



Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership

Strategic Action Plan for Adaptation

May 2024

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) defines adaptation as “adjustments in ecological, social or economic systems” in response to actual and expected climate change.
- 1.2 The Strategic Action Plan for Adaptation outlines the Hertfordshire Climate Change & Sustainability Partnership’s (HCCSP) vision to facilitate a Hertfordshire that is adequately prepared for, and resilient to future and present climate-related risks.
- 1.3 HCCSP works to collaboratively align the goals and targets of key stakeholders across the county and region to ensure that climate and environmental actions are achieved, using direct and indirect policy, legislation, influence and encouragement to ensure the progress and achievement of a sustainable environment for current and future communities.
- 1.4 There is a statutory obligation (Climate Change Act 2008) on councils to prepare for and minimise the longer-term impacts of climate change. This is reinforced by expectations for community resilience and business continuity by residents and businesses.
- 1.5 The Adaptation subgroup has coordinated and facilitated work that has allowed for individual districts and boroughs to conduct climate change risk assessments within their own organisations and identify cross organisational issues and risks that affect the collective Partnership.
- 1.6 The strategic action plan aims to collate and streamline actions across the County that will build short term preparedness and medium and long term resilience to the impacts of climate change, to enable residents and businesses to survive and thrive in the changing climate.
- 1.7 It aims to embed this awareness (where appropriate) into ‘business as usual’ emergency planning workstreams. It has been noted that a number of risks are outside the Partnership’s direct control, and therefore developing and enhancing partnerships with external stakeholders will be a crucial element in developing and delivering a high level county-wide action plan.
- 1.8 This plan will also seek to identify and address medium and longer term infrastructure and operational mitigation interventions that could be needed to reduce the impact of future climate variables.
- 1.9 To date, key partners involved in the Plan’s development include sustainability/climate change officers and risk leads in all 10 districts/boroughs. An external consultant (WSP) provided bespoke adaptation training sessions for relevant officers in all districts/boroughs.

2. Vision for the Future

- 2.1 Hertfordshire will be cognisant and prepared for changes to weather and climate in the short and medium future, and the impact these changes will have on the severity and frequency of major incidents. Hertfordshire will explore, identify and deliver interventions (operational and structural) to reduce the severity and likelihood of these impacts.
- 2.2 By building resilience proactively to the impacts of climate change, Hertfordshire will take advantage of any opportunities that arise from the necessity for transformational change, with nature-based solutions being at the forefront of these.

3. Climate Projections for Hertfordshire

- 3.1 The UK Climate Projections 2018, (updated in 2022)¹ indicate that the predicted changes in climate variables (precipitation, temperature, wind and storms) for Hertfordshire, for the 2030s, 2050s and 2080s are
 - 3.1.1 Wetter winters and drier summers with greater potential for extreme rainfall events
 - 3.1.2 Warmer winters and hotter summers with greater potential for heatwaves
 - 3.1.3 Increase in humidity
 - 3.1.4 Reduction in snow fall during winter and
 - 3.1.5 Potential for more intense storms
- 3.2 These projections will cause impacts across the county, which include:
 - 3.2.1 Demand for/pressure on services
 - 3.2.2 Disruption in access to assets and delivery of services
 - 3.2.3 Risk of heat related illness, disproportionately affecting those with pre-existing health conditions
 - 3.2.4 Exacerbating social equality gaps
 - 3.2.5 Disruption to IT and communications
 - 3.2.6 Increased cost for repair and maintenance and insurance
 - 3.2.7 Depletion of natural resources

¹ <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/research/approach/collaboration/ukcp/summaries/headline-findings>

3.2.8 Negative impact on biodiversity

3.2.9 Food insecurity

3.2.10 Migration of those whose homes are no longer habitable.

4. Key Aims

4.1 This action plan outlines the steps and actions required in order to create a Hertfordshire that is resilient to the impacts of climate change.

4.1.1 Creation of robust climate change risk assessments (CCRA's) by all Hertfordshire authorities, that identifies future actions to reduce climate related risks further.

4.1.2 Analysis of all CCRA's and consideration of common actions across all authorities, or interdependencies that require a joint or additional approach beyond municipal borders.

4.1.3 Stake holder map identifying relevant stakeholders that can develop and deliver the adaptation strategic action plan.

4.1.4 New Terms of Reference that will capture the new remit of the Adaptation Subgroup.

4.1.5 Development of actions that are impactful and measurable, noting that not all will be under the remit or powers of HCCSP.

5. Baseline and Preliminary Actions (Aim 4.1.1)

5.1 Baseline work showed that just two authorities in Hertfordshire had climate change risk assessment ("CCRA") plans and nearly all authorities had no budget for this work. The following actions were carried out by the Adaptation subgroup as necessary initial steps:

5.1.1 **Review of councils' corporate and service risk registers for climate related risks:** all partner authorities sought out their own risk registers, picking out key climate or weather-related risks. This allowed for understanding of each authority's current position in terms of monitoring these climate related risks and the gaps.

5.1.2 **Identified authorities' risk leads:** this was established as senior management team and service leads; those with cross-organisational views of issues and threats within the council, with appropriate stakeholder relationships already in place.

- 5.1.3 **Engagement with Local Partnerships toolkit and WSP workshop:** risk leads and other relevant officers were offered free training hosted by WSP and the Local Partnership Adaptation tool kit was shared accordingly.
- 5.1.4 **Conducted internal climate change risk assessment (CCRA);** the Adaptation subgroup officers coordinated and monitored the completion of district/borough CCRA's by May 2024 (delayed from December 2023). Climate related risks were reviewed and scored following internal risk management processes; for instance, inherent risk scored, control measures currently in place identified and then the residual risk scored. Actions to reduce the risk further were developed and embedded into business continuity plans/service plans or climate action plans accordingly.
- 5.1.5 **Climate change adaptation added to corporate and/or operational risk registers** in addition to climate mitigation risks.

6. Key Actors and Stakeholders

- 6.1 There are a range of stakeholders that are vital in influencing progress in this area, which includes:
 - 6.1.1 Hertfordshire County Council
 - 6.1.2 District and Borough Councils
 - 6.1.3 Town and Parish Councils
 - 6.1.4 Regional bodies, such as HIIP (Hertfordshire Infrastructure Planning Policy), HIDB (Hertfordshire Infrastructure Development Board), LEP (Local Enterprise Partnership), HNRP (Hertfordshire Nature Recover Partnership), HEAP (Hertfordshire Area Energy Plan), LLFA (Lead Local Flood Authority)
 - 6.1.5 Other statutory organisations, such as the fire service, the NHS and the GSENZH (The Greater South East Net Zero Hub)
 - 6.1.6 Businesses such as water companies and power companies
 - 6.1.7 NGOs e.g. charity experts
 - 6.1.8 Local community groups

7. Role of Local Authorities and HCCSP

- 7.1 Local Authorities carry out statutory duties and deliver a wide range of services, some of which are outsourced. This varies between districts and boroughs, for instance;

- 7.1.1 Some local authorities do not own social housing stock, some outsource to external housing associations, and others manage and maintain them internally.
- 7.1.2 Some local authorities outsource their waste collection service, whilst others manage it in house.
- 7.2 County Council are responsible for highways

8. Context; Hertfordshire Growth Board;

- 8.1 In February 2024, the Hertfordshire Growth Board published six new missions, which cover the following areas: World class economy, Digital access for all, Transport for Hertfordshire; Healthy and safe places for all, Right home right places and Sustainable County.
- 8.2 Under the Sustainable County mission, it is envisaged that *“by 2050, Hertfordshire will be a prosperous, low carbon economy with a thriving natural environment, having maximised the benefits of sustainable growth for our residents and businesses, and achieved net zero greenhouse gas emissions”*.
- 8.3 There are nine strategic goals associated with achieving this mission, three of which are linked to adaptation and resilience.
 - 3. All strategic new development will be net zero carbon by 2030, with measures in progress to retrofit existing buildings by 2040 to reduce fuel poverty **and overheating**
 - 5. Support Hertfordshire businesses to improve their sustainability and competitiveness whilst **reducing risks from the impacts of climate change**.
 - 6. By 2025 seek to ensure that all new development is **resilient to the impacts of climate change for the next 30 years. Support local authorities to improve place-based resilience to climate change through infrastructure and public realm improvements.**
- 7.4 HCCSP is required to report regularly against identified milestones to deliver these actions. The Adaptation strategic action plan will therefore ensure that there is alignment and coordinated efforts throughout the County, that can be measured and monitored tangibly.

9. Context; Regional Climate Change Forum (RCCF)

- 8.1 HCCSP is a member of the Regional Climate Change Forum, a regional working group of the East of England LGA, which considers a series of sustainability themes across the Eastern region. One of these themes is Adaptation. 8.2 The Adaptation Subgroup will continue to engage with the RCCF work, to ensure

cross-fertilisation of ideas and actions alongside sharing of best practice to facilitate regional place-based resilience.

10. SMART actions and targets

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Number	Theme/ OUTCOME	Action	Organisation(s) who will deliver the action	Targets or indicators: means of measuring progress	Timeframe for delivery inc. intermediary milestones where appropriate
A1	Embed consistent quality climate risk planning in all Hertfordshire authorities	Adaptation subgroup and HCCSP officers to coordinate and monitor the completion of district/borough CCRA's	Individual local authorities	CCRA's published and approved by senior leadership team at each local authority	In progress Target completion date Q2 24/25
A1.1		Identify Risk Leads	Individual local authorities	List of risk leads within each district/borough	Completed
A1.2		Circulate WSP training and Local partnerships toolkit to relevant staff	HCCSP	Email trail	Completed
A1.3		Carry out CCRA	Individual local authorities	Risk leads to score inherent and residual risk	In progress Target completion date Q2 24/25
A1.4		CCRA approved by Senior Management or Leadership Team/Cabinet/equivalent	Individual local authorities	Official sign off documentation and uploaded to internal/external systems	In progress Target completion date Q2 24/25
A1.5		Embed actions to reduce risks further into business continuity plans / service plans / Climate action plans	Individual local authorities	Risk leads, and sustainability officers	In progress Target completion date Q2 24/25

Number	Theme/ OUTCOME	Action	Organisation(s) who will deliver the action	Targets or indicators: means of measuring progress	Timeframe for delivery inc. intermediary milestones where appropriate
A1.6		Include climate adaptation into strategic or operational risk registers alongside climate mitigation	Individual local authorities	Risk leads	In progress Target completion date Q2 24/25
A2	Identify opportunities to collate/align or make efficiencies between 11 CCRAs	HCCSP officers to consider common actions across all authorities, or interdependencies that require a joint or additional approach beyond municipal borders.	Adaptation Subgroup and external stakeholder TBC	Collate CCRA's and highlight any alignments	In progress. Target completion date Q3 24/25
A2.1		Collate and align common actions across all authorities to create a countrywide list of CCRA actions	Adaptation Subgroup	Countywide CCRA that incorporates details from all authorities CCRA's	Completed
A2.2		Stake holder mapping session	Adaptation Subgroup	Relevant stakeholders identified that need to be involved in discussion about how to deliver the actions	In progress. Target completion date Q3 24/25

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Number	Theme/ OUTCOME	Action	Organisation(s) who will deliver the action	Targets or indicators: means of measuring progress	Timeframe for delivery inc. intermediary milestones where appropriate
A2.3		Create New Terms of Reference for new workflow	Adaptation Subgroup	Ensure ToR is relevant and has a clear directive	Not commenced Target completion date Q3 24/25
A2.4		Separate BAU actions and standalone actions	Adaptation Subgroup		In progress. Target completion date Q3 25/26
A2.5		Work with other HCCSP subgroups to ensure; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work is not duplicated, • actions can be expanded, • Maladaptation does not occur 	Adaptation Subgroup		Ongoing
A2.6		Gap analysis	Adaptation subgroup	Analysis of CCRA's and Adaptation SAP to identify where gaps remain in terms of risk management, engagement with relevant stake holders and both officer and financial resourcing to deliver projects	Ongoing

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Number	Theme/ OUTCOME	Action	Organisation(s) who will deliver the action	Targets or indicators: means of measuring progress	Timeframe for delivery inc. intermediary milestones where appropriate
A3	Identify opportunities to take forward collectively that do not include actions being delivered internally within individual authorities	Identify actions to be delivered collectively	Adaptation Subgroup	Identified actions in excel spreadsheet	In progress. Target completion date Q3 25/26
A3.1	Communication	Identifying opportunities for countywide short term preparedness messaging	Adaptation subgroup and HCCSP comms meeting	Identify programme of annual repeatable messaging/sharable templates	Target Q3 24/25
A3.2	Behaviour change	Coordinated approach for long term countywide adaptation projects advice and information sharing.	Adaptation subgroup and behaviour change subgroup	Identify two projects to deliver	Target Q3 24/25
A3.3	Infrastructure	Coordinated approach for long term countywide adaptation projects	Adaptation subgroup HIPP HPP LRF Growth Board	Identification of large scale Engagement with other stakeholders	Target Q3 25/26
A3.4	Policy	Explore opportunities for coordinated policy for long term adaptation	Adaptation subgroup HIPP HPP HPG	Guidance docs and templates	Target Q3 25/26

Number	Theme/ OUTCOME	Action	Organisation(s) who will deliver the action	Targets or indicators: means of measuring progress	Timeframe for delivery inc. intermediary milestones where appropriate
			RCCF		
A3.5	Resourcing	Identifying opportunities for technology interventions and other resources to facilitate adaptation best practice	Adaptation subgroup	Two funded proposals taken to HSOG each year	Ongoing
A3.6	Training	Introduce training for officer and members as identified from behaviour change research	Adaptation subgroup	Number of training sessions and resources provided and number of people trained	Ongoing
A3.7	Reporting	Determine the minimum reporting requirements and share best practice to stakeholders	Adaptation Subgroup	Best practice shared to partners	Ongoing
A3.8	Outside of HCCSP remit	Identify actions that are not within HCCSP's gift to deliver but ensure relevant stakeholders are offered best practise guidance.	Adaptation subgroup	Best practice shared to partners	Ongoing

11. Funding

- 11.1 It is expected that the primary cost associated with these actions will be in the form of officer time; that of the relevant County/District/Borough Council officers alongside the stakeholders' progression of their own actions.
- 11.2 The development and implementation of actions identified to reduce risks further have varying cost implications. It is recommended that subgroup members work with other HCCSP subgroups to ensure identified measures are incorporated into their action plans so that interventions are not overlooked, nor replicated. Incorporating measures retrospectively and reactively could come at additional cost.
- 11.3 Actions included as BAU should be budgeted for within existing service plans or climate action plans.
- 11.4 It may be within the interests and gift of stakeholders including public competitive funds, private stakeholder companies or NGOs to collaborate on bids to support delivery on actions which meet strategic objectives.

12. Version Control

Version Number	Summary of amendments	Approved by HCCSP
Version 1.0	SAP template provided by Helen Burridge	
Version 1.1	Amendments, updates and actions added by Kelly Murphy	11 July 2024

13. References