

## Stephen Hunt

1) I have long been a campaigner for the environment and for climate action. In 2018 I was prominent and active in my support for Preserve Treloar Meadows, which was headed by Ginny Boxall. The campaign sought to protect this rare chalk land wildflower meadow, essential for pollinators which of course are an essential part of our food chain. I famously stood in the path of a tractor that was mowing early, in order to stop the devastation and allow the wild flowers to set seed. When it came to the detailed planning for the meadows I pressed to increase the energy standards in the homes, but sadly the developer, as many are, was intent on a 'fabric first' approach. Even today as we watch hundreds of new houses spring up in and around Alton you will struggle to find any with solar panels, let alone heat pumps. I continue to press for climate and wildlife protection on the new developments, and have raised this matter at all planning meetings I have attended. I have also pressed for more Electric Vehicle parking. The new Alton Leisure Centre has EV parking points which are very welcome. I continue to push for some EV parking as the Alton Station Forecourt renovation goes ahead. I have signed up for Cycle Alton newsletters and strongly support the Alton walking and cycling strategies .

As Leader of the Lib Dem Group I was proud that we managed to get EHDC to pass a Climate Emergency. It was also my suggestion, that was taken up to set up the Cabinet Advisory Panels advising the council on its Climate Strategy and policies. This has been a vehicle where I and other members have been able to make practical suggestions on climate change. In addition to this I was involved with the writing of EHDC's new Constitution - they key to getting the Climate Emergency considered in all of the districts policies, especially in the products and services they buy. The Climate Emergency is now written into the councils rule book which provides the justification for more green actions.

2) Of course the answer to this does depend on who controls Hampshire County Council after the election. Sadly current cabinet members have chosen not taken any action on this, to the best of my knowledge. To effect a change of control, we need to have a viable group with coherent policies. Independents and small residents groups may not have a critical mass to effect such change. I will push for a shift in investment policy to support limiting global warming to 1.5°C in line with the Paris agreement. The success will depend on a change of régime or at least a balanced council where no party has overall control. I was a member of Surrey County Council when there was no overall control and it actually worked very well, encouraging all parties and residents groups to work together.

3) Transport is vital to the functioning of our society in so many ways, but we must be alive to fact that transporting people or goods increases our net carbon-dioxide and other emissions. I do not want to see a world without travel. Travel broadens our minds, increases our empathy for or cultures and educates us. Just think how many developing nations re-use and repair items, we can learn from them. Travel is not the problem it is the emissions from travelling. The answer is to lower the carbon and ecological footprint of our means of transport. This is easier said than done, but Electric Vehicles can certainly play a significant role. Government dropping the EV vehicle subsidy is a retrograde step. Hampshire is responsible for infrastructure so the provision of more EV charging points, especially on HCC owned land must be a priority. HCC should also encourage the use of

electric bicycles, perhaps by means of grants towards purchase, with financial limits and some clear selection criteria for applicants and strict assessment. Public transport is key to reducing our carbon footprint - it was retrograde of Hampshire County Council to remove bus subsidies. I doubt if the current poor finances at HCC would allow a restoration of bus subsidies but a re-think is certainly required. Certainly if HCC can improve its income, perhaps by higher uptake of other council owned facilities, and investments in green technologies, there may be some more money around in future. We need more joined-up services that better serve our towns and villages and encourage more people to use our buses. Once it is safe to do so we should encourage parents to share school drop-offs. By railway crossings we must have more clear signage to turn off vehicle engines while waiting from trains to pass.

Aviation is the toughest nut to crack on emissions. Although there are technologies in their infancy, such as hydrogen powered planes and aviation fuel made from food waste, it will be difficult to make a major impact on this at county level. Here is another opportunity to consider green investments for example in producing aviation fuel from waste food. That could be double win as currently there is no kerbside waste food collection in Hampshire and many people cannot compost it. Nationally the Liberal Democrats policy of a frequent flyer tax which would escalate the more you fly. There are a lot of details to make sure this is fair to individuals, families and businesses. In the meantime we should limit our trips overseas and try to source as many goods closer to home. HCC could encourage local businesses by improving the digital connectivity of residents and businesses alike.

4) I think a large part of this depends upon infrastructure. Hampshire must provide the correct infrastructure to facilitate local businesses lowering their carbon footprints. We need firms in places accessible by public transport and EV parking on every site. We must encourage more cycle or walk to work schemes. Advice on genuine renewable energy tariffs should be offered to Hampshire businesses. Hampshire County Council spent a fortune with a private company on a carbon-assessment tool. This must be offered to local businesses either directly, if allowed by copyright, or indirectly through HCC officers to guide local firms with new projects. HCC does offer grants and the focus of these could be directed to more environmentally friendly projects.