

## Canterbury BID's Response: CCC's draft Climate Change Action Plan 2020-2031

**1. Which of the following best describes you?**

A business, organisation or community group – Canterbury Business Improvement District, a Community Interest Company

**2. Our draft climate change vision is: “Canterbury district becomes a leading organisation in emissions reduction, building resilience into its services and assets, and empowering the district in climate action”.**

**Do you have any comments on this vision?**

We fully support CCC's vision to become a leading organisation in emissions reduction, and we believe the key to this plan is understanding *how* CCC will empower and support residents, business, institutions and communities in the transition to net zero. We acknowledge that some of that work is ongoing in Canterbury City Council's Climate Change Partnership Board (CCPB), where Canterbury BID is represented, but we are responding to this draft action plan in its current form. We also acknowledge that national action (for example, related to the planning system, transport and funding) are required to support this work. Nonetheless, CCC's leadership and support on climate change is essential in order for everyone to play their part in achieving a carbon neutral and climate resilient district.

There are approximately 650 businesses in Canterbury city centre and the vast majority are independent micro and small businesses, predominantly service-based, including retail, food and beverage, and hospitality. There is also a strong business and professional services sector, HE/FE sector, arts and culture sector (including the Marlowe Theatre) and the World Heritage Site, including Canterbury Cathedral, St Martin's Church and St Augustine's Abbey.

In order to enable and facilitate the transition to a carbon neutral district, we need to understand the local economy and its drivers (market forces, existing employment opportunities, new investment opportunities). The Climate Change Partnership Board is a start, but we also need to involve property owners and investors, the wider district business community and inward investment partners. What is the process for developing a plan for this?

We would like to see the Council's climate change vision embedded in the Council's Corporate Plan, which, at the moment, emphasises the perceived trade-offs between the Council's carbon-neutral ambitions economic recovery. The transition to a carbon-neutral economy is essential for a sustainable future, so the focus needs to be on enabling that for everyone, including the public sector, residents, the private sector, and the voluntary and civic groups.

We support the Council's desire to “champion of green economic activity:

- Providing infrastructure and spaces for businesses and communities to thrive in transition to net zero
- Modelling new ways of delivering inclusive and sustainable local economy

- Supporting organisations in pioneering, preparing for and responding to changes in regulations, markets, products and ways of working
- Supporting, celebrating and advocating responsible practices and investment”

but need to develop an understanding of how this will be facilitated – through what policies and actions? Some of this can be achieved through the Council’s CCPB workstreams, but will need to involve others, eg investors. Also, businesses and organisations will need training, engagement, management and operational support and funding support in order to transition to a carbon neutral economy. This is a significant challenge and we need to be prepared to minimise negative unintended consequences, but could be an opportunity to support job and economic opportunities across society.

**3. Our aims. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the aims set out in the plan?**

We strongly agree with supporting the achievement of net zero emissions, building climate resilience and championing a sustainable district.

Again, we need to understand how the transition will be facilitated and how the businesses and organisations in Canterbury will be supported to enable a fair and inclusive transition, and how we can capture the opportunities of new jobs and investment.

**4. Our goals. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the goals set out in the plan?**

We strongly agree with goals 1-3 (reducing CCC’s own emissions to net zero from scop 1, 2 and 3 by 2030, achieving resilience to climate change risks for CCC’s services and assets and ensuring the district is on a path to emissions reduction in line with regional and national goals by 2030).

However, the fourth goal needs further explanation: “Canterbury district society, environment and economy becomes progressively and proportionately resilient to the impacts of climate change”. Of course we agree with that goal, but the statement doesn’t articulate the Council’s role in it and how the Council will enable others to meet net zero goals. Canterbury district will not achieve net zero reductions and the benefits of transitioning to a carbon neutral and climate resilient society, unless the Council also leads on enabling everyone, business included, to benefit. Some of this is articulated in the section on “championing of green economic activity” but needs further detail to be added. Is it that businesses will be supported through, best practise guides, funding and help with funding sources, retrofit support, guidance on best practice and funding for waste management, etc?

**5. The first five years. Do you have any comments on any of the proposed actions for the first five years?**

The actions to support the achievement of net zero emissions and actions to build climate resilience are internal to the Council and we support them. Again, we stress the need to share these learnings and so we fully support these actions:

- Work with partners to reduce district emissions through the Climate Change Partnership Board

- Prepare and publicise best-practice guides, design standards and policies that help residents and businesses with climate action
- Deliver an ongoing multi-channel engagement programme to inform, educate and gather feedback on climate change.

The questions are how will this activity will be financed and what are the barriers to change? We appreciate the actions table sets out next steps on funding.

We also agree with the need to “incorporate robust climate change mitigation and adaptation policies into the Local Plan”, but acknowledge that supporting and enabling retrofitting is also important, including the complexities of heritage buildings.

**6. Do you have any comments on any of the proposed actions?**

**Building on DCA4 (“district engagement”), we believe these statements are essential and would like to see them incorporated into the actions:**

- “Prepare and publicise best-practice guides, design standards and policies that help residents and businesses with climate action”
- “Champion economic activity that delivers climate action, work with strategic partners to enable and deliver projects at a district level that reduce emissions

**7. Other comments on the draft Climate Change Action Plan**

We appreciate this is a work in progress and that some of the activity to enable the transition to net zero is being worked out in the CCPB, but we feel this action plan needs to articulate the Council’s vision to support other organisations and businesses, and to translate its learnings, for example, on retrofitting commercial property and embedding circular economy principles.

**8. How did you find out about this consultation?**

Email from the Council, word of mouth, Council socials