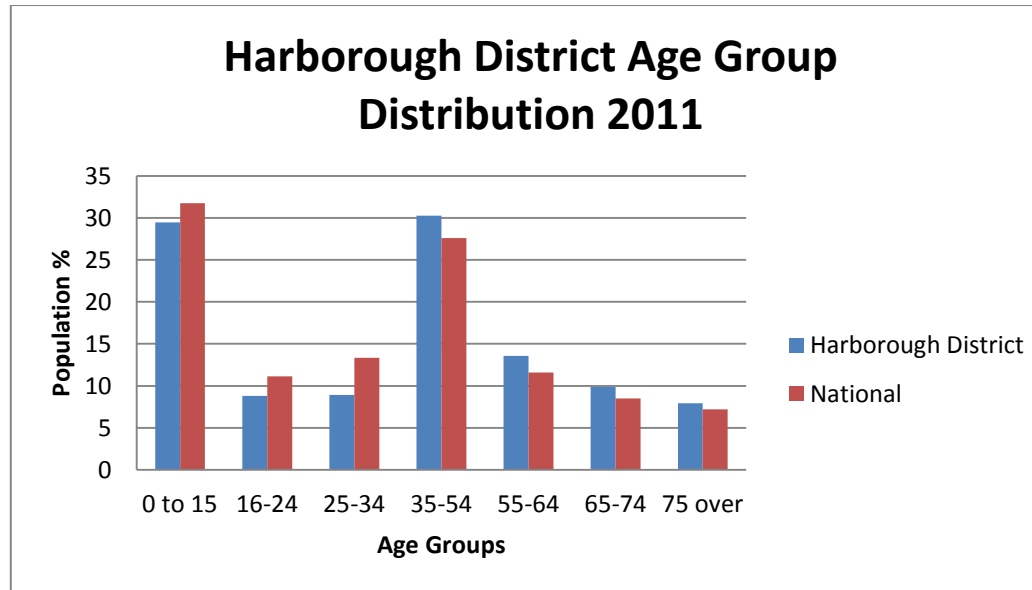
Climate Change is particularly relevant for delivery of CO1, CO2, CO4, CO5, CO6, CO9, CO12 and CO13. This document highlights the actions on climate change that the Council, through its own operations and in its working with partners can deliver to meet the priorities.

### **Harborough District**

Harborough District covers an area of 238 square miles of rural south and east Leicestershire. It lies within the East Midlands Region, bordering Warwickshire to the west, Northamptonshire to the south and Rutland to the east. The District's population of 85,282 (Census 2011) is split between the two market towns of Market Harborough and Lutterworth (37%), large villages of Broughton Astley, Great Glen, Kibworth and Fleckney (27%) and Bushby, Thurnby and Scraftoft part of Leicester's Principal Urban Area (6%). The remaining 30% of the District's population live in the smaller rural settlements, 71 of which have a population of less than 500.



In terms of the age structure of the population, Harborough varies from national population trends in a number of ways. Most noticeable is the relatively lower proportion of young people when compared to the national average. This trend is particularly pronounced in rural villages as a large proportion of young people are concentrated in the two market towns. In contrast there is a higher proportion of people aged over 35 living in the District than nationally. In total the Harborough population comprises 59.7% of working age, 19.6% under 16 and 20.7% of pensionable age (male over 65 and female over 60). Only 2% of the District's population is non-white.

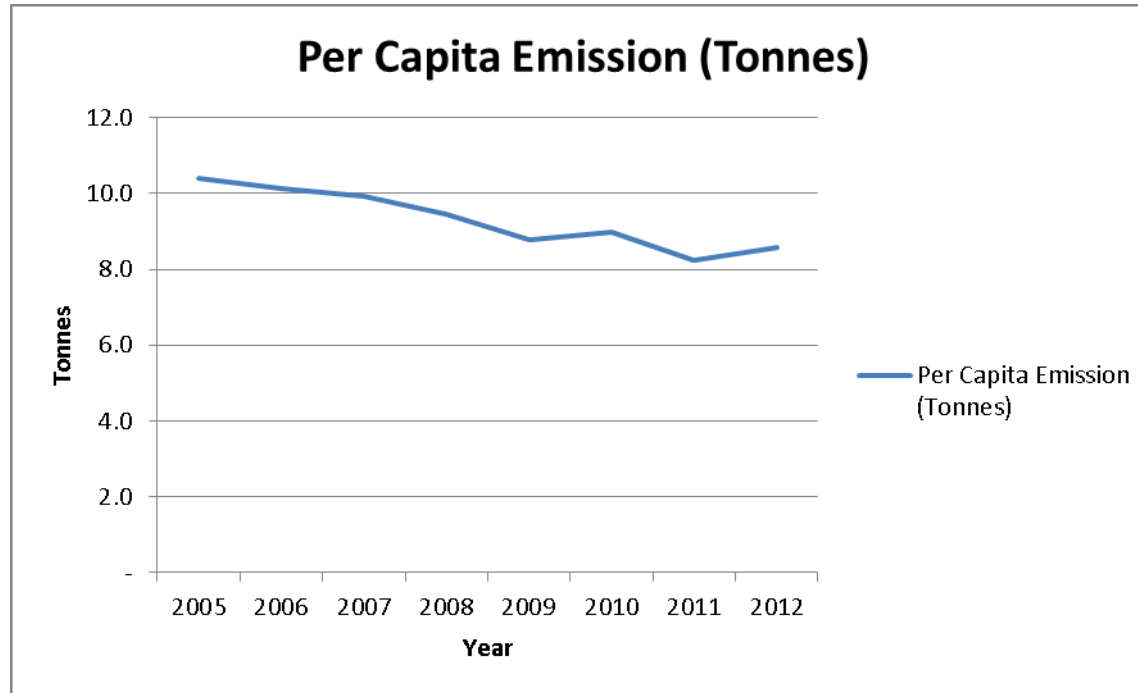


The District is seen as an attractive place to live. The recent Index of Resilience (Experian survey carried out for BBC, 2010) placed Harborough 7th out of 324 districts (1 being most resilient) in terms of its “place resilience” taking into account house prices, crime and greenspace measures. Over 90% of respondents in the 2008 Place Survey were either very or fairly satisfied with Harborough as a place to live, an increase on the 2006 figure and higher than the County average. The attractiveness of the area, together with the close links to major growth areas, mean that Harborough has seen high levels of growth in the past and is likely to see high growth in the future, whilst remaining a mainly rural district.

## Carbon Emissions

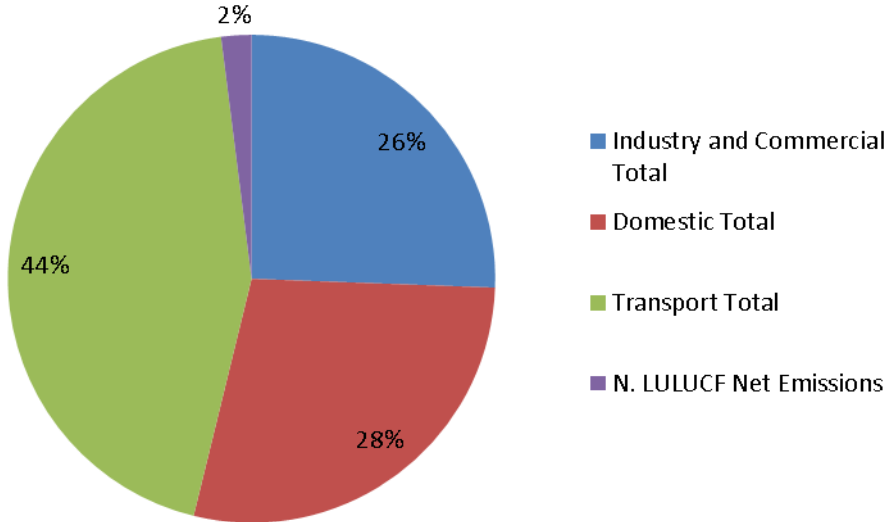
The district is amongst the least deprived, although there are pockets where higher levels of deprivation occur, and in the very rural areas deprivation can be well hidden and difficult to address. Lack of access to the gas network can lead to very high prices for heating fuel or electrical heating systems. Fuel Poverty has varied over the years, but latest figures place it above 14%, the highest category in the recent Government report ([https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/226985/fuel\\_poverty\\_report\\_2013.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/226985/fuel_poverty_report_2013.pdf)).

The carbon emissions in the district are high at 8.6 tonnes per capita, compared to 7.7 tonnes per capita for Leicestershire and 7.1 tonnes per capita for the UK. Harborough has the second highest per capita emissions in Leicestershire. Only North West Leicestershire has higher emission, mainly due to high levels of solid fuel use and large transport contributions. The level of emissions has risen from 2011 levels, when per capita emissions were at 8.2 tonnes



The contribution of emissions from different sectors is dominated by transport emissions at 44% of the whole. In all 189.3 tonnes are from industry; 209.1 tonnes from domestic emissions and 327 tonnes from transport. There is also a small contribution from agricultural land use.

# 2012 Emissions Data by Sector



## **Contribution from Renewable Energy**

Harborough District has a number of renewable energy installations, which contribute to a reduction in carbon emissions. The largest of these are Swinford, with a capacity of 22MW, and Low Spinney, with a capacity of 8MW. There are also a number of smaller farm based turbines. Information from national databases suggests that Harborough has almost 39MW of installed renewable capacity, mainly from wind, but with solar photovoltaics and landfill gas making a significant contribution (October 2014). Solar farms are becoming more popular, with two schemes in planning as of October 2014.

## **Impacts of Climate Change**

The River Welland is the main river within the district and is vulnerable to flooding. The River Soar and the River Swift run through the South West quarter of the district and are smaller at this point in their course. Less than 10% of land in the district is Flood Risk 3, so the risk to river flooding is comparatively low. However there are some villages where there is a risk from local watercourses.

The risks from pluvial flooding, due to high levels of surface run-off, are much more significant than river flooding. Market Harborough town centre has suffered flooding due to high levels of rainfall and some of the villages are also susceptible to flooding in rainstorms. The potential for these risks to increase with future climate change is recognised.

Much of Harborough District is built on clay. The issues of subsidence due to drying of clay are acknowledged as a possible issue for the future, if climate change leads to warmer drier summers, as predicted.

As a mainly rural district, agriculture is an important contributor to the economy. Changes in weather patterns and extreme events lead to a high risk for agricultural businesses. There may also be some opportunities for a diversification of crops, as weather conditions change.



## **Climate Local - Harborough District Council**

### **Our commitment to taking action in a changing climate**

We recognise that our council has an important role to help our residents and businesses to capture the opportunities and benefits of action on climate change. These include saving money on energy bills, generating income from renewable energy, attracting new jobs and investment in 'green' industries, supporting new sources of energy, managing local flood-risk and water scarcity and protecting our natural environment.

We will progressively address the risks and pursue the opportunities presented by a changing climate, in line with local priorities, through our role as:

- Community leader – helping local people and businesses to be smarter about their energy use and to prepare for climate impacts
- Service provider – delivering services that are resource efficient, less carbon intensive, resilient and that protect those who are most vulnerable to climate impacts
- Estate manager – ensuring that our own buildings and operations are resource efficient use clean energy, and are well prepared for the impacts of a changing climate.

In signing this commitment, we will:

- Set locally-owned and determined commitments and actions to reduce carbon emissions and to manage climate impacts. These will be specific, measurable and challenging
- Publish our commitments, actions and progress, enabling local communities to hold us to account
- Share the learning from our experiences and achievements with other councils
- Regularly refresh our commitments and actions to ensure they are current and continue to reflect local priorities.

## Climate Local Commitment

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### Climate Local Harborough District Council: Our commitments and actions

Harborough District Council signed the Climate Local Commitment on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2013 in recognition of the important role that local authorities have in tackling climate change.

In signing the Commitment we pledged to set locally-owned and determined targets and actions on both mitigation and adaptation and publish these within six months.

The table below sets out our priorities commitments the actions will undertake to deliver them. We will monitor our performance against these actions and report regularly on our progress. We will also regularly refresh this list of actions to ensure they are up-to-date and reflect local priorities.

## Climate Local Commitments - Low carbon pathways

In order to create an 'energy smart' low carbon future we make the following commitment(s):

<b>Commitment:</b> Demonstrate political and corporate commitment to acting on climate change.		
<b>Justification:</b> Action on climate change helps the council deliver its corporate goals and Harborough DC wishes to show leadership to residents and businesses within the District (Corporate Priority CO1).		
<b>Specific action(s)</b>	<b>Measure</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
Lead Member to be appointed	Lead Member is responsible for Climate Local Issues. Climate Local falls under the remit of the portfolio holder for Environment and Waste.	Already Completed
Specific information on website	Ongoing – incorporated in new website	February 2015
Regular information on website including information on carbon emissions in the District.	DECC carbon data and other information reported locally	annually

**Commitment:** Manage our assets in a resource efficient manner.

**Justification:** The council is committed to providing the public services that are value for money. Reducing waste and using energy efficiently are crucial to delivering on this priority (Corporate Priority CO5 and CO6)

<b>Specific action(s)</b>	<b>Measure</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
Continue to upgrade council owned buildings to reduce energy use, water use and waste created.	Monitor energy usage and water and waste data where available	Annually
Encourage staff and other users of the Symington building to use resources efficiently through targeted campaigns, based on monitored data	Specific events and programmes	As required
Promote sustainable transport for Symington building through the green travel plan	Monitor effectiveness of green travel plan and review if necessary	Annually

**Commitment:** Work with households to promote the uptake of energy efficiency measures to reduce household carbon footprints and alleviate fuel poverty

**Justification:** Harborough DC is committed to working with communities to develop places where people wish to live and to support the vulnerable within those communities. Reducing fuel bills and helping communities be more environmentally conscious is vital to delivering our priorities (Corporate Priorities CO1, CO4, CO12 and CO13 also actions identified in HECA report and Leicestershire Carbon Reduction Strategy).

Specific action(s)	Measure	Timescale
Work with partners to encourage the uptake of all schemes for improving energy efficiency in homes of all tenancies	Contribute to the Leicestershire carbon reduction target for housing stock (Proportion of 75K tonnes).  Record Number of Measures installed	Ongoing
Work with partners to access health funding to support vulnerable people in fuel poverty	Access funding maintain and develop programmes	Ongoing
Develop programmes with partners for rural areas, especially off gas.	Develop projects with funding via the Local Enterprise Partnership	During 2015
Work with partners to encourage residents across the District to reduce their own carbon footprint.	The Market Harborough “Sustainable Harborough” Project will promote and engage residents in and around Market Harborough including through ECO house refit project. This will include advice and signposting.	Ongoing

**Commitment:** Support local businesses to become more resource efficient and encourage businesses in the low carbon/ green technology sector

**Justification:** Harborough District Council is committed to supporting business in the district. Reducing costs is vital for all business. The green technology sector is growing rapidly and could be an important growth area in the district (corporate Priorities CO1, CO4 and CO9). The Leicestershire Carbon Reduction Strategy aims to reduce carbon emissions from business by 90k tonnes across the county.

<b>Specific action(s)</b>	<b>Measure</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
Support development of an Business Resource Club in Market Harborough	Waste and energy advice offered, including renewable energy, to smaller businesses.	Club set up by Sustainable Harborough Autumn 2014
Promote green travel plans via planning	Green Travel Plans required for all business development.	Ongoing
Promote local food economy with partners	Food forum established, further promotion going forward Food Hub established for Market Harborough as part of Sustainable Harborough	Ongoing

**Commitment:** Support communities to take advantage of the financial opportunities offered by community energy projects.

**Justification:** Harborough DC is committed to working with communities to develop places where people wish to live. Supporting communities to be more resilient to economic change is an important part of this, particularly encouraging an entrepreneurial approach to energy. (Corporate Priorities CO1, CO4, CO12 and CO13 also actions identified in HECA report and Leicestershire Carbon Reduction Strategy).

<b>Specific action(s)</b>	<b>Measure</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
Develop renewable energy project in the District	Potential installation of PV Panels on the Market Hall in Market Harborough	Ongoing
Promote community owned renewable energy through neighbourhood plans	Renewable energy included in emerging neighbourhood plans and supported in emerging Local Plan	ongoing
Promote awareness of Renewable Heat Initiative opportunities in off-gas areas	Information at Parish Engagement Event	During 2015

## Climate Local Commitments - Ensuring our Communities and Places are Resilient to the Possible Impacts of Climate Change

<b>Commitment:</b> Encourage communities to build their resilience to climate change		
<b>Justification:</b> Harborough District Council recognises that it cannot avoid the impacts of climate change, so it must build resilience. Harborough District Council recognise the distress caused by weather related risks and also the costs to homes and businesses incurred. Building resilience will support better places. (Corporate Priority CO4 and CO5)		
<b>Specific action(s)</b>	<b>Measure</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
Include climate adaptation in neighbourhood plans, especially flood resilience, policies for well designed adaptive buildings and multifunctional green space.	Information and guidance available throughout neighbourhood planning process	As required
Incorporate specific risks within parish emergency plans	Information for parishes at parish engagement event Parishes engaged with directly	Ongoing
Encourage Community management of green space to maintain multifunctional value for leisure, water management, possible food and wood supplies	Parishes supported to take over green space Green space plan for major developments	Ongoing
Promote flood protection for at risk business and homes.	Reduced risk of financial loss	Spring 2015



**Commitment:** Promote good water management across the district

**Justification:** Rivers are an important aspect of a place and can contribute to the attractiveness and biodiversity of a place. Harborough District Council recognises the importance of working with partners to maintain rivers and waterways and promote sustainable drainage. (Corporate Priorities CO1, CO2, CO3 and CO5)

<b>Specific action(s)</b>	<b>Measure</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
Support Welland River Restoration project	Improved river attractiveness, enhancing the town. Improved biodiversity, with no additional flood risk.	ongoing
Promote sustainable drainage systems within local plan and neighbourhood plans for new developments	No increase in flood risk from new development Enhanced green infrastructure	ongoing
Support partners working with landowners to improve water quality of rivers	Improved biodiversity	Ongoing

<b>Commitment:</b> Encourage climate resilient design		
<b>Justification:</b> Harborough District Council recognises that good quality buildings are essential for the wellbeing of residents. Climate change may mean that some buildings are not fit for purpose. As the local planning authority Harborough District Council recognises it has an important role in future-proofing development (Corporate Priorities CO1 and C12).		
<b>Specific action(s)</b>	<b>Measure</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
Promotion of climate resilient buildings through the revised Local Plan policy	Robust policy in Local Plan, supporting low carbon and adaptive development.	Ongoing
Working with partners to bring forward local exemplars, including ECO House with Seven Locks Housing Association.	Families engaged in adapting to climate change in house and garden, including for retro-fit	Ongoing
Investigating the development of low carbon and resilient community buildings with partners	New exemplar buildings developed including retrofit  Local business engaged	Autumn 2015