

The mayor's guide to responding to the climate emergency

Hello! I'm looking forward to meeting you or supporting your event. Shrewsbury Town Council, like many other organisations, has declared a climate emergency. The news from around the world is that we have very little time to get to grips with this. So as Mayor I am asking you to take a few minutes to read and respond to my guide. Don't worry; it's not a test; there is no 'pass or 'fail'. My hope is that, by using this guide, you might take a few extra steps to help address the emergency. I'd love to see your responses but promise that any sharing will be anonymised, unless you want me to share your contributions.

Powering Down

Ultimately, it has been the use of coal, gas and oil fuels that has got us in this mess. So we need to both reduce energy use and switch to renewable sources. Shropshire council keeps [this webpage](#) up-to-date with the funding sources that are available to businesses.

[I found this guide from Lumina really useful](#); the first thing I did was to change the 'sleep' settings on my laptop!

Heating is often the biggest energy use, so reducing room temperatures by just 1°C could save up to 10% on bills, and wise use of timer settings will make a big difference.

Avoid stand-by; switch off at the socket if you can. Set computer equipment to go to sleep when not in use during working hours.

Low energy **lighting** is an obvious one, but worth checking, and motion sensors are easy to install and will make additional savings.

Hot water is another big energy user, so flow restrictors, self-closing taps, and of course temperature reduction all save energy. Even cold water is an energy user upstream.

Smart meters give you accurate information and can help identify areas for savings.

Finally, **homeworking** or four-day weeks have been found to be energy-saving whilst often not reducing productivity. Is this something that might suit your organisation?

Are there any 'powering down' steps you can take?

Powering Up

The switch to renewables is both about what comes through the grid, and what can be produced 'on-site'.

Switching provider can promote renewables, but it's not always clear that the offer is genuinely helping to grow the renewables sector. It's not for me to recommend a specific supplier, but [take a look at this article to see the pitfalls and possibilities](#).

There are options for introducing your own renewable energy supply, or joining with others to do so, and [funding might be available](#). There are exciting possibilities in the pipeline with the revival of the weir hydro scheme in Shrewsbury, and there is also [Shropshire and Telford Community Energy](#).

Are there any 'powering up' steps you can take?

Supply chain

As a councillor I know one of the most important ways that councils can make a difference is by looking to ensure suppliers and contractors are addressing the climate emergency. I guess this might go for your organisation too. You are welcome to share my guide with others! You might want to check whether your suppliers have their own policies. A prompt in that direction could make a difference (just as I hope this guide will!).

Can you nudge your suppliers in the right direction?

Transport

Decarbonising transport is essential, and it's not just about EVs. As Mayor I am often cycling to events now (and the town council is adopting electric vehicles). At the time of writing, I'm about to buy an electric bike. Our town now has [e-bike hire](#) and a [bike delivery service](#) which might be useful for your organisation.

Small businesses can make use of the [cycle to work scheme](#) that helps staff with bicycle purchase, including e-bikes.

You might also want to make your voice heard when Shropshire Council consults on these issues. As I write they have a [public transport survey](#), and in the works in a 'Local Transport Plan' that you will be able to comment on.

Can you reduce your transport carbon footprint?

Going circular

'Circular economy' means ensuring resources are kept productive for as long as possible, reducing the impact on the climate and potentially saving money. There are four ways to approach going circular.

Circular by design. Create or use more durable goods and goods that can be repaired or, if necessary, recycled.

Is there an upcoming purchase that could prioritise durability? Is there something that could be repaired rather than replaced?

Circular services. Leasing and subscription services means the owner has an interest in making their products durable and keeping them in good repair. Often the 'hired' version is of a better standard than could be afforded if bought. Waste

is reduced because products are used more frequently and efficiently.

are there products or services that you could access by subscription or leasing?

Repurposing. Better than relying on recycling, is there a way to recover and reuse parts of a product directly? Hipster bars are full of this sort of thing, but the possibilities are endless.

Can you impress your customers and staff with innovative reuse of materials or products?

At the bottom of the list comes **recycling**. If there is really no further use for something, then recovering and reusing the raw materials becomes the priority.

Have you got a good system to ensure your waste is effectively recycled?

Now it's your turn.

Based on my brief guide, or any other sources of advice you have, are there any steps you could take in the next few months in response to each of the questions...

Are there any 'powering down' steps you can take?

Are there any 'powering up' steps you can take?

Can you nudge your suppliers in the right direction?

Can you reduce your transport carbon footprint?

Can you go more circular?...

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are there products or services that you could access by subscription or leasing?

Can you impress your customers and staff with innovative reuse of materials or products?

Have you got a good system to ensure your waste is effectively recycled?

On behalf of myself, the town council, and indeed present and future people of Shrewsbury, thank you very much for taking the time to complete this.

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Cllr. Julian Dean, Mayor of Shrewsbury 2021-22