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Climate Emergency Action Plan

JANUARY 2022 REPORT

WBC Progress Report Summary

This report details progress made on the Climate Emergency Action Plan in the 6 months between August 2021 to January 2022. The highlights from each priority area are summarised, along with deliverables planned for the next three months and any new actions added to the CEAP. The report also presents a summary of national context influencing the agenda. Full details are available in the annual report (July 2021).

This report also highlights council emissions, including more detail on the sources and the related actions being taken towards minimising these.

Carbon Emissions 2021

The Government released the latest carbon emission figures in June 2021, which revealed that Wokingham Borough's overall carbon footprint was **557.0 ktCO₂e** in 2019. This is comprised of transport emissions 352.5 kt CO₂e (63%), emissions from the industrial and commercial sector 134 Kt CO₂e (23%), and domestic emissions 256.7 Kt CO₂e (45%). Carbon sequestration in the Borough accounts for 17.4 kt CO₂e a year through forestry and natural land use (LULUCF), which is around -3.1% of the Borough's carbon footprint. This breakdown can be seen in Figure 1.

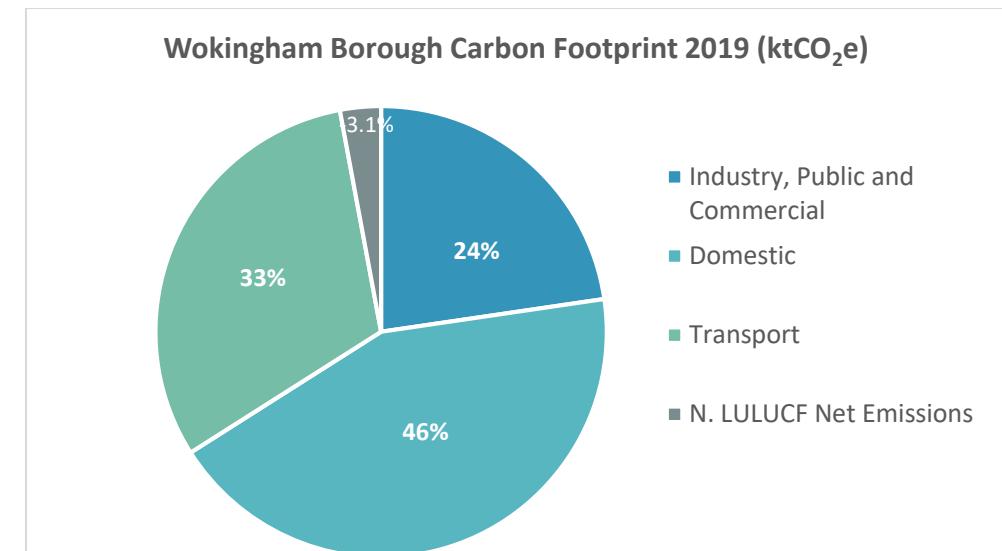
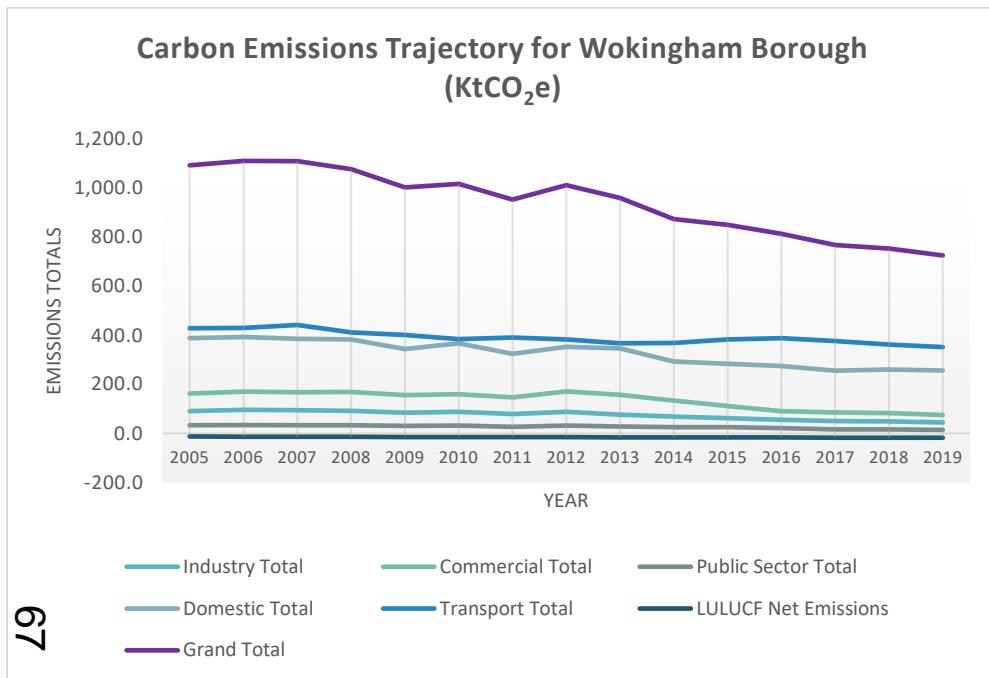


Figure 1 Wokingham Borough Carbon Footprint 2020 (Figures from 2021, BEIS)

Carbon dioxide emissions declined by 23.1 ktCO₂e from the baseline of 580.9 ktCO₂e which was reported in the 2019 Climate Emergency Action Plan. The estimation for 2017 carbon emissions were also revised. The trajectory of carbon emissions for Wokingham Borough have been steadily decreasing since 2012. This can be seen in Figure 2.



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This footprint is based on government figures, reported two years in arrears, from the department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS)¹.

Note¹ BEIS has an annual improvement program which leads to revisions of data from year to year. This means that for the latest Local Authority stats where new data was published for 2018, the data covering 2005-2017 were revised. The emission factors applied to transport and electricity from 2017 to 2018 changed slightly. This had a minimal impact on the figures used for the baseline.

Council Emissions 2021

Within this wider borough target, the council aims to become a carbon neutral organisation by 2030. To measure progress on this the council will calculate its gross emissions through the Local Authority GHG Accounting Tool², which applies standard emissions factors to consumption figures and is designed specifically for local authorities.

Emissions Summary

Scope	Emissions Type	Emissions (tCO ₂ e)	Percentage of Total Emissions
Scope 1	Heating	1,289.04	26.2%
	Fugitive Emissions	0.00	0.0%
	Authority's Fleet	59.22	1.2%
Scope 2	Electricity	3,079.53	62.6%
Scope 3	Staff Business Travel	141.08	2.9%
	Outsourced Fleet	2.56	0.1%
	Transmission & Distribution Losses	272.52	5.5%
	Water	16.04	0.3%
	Material Use	0.00	0.0%
	Waste generated from own operations	57.51	1.2%
	Outsourced Scope 3	0.00	0.0%
	Total Emissions	4,917.50	100%
Green Tariff Electricity		(-)2309.65	
Final Emissions		2607.85	

This is the first year (2021) which these figures have been fully accounted for. Due to some irregularities in figures available with the time lag in

² <https://localpartnerships.org.uk/greenhouse-gas-accounting-tool/>

reporting, some of the months have been estimated based on previous years, to find the best annual estimate for this period.

Covid disruption has had a significant impact on all of these areas, as explained below. Therefore, these figures are not fully representative of the council's usual emissions at this stage and are anticipated to change noticeably in future reports.

Largest Emission Areas

Transport

Due to covid disruption and the resulting lockdowns, many council staff have been working from home where possible. This has been an unexpected positive and means this aspect is well ahead of target, leading to a drastic drop in transport emissions for the council.

However, elements remain, primarily from the use of council owned or private petrol/diesel vehicles for council work, representing a total of 20.29 tCO₂e across all scopes.

In response, as explained fully in the below table, the council is currently reviewing its own fleet towards ultra-low emission vehicles by 2028, along with a number of actions to encourage staff to reduce their mileage and transitioning to EVs for business purposes and commuting where possible, to reduce emissions.

Waste

In 2020/21 the council produced approximately 157 tonnes of waste, of which 35 tonnes was recycled, as shown below.

Type	Amount	tCO ₂ e
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Glass	2	0.04
Commercial Waste	122	56.77
DMR (Dry Recyclables)	33	0.7

Council targets for waste are aligned with the CEAP and therefore aims for a 70% recycling rate by 2030. This includes new practices already in place such as the implementation of a zero single use plastic use policy in commercial areas, along with increased separation of food waste and dry recyclables.

Buildings and Energy

The scope in this report now includes all council run sites, not just offices, this represents by far the largest area of emissions, contributing 94.38% and 4641.1 tCO₂e across all scopes. By excluding streetlighting, which the council has minimal influence over, this figure would fall to 3,924.35 tCO₂e.

For this calendar year these figures are also above usual levels due to covid disruption, as protocols on leaving windows open for circulation has led to increased heating and energy usage overall, meaning this is anticipated to fall once these procedures are removed. In response, the council is currently implementing a wide range of energy efficiency improvements at all owned properties, towards carbon neutral standards by 2028, which will also apply to new builds.

Meanwhile, the council is also working towards sourcing as much electricity as possible from green tariffs, with 75% of the current electricity purchased coming from these sources across the period.

This is supported by additional significant investment in renewable energy sources including the solar farm, along with renewable energy installations in council buildings when feasible, to ensure capacity is available.

Transport

Carbon savings: 56355.24 tCO₂e

Being one of the key sectors which contributes towards emissions in the borough, transport targets remain a priority for the council, with significant progress being made in a number of areas. However, the delivery of many projects has been massively affected and temporarily delayed in many cases, due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Planned infrastructure work, changes and delivering training has been difficult during the past year, while policy changes to discourage public transport use and limit users in this period has led to sharp decline in numbers using these services. While these have begun to recover as restrictions are eased, they remain very uncertain along many other projects. Overall, this means much of the progress is temporarily halted (unless otherwise stated) while the potential implications of Covid-19 are assessed, to ensure the correct direction is taken following the scale of changes to working and transport patterns on the whole. Fortunately, despite these difficulties many programs were still able to be run successfully, and as a result of the government ban on non-essential travel and resulting rise in home working, there was a 31% decrease in car-use, leading savings of 44,930.85 tCO₂e being achieved this year.

Highlights August – January 2022

These milestones have been completed in the action plan:

- Reviewed bus routes and re-tendered to save 2551.38kg CO₂e for the year.
- Cantley park section of greenways completed.
- LCTS consultation complete.
- The town centre strategy is complete.
- The bus strategy for North Aborfield has been published and an implementation plan agreed.
- Managers have discussed the need for and preferences of home or flexible working patterns with staff, completing the required surveys. Only those staff required will be coming into the office at this stage.
- Two more schools have had their modeshift star accreditation confirmed
- Bus Service Improvement Plan completed which aims to boost passenger numbers to 3 million and improve many aspects.
- London Road trial installed a 1,321m stretch of plastic kerbing, saving 40,555kg of carbon.

SDGs



Deliverables planned for the next three months:

- Intelligent transport systems strategy underway. Installing technology across 140 locations borough wide.
- Staff commuting survey Feb 2022.
- The Woodley/Reading Active Route has been identified as one of the strategic connections in the emerging LCWIP

Electric Vehicles

Carbon savings: 981 tCO₂e

Being one of the key sectors which contributes towards emissions in the borough, supporting the transition to transport electrification remain a priority for the council.

Highlights August – January 2022

These milestones have been completed in the action plan:

- 185 active sockets installed, with a further 190 planned. This means 981,786 kgCO₂ savings have been identified, which helps to address the current gap.
- A uniform method of accessing public and private charge points provided. Access requires contacting the EV team for permission and a quick guide.
- All EV charging points installed in the Borough are 'smart ready'.
- Businesses have been engaged following low carbon workspace grants and the benefits and viability of EVs highlighted.

Deliverables planned for the next three months:

- EV Strategy to be completed, which will inform other actions.
- Feasibility study for on street and council owned car parks to be completed.
- A small-scale project focusing on the installation of EV chargepoint infrastructure in on-street residential locations where off-street parking is not available is in progress.
- Provision of chargepoints in council-owned car parks enabling residents to charge their car both during the day and overnight. The exact number of chargepoints would be specified following demand analysis.

SDGs



New Actions

There are no new actions for this section of the CEAP for this quarter.

Air Quality

Carbon savings: Carbon savings for air quality targets are reported in the transport section as the actions overlap.

Wokingham Borough Council's efforts over the last year have focused on tackling the levels of air pollutants, particularly in the Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) in the borough. Mitigations to tackle all pollutants including Particulate Matter 2.5 (PM2.5) and Nitrogen oxides (NOx) align with measures to reduce carbon emissions in the borough such as by reducing idling, congestion and increasing awareness through education, to name a few.

New Actions

There are no new actions to note for this section of the CEAP for this quarter.



SDGs



Highlights August – January 2022

These milestones have been completed in the action plan:

- The 2021 Annual Status Report (ASR) was accepted by DEFRA and stated that the council to continue its excellent work around air quality and confirmed there will be no change to the AQMAs as the diffusion tube sites of NO₂ levels in Wokingham borough have shown a decreasing trend since the 2016 and have not exceeded the annual mean average.
- Mobile diffusion tubes have been placed at an addition 2 schools, totalling 8 schools in the Borough as part of the Eco-Travel Officer programme.
- The Public Protection Partnership (PPP) have been awarded £259K from the DEFRA Air Quality grant programme. An Air Quality Officer has been successfully recruited to post and procurement activities have commenced.
- The PPP have applied for further funding to monitor PM2.5 levels at 4 different sites across the PPP area.
- PPP have launched a bumper sticker competition in schools to engage children in issues of air quality and anti-idling.

Deliverables planned for the next three months:

- The PPP is currently recruiting a behaviour change specialist to focus on reducing idling.

Renewable Energy Generation

Carbon savings: 20 tCO₂e

Over the last year, Wokingham Borough Council has worked in setting the ground to deliver projects that will increase the generation of renewable energy across the Borough. Our targets to increase generation of renewable energy through investing in solar farms and to support the generation of renewable energy in the Borough remain.

The council has also delivered the installation of renewable energy systems in public buildings and is planning to continue on this trajectory.

Highlights August –January 2022

These milestones have been completed in the action plan

- 7 Barkham Ride Solar farm delivery stage started. Procurement routes initially under review.
- Hybrid renewable projects (PV and battery) implemented at Bulmershe & Shinfield Infant School, stage 1 completed.
- Hillside School – installation of solar shelter has gone through planning. Installation expected in December/January phase 1.
- Grovelands park (prefabricated mobile homes) – tenanted properties. Pilot projects include solar and battery installation on progress. Working in partnership with Social Energy.
- Fuel Poverty Working Group set up and looking at supporting most vulnerable people within the Borough.

Deliverables planned for the next three months:

- Next steps for the Wokingham Community Energy scheme to be confirmed. Next steps meeting with key stakeholders to take place over this quarter.
- Start the development of the Energy Management Plan – this will include an analysis of the energy requirements for the council buildings
- Schools projects including the Hillside Solar hybrid, phase 1.

SDGs



New Actions

- Pilot projects Groveslans park – tenanted properties

Retrofitting Domestic and Commercial

Carbon savings: 4.4 tCO₂e

Over the last year, the council introduced and started the delivery of the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) and Green Homes Grant schemes. These seek to support residents to reduce their energy usage and carbon emissions and increase the uptake of green energy technologies.

Households who install energy saving measures will see significant savings in their energy bills and carbon emissions. Many of the households benefited will be low-income or vulnerable households on benefits, whose homes currently have poor energy efficiency ratings.

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Despite the limitations caused by lockdowns, council assets and schools have also been retrofitted. Feasibility assessments have been of pilot schemes in council houses and Woodley.

Additionally, the council is progressing with the Workplace reimagine project, which will reduce our office footprint to an area equivalent to 50% of our workforce.

SDGs



Highlights August –January 2022

These milestones have been completed in the action plan

- A Focus Group for the delivery of the Green Bank Project has been set up and is currently reviewing different proposals and opportunities (Solar Together, Lendology, etc.).
- Energy Company Obligation (ECO) schemes – Over the last three months around 75 properties were retrofitted.
- GHG-LAD2 – bidding progressed
- Schools' projects, Holt School, South Lake Primary School, Radstock, Aldryngton School – LED installation
- Low Carbon Workspaces projected reduction in carbon emissions from SMEs (annual saving 468 tCO₂e) – Projects mainly being LED Lighting and solar installation.

Deliverables planned for the next three months:

- Target to deliver 20 installation per week under the ECO scheme
- GHG-LAD2 – commence delivery on the second quarter
- Projects coming up on schools
- Start the development of the Energy Management Plan – this will include an analysis of the energy requirements for the council buildings and program for retrofitting and heath decarbonisation

New Actions

There are no new actions in this section.

Carbon Sequestration

Carbon savings: 5,250 tCO₂e³ per year once mature

The actions identified in our plan seek to not only address climate change but also to improve our local air quality, protect and enhance important habitats and safeguard our local biodiversity. The council has committed to plant 250,000 trees by 2025.

Over the last year we have focused on doing the groundwork that will ensure the long-term sustainability of this project as it is essential to consider the maintenance of the trees in the long-term, as well as making sure we choose the right tree for the right location, promote native tree planting and well targeted woodland creation, as well as encouraging retention of trees.

The delivery of tree planting will be supported by a Tree Strategy, this will help meet statutory biodiversity obligations, while maximising the wide range of benefits that trees and woods can deliver for health, amenity, climate change and water management.

The council plans also include projects to manage grassland, rewild land, and protect and enhance wetland habitats.

Highlights August to January 2022

These milestones have been completed in the action plan:

- In July 2021 the business case for the Tree Project was presented to The Executive and approval was given to begin Phase 1. This will include a Feasibility Study, development of a Tree Strategy, a Garden Forest scheme and planting on small scale sites.²
- The project manager was recruited and started scoping sites and opportunities across the borough. The Project Board is now in place.
- The Tree strategy working group was set up and running.
- Further engagement with towns & parish councils to support the Tree Project.
- [Garden Forest Scheme](#) was launched in November and invites residents to get involved by planting one or more trees in their garden.

SDGs



Engaging Schools and Young People

³ <https://www.viessmann.co.uk/heating-advice/how-much-co2-does-tree-absorb#:~:text=A%20typical%20tree%20can%20absorb,around%20a%20tonne%20of%20CO2>.

Carbon savings

There are no additional carbon savings identified for this section of the CEAP this quarter.

Highlights August – January 2022

These milestones have been completed in the action plan:

- My Journey completed summer and winter competitions in primary schools, and currently running a film competition for secondary school students.
- A total of 1025 children have been trained on bikability courses so far in 2021 (up to November).
- Two more schools have had their Modeshift STARS accreditation confirmed, one Green and one Silver. Another school had a formal awards ceremony for their Platinum accreditation. Four further schools have been engaged with for the first time.
- Display Energy Certificates completed at 55 schools.
- 26 energy efficiency projects completed over 2021 (up to November).

- The council's second Youth Climate Conference was held on 24th November for the borough's secondary school students. The conference can be viewed [here](#).
- Tree planting has taken place in 3 schools after the council's promotion of the Woodland Trust's free tree packs.

Deliverables planned for the next three months:

- Continue with retrofit and solar PV installation programme in schools across the borough.
- Engagement via the community deliberative process.
- Teachers (both Primary & Secondary) now sit on the Climate Emergency Advisory Board.

New Actions

There are no new actions for this section.

SDGs



Waste and Recycling

Carbon savings: 15,502.79 tCO₂e

Overall, this year's total waste increased to 71,664 tonnes, with the recycling rate at 49.7% as compared to 50.3% in 2019/20.

However, as waste emissions are outside of the borough's scope and not included in the initial figures, they have not been included in the overall savings figures but remain here to demonstrate the potential savings which can be achieved towards global emissions from these initiatives and highlight the importance of such measures.

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This is thanks to the successful implementation of a number of initiatives around the existing waste and recycling goals set out in the initial plan. These include new measures for improving the quality collected recyclables and several campaigns to increase awareness.

New Actions

Target 26: Engage school children in recycling via Green Team & Youth Council

Highlights August to January 2022

These milestones have been completed in the action plan

- Waste Strategy approved – First round of consultation now complete.
- Conducted surveys to identify sites to target for food waste.
- A number of successful campaigns and communications have been run in this area and continue to do so, including comms on food waste over Halloween and festive period.
- 10 champions contacted so on target, can identify and respond to issues quickly.
- Low participation food waste areas identified and targeted with straw pool observations and surveys to identify barriers.
- Conversation with multiple developers to improve their provision of communal dwellings waste and recycling materials, along with engagement in initiatives.
- Youth Council climate themed event completed.

Deliverables planned for the next three months

- Member Working Group to be formed.
- To be included in CDP Questionnaire 2022, with recordings from various stakeholders.
- Signage currently being designed to promote food waste recycling as well as general recycling.



New Development

Carbon savings: None to report at this time.

The Local Plan Update (LPU) is progressing. The Revised Growth Strategy proposed by the Draft Local Plan reflects preferences expressed in earlier consultations for most new development to be focused in carefully planned major new communities, rather than scattered piecemeal across all our towns and villages. This allows the council to provide suitable high-quality infrastructure.

The consultation included a full draft plan document setting out proposals for where development should go and how it should be managed. This covered a range of topics including proposed allocations for housing and other development, climate change, sustainable transport, affordable housing, and many more.

Policies within the LPU are being refined with consideration given to feedback received through the consultation. In addition, specific climate change evidence has been commissioned to support policy development. This is a key part of evidencing that the requirements will contribute towards the goals relating to new development in the Climate Emergency Action Plan.

The council owned development has been assessed and measures to improved energy efficiency, reduce carbon emissions, and when possible, make new buildings net-zero carbon have been introduced.

Highlights August to January 2022

These milestones have been completed in the action plan

- Initial assessment to all new council development to assess stage of development and possible interventions to committed buildings. Over 15 schemes of new capital projects have been reviewed to low carbon or net-zero standards. Including [Carnival Hub Development](#) and Gorse Ride redevelopment.
- Dinton Activity Centre, the first carbon-positive building built in the Borough. The new building will generate all of its own power (using solar panels and heat pumps) and will generate more green energy than it uses.
- [The Right Homes, Right Places – Revised Growth Strategy](#) consultation is open from 22 November 2021 to Monday 24 January 2022.

Deliverables planned for the next three months:

- Climate Change Evidence Base report to be completed.

New Actions

Target 26.2 removed as the same as 27.2.

Procurement

Carbon savings:

Procurement drives carbon savings throughout the other sections of the plan. This section of the action plan focuses on how the council can utilise its influence to encourage suppliers to also reduce their emissions, by implementing policies which incorporate this as a requirement/criteria in the overall procurement selection process.

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It also covers training staff on this topic and other methods through which CE is being embedded into the governance and decision making within the council. This is primarily through an assessment tool which assists staff in identifying the potential impacts of projects and how they can potentially mitigate these. The majority of the actions are therefore listed as 'Neutral' for their carbon savings.

Highlights August – January 2022

These milestones have been completed in the action plan:

- Procurement Strategy published, which will inform many other actions.
- CE has been embedded into the business case, PID Document and PM Sizing Tool.
- Temporary CE risk assessment tool applied to Exec Papers

Deliverables planned for the next three months:

- Climate Change Assessment Tool and Guidance to be completed.
- CE E-learning module and coaching feasibility study underway.

New Actions

- The old actions 33.3 and 32.5 have been removed as identical to 32.4

SDGs



Engagement and Behaviour Change

Carbon savings: Engagement and behavioural change drives carbon savings throughout the other sections of the plan. This section of the action plan focuses on engagement with the aim of promoting and accelerating the shift to more sustainable behaviours amongst our residents, businesses, schools and community organisations and will feed into the carbon savings achieved elsewhere on this action plan such as increased use of public transport, as well as reducing out of scope emissions from purchases of goods and services. The majority of the actions are therefore listed as 'Neutral' for their carbon savings.

Highlights August – January 2022

These milestones have been completed in the action plan:

- The monthly climate emergency newsletter launched at the end of July, with four editions now sent out. The newsletter currently has 3,561 subscribers.
- The last quarter has seen 23 news articles published, that are either directly or indirectly linked to Climate Emergency
- The second climate conversation event on carbon footprinting took place on October 2021.
- A campaign to engage businesses with COP26 has run since September, three articles were published in the business matters newsletter to encourage businesses to make net zero carbon pledges.
- The climate emergency drop-in sessions with the towns and parish councils were hosted in September with the Southeast Energy Hub as a guest speaker.
- Market engagement event findings report complete.

Deliverables planned for the next three months:

- Further engagement with business through a range of methods including business matters newsletters, partnership with Low Carbon Workplaces, business engagement officers, etc.
- The next climate conversation is planned for early 2022.
- Improve climate emergency information through council's website.
- Delivery of the Community Deliberative Process.
- A summary update will be included in the upcoming business directory.
- Video sessions planned to support this and engagement projects in the long term to inform residents on key issues.

New Actions

- There are no new actions in this section

Climate Emergency Newsletter

- [August 2021](#)
- [September 2021](#)
- [October 2021](#)
- [November 2021](#)



National Context

COVID-19

The Coronavirus Pandemic led to countries going lockdown across the globe, drastically altering our behaviours. It is estimated that these behaviour changes led to a 26.3% fall in carbon emissions across Europe as countries went into lockdown⁴. Although the restrictions did give the world an understanding of what a less impactful lifestyle would look like, reports have concluded that the respite in environmentally damaging activity was too short to counter decades of change.⁵ Most recently, it has come to light that pandemic has led to an increased demand for single-use plastic with studies showing that more than eight million tons of pandemic-associated plastic waste have been generated globally. This has resulted in over 25,000 tons entering the global ocean. Most of the plastic is from medical waste generated by hospitals that dwarfs the contribution from personal protection equipment and online-shopping package material.

Environment Bill

The Environment Bill has now been passed through Parliament and has become law as the Environment Act (2021). The Act will introduce a new independent regulator: the Office for Environmental Protection (OEP) which will take over regulatory functions formerly performed by the European Commission. The Act also allows for centrally prescribed lists of materials that local authorities must collect for recycling, extended producer responsibility for packaging and a deposit return scheme for drinks containers. This act aims to bring about urgent and meaningful action to combat the environmental and climate crises we are facing and acts as a key vehicle for delivering the bold vision set out in the 25 Year Environment Plan.

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Transport decarbonisation strategy

With transport remaining the highest emitting sector in across the nation, this strategy directly targets not just reducing emissions, but decarbonising the entire transport process away from fossil fuel use, towards more sustainable alternatives such as electricity and hydrogen. This is being done by encouraging and supporting new opportunities and technologies, across a range of areas including domestic and commercial, public transport, aviation and freight. This involves significant new upcoming policies such as bans on diesel/petrol cars and HGVs after 2030/40 respectively, utilising £2bn in funding to do so.

The key theme is a message that the approach for the future is about doing the same things we are already, but in a more efficient way, such as EVs etc. This effectively refers to behaviour change which is a key theme running throughout and is more about how this will be implemented and encouraged. It prioritises moving away from transport planning based on predicting future demand to provide capacity ('predict and provide'), towards planning that sets an outcome communities want to achieve and provides the transport solutions to deliver those outcomes (sometimes referred to as 'vision and validate'). This theory is likely to apply across more than just transport, particularly for climate emergency projects.

⁴ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/science-environment-55412079>

⁵ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/dec/29/could-covid-lockdown-have-helped-save-the-planet>

Hydrogen Strategy

Building on the Ten Point Plan, this strategy examines the potential and plans for hydrogen to provide energy, not just as a fuel source for vehicles, but as a renewable energy source, capable of providing 5GW of low carbon hydrogen production capacity by 2030 for use across the economy. This will require a drastic change in many areas, with a rapid ramp up of production and use of hydrogen over the coming decade needed. Therefore, this strategy examines how this will be accomplished, by again encouraging and supporting the new technology and opportunities in this sector, with £240 million in funding for government co-investment in production capacity through the Net Zero Hydrogen Fund, as part of a wider £1bn fund to accelerate commercialisation of low-carbon technologies and systems for net zero. This includes pilot schemes such as a hydrogen village, along with the implementations of a UK Low Carbon Hydrogen Standard. It also acknowledges the beneficial role hydrogen can play as a storage mechanism for excess renewable energy generation, helping to cover the traditional shortcomings in reliability from these other methods such as wind/solar.

Net Zero Strategy

The overarching document encompasses all of the above strategies towards achieving net zero by 2050, along with all carbon budgets on the way. It outlines the next steps we will take to cut our emissions, seize green economic opportunities, and leverage further private investment into net zero, beyond the £26 billion of government capital investment already mobilised for the green industrial revolution. It targets doing so in a sustainable way that still supports growth and all the new jobs promised in the Ten Point Plan by improving the effectiveness and therefore viability of low carbon alternatives, to make them more competitive. This will ultimately set an example so others can follow.

Heat and Buildings Strategy

The Government also published the Heat and Buildings Strategy on 19 October. This strategy sets out the actions they will be taking to reduce emissions from buildings in the near term and provides a clear long-term framework to enable industry to invest and deliver the transition to low-carbon heating. The Strategy also states that £800 million of additional funding has been granted to the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) over 2022/23 to 2024/25.

Key announcements included: new grants of £5,000 will be available from April next year to encourage homeowners to install more efficient, low carbon heating systems – through a new £450 million 3-year Boiler Upgrade Scheme; an ‘ambition’ to phase-out the installation of natural gas boilers beyond 2035; plans for a strategic decision on the role of hydrogen in heating by 2026. Accompanying consultations were announced on market-based mechanisms for incentivizing low carbon heat; phasing out the installation of new fossil fuel heating in domestic properties off the gas grid; and on phasing out the installation of fossil fuel heating systems in businesses and public buildings off the gas grid.

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