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COUNCILS



# Delivering Climate Action in West Sussex

## A Joint Approach to Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

### Consultation Summary Document

August 2026



**City Science**  
Delivering decarbonisation

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# Foreword

West Sussex is a wonderful place to live, work and visit. Our landscapes, coastline, towns, villages, and communities are among our county's greatest strengths. However, like communities across the country and around the world, we are already experiencing the effects of a changing climate. More frequent heatwaves, increased flood risk, pressure on water resources, and impacts on nature are affecting people, businesses, and the places we value.

Responding to these challenges requires collective action. It also presents an opportunity to create a healthier, safer, and more resilient West Sussex for current and future generations.

As Chair of the Joint Climate Change Board, I am pleased to introduce this consultation on the proposed West Sussex Climate Change Mitigation and Climate Change Adaptation Action Plans. Developed collaboratively by the County Council and the District and Borough councils, these plans set out a shared framework for action over the coming decades.

The plans recognise that tackling climate change means both reducing the emissions that drive it and preparing our communities, infrastructure, economy, and natural environment for the impacts that are already happening. By taking this joined-up approach, we can help deliver better homes, cleaner air, lower energy costs, thriving natural habitats, resilient communities, and sustainable economic growth.

The actions presented in this document have been informed by evidence, technical analysis, and engagement with stakeholders from across West Sussex. They provide a clear direction for how we can work together to support the transition to clean energy, strengthen resilience to extreme weather, and create lasting benefits for residents, businesses, and the environment.

Climate action cannot be delivered by councils alone. Success will depend on strong partnerships and the involvement of communities, businesses, voluntary organisations, and residents across the county. Your views are therefore an important part of shaping the final plans.

I encourage you to take part in this consultation and share your thoughts on the proposed actions. Together, we can help ensure that West Sussex remains a thriving, prosperous, and resilient place for generations to come.

CLlr Natasha Davie

Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change, West Sussex County Council

Chair, West Sussex Joint Climate Change Board

## The Vision

This vision reflects the evidence gathering and engagement with key stakeholders to date, and sets the ambition that both the Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Action Plans are designed to deliver:



**A green, resilient West Sussex where people and nature thrive together**

- Clean, affordable energy and lower bills for residents
- Resilient homes, infrastructure, and communities
- Thriving nature and green spaces across the county
- Fair opportunities for everyone, including vulnerable communities



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# Key Terms

- **Action Plan:** A strategic document outlining the specific actions, assigned responsibilities, timeframes, and resources necessary to achieve defined objectives.
- **Biodiversity:** The variety of plants, animals, and other living things in an area, and the balance between them.
- **Blue-Green Streets:** Streets designed with trees, planting, and rain gardens that manage rainwater naturally, while also cooling and greening neighbourhoods.
- **Carbon Emissions:** Gases released into the atmosphere from human activities and natural processes, which drive changes in global climate systems (e.g. global warming). Some, like carbon dioxide, persist for centuries and others, like methane, break down faster but trap more heat while they remain.
- **Circular Economy:** An approach to making and using things that keeps materials in use for longer, through reusing, repairing, and recycling instead of throwing them away.
- **Clean Energy:** Refers to cleaner and more efficient ways of powering our homes, transport, businesses, and farms, helping to reduce carbon emissions, improve energy security, and lower costs for residents.
- **Clean Growth:** Growing the economy in ways that cut carbon emissions while creating jobs and investment.
- **Climate Change Adaptation:** Adjusting systems, practices, and infrastructure to prepare for and respond to the current and ongoing effects of climate change.
- **Climate Change Mitigation:** Efforts to reduce or prevent carbon emissions in order to limit the scale and severity of future climate change.
- **Climate Change Resilience:** The ability of people and places to cope with and recover from the impacts of climate change.
- **Ecosystems:** Communities of plants, animals, and other living things, together with the air, soil, and water they rely on.
- **Energy Security:** Having a reliable, affordable supply of energy, so homes, businesses, and essential services aren't left vulnerable to shortages or price spikes.
- **Fossil Fuels:** Sources of energy such as coal, oil, and gas that release pollution when burned.
- **Heat Networks:** Systems that provide heating and hot water to multiple buildings from a shared energy source.
- **Nature-based Solutions:** Interventions that protect, restore, or work with nature, such as planting trees or restoring wetlands, to help tackle challenges like flooding and rising temperatures.
- **Sustainable Drainage Systems:** Natural ways of slowing and storing rainwater to reduce flooding (e.g. ponds, rainwater harvesting).



# Document Structure

The document is structured as follows:

**1. Context:** This section explains:

- a) Why climate action is needed.
- b) Why we need to prepare for the impacts of climate change as well as reducing emissions.
- c) The process for developing the strategy.
- d) The benefits climate action can bring for residents, businesses, and nature.

**2. The Action Plans:** This section sets out the proposed priority actions for the next 25 years and the benefits they aim to achieve.

- a) Climate Change Mitigation – Reducing the causes of climate change: Actions to support the transition to a clean energy system and provide warmer homes, reduced air pollution, and lower energy bills to residents and businesses.
- b) Climate Change Adaptation – Preparing for climate change impacts: Actions to help communities, businesses, infrastructure, and nature adapt to a changing climate and become more resilient.

**3. Looking Ahead and Next Steps:** This summarises the Action Plans and outlines the next steps for the consultation process and delivering climate action across West Sussex.



# Context

## Why We Need to Act

The county, district, and borough councils across West Sussex are committed to taking climate action. Moving towards cleaner, more secure energy and improving resilience to extreme weather events are county-wide priorities.

Understanding the current causes and future impacts of climate change is essential to planning for a more sustainable and prosperous West Sussex.

### What activities contribute most to climate change in West Sussex?

#### Transport



Cars, vans, and lorries on the road

#### Homes



Heating and powering where we live

#### Businesses



Energy use in workplaces and industry

### What climate change hazards are affecting West Sussex the most?

#### Flooding



Heavy rainfall and rising water levels affecting homes and infrastructure.

#### Drought



Dry weather putting pressure on water supplies.

#### Heatwaves



Hotter temperatures affecting health, homes, and infrastructure.

## Our Response

To reduce the causes of climate change and prepare for climate change impacts, the Councils have developed two Action Plans

**Climate change mitigation:**  
reducing the causes of climate change.

- Reducing carbon emissions
- Transitioning to clean energy



**Climate change adaptation:**  
preparing for climate change impacts.

- Preparing for extreme weather
- Building resilient communities

**Shared goal:** A green, resilient West Sussex where people and nature thrive together.

#### **Example Project 1: Medmerry Coastal Protection Scheme**

- Created 184 hectares of coastal wetlands
- Protects local communities from flooding and coastal erosion
- Restores wildlife habitats and stores carbon

#### **Example Project 2: Adur Adaptation Project**

- Restores natural floodplains, wetlands, and riverbank habitats
- Aims to cut peak river levels by 10% during heavy rainfall
- Protects local homes and increases carbon storage

This integrated approach helps to ensure that environmental, infrastructure, and community priorities are addressed in a coordinated and effective way.



# Context

## The Process

The Action Plans have been shaped by stakeholders from across West Sussex, drawing on local knowledge, data, evidence, and expert advice, to ensure the actions generate better outcomes for West Sussex’s residents, businesses, and nature.

The West Sussex county, district, and borough councils have jointly commissioned the development of the two Action Plans by City Science and inputted into them. We are now asking for your views. The Plans will be refined to incorporate feedback and will be approved through the Councils’ governance processes.

## The Benefits of Climate Action

Climate action will deliver a range of benefits for residents, businesses, and nature across West Sussex. Action to both reduce the causes of climate change and prepare for it can improve health and wellbeing, support economic growth, and enhance the natural environment.

The diagram below sets out the key benefits expected from climate change mitigation and adaptation, including the joint benefits delivered by both. These benefits inform the Climate Change Mitigation and Climate Change Adaptation Action Plans.

### Mitigation: Reducing the Causes of Climate Change

-  Warmer homes and lower energy bills
-  Businesses leading the way on clean growth
-  Cleaner and more accessible travel
-  Affordable and reliable local clean energy
-  Sustainable farming and natural landscapes
-  Less waste and greater resource efficiency
-  Development that supports climate goals
-  Skills and leadership for a sustainable future

### Joint Benefits

-  Better health and wellbeing for all
-  Opportunity for financial savings
-  Stronger, connected communities
-  Good jobs and a thriving local economy
-  Greener and more attractive places
-  Protected nature and food systems for future generations

### Adaptation: Preparing for Climate Change Impacts

-  Prepared and resilient communities
-  Buildings fit for extreme weather
-  Reliable services and infrastructure
-  Cooler and resilient urban and rural spaces
-  Reduced flood and drought risks
-  Resilient food systems and countryside
-  Future-proof planning and development
-  Strong partnerships and community action



# Mitigation - Reducing the Causes of Climate Change

Reducing emissions can help create warmer homes, reduce air pollution, and build a stronger local economy. The following themes show where action is needed, what we want to achieve, and how these actions can benefit people and businesses across West Sussex.



## Warmer Homes and Lower Energy Bills

| What Success Looks Like                                                                                         | Why this Matters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Residents live in warmer, healthier homes that are cheaper to heat and more comfortable throughout the year     | Energy costs affect households across the county, and many homes are vulnerable to rising energy prices.                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Priority Actions                                                                                                | Benefits                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Action 1:</b> Development of a county-wide home energy efficiency and heating improvement programme.         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lower energy bills.</li><li>• Homes that are warmer in winter and cooler in summer.</li><li>• Better health and wellbeing, particularly for vulnerable residents.</li><li>• More local jobs and skills in home improvement and construction.</li></ul> |
| <b>Action 2:</b> Delivering awareness campaigns on home sustainability improvements for West Sussex households. |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |



## Businesses Leading the Way on Clean Growth

| What Success Looks Like                                                                                                                                           | Why this Matters                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Businesses operate more efficiently, reducing energy costs while remaining competitive and resilient.                                                             | Energy costs and uncertainty place pressure on businesses and public services.                                                                                                                                                     |
| Priority Actions                                                                                                                                                  | Benefits                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Action 3:</b> Support energy efficiency improvements and the transition to cleaner technologies and heating systems in commercial and public sector buildings. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lower running costs.</li><li>• More resilient local businesses.</li><li>• Increased competitiveness and opportunities for growth.</li><li>• Encourages investment and innovation</li></ul> |
| <b>Action 4:</b> Facilitate the clean energy transition for industrial processes and support innovation for harder-to-tackle industrial emissions.                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |



# Mitigation - Reducing the Causes of Climate Change

Reducing emissions can help create warmer homes, reduce air pollution, and build a stronger local economy. The following themes show where action is needed, what we want to achieve, and how these actions can benefit people and businesses across West Sussex.



## Cleaner and More Accessible Travel

| What Success Looks Like                                                                                                                                   | Why this Matters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Residents have access to safe, convenient, and affordable ways to travel, with less reliance on fossil fuels.                                             | Transport is the biggest source of emissions in West Sussex and can affect air quality, congestion, and health.                                                                                                                                           |
| Priority Actions                                                                                                                                          | Benefits                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Action 5:</b> Improve public transport and expand walking, wheeling, and cycling opportunities.                                                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reduced air pollution.</li><li>• Less traffic congestion.</li><li>• Equal access to cleaner travel choices.</li><li>• Better health and wellbeing.</li><li>• Improved safety and community connections.</li></ul> |
| <b>Action 6:</b> Make it easier for people to switch to electric vehicles through measures such as increasing the availability of accessible chargepoints |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |



## Affordable and Reliable Local Clean Energy

| What Success Looks Like                                                                                                                          | Why this Matters                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| More energy is generated locally from clean sources, helping communities and more vulnerable households become more resilient and energy secure. | The county needs reliable and affordable energy while reducing dependence on fossil fuels.                                                                                                                                            |
| Priority Actions                                                                                                                                 | Benefits                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Action 7:</b> Support rooftop solar on homes, businesses, and public buildings.                                                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Greater energy security.</li><li>• Lower exposure to future energy price rises.</li><li>• Local investment and job creation.</li><li>• More money staying within local communities.</li></ul> |
| <b>Action 8:</b> Encourage community energy projects.                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Action 9:</b> Support low-carbon heat networks.                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Action 10:</b> Work with partners to improve electricity infrastructure.                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |



# Mitigation - Reducing the Causes of Climate Change

Reducing emissions can help create warmer homes, reduce air pollution, and build a stronger local economy. The following themes show where action is needed, what we want to achieve, and how these actions can benefit people and businesses across West Sussex.



**Sustainable Farming and Thriving Natural Landscapes**

| What Success Looks Like                                                                                                | Why this Matters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Nature, farmland, and green spaces are protected and enhanced while supporting food production and reducing emissions. | Healthy ecosystems provide food, clean water, and biodiverse habitats.                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Priority Actions                                                                                                       | Benefits                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Action 11:</b> Support farmers and land managers to reduce emissions and use sustainable farming practices.         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Greater food security.</li><li>• Improved wildlife habitats and biodiversity.</li><li>• Cleaner rivers and healthier soils.</li><li>• More attractive and enhanced green spaces for residents and visitors.</li></ul> |
| <b>Action 12:</b> Expand woodland, hedgerows, and natural carbon stores.                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |



**Less Waste and Greater Resource Efficiency**

| What Success Looks Like                                                                                                                  | Why this Matters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Communities and businesses reduce waste and make better use of resources.                                                                | Reducing waste lowers emissions, saves resources, and can reduce costs.                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Priority Actions                                                                                                                         | Benefits                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Action 13:</b> Support circular economy initiatives, reduce food waste and water demand, and improve wastewater treatment efficiency. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Skills development in circular economy initiatives.</li><li>• Cleaner communities.</li><li>• Reduced environmental impact.</li><li>• New local business opportunities in repair and reuse.</li><li>• Improved water management.</li></ul> |



# Mitigation - Reducing the Causes of Climate Change

Reducing emissions can help create warmer homes, reduce air pollution, and build a stronger local economy. The following themes show where action is needed, what we want to achieve, and how these actions can benefit people and businesses across West Sussex.



Development that Supports Climate Goals

| What Success Looks Like                                                                                                                                  | Why this Matters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| New homes, buildings, and developments are designed to be energy efficient and low-carbon, and connected to public transport and active travel networks. | Planning decisions will impact the energy use and carbon emissions of future developments.                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Priority Actions                                                                                                                                         | Benefits                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Action 14:</b> Strengthen planning policies to support sustainable, energy-efficient development.                                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lower future energy bills.</li><li>• Better quality homes and buildings.</li><li>• Warmer, healthier homes, reducing fuel poverty and improving health and wellbeing.</li><li>• Communities connected to sustainable transport networks.</li></ul> |



Skills and Leadership for a Cleaner Future

| What Success Looks Like                                                                              | Why this Matters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The county has the skills, funding, and partnerships needed to deliver climate action successfully.  | Long-term climate action depends on strong leadership, investment, and local expertise.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Priority Actions                                                                                     | Benefits                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Action 15:</b> Improve data collection, reporting, and monitoring.                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• New economic opportunities.</li><li>• Boosts funding eligibility.</li><li>• Supports timely decision-making.</li><li>• Creates new local jobs.</li><li>• A future-ready local workforce.</li><li>• Attracts Private Investment.</li><li>• Shared financial risk.</li><li>• Allows the region to apply for large-scale national funds that individual councils cannot access alone.</li></ul> |
| <b>Action 16:</b> Support local skills, workforce development and business innovation.               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Action 17:</b> Work with partners to secure funding to deliver climate action across West Sussex. |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |



# Adaptation - Preparing for the Impacts of Climate Change

Preparing for climate change can help protect people, homes, businesses, essential services, and the natural environment. The following themes show where action is needed, what we want to achieve, and how these actions can help build a more resilient West Sussex.



## Prepared and Resilient Communities

| What Success Looks Like                                                                                                | Why this Matters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Communities understand climate risks and feel confident and supported in responding to them.                           | Extreme weather can affect the health and safety of residents.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Priority Actions                                                                                                       | Benefits                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Action 1:</b> Support community-led climate change adaptation, particularly across the most vulnerable communities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Communities are better prepared for extreme weather.</li><li>Residents have the information and support they need to respond to local climate risks.</li><li>Stronger community networks help people recover more quickly when disruption occurs.</li><li>Increased public health and safety.</li></ul> |
| <b>Action 2:</b> Work with coastal communities to co-design flood resilience planning.                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |



## Buildings Fit for Extreme Weather

| What Success Looks Like                                                                                       | Why this Matters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Homes, workplaces, and public buildings are better able to cope with heatwaves, flooding, and severe weather. | Climate change impacts can damage property and affect health, wellbeing and productivity.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Priority Actions                                                                                              | Benefits                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Action 3:</b> Improve the resilience of new and existing buildings to extreme heat                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Homes stay cooler during hot weather and are better protected from flooding.</li><li>Reduced damage and repair costs.</li><li>Improved comfort, health, and wellbeing, particularly for the most vulnerable communities.</li><li>Businesses and property owners are better prepared and experience less disruption</li></ul> |
| <b>Action 4:</b> Embed flood resilience into planning, building, and retrofit processes.                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |



# Adaptation - Preparing for the Impacts of Climate Change

Preparing for climate change can help protect people, homes, businesses, essential services, and the natural environment. The following themes show where action is needed, what we want to achieve, and how these actions can help build a more resilient West Sussex.



## Reliable Services and Infrastructure

| What Success Looks Like                                                                                                                               | Why this Matters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Essential services continue to operate during extreme weather and climate-related disruptions.                                                        | Residents rely on essential services every day (e.g. transport, water, heating, electricity, hospitals).                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Priority Actions                                                                                                                                      | Benefits                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Action 5:</b> Work with infrastructure operators to improve the resilience of roads, railways, utilities, and critical services to climate change. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• More reliable transport, energy, water and communication services.</li><li>• Reduced disruption to daily life.</li><li>• Faster recovery after storms, floods and heatwaves.</li><li>• Greater confidence that vital services will continue to operate when needed most.</li></ul> |



## Cooler and Resilient Urban and Rural Spaces

| What Success Looks Like                                                                                   | Why this Matters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Neighbourhoods are greener, cooler and better able to cope with rising temperatures and changing weather. | Green spaces help reduce extreme weather impacts and improve wellbeing.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Priority Actions                                                                                          | Benefits                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Action 6:</b> Strengthen wildfire mitigation and preparedness in high-risk areas.                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• More trees and greenery across urban areas.</li><li>• Healthy river systems.</li><li>• Improved health and wellbeing from better quality and more accessible greenspaces.</li><li>• Protected habitats and increased biodiversity.</li><li>• Reduced drought and wildfire risks.</li></ul> |
| <b>Action 7:</b> Deliver a pilot of blue-green streets and infrastructure.                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Action 8:</b> Prioritise nature-based flood management solutions.                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Action 9:</b> Develop a county-wide biodiversity monitoring framework.                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |



# Adaptation - Preparing for the Impacts of Climate Change

Preparing for climate change can help protect people, homes, businesses, essential services, and the natural environment. The following themes show where action is needed, what we want to achieve, and how these actions can help build a more resilient West Sussex.



## Reduced Flood and Drought Risks

| What Success Looks Like                                                                                           | Why this Matters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Communities, infrastructure and businesses are better protected from flooding, drought, and water shortages.      | Changing rainfall patterns are increasing risks from both flooding and water scarcity.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Priority Actions                                                                                                  | Benefits                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Action 10:</b> Accelerate sustainable drainage system implementation across the county.                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reduced risk of flooding to homes, businesses and roads.</li><li>• Better protection of water resources during dry periods.</li><li>• Lower costs from weather-related damage and disruption.</li><li>• Support for vulnerable communities.</li><li>• Enhanced community engagement.</li></ul> |
| <b>Action 11:</b> Protect households, businesses, and ecosystems from drought risks.                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Action 12:</b> Improve understanding and monitoring of groundwater levels during drought and flood conditions. |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |



## Resilient Food Systems and Countryside

| What Success Looks Like                                                                                                              | Why this Matters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The county's landscapes, farmland and food systems can adapt to changing climate conditions.                                         | Climate change affects food production, water availability, and natural habitats.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Priority Actions                                                                                                                     | Benefits                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Action 13:</b> Provide clear guidance to food growers, landowners, and land managers on reducing climate hazards (e.g. flooding). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A more secure local food supply.</li><li>• Healthier soils, rivers and ecosystems.</li><li>• Protection of landscapes that people value.</li><li>• Increased resilience to flooding, drought and extreme weather.</li><li>• More resilient and sustainable farm businesses.</li></ul> |



# Adaptation - Preparing for the Impacts of Climate Change

Preparing for climate change can help protect people, homes, businesses, essential services, and the natural environment. The following themes show where action is needed, what we want to achieve, and how these actions can help build a more resilient West Sussex.



## Future-Proof Planning and Development

| What Success Looks Like                                                                                                                         | Why this Matters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Climate resilience is embedded in planning, development, and investment decisions across the county.                                            | Planning ahead reduces future risks and avoids costly adaptation later.                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Priority Actions                                                                                                                                | Benefits                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Action 14:</b> Strengthen climate resilience requirements in planning, policy and decision-making, and lobby for national regulatory reform. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• New development is ready for future climate conditions.</li><li>• Reduced future costs.</li><li>• Safer, healthier and more resilient communities.</li><li>• Better protection for people most vulnerable to climate impacts</li></ul> |



## Strong Partnerships and Community Action

| What Success Looks Like                                                                                        | Why this Matters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The county has the skills, funding, and partnerships needed to deliver climate change adaptation successfully. | Long-term climate resilience depends on strong leadership, investment, and local expertise.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Priority Actions                                                                                               | Benefits                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Action 15:</b> Establish a dedicated taskforce for key partners to work together and pool funding.          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A safer, healthier county for future generations.</li><li>• Access to new jobs and careers.</li><li>• A future-ready local workforce.</li><li>• Stimulate public and private investment in the county.</li><li>• Greater inclusivity and opportunity for communities with higher levels of vulnerability.</li><li>• Economic opportunities created by the transition to a low-carbon economy.</li></ul> |
| <b>Action 16:</b> Build local education, skills and workforce capacity for adaptation projects.                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |



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# Looking Ahead

## The 25-Year Vision

Over the next 25 years, this strategy will help deliver clean, affordable energy, energy-efficient homes, cleaner air, thriving natural environments, and more resilient communities. It will improve public health, reduce living costs, support a stronger local economy and skilled jobs, and ensure the transition is fair, with the greatest benefits reaching vulnerable residents and communities.

## Enabling Collective Action

Success will depend on effective collaboration between councils, residents and community groups, businesses, farmers, infrastructure providers, investors, academic institutions, and other key stakeholders. By working together, we can achieve far more than any one group could alone.

The action plans are designed to remove barriers, build capacity, and support long-term partnerships. They also provide a shared direction and momentum for climate action during local government reorganisation and devolution.

This is a real opportunity to build on the significant climate action already taking place across West Sussex, accelerating both the pace and scope of this work to create a green, resilient West Sussex where people and nature thrive together.

## Next Steps

- Share your views through the public consultation.
- Consultation responses will help shape the final action plans ready for publication in the winter.

