



For Immediate Release

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### **Working together to support climate change action**

Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council has joined forces with Sustainable Overton community climate change group to help other parts of the borough to take local climate action, including setting up their own renewable energy projects.

The borough's climate change officers have supported the Overton group to produce two online toolkits to pass on their knowledge and encourage other residents to form similar climate change groups.

Sustainable Overton was set up by Overton Parish Council in September 2019 after declaring a Climate Emergency. Its goal is to become a carbon-neutral village by 2030, in line with the borough council's own ambitious targets for carbon reduction.

The group hopes more residents will invest in local green energy projects, which can support local jobs, help building owners save money on bills and generate income for the investors, which can be directed to local causes such as tackling fuel poverty.

Overton has been successful in its bid for a Rural Community Energy Fund grant stage 1, which is a feasibility study on installing 0.5 megawatts of rooftop solar photovoltaic panels on a number of local rooftops in the parish.

Cabinet Member for Environment and Enforcement Cllr Hayley Eachus said: "Working with local groups, organisations and businesses is crucial to reducing carbon in the borough. This project with the Sustainable Overton group is an important step forward and we encourage more parishes to do the same.

"These useful guides give guidelines on setting up climate change groups in other local parishes and information on Overton's successful community energy projects, which take us all a step closer to achieving the borough's ambitious Climate Emergency target of a carbon neutral borough by 2030.

"Climate change action such as this will help more people focus on the difference they can make and the opportunities in doing so, such as lowering their energy bills and fostering an increased sense of community."

Alison Zarecky, chair of Sustainable Overton added: "We are delighted that we have been able to progress this project, thanks to Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council and help from their climate change officers.

"Setting up community energy projects is particularly important in helping us fight climate change. We have sun, wind and water in Hampshire, so plenty of opportunity to harness this to produce our own renewable, green energy, especially given Hampshire currently only produces a small proportion of the energy we consume."

Sustainable Overton is also working in partnership with Community Energy South and Hampshire County Council, so that other parishes in the county can set up their own community energy projects.

Find out more about Sustainable Overton's energy toolkits at <https://www.sustainableoverton.org.uk/our-group-toolkit> and <https://www.sustainableoverton.org.uk/energy-toolkit>

**ENDS**

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