

Staffordshire & Stoke-On-Trent COP Charter

This Charter was duly and officially declared open for signatories to endorse on the twentieth day of September, two thousand and twenty-four.

Background

The Paris Agreement set a global goal to limit global warming to well below 2 degrees Celsius, ideally 1.5 degrees Celsius, compared to pre-industrial levels. We're seeing the impacts of climate change with more extreme weather events, rising sea levels, and loss of biodiversity. Even though there's been progress in renewable energy and electric vehicles, we need to accelerate our efforts to cut emissions significantly and adapt to the changing climate.

Vision

Our vision is to foster a region where economic activities are designed to enhance human well-being while preserving the ecological integrity of our planet. Based on the principles of Doughnut Economics, we strive to ensure that no one falls short on life's essentials (from food and housing to healthcare and political voice), while ensuring that collectively we do not overshoot our pressure on Earth's life-supporting systems through place-based, coordinated and aligned activity for Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent.

Objectives

- 1. Climate Action:** Implement and advocate for effective measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in line with the Paris Agreement targets, aiming for net-zero emissions by 2050.
- 2. Sustainable Development:** Promote sustainable practices across all sectors, including (but not limited to) energy, transport, agriculture, and waste management, to minimise environmental impact and enhance resource efficiency.
- 3. Nature and Biodiversity:** Act to halt and reverse biodiversity loss and support the health and resilience of our natural environment by aligning with the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework targets.
- 4. Inclusive Engagement:** Foster active participation from all sectors of society, ensuring that local communities are involved in decision-making processes and benefit from the transition to a sustainable future.
- 5. Equity and Social Justice:** Address inequalities by ensuring that the benefits of sustainable development are shared fairly and that vulnerable populations are protected from the adverse effects of environmental changes.
- 6. Education and Awareness:** Enhance understanding of climate change, sustainability, and Doughnut Economics through educational programs and initiatives that empower individuals and organisations to take meaningful action.

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Commitments

As signatories to this charter, we commit to:

- **Drive Climate Change & Nature Mitigation and Adaptation:** Consider Climate Change, nature and wider sustainability impacts within decision making processes.
- **Support and Explore Doughnut Economics:** Encourage the exploration and consideration of Doughnut Economics principles in our policies, strategies, and operations to strive for a balanced approach to development and sustainability.
- **Collaborate and Share Best Practices:** Work together across sectors to share knowledge, innovations, and best practices that support our collective climate and sustainability goals.
- **Report and Monitor Progress:** Establish transparent mechanisms to monitor, report, and review our progress towards achieving the objectives of this charter.
- **Support and Implement Local Initiatives:** Encourage and participate in local projects and initiatives that align with the goals of this charter, fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility within the community.

Duration and Review

This charter shall guide our actions from March 2024 to March 2034. Upon completion of this period, we will review our progress, assess the effectiveness of our strategies, and renew our commitments for the future. The Charter, in agreement with signatories, may be updated to reflect demand shifts and local need as the programme of work develops within the next 10 years.

Signatories

We, the undersigned organisations, councils, civic societies, and individuals, recognise the urgent need to address climate change and environmental degradation. In alignment with the principles of Doughnut Economics, which emphasises the balance between meeting human needs and respecting planetary boundaries, we commit to a transformative 10-year programme (March 2024 - March 2034) to create a sustainable and thriving future for all.

By signing this charter, we affirm our dedication to creating a sustainable and equitable future for Staffordshire & Stoke-On-Trent. We invite all stakeholders to join us in this critical endeavour to safeguard our environment and enhance the quality of life for present and future generations.

To become a signatory and sign this document electronically, please visit staffordshirecop.com/charter-signatory

For more information or any questions relating to this Charter please contact info@staffordshirecop.com



Addendum 1 - Doughnut Economics: A Framework for Place-Based Action

Doughnut Economics, developed by British economist Kate Raworth, offers a radical rethinking of traditional economic theory, focusing on the need to operate within planetary limits while ensuring that every individual's basic needs are met. The model, which takes the shape of a doughnut, has attracted significant attention for its holistic approach to sustainability and equity, providing a framework for shaping economic development at the local, national, and global levels. By focusing on environmental sustainability and social justice, Doughnut Economics offers a powerful guide for place-based action—community-led initiatives that address local challenges in a way that aligns with global sustainability goals.

Understanding the Doughnut Model

At the heart of Doughnut Economics is the concept of a "safe and just space for humanity." This space is represented by the area between two rings in the doughnut diagram. The inner ring defines the minimum social foundation required for human well-being, such as access to food, clean water, healthcare, education, housing, and political participation. Falling below this ring results in social shortfalls, where people's basic needs are not met.

The outer ring represents the ecological ceiling, which is based on the planet's natural limits, known as planetary boundaries. These include thresholds for issues like climate change, biodiversity loss, ocean acidification, and freshwater depletion. Exceeding these boundaries leads to environmental degradation, which compromises Earth's ability to sustain life.

The aim of Doughnut Economics is to ensure that societies can live within the "doughnut"—the space between the social foundation and the ecological ceiling—meeting everyone's needs without damaging the environment. This approach challenges the traditional pursuit of unlimited economic growth and instead advocates for a balanced and sustainable way of living.

Doughnut Economics and Place-Based Action

While Doughnut Economics provides a global framework, it is highly adaptable to place-based action, which involves addressing local issues with context-specific solutions. Communities, regions, and cities have distinct economic, environmental, and social dynamics that require tailored approaches. The doughnut model provides a structured way for communities to assess their unique situation and develop plans that balance environmental sustainability with social well-being.

1. Localising Sustainability Goals

The doughnut model enables communities to set local sustainability targets that reflect both the global need for environmental protection and the specific social and economic conditions of their region. For example, a city located in a flood-prone area might prioritise climate adaptation strategies such as flood defences and sustainable urban drainage systems, while a rural area might focus on land conservation and sustainable agriculture.

Addendum 1 - Doughnut Economics Overview: A Framework for Place-Based Action

By using Doughnut Economics as a lens, local authorities, businesses, and community groups can work together to develop plans that align with both ecological boundaries and social needs. The visual simplicity of the doughnut diagram also makes it an effective tool for engaging a broad range of stakeholders, encouraging them to take ownership of the sustainability goals for their area.

2. Encouraging Collaboration Across Sectors

Place-based action requires collaboration across sectors, and Doughnut Economics promotes this by encouraging partnerships between local government, businesses, educational institutions, and civil society. No single organisation can solve the complex challenges of sustainability alone, but by working together, communities can combine resources and expertise to achieve shared goals. For instance, a city aiming to become carbon-neutral could use the doughnut framework to bring together local businesses, transport providers, and residents to create a cohesive strategy. Businesses might commit to reducing their emissions through circular economy practices, while local authorities could improve public transport and promote energy-efficient housing. The model's emphasis on collaboration helps ensure that efforts are aligned and that all parts of the community are working towards a common vision.

3. Addressing Social Inequality Locally

One of the key strengths of Doughnut Economics is its focus on social justice alongside environmental sustainability. Place-based action using this framework ensures that efforts to protect the environment do not worsen inequality or leave disadvantaged groups behind. In fact, the doughnut model prioritises reducing social shortfalls, such as poverty and lack of access to education, as an integral part of sustainability.

For example, a local council implementing Doughnut Economics might focus on ensuring that any new green infrastructure projects also benefit low-income communities. This could include creating affordable, energy-efficient housing or investing in public transport systems that improve access to job opportunities. By addressing both environmental and social challenges simultaneously, communities can create more inclusive and resilient economies.

4. Stimulating Local Economies Through Sustainable Innovation

Doughnut Economics encourages innovation, particularly in areas that promote both social and environmental well-being. Place-based action is an ideal platform for experimenting with new approaches to sustainability, allowing local economies to develop in ways that protect the environment and benefit local people.

Cities like Amsterdam have adopted the doughnut framework to guide their transition to a circular economy, reducing waste and promoting reuse in sectors like construction and manufacturing.



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Rural areas, on the other hand, might focus on regenerative agriculture practices, which restore soil health and improve biodiversity while supporting local farmers. By fostering innovation in these areas, communities can create new economic opportunities that align with sustainability goals.

5. Adapting and Monitoring Progress

The doughnut model provides a clear structure for communities to monitor their progress over time, ensuring that place-based action remains focused and effective. Local authorities can set measurable targets for social and environmental outcomes and regularly assess their performance against these goals. This ongoing monitoring allows communities to adapt their strategies based on changing circumstances, ensuring they remain on track towards achieving long-term sustainability. For example, a city might set a goal to reduce carbon emissions by 50% over the next decade. Using the doughnut framework, the city could track its emissions reductions and evaluate the effectiveness of its strategies, adjusting its approach as needed. This ability to adapt is crucial in a rapidly changing world, where local actions must respond to both global challenges and local needs.

Summary

Doughnut Economics offers a transformative approach to economic development, one that places the well-being of people and the planet at the heart of decision-making. Its focus on creating a "safe and just space" for humanity makes it an ideal framework for guiding place-based action, helping communities develop locally relevant solutions that align with global sustainability goals.

By using the doughnut model, communities can set clear and achievable sustainability targets, foster collaboration across sectors, address social inequalities, stimulate innovation, and continuously monitor their progress. Whether in cities, towns, or rural areas, Doughnut Economics provides a powerful tool for creating economies that are both sustainable and inclusive, ensuring a better future for all.

In an era of increasing environmental and social challenges, Doughnut Economics offers hope and direction. It helps local communities embrace sustainability while addressing the specific issues that matter most to them, proving that local action can contribute to global solutions.