Harbury Parish Council

Environment and Climate Strategy and Action Plan

2026–2031

Adopted: October 2026

Review Dates: Action Plan October 2027; Strategy 2030

Foreword

Harbury Parish Council recognises that climate change, biodiversity loss and environmental degradation are among the most significant long-term challenges affecting rural communities.

This Environment and Climate Strategy and Action Plan sets out how the Parish Council intends to respond locally through leadership, partnership working, planning influence and practical action. The strategy builds upon the Harbury Parish Environment and Climate Policy and supports the objectives and principles of the Harbury & Deppers Bridge Neighbourhood Development Plan.

The strategy reflects the character of Harbury Parish as a rural community comprising the settlements of Harbury and Deppers Bridge, surrounded by valued agricultural land, countryside, green spaces and important ecological assets.

While many environmental challenges require national and international action, Parish Councils can play an important role by influencing local development, supporting community initiatives, improving biodiversity and encouraging more sustainable ways of living.

This document combines:

1. A longer-term Environment and Climate Strategy; and
2. A practical Action Plan identifying examples of achievable local priorities.

The strategy is intended to be realistic, proportionate and deliverable within the powers and resources available to the Parish Council.

---

1. Vision

Harbury Parish will be:

> A resilient, low-carbon rural parish that protects and enhances its natural environment, supports biodiversity, promotes sustainable living and maintains the distinctive character, landscape and community identity of Harbury and Deppers Bridge for future generations.

---

2. Strategic Objectives

The Parish Council will work towards the following strategic objectives:

Objective 1 — Reduce Carbon Emissions

Support practical measures that reduce greenhouse gas emissions from buildings, transport and local activities.

Objective 2 — Encourage Sustainability in Developments

Encourage development that is energy efficient, climate resilient and sensitive to rural character.

Objective 3 — Improve Climate Resilience

Prepare for the impacts of climate change, including flooding, extreme weather and heat stress.

Objective 4 — Promote Sustainable Transport

Promote walking, cycling and lower-carbon transport options.

Objective 5 — Reduce Waste and Resource Use

Encourage waste reduction, reuse, recycling and sustainable procurement.

Objective 6 — Protect and Enhance Biodiversity

Conserve and improve habitats, green infrastructure, trees, hedgerows and wildlife corridors throughout the parish.

Objective 7 — Engage and Support the Community

Work collaboratively with residents, schools, businesses and local organisations to improve environmental outcomes.

---

3. Strategic Context

This strategy has been informed by:

- Harbury Neighbourhood Development Plan
- Stratford-on-Avon District Council policies
- Warwickshire climate and biodiversity initiatives
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- National biodiversity and climate commitments
- Local environmental priorities and community concerns

The strategy supports the environmental objectives within the Harbury Neighbourhood Development Plan, including:

- Protection of landscape character
- Green infrastructure and Local Green Spaces
- Sustainable drainage and flood mitigation
- Biodiversity enhancement
- Sustainable design and energy efficiency
- Protection of rural views and heritage setting
- Sustainable transport improvements

---

4. Key Environmental Challenges in Harbury Parish

The Parish Council recognises a number of key environmental and climate-related challenges affecting the parish:

Climate Change

- Increasing temperatures and more frequent extreme weather events
- Rising energy costs and carbon emissions
- Need for adaptation of buildings and infrastructure

Biodiversity Loss

- Decline in species diversity and abundance
- Habitat fragmentation
- Loss or deterioration of hedgerows and natural habitats

Flooding and Drainage

- Surface water flooding risks
- Pressure on drainage infrastructure
- Increased intensity of rainfall events

Transport and Traffic

- Dependence on private vehicles
- Traffic congestion and idling
- Limited public transport options

Development Pressure

- Need to balance housing and infrastructure needs with environmental protection
- Risk of loss of rural character and green space

Waste and Resource Consumption

- Need to reduce waste and improve reuse and recycling
- Reducing reliance on single-use materials

---

5. Strategic Themes and Example Actions

Theme A — Carbon Reduction and Energy Efficiency

Strategic Aim

To support the transition to a low-carbon parish through energy efficiency, renewable energy and sustainable practices.

Priority Actions

Ref	Action	Lead	Timescale
A1	Review Parish Council energy use and identify opportunities for reduction	Parish Council	Short term
A2	Reduce paper use and encourage digital communication where practical	Parish Council	Ongoing
A3	Encourage energy-efficient design in planning consultations	Parish Council	Ongoing
A4	Support appropriate renewable energy proposals compatible with local character	Parish Council	Ongoing

Ref	Action	Lead	Timescale
A5	Investigate opportunities for energy efficiency improvements to community buildings	Parish Council / Community Groups	Medium term
A6	Promote awareness of home energy efficiency and retrofit opportunities	Parish Council	Ongoing

Theme B — Sustainable Development and Planning

Strategic Aim

To ensure new development contributes positively to environmental sustainability and parish character.

Priority Actions

Ref	Action	Lead	Timescale
B1	Consider environmental and climate impacts in all planning consultations	Parish Council	Ongoing
B2	Ensure developments incorporate SUDS and flood mitigation	Parish Council	Ongoing
B3	Encourage retention of mature trees and hedgerows	Parish Council	Ongoing
B4	Promote high-quality sustainable design principles	Parish Council	Ongoing
B5	Encourage electric vehicle charging infrastructure in suitable developments	Parish Council	Ongoing
B6	Resist development causing unacceptable environmental harm	Parish Council	Ongoing

Theme C — Flooding and Climate Resilience

Strategic Aim

To improve resilience to climate impacts and support sustainable water management.

Priority Actions

Ref	Action	Lead	Timescale
C1	Work with relevant authorities on local flooding concerns	Parish Council	Ongoing
C2	Encourage natural flood management approaches where feasible	Parish Council / Landowners	Medium term
C3	Promote water conservation and rainwater harvesting awareness	Parish Council	Medium term
C4	Encourage climate-resilient landscaping and planting	Parish Council	Ongoing

Theme D — Sustainable Transport and Air Quality

Strategic Aim

To encourage safer and lower-carbon travel options.

Priority Actions

Ref	Action	Lead	Timescale
D1	Support improved walking and cycling infrastructure	Parish Council	Ongoing
D2	Encourage safer pedestrian routes within the parish	Parish Council / Highways Authority	Medium term
D3	Promote active travel to schools and community facilities	Parish Council / Schools	Ongoing

Ref	Action	Lead	Timescale
D4	Support the provision of EV charging infrastructure	Parish Council	Ongoing
D5	Drive initiatives to reduce vehicle idling and congestion	Parish Council	Medium term

Theme E — Waste Reduction and Sustainable Procurement

Strategic Aim

To minimise waste and encourage responsible resource use.

Priority Actions

Ref	Action	Lead	Timescale
E1	Reduce use of single-use plastics in Council activities	Parish Council	Short term
E2	Encourage recycling and reuse initiatives	Parish Council / Community Groups	Ongoing
E3	Consider environmental criteria in procurement decisions	Parish Council	Ongoing
E4	Encourage sustainable event management practices	Parish Council / Community Organisations	Ongoing

Theme F — Biodiversity, Trees and Green Infrastructure

Strategic Aim

To protect and enhance biodiversity, habitats and ecological networks across the parish. This strategic aim and supporting priority actions are explained in the Harbury Local Nature Recovery Strategy and Action Plan.

Theme G — Community Engagement and Education

Strategic Aim

To encourage community participation in environmental improvement and climate action.

Priority Actions

Ref	Action	Lead	Timescale
G1	Publicise environmental initiatives and opportunities	Parish Council	Ongoing
G2	Support community environmental volunteering activities	Parish Council / Community Groups	Ongoing
G3	Work with schools and youth groups on environmental awareness	Parish Council / Schools/ Youth Groups	Medium term
G4	Encourage community participation in tree planting and habitat projects	Parish Council	Ongoing
G5	Share information on sustainable living and climate resilience	Parish Council	Ongoing

6. Delivery and Partnerships

The Parish Council recognises that many actions will require collaboration with other organisations and community stakeholders.

Potential partners include:

- Stratford-on-Avon District Council
- Warwickshire County Council
- Environment Agency
- Severn Trent Water
- Local schools
- Community organisations and volunteer groups

- Landowners and farmers
- Wildlife and conservation organisations
- Local businesses

The Parish Council will seek opportunities to:

- Apply for grants and external funding
- Participate in regional environmental initiatives
- Support volunteer-led projects
- Encourage community partnerships

---

7. Monitoring and Review

The action plan will be reviewed annually by the Parish Council.

The review will consider:

- Progress against actions
- Emerging environmental priorities
- Funding opportunities
- Changes in legislation or planning policy
- Community feedback

Actions may be updated, added or reprioritised over time.

A fuller review of the strategy should normally take place every four years.

---

8. Measuring Progress

The Parish Council will seek, where practical, to monitor:

- Number of environmental initiatives supported
- Biodiversity improvements on parish-managed land
- Inclusion of sustainability measures in development proposals
- Community participation in environmental projects
- Reduction in Council paper use and resource consumption

The Council recognises that many environmental outcomes are longer term and may require partnership working to achieve.

---

9. Conclusion

Harbury Parish Council is committed to supporting a healthy, resilient and sustainable future for the parish and its parishioners.

This Environment and Climate Strategy and Action Plan provides a practical framework for local action while recognising the importance of protecting the parish's distinctive rural character, landscape, community identity and biodiversity.

By working collaboratively with residents, organisations and partner authorities, the Parish Council aims to contribute positively to climate action, environmental stewardship and community resilience for present and future generations.

Appendix A — Example Short-Term Priorities (First 12–24 Months)

Potential initial priorities may include:

1. Establish a Parish a climate and biodiversity working group.
2. Undertake a review of Parish Council operational emissions and energy use.
3. Provide guidance to Councilors on sustainability and biodiversity for planning consultations and Council responsibilities.
4. Reduce single-use plastics at Parish Council events.
5. Improve communication of environmental information to residents.
6. Liaise with relevant authorities regarding flooding and drainage concerns.
7. Explore opportunities for EV charging infrastructure.
8. Support local volunteering and environmental awareness activities.
9. Identify opportunities for biodiversity improvements on Parish-owned land.

Appendix B — Guiding Principles

In delivering this strategy, the Parish Council will seek to:

- Act proportionately and realistically
- Respect the rural character of the parish
- Support evidence-based decision-making
- Encourage practical local solutions
- Work collaboratively and inclusively

- Balance environmental, social and economic considerations
- Support long-term sustainability and resilience