Draft Climate and Nature Strategy Summary July 2025

Gases like carbon dioxide and methane, released by human activities, are increasing in our atmosphere and causing rapid warming of our planet leading to big changes to our climate, weather, and nature. Our climate and nature strategy will help us reduce the carbon pollution created by Stroud District Council, and all those who live and work in Stroud District, to as close to zero as possible. We also want to make sure that we reduce the impact of our activities on plants and animals and the places they live.

Many of the actions we need to put in place to slow down warming and reduce our impact on nature will also improve our standard of living and make our society fairer. Implementing our strategy to tackle the nature and climate emergencies will help us to create a better quality of life for everyone and a district where:

1. Our homes, workplaces and schools are comfortable, healthy and efficient.
2. We can afford the energy needed to live well and our energy system is fairer, resilient to shocks and not dependent on fossil fuels.
3. We can easily walk, cycle or use public transport if we choose to and goods are safely transported through our communities without polluting our streets.
4. Our businesses are thriving in a circular economy.
5. We produce less waste through sharing and repairing.
6. We can afford to eat well and sustainably, and our farmers have the capacity and resources to grow and produce sustainable food that helps restore nature.
7. Our towns and villages are protected from flooding, drought, heat and storms and feel resilient and connected to each other.
8. We can build new houses and create new communities that help nature without creating more pollution.
9. We can see and hear that nature is recovering and healthy in the places we live and visit.

Changing our energy systems and making sure our houses are well insulated and using renewable electricity will create jobs, increase skills, improve the comfort of our homes and make them cheaper to live in. Cleaner air and water will improve our physical health and being able to walk in areas rich in nature will improve our mental health. We will be better prepared to prevent and respond to some of the impacts from a warming climate such as storms and heatwaves.

This matters, because our existing houses, roads, bridges and factories are not designed or built to withstand the increased temperatures, rains, floods, droughts and storms that a warming climate will bring. The way we grow and produce our food is not compatible with long periods of much hotter and wetter or dryer weather. We have built towns and villages in places that will be flooded because sea levels are getting higher and it’s raining harder.

Since our buildings, roads, and ways of growing food are not designed for the significant changes to our weather being caused by our pollution, we need to very quickly adapt or change them to cope with more heat, more rain, longer droughts and stronger storms. If we fail to reduce the levels of carbon pollution or protect our buildings and food systems, the intensifying storms, fires, floods, heats, droughts

and sea-level rise will get worse and then the physical and economic destruction and number of deaths caused by them will increase. If we don't stop destroying or polluting natural habitats, then the ability of our planet to produce our air, clean water and food will reduce and life will become much harder and much more uncomfortable for everyone. This is especially true for those who are already disadvantaged economically or physically, including the elderly and children.

If we would like to slow down the rapidly changing physical climate around us, we must reduce the amount of carbon pollution caused by our everyday activities that are powered by fossil fuels like oil, gas and coal. If we delay in doing this, then the new and significantly different weather from the additional carbon pollution will cause much more damage to our society, and that damage will continue to increase and cause more disruption and cost us more that the price of preventing climate change in the first place.