



Canterbury Climate Action Partnership
Patrons: The Rt Revd. Rose Hudson-Wilkin, Rosie Duffield MP, Cllr Robert Thomas

CANTERBURY COMMITMENT TO CLIMATE ACTION

Canterbury held its first-ever Climate Action Week, 23-30 October 2021, organised by CCAP in the lead-up to COP26 in association with the Canterbury Festival and local partners including Canterbury Cathedral, Canterbury City Council, Canterbury Society, Canterbury Business Improvement District, the Universities of Kent, Christ Church and the Creative Arts, Canterbury College, Westgate Hall and many others. This wide-ranging community interaction has highlighted the strong commitment which exists to Climate Action but as our young people have said, we do not want 'blah, blah, blah', but practical action to reduce carbon emissions and reach Zero Carbon.

All the many groups and organisations represented are united in recognising the extreme urgency of taking climate action locally, nationally and internationally if the pledge of the Paris Agreement to maintain global temperatures rise to a maximum of 1.5 degree is to be met. To this end all are committed to taking action individually and collectively to achieve a major reduction in carbon emissions by 2030 and reaching zero carbon by 2045 at the latest. We need to ensure that this commitment takes in our entire district- Canterbury, Herne Bay, Whitstable and our villages.

We recognise the leadership role of our democratically elected representatives, to ensure Zero Carbon is a top priority. This applies to all our representatives in Parliament, Kent County Council, Canterbury City Council and our Parish Councils. We value the support provided by our Member of Parliament for Canterbury, Rosie Duffield, as CCAP Honorary Patron and the close engagement we have with the City Council's Lead Councillor on Climate Change, Dan Watkins. We look to all of them to commit to securing resources to enable CCAP and its partners to strengthen their work.

We welcome Kent's environmental strategy, the Canterbury Climate Change Action Plan and our City Council's engagement with diverse stakeholders, including CCAP, which is represented on the Climate Change Partnership Board. CCAP commits to further strengthening its interaction with MPs, councillors and council officers. We are conscious that climate objectives must be reflected in all council policies, notably its District Local Plan, especially with regard to housing, transport and energy. This also applies to the vital area of maintaining our biodiversity through nature-based solutions, working with other stakeholders to ensure more appropriate management of open spaces, water resources, forests, coasts and agricultural land.

Our community, faith and youth organisations have a central role in reaching out to our population on climate action. Our community and civic action day brought together many local organisations: The Repair Cafe, Kent Wildlife Trust, the Kentish Stour Countryside Partnership, the Kent Pond and Tree Wardens, the Wildwood Trust and the Canterbury Alliance for Sustainable Transport. These and other community-based organisations are living proof of small, but vital actions to address climate change. The many local projects and initiatives deserve greater public and governmental support and resources. CCAP will maintain and strengthen our critical local network of like-minded organisations and advocate for greater resources for their work

Canterbury's global designation as a UNESCO World Heritage site and the associated role of our Cathedral and churches gives an important moral role to our religious leaders. We were inspired by the address on climate action by Rt Revd Bishop of Dover at the 2021 United Nations Service at Canterbury Cathedral and look forward to her continued support as CCAP Honorary Patron.

Businesses and the corporate sector have a central responsibility to address climate change, whether they are individual entrepreneurs, small and medium sized enterprises in the retail, finance and hospitality sectors, or larger companies, given they too are emitters of carbon. Regardless of size, they can, as several Canterbury enterprises are already doing, commit to ensure climate-friendly operations for example through recycling, sourcing local products and materials, insulating their premises and supplying them with sustainable energy. There is also encouraging work being done on reducing emissions related to supply chains and transport, and an acknowledgement of the need for partnership working with local and national government.

We further look to business support for sponsorship of projects that will make a difference for those who live, work and visit the Canterbury district, such as Repair Café or Canterbury's first Climate Action Awards in 2022. Businesses can also support the work of CCAP by becoming corporate members. In these endeavours, we value the strong partnership we have with the Canterbury Business Improvement District (BID) and look forward to extending this to other business organisations across our district including the Federation of Small Businesses and larger national companies and financial institutions.

Our many schools, colleges and universities should, like other public institutions, commit to be in the vanguard of tackling climate change, given that they are all generators of carbon emissions. In this context, we are encouraged by the steps taken by the Universities of Kent and Canterbury Christ Church to address sustainability, although more needs to be achieved. The valuable academic expertise of our universities on climate-related areas such as air pollution or sustainable business practices should also be harnessed for the benefit of our local communities and businesses.

Above all, we need to engage our youth and students in all our schools and institutions of higher education and tap their energies and commitment to climate action. It is they who will feel the impact of climate change most and it is the younger generation which has most to lose. We accordingly commit to strengthen our engagement with youth and relevant bodies, such as the Kent Youth County Council Environmental Campaign Group, and to ensure that our 2022 Climate Action Week has as strong involvement with, in particular, our schools and schoolchildren.

Our Climate Action Week was designed to engage our district's 160,000 population directly and inform them on the practical measures they can do as individuals. We need to talk less to committed climate action activists and more to the general public. Low-income households especially need advice and financial support in taking climate actions. CCAP commits to continue to work with its partners to engage our public to inform of what they as individuals and households can do to reduce carbon emission, through simple lifestyle changes. Examples include buying local and Fairtrade products, reducing consumption, wasting less, reusing and recycling more, installing sustainable domestic heating, using bicycles and electric vehicles and ensuring green financial investments. It also mean not using pesticides and herbicides, planting for pollinators, composting green material and encouraging the creation of habitats for wildlife.

Nor must we forget the wider international dimension of climate change. CCAP is gratified that it has been officially accredited to COP26 and will have a delegation present in Glasgow which will learn of others' experience, showcase our own work and link-up with like-minded partners and sponsors. We have existing links with national and international organisations like the Soroptimist International, United Nations Association and Commonwealth Local Government Forum, as well as numerous local twinning and exchange links with city and other counterparts in the European Union and elsewhere such as Entebbe in Uganda. Building on the outcome of our attendance at COP26, we need to commit to nurture and expand these global and national links and partnership with a focus on exchanging good practices on climate action.

Our *Canterbury Commitment to Climate Action* is shared by all of CCAP's partners and has to produce practical, measurable results which will be reviewed at our 2022 Climate Action Week, including through our very own Canterbury 'Earthshot' Climate Action Awards. We call on all individuals, organisations, institutions in our district, including our business community, to join us to achieve tangible results to seriously confront the looming global climate crisis.