



West Sussex Climate Emergency

CALL FOR ACTION: Write to your County Councillor

On April 5th West Sussex County Council is debating [a motion](#) to Declare a Climate Emergency. Now is the time to seize the moment and mobilise as much support as we can to get this motion passed.

Why declare a Climate Emergency?

The number of local councils 'Declaring a Climate Emergency' has been gathering speed ever since Bristol City Council declared in November 2018. Over [30 councils across the UK](#) have followed suit since, including Oxford, Brighton and Hove, Somerset and Wiltshire. More are declaring every week, and from all political hues. The movement is building into a wave, and is spreading globally.

Declaring a Climate Emergency is a way of shifting climate change from the fringes of council agendas to the centre, and of recognising publicly that 'business as usual' is not going to be good enough to tackle this massive global challenge. '[Our house is on fire](#)', as Swedish schoolgirl Greta Thunberg memorably put it, and we need to take action before it's too late.

What you can do

Contacting our County Councillors to encourage them to back this motion is our best tactic. The more letters and emails they get, the more they'll realise that climate change is a widespread concern amongst their constituents, not just a fringe issue for a few green activists. We want to emphasise that this is a broad-based campaign, not a party political one.

There's three ways to help – please follow up with as many as you can:

- **Write to your own County Councillor** – you can find their names and contact details through the links below.
- **Encourage your friends to write to theirs** – pass on this email, especially to those living in other parts of West Sussex. The more electoral wards we can get to the better.
- **Use your networks to amplify the message** - are there groups you're part of with members across the area that you can tap into to encourage their members to write letters (church groups, book groups, conservation volunteers, gardening clubs, etc.)

How to write a good letter

It's best to use your own words. Councillors get bombarded with campaign material and tend to ignore 'cut and paste' letters. But here's the essentials:

- **Introduce yourself** and explain that you live in their constituency – there's not much point in writing to councillors from other areas, as they won't take much notice.
- **Say a few words** about why you are worried about climate change. Is it the 2018 IPCC report that gives us only 12 years to act before irreversible climate change? Extinction of insects and other species? The effects of global disruption on your grandchildren?
- **Urge them to support the motion** to declare a Climate Emergency when it comes up for debate.

How to contact your Councillor

The 'Write to Them' website is a handy way of finding out who your local County Councillor is, and getting in touch. Just [click this link](#), put in your postcode, select your Councillor, fill in your details, and write your message.

If you'd prefer to send a letter by post, you can get the addresses of local councillors from the [West Sussex](#) County Council website.

Join the demonstration on April 5th

To back up the letter writing campaign, we're also organising a demonstration. Last month, we had over 100 campaigners on the steps outside West Sussex County Council HQ in Chichester when the Climate Emergency motion first came up on the agenda. It was a thoroughly peaceful and happy occasion. We certainly got the attention of county councillors as they filed in for the meeting, and also good [press coverage](#).

We're planning on an even bigger crowd when the Climate Emergency Motion comes back for full debate on Friday April 5th. We are meeting at Chichester Cross at 9.45am, ready to march to Council HQ. It's being organised by Worthing Climate Action Network. Details are available on their [Facebook page](#). Please come along if you're free that day.

About the South East Climate Alliance (SECA)

SECA is a brand new umbrella group set up to coordinate action on climate change across the South East of England. Made up of over 20 local environmental, community and faith groups, we are joining forcing forces on a campaign to get all our district, borough and county councils to declare a Climate Emergency. [Our website](#) has more information on the background to the campaign, and how you can get involved. If you have any questions, feel free to contact us at southeastclimatealliance@gmail.com

Thank you. Your support could really make a difference!

South East Climate Alliance

Website: www.seclimatealliance.uk **Facebook:** @seclimatealliance **Twitter:** @SECA_UK