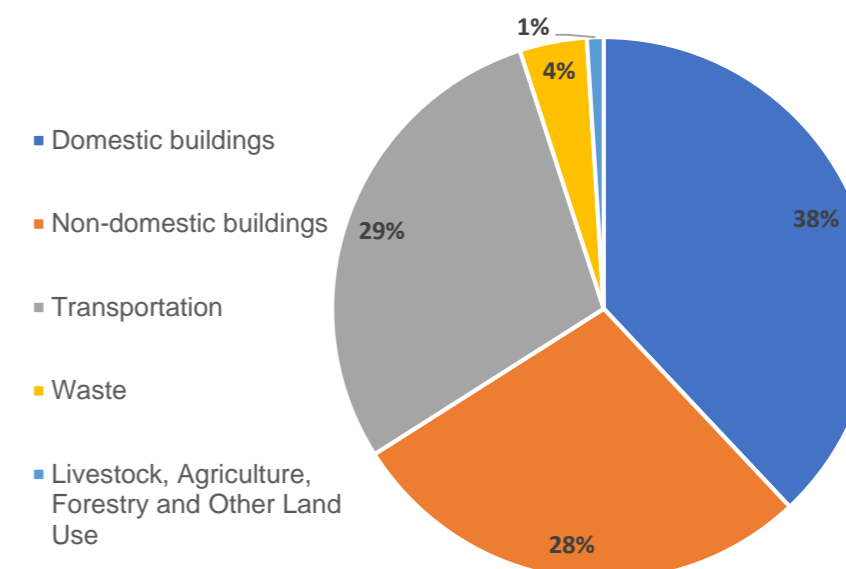


Bath & North East Somerset Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan (updated January 2021)

Bath and North East Somerset Council (B&NES) declared a Climate Emergency in March 2019 and pledged to provide the leadership to enable carbon neutrality in the district by 2030. Tackling the Climate Emergency means creating a different vision for all parts of Bath and North East Somerset, including the World Heritage Site of Bath itself. The Council is committed to providing the leadership to enable this scale of ambition to be realised and recognises that this requires a significant and fundamental shift within all sectors of the community.

In July 2020 the Council also declared an Ecological Emergency in response to the escalating threat to wildlife and ecosystems. The declaration recognises the essential role nature plays in society and the economy and provides a statement of intent to protect our wildlife and habitats, enabling residents to benefit from a green, nature rich environment. The Council has a long and strong history of work on biodiversity, landscape and ecology, which means that there is a considerable amount of action already underway in Bath and North East Somerset and within the wider context of the West of England. Further action planning will be developed during 2021.

Our [first phase of research](#) completed in October 2019 incorporated a district carbon foot-printing exercise, indicating that the main sources of greenhouse-gas emissions across the district are energy use in buildings (66%), and transport (29%), and modelled a pathway to 2030 to cut emissions from these segments. This enabled a clear definition of three immediate priorities for action and the scale and speed of ambition needed to achieve the 2030 target.



Priority areas for action:

- **Energy efficiency improvement** of the majority of existing buildings (domestic and non-domestic) and zero carbon new build;
- **Transport:** a major shift to mass transport, walking and cycling to reduce transport emissions;
- A rapid and large-scale increase in **local renewable energy generation**.

As identified in the [Council report](#) (October 2019), further research is needed on the complex range of land use issues, including biodiversity, soil health, food production and carbon sequestration issues. The second phase of research and development includes road-mapping action against the three priority areas, to identify key next steps that need to be taken to get us on the right trajectory.

Alongside this, a comprehensive community engagement programme will:

- Utilise and build on current work with the Community Forums, the Parish Liaison Committee and parish councils;
- Develop a public communications campaign to ensure that we're enabling well-informed community dialogue and using input to inform ongoing action planning

Part of the Council's response to the Covid pandemic has been to set up the **Renewal Programme**, which is enabling a strategic re-positioning in order to drive action on the Council's priorities. The programme is creating a more comprehensive and collaborative approach to driving climate and nature emergency action across services and accelerating policy and resource alignment through the **Renewal Vision workstream**. The development of the Renewal Vision has 'green recovery' at its heart in order to create a stronger, more diverse and greener local economy that encompasses the 2030 net zero goal and our climate and nature emergency commitments.

Examples of past climate action in Bath and North East Somerset that we are building on:

- **We were the first local authority** to roll out LED street-lighting to our main roads across B&NES. The Council has been upgrading street lighting to energy saving LEDs since 2010. This delivers an annual energy saving (kWh) of 64%.
- Constructed our **award-winning exemplar low carbon office building in 2016**, the Keynsham Civic Centre, with the largest solar PV array in any new public sector building at the time, and one of the lowest energy consuming public buildings in the UK.
- Supported the development of three **community energy companies**: Bath & West Community Energy; Keynsham Community Energy and Chelwood Community Energy
 - Enabled the creation of the award-winning schools' [Energy Sparks](#) project, which is now being rolled out nationally with government support
- Set up ground-breaking '**dynamic purchasing scheme**' to enable local food producers to access public sector catering, now being rolled out by national government
 - We continue to provide home energy efficiency advice and some grant funding via our [Energy at Home](#) advice line
 - Drafted a rigorous zero carbon planning policy for new buildings



Our Energy At Home Advice Service provides residents with expert advice on heating, insulation and renewable energy



Cllr Warren, Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency and Neighbourhood Services launches our toolkit to support parish councils to respond to the Climate Emergency



Food waste in Bath and North East Somerset is transformed into renewable energy to power thousands of homes

Actions taken since declaring a Climate Emergency

- Created a **new dedicated** Climate Emergency cabinet role and a Climate Emergency and Sustainability Policy, Development and Scrutiny Panel
- **Tackling the Climate and Nature Emergency is one of our two core policies** (alongside giving people a bigger say), which will shape everything we do. The three priorities for action have been built into our Corporate Strategy and are reflected in our key principles and commitments
- **Updated the Council decision-making report template** to ensure that every new proposal is aligned with our Climate Emergency commitments
- **Established an internal governance structure**, including a Climate Emergency Senior Officer Group to drive and coordinate cross-departmental action across the council.
 - We have **embedded the Climate Emergency into our budget planning**.
- Established a new **Public Services Climate Emergency workgroup** (includes both universities, the RUH, Avon Fire & Rescue, Wessex Water), that will become part of a new district-wide partnership structure
- Created a **toolkit to help parish councils respond to the Climate Emergency** (seven of whom have now also declared a climate emergency; Freshford parish council, Keynsham town council, Timsbury parish council, Compton Martin parish council, Chew Magna parish council, East Harptree parish council and Radstock town Council). We will be supporting parishes to define and implement community initiatives.
 - Launched a **survey to map community-led climate action** taking place within B&NES to encourage and enable local organisations to collaborate, support each other and share skills.
- Supported the development of the **B&NES Schools' Climate Emergency Network**, launched in December 2019 and attended by representatives from more than half B&NES schools
 - Begun what will become a **comprehensive programme of citizen engagement** across the district, starting with our Community Forums and Parish Councils to stimulate local conversations and partnership working to enable local action within communities
 - Received 'pro bono' analysis from **the University of Bath** on how to use citizens' assemblies or juries to inform action planning
- **Signed up to CDP**, a global platform for cities to measure, manage and disclose environmental data annually.

Planned actions 2021

- Reviewing Council strategies and plans to re-align to the Climate Emergency
- Developing a **new Climate Emergency Commissioning and Procurement Strategy** to ensure all future contracts deliver against the declaration
- The Planning service has begun a **Partial Update of the Local Plan** (coming into force in 2022) to fast track climate and ecological emergency policy updates in advance of a full Local Plan review. The full plan will allow an update to renewable energy targets, though existing targets are no barrier to rapidly increasing capacity.
 - Creating a **new Climate Emergency website** to improve advice and support across the community
- A **climate literacy training programme** has been developed and will be piloted in the first quarter of 2021, prior to full roll-out to staff later in the year. This includes a day long climate leadership course for members and senior managers in March
 - A **review of the value of Citizens' Juries** will be conducted in early 2021, as part of the development of the next phase of the Community Engagement Programme
 - Develop a robust **performance monitoring framework** to record and monitor actions and progress taking place to tackle the climate and ecological emergencies across all service areas.

Priorities areas for action:

Energy Efficient Buildings	
Action	Timeframe
Expand our existing Affordable Warmth Grant scheme and support low income and vulnerable residents. The Housing service has taken advantage of the government's new Green Homes Grant scheme, winning £500k under the local authority led element of the scheme	2020-21
Enabling and inspiring local home energy efficiency improvements by providing expert advice and information and signposting to grants and loans to help cover costs through the Energy at Home advice service, in parallel with investigation into the most suitable council delivery model for significant home energy improvements in the medium- to long-term	2020-21
Review the carbon emissions from all future council capital projects and programmes	2020-21
Enforcement of the Sustainable Construction Checklist which requires a 19% reduction in carbon emissions beyond the national Building Regulations. Responded to the Government's Future Homes Standard consultation on energy conservation to push for higher standards nationally and in B&NES	2020-21
Development of standard specifications and a policy for the whole life carbon footprint of future council housing developments	2020-21
The Corporate Estate review, reported to Cabinet in December 2020 embeds carbon reduction, environmental sustainability and future climate-proofing in the approach to future management. In the 2021/22 budget setting process, the emerging capital programme will include dedicated capital for retrofitting the Council's own buildings, alongside allocation for the development of renewable energy projects within the estate and beyond	2021-22
Work with schools, particularly through the Climate Emergency Schools Network to improve energy efficiency of their buildings. New school projects designed to Passivhaus standard (Two Rivers CofE Primary School, Hygge Park, Keynsham)	2020-21
Continue to work with Bath BID to support the 'shut the door' campaign to get shops, restaurants and cafés, to keep their doors closed during the working day to save energy and help cut fuel bills	2020-21
Exploring and promoting community options for home energy efficiency, such as the Cold Homes Energy Efficiency Survey Experts (C.H.E.E.S.E) Project, which uses thermal imaging to highlight areas of heat loss in people's homes and recommend remedial action	2020-21
Transport and active travel	
Clean Air Zone (CAZ) project implemented in accordance with agreed programme	2020-21
Expand the public electric vehicle charging network across B&NES with funding from the Go Ultra Low West Project, including rapid charging points in public car parks	2020-21
Continue to expand the walking and cycling networks across the district and promote active travel. Consulting on three active travel schemes in 2021; City Centre to University of Bath cycle route, A4 Upper Bristol Road segregated cycle lanes, Combe Down to University of Bath walking and cycling route	2020-21
Commence the delivery of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods to prioritise pedestrians and cyclists in residential areas and carry out a review of residents' parking schemes	2020-21
Develop the business case for The Bath River Line Project and East of Bath cycle route	2020-21

Continue to promote sustainable travel in schools through the school journeys app and awarding schools for excellence in promoting sustainable travel choices through ModeShift stars	2020-21
Pilot a last mile delivery service to reduce supplier journeys into Bath. Ten electrically-assisted cargo bikes have been provided by funding from the Energy Savings Trust in Bath to help businesses make sustainable, pollution-free deliveries.	2020-21
Working with Bristol, South Glos and North Somerset WECA Mass Transit Project to improve mass transit between Bath and Bristol	2021-21
Ensure the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding helps to improve sustainable transport infrastructure	2020-21
Review of the use of the council's passenger transport fleet to maximise utilisation	2020-21
Ongoing reductions in council grey fleet mileage and grow pool car uptake	2020-21
A reduction in the emissions from our operational fleet, including increased training in fuel efficient driving and replacing smaller vehicles with EV's	2020-21
Continue to promote flexible staff working and homeworking to reduce travel and promote sustainable transport options, as well as our salary sacrifice schemes for electric vehicles and bicycles	2020-21
Renewable Energy	
From April 2021 the Council's energy contracts will be 100% renewable energy.	2020-21
A study has been commissioned on the financial aspects of developing local renewable energy at the scale and pace needed to deliver our 2030 net zero carbon goal. The report is expected in late January 2021 and will inform further action planning in relation to potential investment and support for community energy that will take place during 2021.	2020-21
An analysis by the South West Energy Hub has identified options within the Council's estate for potential renewable energy projects, subject to satisfactory detailed business case development	2020-21
Amend and update planning policies to facilitate increased renewable energy generation through the Partial Update of the Local Plan (coming into force in 2022). Fast tracking climate and ecological emergency policy updates in advance of a full Local Plan review. The full plan will allow an update to renewable energy targets, though existing targets are no barrier to rapidly increasing capacity.	2021-21
Continue to support the three community energy organisations working in the district; Bath and West Community Energy, Keynsham Community Energy and Chelwood Community Energy and encourage parishes, town councils, residents' and community groups to get involved	2020-21
Promote access to grant funding for renewable energy for residents	2020-21
Encourage our contractors, service partners, and other stakeholders to procure renewable energy	2020-21
Reduce, Reuse, Recycle	
Launch our new Journey Towards Zero Waste Strategy 2020-2030 which proposes to adopt and exceed the national statutory target of 65% recycling 5 years earlier by 2030	2020-21
A push to encourage 100% of households within the district to actively recycle everything they can, with a priority on increasing the amount of households that recycle their food waste	2020-21
New waste facilities designed to net zero standard	2020-21
A focus on eliminating non-essential packaging of all types, but particularly single use plastic	2020-21
Communications campaign to tackle litter and promote litter picking and increase volunteer engagement	2020-21

Continue to work with the Student Community Partnership on the Pack for Good, Moving Out and litter picking campaigns to generate increases in reuse and recycling through encouraging students to recycle more	2020-21
Continue to support community litter picking groups, such as Wombles Groups and the No Place For Litter equipment hubs	2020-21
Continue the Plastic Free BathNES campaign and Refill scheme and support community and business across B&NES to take action on single-use plastic	2020-21
Ongoing action to reduce the use of single-use plastic in service areas across the council	2020-21
Green infrastructure and biodiversity	
Review and update the B&NES Green Infrastructure Strategy	2020-21
A Tree and Woodland officer task and finish group has been established to develop the B&NES Tree & Woodland Delivery Plan, which will be completed by March 2021. Approximately 5,000 trees will be planted on Council and private land in 2020/21.	2020-21
A range of projects that contribute to tackling the ecological emergency, nature-based solutions and habitat restoration, such as: Bathscape; Bath River Line; Waterspace Programme; Somer Valley Rediscovered; connecting the Cotswold and Mendip AONBs, and the Chew Valley Catchment project.	2020-21
The Local Plan Partial Review, currently underway, will strengthen and update policies in relation to the Environment Bill, particularly the new bio-diversity net gain requirement	2020-21
The Parks team will continue to promote grassland habitat diversity and support the connectivity of pollinator habitats through the 'Get Bath Buzzing' campaign, by reviewing parks and green spaces management regimes	2020-21