



# Climate Change

Action Plan  
2021 - 2025

Revision 2 - November 2022

Doing our Bit to make  
**Staffordshire Sustainable**

# Introduction

Staffordshire County Council recognises that climate change is the biggest environmental challenge facing the world today and has reflected this by identifying climate change as one of five key principles in the Council's Strategic Plan. Staffordshire County Council committed itself to this agenda by declaring a climate change emergency in July 2019 to also achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050. The Strategic Development Framework released in February 2021 sets out how the authority will work towards achieving its carbon emissions target.



The County Council recognises that a range of actions are needed to stop or reduce the Council's carbon emissions. These actions are to either stop carbon emissions, develop ways to remove carbon that is already in the atmosphere (sequestration) or help communities and businesses prepare for the impact of a changing climate (adaptation). In achieving these actions, the authority will play its part in the global effort to reduce the impact of Climate Change and meet its net carbon zero target. The Council will monitor its carbon emissions each year, to track the success of these actions. Between 2018 and 2021 we have reduced our carbon emissions by 43%.

This is the first revision of the 2021-2025 action plan this updated plan reflects our completed actions, presents reviewed existing actions where appropriate and introduces some new actions to maintain our journey to net carbon zero.

**Simon Tagg - Staffordshire County Council's Cabinet Member for Environment, Infrastructure and Climate Change**

# Key Themes



Theme 1: Carbon Reduction

Theme 2: Air Quality

Theme 3: Natural Environment

Theme 4: Waste

Theme 5: Behavioural Change

# Carbon Reduction

The Carbon Reduction theme has the most amount of actions within the plan. These actions cover internal staff training, resource use and efficient operation of services as well as starting to change the way that we work. The actions also look to include climate change thinking in policy and Governance processes.

Ref	Description	Action	Proposed Timeline
CR-01	Ensure climate change and sustainability impacts are considered in decision making, including land disposals and budgets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Business case templates to include financial benefits or consequences of delivering low carbon alternatives.</li><li>• Procurement process to include consideration of the impacts on climate change.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mar 2023</li><li>• Ongoing</li></ul>
CR-02	Ensure sufficient resources are available to support business areas in understanding and identifying carbon impacts and reduction opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify the resources required to progress the climate change agenda across the council.</li><li>• Climate Change team to provide expertise and support to business areas to develop ideas to deliver innovation.</li><li>• Deliver DfT/ADEPT Live Labs 2 project (subject to funding approval) to consider opportunities for reducing carbon emissions in certain highways tasks</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ongoing</li><li>• Ongoing</li><li>• Mar 2023</li></ul>
CR-03	Research carbon sequestration and other potential offsetting projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Outline options and make recommendations for sequestration and/or offset projects.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dec 2022</li></ul>



# Carbon Reduction

Ref	Description	Action	Proposed Timeline
CR-04	Continued liaison with district and borough councils to discuss how planning considerations can include climate change mitigation and adaptation.	Provide advice to encourage Local Plan policies to have high regard to climate change mitigation and adaptation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ongoing</li></ul>
CR-05	Review the SCC Policy Position to encourage renewable technologies in appropriate locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review the SCC policy position on renewable generation and consider the identification of targets</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• April 2023</li></ul>
CR-06	Invest in improving driving styles to reduce preventative carbon emissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Monitor driver behaviour and provide efficient driving information to staff</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ongoing</li></ul>
CR-07	Make better use of Home to School transport by maximising use of every seat for entitled pupils	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop an app to allow contracted services to monitor usage through the Smart Pass</li><li>• Evaluate results of Smart Pass use and consider if any service changes can be made</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Jun 2025</li><li>• Jun 2025</li></ul>

# Carbon Reduction

Ref	Description	Action	Proposed Timeline
CR -08	Maximise efficiency of the home to school and Special Education needs transport (SEN) services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Investigate options for reducing the number of vehicles and the mileage travelled</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Sep 2023</li></ul>
CR-09	Increase the number of Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Develop an EV charging infrastructure strategy in partnership with the Districts and Boroughs</li><li>Develop a 2 year countywide EV charging implementation plan</li><li>Develop an internal EV charging infrastructure strategy and implementation plan</li><li>Investigate the potential to upgrade electricity supply in SCC building stock to facilitate EV charging in retained property portfolio and identify sites requiring upgrade.</li><li>Work with Amey to roll out EV charging across highways depots where spare electrical capacity is available</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Dec 2022</li><li>Feb 2023</li><li>Feb 2023</li><li>Aug 2023</li><li>Ongoing</li></ul>
CR-10	Transition fleet to alternative fuels or more carbon efficient where appropriate by 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Implement HVO fuelling to all suitable Highways AMEY vehicles, plant, machinery and equipment</li><li>Develop a Highways AMEY fleet plan for phasing in of EVs where suitable vehicles are available</li><li>Where possible consider and implement a transition plan to full EV vehicles within the SCC fleet</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Apr 2023</li><li>Jun 2023</li><li>Oct 2023</li></ul>

# Carbon Reduction

Ref	Description	Action	Proposed Timeline
CR-11	Maximise usage of properties by identifying properties for disposal and opportunities for change of retained properties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Take a phased approach to complete a review of all SCC owned or leased buildings.</li><li>Identify opportunities for change through the development of Business Asset Plans.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Feb 2023</li><li>Ongoing</li></ul>
CR-12	Improve energy efficiency of SCC owned buildings where feasible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Collate data on running costs, energy usage, type and condition of lighting, boilers and insulation</li><li>Develop a programme of work incorporating lower carbon and energy efficiency considerations as part of capital maintenance programs</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Jul 2023</li><li>Annual</li></ul>
CR-13	Prioritise sites to have Building Energy Management Systems (BEMS) installed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Achieve 7 BEM installations per year</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Jan 2023 - Phase 1</li></ul>
CR-14	Improve energy efficiency of highway infrastructure and equipment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Continue delivery of Street Lighting LED retrofit programme phase 1.</li><li>Deliver annual Traffic Signals refurbishment/LED upgrade programme</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Mar 2025</li><li>Annual</li></ul>
CR-15	Improve understanding of embedded carbon in Highways activities to enable carbon reduction or mitigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Participate in pilot project with Future Highways Research Group (FHRG) to develop a standardised carbon reporting tool for highways</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Ongoing</li></ul>
CR-16	Emissions monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Continue to monitor and report the Councils annual carbon emissions.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Annual</li></ul>

# Air Quality

The Council aims to improve air quality by encouraging active travel and working with vehicle operators within the county to introduce efficient engines and use of low carbon fuels.

Ref	Description	Action	Proposed Timeline
AQ-01	Investigate the impact of introducing a standard requirement for Euro5 or better for home to school transport contracts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Market test feasibility (cost &amp; availability) of including Euro5 as a standard requirement.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Jun 2023</li></ul>
AQ-02	Secure funding to work with local bus operators to improve the energy efficiency of public transport in Staffordshire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Agree Bus Service Improvement Plan with interested local bus operators with an agreed transition path to low emission buses.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ongoing</li></ul>
AQ-03	Deliver against objectives of the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Deliver and review active travel schemes in Stafford, Burton, Cannock, Lichfield, Newcastle and Tamworth</li><li>• Work with the District and Boroughs to support bids for sustainable travel delivery</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Oct 2024</li><li>• Ongoing</li></ul>



# Natural Environment

The natural environment is key to removing carbon out of the atmosphere, through carbon sequestration. The focus of this theme is to maximise the benefit the councils land holding has on the climate. New land management opportunities will be identified to further enhance the positive carbon impact of County land with additional benefits of enhanced biodiversity.

Ref	Description	Action	Proposed Timeline
NE-O1	Commission a study to determine the current sequestration / storage of carbon in natural habitats on SCC landholdings and the potential to increase it through tree planting and habitat enhancement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Review report outcomes and recommendations and produce business case to take forward recommendations.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Dec 2022</li></ul>
NE-O2	Review policies that impact on our management of habitats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Review land management policies and consider options to lower carbon intensity and/or improve biodiversity.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Jun 2023</li></ul>

# Waste

This section includes not only the emissions from the waste generated by the Council but also Staffordshire households. It measures the emissions from handling the waste at the recycling centres and the emissions from operating the energy recovery facilities for handling all of Staffordshire's household waste

Ref	Description	Action	Proposed Timeline
W-01	Consider the long term capacity needs for Energy Recovery Facilities (ERF) in Staffordshire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Present an options appraisal for cabinet approval</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Jun 2024</li></ul>
W-02	Plateau growth in waste to 0% by 2025, using 2019 pre-pandemic tonnage as the baseline.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Deliver 4 communications campaigns a year focussed on waste education and waste reduction</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ongoing</li></ul>
W-03	Reduce food waste and garden waste in the residual waste stream.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Complete procurement for a Countywide food waste treatment contract</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Apr 2023</li></ul>
W-04	Consider the potential for transitioning to alternative and low carbon fuels for the Recycling centres service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Where feasible transition site and supervisor vehicles from diesel to a lower carbon alternative</li><li>• Investigate the potential for transitioning outsourced vehicles to lower carbon alternatives</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dec 2022</li><li>• Jan 2023</li></ul>
W-05	Develop a Staffordshire Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) to reduce haulage requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Begin development of Strategic business case for long term management of dry mixed recycling in Staffordshire with support of local waste partnership</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Apr 2023</li></ul>
W-06	Investigate options for using closed landfill sites for climate change mitigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify suitable technologies or changes to land management on closed landfill sites which could assist with climate change objectives</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dec 2022</li></ul>

# Behavioural Change

Climate change is a problem that is facing everyone. To tackle the issues it will need everyone to make changes to their daily lives. The council plan to work with business and other Councils within Staffordshire to produce a joined-up approach to tackling climate change that reaches beyond just the actions of the Authority.

Ref	Description	Action	Proposed Timeline
BC-01	Offer funding through the Climate change action fund.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Offer an annual fund for climate change projects for schools, parish councils and the local community</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Annual</li></ul>
BC-02	Raise awareness of climate change and encourage behavioural change through communication campaigns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increase climate change awareness in all staff. Aim for 1000 members of staff to complete the course by March 2023.</li><li>• Increase climate change awareness of Staffordshire residents. Run a calendar of monthly hints and challenges.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ongoing</li><li>• Oct 2022</li></ul>
BC-03	Engage with communities to raise awareness and highlight opportunities for local action for waste and climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hold a Climate Change &amp; Waste Conference</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Annual</li></ul>
BC-04	Consider implications and how the changing climate of Staffordshire can be managed and mitigated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop a Countywide Adaptation Strategy</li><li>• Develop an SCC Adaptation Plan</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mar 2023</li><li>• Oct 2023</li></ul>
BC-05	Work with businesses to raise awareness and reduce their carbon footprint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Staffordshire Business Environment Network (sben) to encourage and provide assistance to install 25 solar PV on businesses</li><li>• sben to work with Staffordshire Wildlife Trust to promote small scale funded tree planting projects with a total of 120 trees across 20 businesses</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Apr 2024</li><li>• Ongoing</li></ul>

# Completed Actions

## Carbon Reduction

- Revise the Cabinet Report standard template to include a section on Climate Change
- Consider the outcome of the Renewable Energy Audit
- Ensure Climate Change is a standing agenda item for Staffordshire Development Officers Group
- Issue all school children with a Smart Pass to monitor Home to School transport usage to identify any inefficiencies in the system
- Review SCC owned tools and equipment and usage and replace with battery powered where possible
- Establish potential for battery operated tools to be specified in future ground maintenance contracts and apply if possible



## Natural Environment

- Engage with consultants to produce a review of land/habitats in Staffordshire (including carbon impact, carbon storage benefits, potential opportunities, other benefits ie social and GIS data) to determine the current sequestration / storage of carbon in natural habitats on SCC landholdings and the potential to increase it through tree planting and habitat enhancement.
- Develop guidance and instructions for staff on GIS



# Completed Actions

## Waste

- Investigate options for a single food waste procurement contract to encourage the Districts and Boroughs to introduce separate food waste collections ahead of proposed legislative changes



## Behavioural Change

- Sben to roll out carbon calculator for businesses
- Staffordshire Sustainability Board to set a countywide strategic direction in ways of working to support the transition to Net Zero





# Programme Funding

- The Council has dedicated and secured over £5.4m of support to our net carbon zero journey over and above usual budget allocations.
- A further £1m Investment Fund has been made available over a 5 year timeframe, specifically for Sustainability projects to support the climate change agenda, which will be subject to successful business case bids.
- The Council pledges to maximise external funding opportunities that will assist in the delivery of this plan.

County Council Climate Change Investment	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Investment
MTFS Budget - Internal Funding	£ 690,000	£ 585,580	£ 596,700	£ 546,700	£ 546,700	£ 546,700	£ 2,836,070
Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (External funding)	£ 0	£ 3,005,350	£ 0	£ 0	£0	£0	£ 3,005,350
Total Investment (Internal & External funding)	£ 690,000	£ 3,590,930	£ 596,700	£ 546,700	£ 546,700	£ 546,700	£ 6,817,730

# Programme Roadmap

The Council has declared a commitment to be net carbon zero by 2050. Whilst our aspirations are high to reduce this as much as possible we acknowledge we can not reach net zero without some carbon sequestration or offsetting. This also forms a key role within the plan.

The Roadmap shows the projected reduction in Staffordshire County Council's operational emissions. The reduction is based around targets and legislative changes that have already been or will soon to be set by Central Government through consultations, industry developments and economic drivers. The authority understands that there will potentially be further changes to mechanisms the drive decarbonisation across the energy and transport sectors.

