

## **South Somerset District Council joins UK100 Countryside Climate Network to accelerate net zero goal.**

South Somerset District Council (SSDC) has joined UK100 – a coalition of the most ambitious local leaders in the UK who are committed to achieving Net Zero further and faster than national targets. At Full Council on 21 October, Councillor Sarah Dyke proposed a motion to join UK100, which was supported by members. SSDC joins 112 local authorities who have already taken the UK100 pledge.

Additionally, to make sure our rural voice is heard, we have also joined the Countryside Climate Network (CCN), which is the rural arm of the UK100 network, and currently consists of 28 member Councils. As members of UK100, the CCN are committed to delivering climate action in their communities and amplifying the rural voice as part of our national policy advocacy - bringing the best from cities and the countryside together.

### **What is the UK100 coalition?**

The UK100 coalition is a network of locally elected leaders, who have pledged to play their part in the global effort to accelerate the transition to a Net Zero Carbon society. It brings together local authorities, from cities to the countryside, to share knowledge, collaborate, and petition the UK government with their collective power.

The ambition is to work together to create flourishing communities, seizing the opportunities of renewable technology to create jobs and establishing nationwide projects of renewal, focussed on local needs and goals. The UK100 coalition works closely with elected representatives and policy experts to develop solutions to the challenges local governments face, and to build public support for the transition.

Joining the UK100 is free but will be invaluable for the rewards of shared experience, knowledge and support and build a network across the UK to work with each other and government, challenge Government to move quickly and effectively and to monitor progress, adapting as new technologies come forward.

### **How will it help South Somerset achieve net zero?**

South Somerset must play its part in the building of a network across the UK as we work together to challenge each other and the Government to move quickly and effectively towards addressing climate change. South Somerset is a rural community, often at the frontline of climate change impacts with more extreme weather bringing longer droughts and wetter winters. These impacts will progressively increase over this century and will shift the locations where rural economic activities (such as agriculture, forestry and recreation) can thrive. In addition, two-thirds of our residents live outside the largest urban areas, with climate change bringing distinct challenges to our villages and towns. It is therefore important the rural voice is amplified and at the forefront of climate action. As members of both UK100 and Countryside Climate Network, we will be well equipped to champion the environmental needs of South Somerset.

## **What will happen when the new Somerset unitary council is formed?**

SSDC declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency in 2019 and are working at pace to achieve net zero by 2030 or sooner, by delivering on this declaration through our [Environment Strategy](#). We pledge to continue this work, its review and renewal throughout the unitary transition process and embed it in the creation of the new council.

### **Leader of SSDC Councillor Val Keitch said:**

“There is no doubt that the aim is high and the task is hard, but it is achievable with the right co-ordination and partnership working, both locally and nationally. With the UN Climate Summit COP26, imminent, joining the UK100 is a fantastic opportunity for SSDC to advocate for national changes that will enable all local authorities to reach Net Zero as soon as possible, and it will remove the barriers that local authorities are currently facing when trying to implement ambitious climate action.

### **Portfolio holder for environment Councillor Sarah Dyke added:**

“Being part of the UK100 will accelerate the transition to a Net Zero Carbon society, and bring together local authorities from across the country through sharing experiences, knowledge and support. Since declaring a climate and ecological emergency in May 2019 we are already implementing numerous projects to reach carbon neutrality by 2030 or sooner. As members of UK100 we will have a greater presence and louder voice to do even more to support our communities here in South Somerset.”

### **South Somerset District Council has therefore resolved to:**

- Sign the [UK100 pledge](#);
- Commit to delivering on this declaration through our Environment Strategy and pledge to continue this work, its review and renewal throughout the unitary transition process and embed it in the creation of the new council.
- Continue work on mitigating climate change through membership of the UK100 the alliance of local government leaders for cleaner, more powerful communities
- Join the Countryside Climate Network to ensure the rural voice is amplified and at the forefront of climate action.

You can read our [Environment Strategy](#) and visit our dedicated environment website [www.southsomersetenvironment.co.uk](http://www.southsomersetenvironment.co.uk) to see more of what SSDC is already doing to tackle climate change.