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| Chichester District Council logo  |
| Chichester District CouncilClimate Emergency Action Plan 2025-2030 |
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# Foreword

by Jonathan Brown, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for the Environment (insert photo)

# Summary

In 2019, Chichester District Council declared a climate emergency. This declaration led the Council to create an action plan to reduce its own emissions and help others in the district reduce their emissions. This plan ends in 2025, so in 2024 the Council consulted people who live and work in the district on the next plan – this document – which will run from 2025-2030.

Feedback from the consultation has helped shape the plan, the following projects have been selected:

1. Working to reduce carbon emissions from private sector housing through energy efficiency and renewable energy measures, significantly increasing what the Council is already doing in this area.
2. Employ a Tree Strategy Officer to continue the successful Government-funded tree planting project that is coming to an end.
3. Make a Local Area Energy Plan. This new project will help homes, businesses, and other organisations reach net zero in the most efficient way possible.
4. Based on the Council's Local Plan, using planning policy to increase street tree planting and green travel plans for new developments.
5. Climate adaptation is about changing the way we do things accounting for the new weather patterns we are experiencing due to climate change. This project will pull together into one place how climate change will affect our district and who is doing what to enable all of us to adapt.
6. Marine offsets is a new project that will look at opportunities to create carbon offsets and improve the biodiversity of marine habitats.
7. Develop the network of climate action groups through the district.
8. Assess how licensing policy can best reduce greenhouse gas emissions from taxi and private hire vehicles.
9. Working with schools to stimulate debate on climate change.
10. Hold quarterly networking events for public sector employers and larger, other not-for-profit organisations.
11. To identify template climate change policies for community organisations to incorporate into their procedures.

The Council will continue with other projects and policies, started under the first action plan, where not already completed. These outcomes will be benchmarked against the Government’s national target of net zero by 2050.

The Council did not consult on the technical plans and projects it needs to take to reach net zero itself, but it did ask the public if they agreed with the Council reducing its emissions in line with the Government’s national target of net zero by 2050. Most respondents thought the target should be earlier and so the Council has decided to aim for a target of net zero by 2040. This is contingent on the Council switching its diesel vehicles – it’s largest source of emissions – to Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil, a lower carbon fuel. This is discussed further in Section 18 on Council Vehicles.

The Council has been working on reducing the greenhouse gas emissions from its buildings and this work will continue with plans developed for further decarbonization work. The Council is also considering switching to an electricity contract that offers credible greenhouse gas reductions.

Other projects that reduce the Council's emissions, and those of the district, may be developed during the roll-out of the action plan where they are in line with the Council's vision which is:

*To be a proactive, forward-thinking Council that creates opportunities for and by supporting the economic growth, wellbeing and cultural life of the communities of Chichester District and that leads on carbon reductions and the restoration of nature.*

# What is climate change?

Climate change refers to the long-term shift in the Earth’s average temperature and weather patterns. Since the Industrial Revolution in the mid-1800s, humans have contributed to the release of greenhouse gases that cause an increase in global temperature by changing the Earth’s atmosphere, so it traps more energy from the Sun. There are many different greenhouse gases, but carbon dioxide – the main one - is produced when fossil fuels - coal, oil, and gas – are burnt for energy. According to the Met Office, the current level of carbon dioxide in the Earth’s atmosphere is higher than at any time in the past 800,000 years. As the level of greenhouse gases has risen, so has the global temperature. The average temperature of the planet has risen by about 1°C since the Industrial Revolution. That might not sound fast, but the Industrial Revolution is only yesterday in the long life of our planet.

In 2015 almost every country in the world signed an agreement (see https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement) promising to cut greenhouse gas emissions. The aim is to keep the average global temperature increase to below 2°C - using pre-industrial revolution levels as a baseline - and to try to limit the increase to 1.5°C. The goal is to reduce the impact of climate change.

But if we continue to burn fossil fuels and cut down forests at the same rate, the planet could warm by more than 4°C by 2100. The Met Office warns this warming could fundamentally change life on Earth, with potentially drastic consequences.

For the UK, that is expected to mean,

* Warmer, wetter winters
* Hotter, drier summers
* More frequent and intense weather extremes

Rising sea levels mean we will need more robust coastal defences for our settlements or moving settlements away from the coast. In other places managed re-alignment will help us avoid squeezing out inter-tidal habitats that provide a natural defence. Surface water flooding will increase with more intense rainfall so we will need to work together to ensure there is space for this water away from houses and businesses. We will all have to conserve water resources in summer. More frequent and intense weather extremes will pose significant challenges to reliable agricultural output.

# What is net zero?

Burning fossil fuels releases carbon dioxide, but this gas is taken in by plants as they grow. Carbon dioxide can also be removed from the atmosphere by technological means which are being explored. Net zero means that the amount of greenhouse gases that are added to the atmosphere is balanced by the amount of greenhouse gases that are removed.

The Government has set a target for the UK to reach net zero by 2050. In 2019 the Government’s advisors, the Committee on Climate Change, judged that if this target was replicated around the world and was supported by ambitious, near-term reductions it would deliver a greater than 50% chance of limiting the global temperature rise to 1.5°C.

# The district’s emissions

Graph 1 shows different sources of emissions in Chichester district for the year 2022, the latest emission figures available from the Government. The biggest source of emissions is from road transport at almost 250,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent a year. This is followed by household emissions at 185,000 tonnes. The next biggest sources are much smaller - around the 50,000 to 60,000 tonnes mark. These include industry, commerce, agricultural use of energy and emissions from livestock.

The graph also shows that forestry in the district absorbs a significant amount of carbon dioxide – 134,000 tonnes in 2022. See Table 1 in the Data section for district emissions figures.

**Graph 1: Greenhouse gas emissions from Chichester district in 2022**

Notes: “Agricultural soils” refers to emissions from urea application, liming of soils and fertiliser application to soils. “Cropland” and “Grassland” refers to changes in mineral soil carbon stocks which can continue for decades following changes in land use and the corresponding N2O emissions from soil mineralisation.

The Council doesn’t have control over most of these emissions, but it can influence them through working with others, helping to change behaviour and to support take up of low carbon technologies. In the first action plan, the Council set an aspirational target for the district to cut carbon emissions by 10% a year to 2025, with 2019 as the baseline year.

**Table 1: Changes in district emission figures since 2019**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Year 1 (2020) | Emissions reduced by 11.1% |
| Year 2 (2021) | Emissions increased by 2.3% |
| Year 3 (2022) | Emissions reduced by 6.6% |

The Covid pandemic was responsible for much of the emission reductions in 2020, but even such drastic changes in our behaviour could only reduce emissions by 11%. This shows the challenge that we face.

There are different pathways through which the district can reach net zero by 2050, the Government’s national target. See Graph 2 below. Some routes involve emitting more greenhouse gases than others and total amount of emissions is key. The Tyndall Centre, a renowned academic institution, has worked out a carbon dioxide budget and a pathway to net zero for each district based on the temperature target and fairness principles in the United Nations Paris Agreement. The Paris Agreement sets a goal of keeping the global temperature increase “well below 2 degrees Centigrade and pursuing 1.5 degrees Centigrade”.

However, the Tyndall data does not factor in the carbon dioxide storage by woodland – which is important in our district. So, we will use the more comprehensive Government data as the benchmark, but we will take the Tyndall Centre data into account in monitoring emissions in the district.

**Graph 2: Pathways to net zero in 2050**

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We have estimated the greenhouse gas emission savings from the projects in this plan and put them into bands of “Very low” through to “High”, which we estimate would save more than 1,000 tonnes (tCO2e) a year. The District emissions are about 620,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent a year, so even carbon savings that are labelled “High” are still very small in the context of the District. For context, a UK resident’s carbon footprint is about 8.4 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent a year, according to the WWF Footprint Calculator. This has been rounded up to 10 for simplicity as carbon saving estimates are indicative only.

**Table 2: Project carbon savings estimates – bands**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Very low** | **Low** | **Medium** | **High** |
| **Carbon savings a year** intCO2e (tonnes carbon dioxide equivalent) | Less than 10  | 10 - 99  | 100 – 1,000  | Over 1,000  |
| Benchmarked against the UK resident’s carbon footprint | Less than one person’s annual carbon footprint | One to ten people’s annual carbon footprint | Ten to 100 people’s annual carbon footprint | More than 100 people’s annual carbon footprint |

# The Council’s own carbon emissions and target

The Council’s emissions are less than 0.5% of total District emissions. But, like everyone in the district, we need to play our part in reducing emissions. So, when the Council created its first climate emergency action plan, it included a target to reduce its emissions by 10% year-on-year from an October 2018- September 2019 baseline. Table 2 below shows progress so far.

**Table 2: Chichester District Council’s greenhouse gas emissions**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Year 1 (Oct 2019-Sep 2020) | Emissions reduced by 12% |
| Year 2 (Oct 2020-Sep 2021) | Emissions reduced by 4% |
| Year 3 (Oct 2021-Sep 2022) | Emissions increased by 2% |
| Year 4 (Oct 2022-Sep 2023) | Emissions increased by 2% |
| Year 5 (Oct 2023-Sep 2024) | Emissions reduced by 5% |

The Council’s biggest emission source is the Council’s refuse vehicles. These diesel refuse vehicles only do very few miles to the gallon partly due to the waste compactor on the back.

Our second biggest source is Westgate leisure centre due to the swimming pool. You can read about what we have done to reduce our emissions and our plans for further reductions in section 16.

Based on the emission sources that we currently account for in our inventory or footprint, we have decided to set ourselves a target of reaching net zero by 2040, although this will depend on us replacing diesel use (see Section 18). We will plot a straight line from emissions at a start date to net zero by 2040. We are unlikely to match this line exactly as projects will deliver different levels of emission reductions and will be complete at different times, but it will be a useful benchmark.

**Graph 3 Chichester District Council’s greenhouse gas emissions**

# The Council’s vision and approach

The Council’s vision is

To be a proactive, forward-thinking Council that creates opportunities for and by supporting the economic growth, wellbeing and cultural life of the communities of Chichester District and that leads on carbon reductions and the restoration of nature.

Our mission:

To support our communities by enabling a choice of quality housing to high sustainable standards, promoting growth and inward investment which protects the environment, and working with partners to maintain and improve access to the outstanding quality of life available to our residents.

Our priorities:

• Decent homes for all

• Thriving economy

• Healthy, vibrant communities

• Financial prudence

• A protected and recovering environment

Our guiding principles:

1. Focus on our residents’ needs.

2. Provide quality public services.

3. Promote sustainable change across the District.

4. Work in partnership to benefit Chichester District.

5. Make best use of our resources, including seeking grant funding.

6. Adopt modern and efficient working practices.

7. Lobby for Chichester’s interests both regionally and nationally.

These priorities are translated into measures such as “Work with communities to help them plan for and adapt to climate change”.

The following sections describe the projects that will take place under the new action plan and work towards the Council’s vision.

# Housing

Homes are the second biggest source of emissions in the district after transport. They account for 30% of emissions, mostly from energy used for heating and cooking. The Council has a legal duty to keep housing conditions in the district under review. Residential accommodation must be safe and free of health and safety hazards. This is a good fit with work to reduce carbon emissions from homes as this may also make them warmer, healthier and cheaper to run. This is done through retrofitting: adding energy efficiency and renewable energy measures to existing buildings.

There are Government grants and other help available to do this. We already promote these to residents through leaflets, social media and events, but the Housing Decarbonisation project involves employing an extra officer who will scale up this work using sophisticated marketing techniques to get the information where it is needed.

An officer will be trained as a Retrofit Assessor, so they are a trusted voice for people starting to think about retrofitting their homes and unsure how to get surveyors and installers in to assess their homes. This project includes assessing whether there is a case for a county-wide, local authority-run retrofit service.

It also includes investigating ways of unlocking finance mechanisms that support greater delivery of retrofit to the “missing middle” – the proportion of property owners that are ineligible for grants but would struggle to fund work based on their disposable income.

It will also convene discussions with local stakeholders to strengthen the local delivery capacity of retrofit measures.

[Carbon savings: High – equivalent to more than 100 people’s annual carbon footprint]

This section should be read with the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025-2030. See [here.](https://www.chichester.gov.uk/housingstrategiesandstudies)

# Energy

To reach net zero, we need to cut the amount of fossil fuels that we use and use more electricity as it becomes decarbonised in line with the UK Government’s target. This means fewer petrol and diesel vehicles and more electric ones. We also need to use electricity more to heat our homes and workplaces. That will put huge extra demand on the electrical grid. A heat network in which hot water delivers heat to buildings via underground pipes may be the best option in some places or, for some uses, hydrogen supplied by the gas grid.

A Local Area Energy Plan would look at how these changes can be factored into new development in the district as well as identifying priority areas for improving energy efficiency of existing buildings. It would also help energy network operators plan improvements to their networks for example to be able to handle the electricity from a new solar farm. And it would factor in people’s attitude to these changes too.

These changes are going to require a lot of investment from national government and private investors, but if we have a smart and efficient plan, the amount of investment needed may be reduced and that might make this more achievable, helping to deliver clean, affordable energy and improved energy security for the UK. Local area energy plans are a new idea and English councils are not legally required to produce a Local Area Energy Plan but more organisations now believe that they are the way forward. They support work that the Council does to encourage homes and businesses to generate renewable energy themselves, contributing to UK energy security.

[Carbon Savings:Potentially high (equivalent to more than 100 people’s annual footprint) as it can reduce the capital cost of decarbonisation, making it more likely to go ahead.]

Where the Council has access to other funding sources for carbon reduction, such as the proposed Low Carbon Chichester Fund from the re-development of Graylingwell, we will ensure that it is used for energy efficiency and/or new renewable energy schemes in the district that deliver the greatest amount of carbon reduction for the funding available.

[Carbon savings: Medium – equivalent to 10-100 people’s annual footprint, possibly more].

# Climate Adaptation

People and nature can adapt to the effects of climate change to reduce harm or achieve potential benefits. This is referred to as adaptation. The Council is committed to working with communities to help them plan for and adapt to climate change. It is also committed to working with communities to unlock funding for, and assist with, the building and maintenance of coastal defences, one of our biggest areas of work on adaptation.

Coastal erosion and flooding defence work is undertaken by the Environment Agency and Coastal Partners, a partnership of coastal local authorities that includes Chichester District Council. Through Coastal Partners, we are working on a scheme to renew defences at Selsey. We are also working to prepare a Chichester Harbour Investment and Adaptation Plan that will allow us to take opportunities for habitat creation in the harbour, whilst protecting properties from rising sea levels. In our work, we will address the impacts of coastal squeeze, which occurs when the natural process of habitats moving landward due to sea level rise is blocked by hard sea defences, leading to the loss of mudflats and saltmarsh.

The Council also works on:

* wildlife corridors that allow species to move across the landscape in response to climate change
* working with the Lead Local Flood Authority (WSCC) to make sure development slows the flow of water and reduces runoff.
* Working with the Western Sussex Rivers Trust and others to restore the natural function of our rivers and streams and to hold water in the catchment.
* factoring adaptation into Biodiversity Net Gain, a requirement on developers to improve or create wildlife habitat, ensuring we create drought resistant planting, more wetland areas, and better-connected hedges and ditches.
* contributing to multi-agency emergency planning for heatwaves, coastal flooding, and surface and ground water flooding.

See our biodiversity strategy for the district that overlaps with this climate strategy.

[Carbon savings: Low – equivalent to one to ten people’s annual footprint]

# Planning Policy

The Council is the planning authority for the district outside of the South Downs National Park. We have a range of planning policies that are used to inform decisions on planning applications. Every Council that is responsible for planning decisions is expected to have a Local Plan. The plan sets out the opportunities for development and investment in an area. It makes clear what types of development will be permitted and what won't and looks at housing, employment space, required infrastructure, and places where retail and leisure facilities should be provided.

The Council’s Local Plan to 2039 has been subject to Examination by Government planning inspectors. At the time of writing, their view is that subject to certain modifications, the Plan is likely to be capable of being found legally compliant and sound. Once the inspectors’ final report is received, the Council will adopt the Plan.

Technical standards for in-use energy performance and carbon emissions are being moved from local planning polices to a national system, the Future Homes Standard, delivered through the Building Regulations. Local Plan Policy P1 does not repeat those requirements but does require a sustainability statement that covers additional aspects, including reducing the embodied carbon of construction materials, and design to adapt to our changing climate, for example drainage, shaded spaces, use of green roofs and walls.

The Council expects to be able to use the policies in the new Local Plan (once it is adopted) and national planning policy to produce planning guidance on tree planting and requiring tree lined streets in new developments. This will include ensuring that underground utilities are planned from the start to avoid conflicts with root zones wherever practicable, and robust future maintenance plans are in place.

[Carbon savings: Low – equivalent to one to ten people’s annual footprint].

To ensure traffic flows freely, extra traffic from new developments on the A27 will need to be mitigated - either by people switching from cars to walking, cycling and/or public transport, or by removing the need for the journey.

We will ensure that transport policies in the Local Plan – once it is adopted - are used to deliver effective travel plans that include ambitious targets and monitoring of journeys switched from cars to other forms of transport. However, achieving this for residential development will still be challenging, due to our inability to force lifestyle changes.

[Carbon savings: Medium – equivalent to 10-100 people’s annual footprint, possibly more].

# Transport

The biggest source of emissions in the district at 40% is road transport. The District Council does not have direct responsibility for transport in its District but is consulted on other organisations’ transport strategies. National Highways is responsible for the A27, and West Sussex County Council is responsible for the rest of the public road network, including public rights of way (public footpaths and bridleways) and has a plan that runs until 2026. See [here](https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/about-the-council/policies-and-reports/roads-and-travel-policy-and-reports/west-sussex-transport-plan/). The County Council has a partnership with local bus operators to deliver bus schemes in the county. Click [here for further information](https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/about-the-council/policies-and-reports/roads-and-travel-policy-and-reports/bus-service-improvement-plan/). However, the District Council has a role in improving air quality e.g. reducing tiny soot particles and nitrogen dioxide from vehicle exhausts. This leads it to support projects that reduce vehicle emissions, such as local cycling and walking projects.

The District Council is funding a feasibility study for an **Oaklands Park** cycling, wheeling, and walking route. The study would cover part of Route B which is in the Chichester City Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan. See [here](https://www.chichester.gov.uk/cyclelanesandroutes). A large part of Route B is on the highway (The Broadway and College Lane, Chichester) and therefore is for the County Council to deliver, but the District Council is seeking to deliver the section across Oaklands Park as it owns the land. Funding of this feasibility study does not mean that this will be built. Delivery of the path is subject to the outcome of a public consultation and finding the money for delivery.

[Carbon savings: this is a feasibility study only so would not deliver any savings itself. If the capital project went ahead, we would expect very low carbon savings (equivalent to less than one person’s annual footprint) in isolation, but as part of an infrastructure network, could deliver medium savings.]

**The District Council has the responsibility for licensing taxis (Hackney carriages) and private hire vehicles. Greenhouse gas emissions were factored into the Council’s taxi licensing policy when it agreed in 2022 and will be re-considered before the end of this action plan (2030).**

**[Carbon savings: potentially medium – equivalent to 10-100 people’s annual footprint]**

**The Council is supporting drivers more widely to make the transition to zero-emission at tail-pipe vehicles. It has already installed 18 electric vehicle charge-points in Council car parks. Working with West Sussex County Council and Connected Kerb, we will seek to continue the expansion of the electric vehicle charging network for residents without driveways and visitors to the district.**

**The Council also supported the establishment of a car club in Chichester. This gives people access to modern lower-emitting or zero-emission vehicles and reduces the need for households, community organisations and businesses to own an extra car.**

# Economic Development

Industry and commerce accounts for 20% of emissions in the district. In its corporate plan, the Council states its commitment to a stronger, greener, more sustainable economy and providing support to businesses in the sectors of renewable, retrofitting and the circular economy.

This support has taken the shape of initiatives to help small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to improve their sustainability and the launch of ‘Sussex Six’ in Chichester District to promote local food and drink and reinforce local supply chains (see [here](https://investchichester.co.uk/news-events-blog/blog/calling-all-foodies-support-sussex-six/)). There have also been grants to help SMEs to move to lower carbon ways of working and that support is continuing. In 2025-2026, up to 30 SMEs will be supported to develop action plans aligned to their sustainability goals and ambitions, so they can grow their business sustainably, adapt to climate change and set measurable climate related goals.

SMEs will be provided with a blended package of support combining digital resources, online tools and expertise which can be tailored to local business needs and help to work towards industry-recognized sustainability certification.

The Council’s Growth and Sustainability officer will continue to operate the Sustainable Support Grant Scheme for SMEs as the Council recognises the challenges businesses face adapting to climate change and we are keen to offer support and assistance to help SMEs to achieve a reduced carbon future.

[Carbon savings: Depends on the SMEs’ action plans and the projects supported by the grant scheme.]

# Community and public sector engagement

Achieving net zero will transform how we live. “Filling up at the pump” is being replaced by “plugging in at the charger” and we will become much more aware of energy with many of us producing it at our homes and businesses as well as using it. And that is just the start of the transformation. The Council is already delivering Carbon Literacy training to people in the district so they can learn more about climate change and net zero. We want to support people to establish climate action groups in their areas, so people can work together whether that is to plant trees in their neighbourhoods, to cut food waste, share information on energy saving, or to repair and share items rather than throwing stuff away. We want to support organisations too with networking meetings to share information and ideas and collaborate on climate projects. This includes the public sector (education, health, councils, etc.) that accounts for 4% of the district’s emissions. We will support community groups with template climate change policies that they can choose to incorporate into their procedures.

Carbon Savings: Potentially high – equivalent to more than 100 people’s annual footprint

Whilst we are not the education authority – that role rests with West Sussex County Council – we have engaged with school children on climate change. For example, see [this film](https://youtu.be/HD424U8F_Y8?si=ZIASBD8HNgL-AbDc) made by local students and supported by us. Moving forwards, we want to stimulate debate among school children on climate change. Using a “mock election” engagement model, the Council’s youth engagement officer will engage with a number of local primary schools to stimulate ideas about local climate change projects. Projects that are developed within schools consequently are impossible to predict, but tangible carbon emission savings could be identified and measured.

[Carbon Savings: Will depend on the projects.]

# Land, sea and nature

Carbon dioxide is the main greenhouse gas causing climate change, but it can be removed from the atmosphere. When plants grow, they take in carbon dioxide, release oxygen and store carbon as leaves, stems, trunks, and roots. This traps the carbon until the plant dies when it may add to the organic matter in soil, another important store of carbon. Woodland is a significant carbon store in our district. See the graph in Section 5.

Since 2019 we have used Government funding to launch Tree Chichester District, a scheme that tests ways to boost the numbers and health of trees outside of woodlands. This has led to nearly 65,000 trees being planted across our district in partnership with landowners, farmers, community groups, parish councils, schools, charities, and businesses, and on the Council’s own land. The Council is going to employ a Tree Strategy Officer, to continue this work after the current Government funded project ends. The officer will help landowners and managers take advantage of the grants available for tree-planting. [Carbon saving: Medium – equivalent to 10-100 people’s annual footprint]

We are going to start a wholly new project involving marine offsets. An offset project involves looking at the feasibility of using active marine habitat creation and restoration to increase the amount of carbon dioxide stored by that natural habitat. Once quantified, each tonne stored could be issued as a carbon offset. These offsets can then be sold to organisations or individuals who want to report a reduced carbon footprint. This provides an income to run the project. You may have had the option to buy a carbon offset when you were purchasing a flight.

Marine offset schemes are not as well understood or developed as land-based ones and currently lack agreed standards. However, we intend to work with others to undertake a feasibility study of marine based offset schemes in Chichester District. Coastal habitats such as salt marshes, seaweed beds and the seabed are important stores of carbon dioxide. Some research has shown these marine habitats are more effective at storing carbon dioxide than trees. If a robust scheme is viable, we would progress to a business case for launching a scheme which would then be designed to cover its own costs.

[Carbon saving: high – equivalent to more than 100 people’s annual footprint]

See the section on Adaptation for other ways in which the Council is working with nature to address climate change. See also our forthcoming biodiversity strategy for the district that overlaps with this climate strategy.

# Waste

The best way to tackle carbon emissions from waste is not to create waste in the first place. All products take energy and other resources to produce and transport to customers. So being careful about what we buy is the first step and repairing items or putting the items to another use is the second step in cutting these emissions. The Council promotes waste reduction and re-use options.

Waste disposal itself accounts for 4% of emissions from the households, businesses and other organisations in the district. This includes emissions from wastewater treatment, sewage sludge decomposition, composting and landfill sites.

Emissions are produced when waste rots in a certain way. For example, when food and garden waste goes to a landfill site, it rots producing methane - a greenhouse gas more powerful than carbon dioxide in warming the atmosphere. Currently less than 10% of waste collected in the district goes to landfill and a big proportion of this is dog waste. The rest is burnt for energy and known as Refuse Derived Fuel.

Separate collection of household food waste collection is a Government requirement and will begin from Spring 2026. The food waste will then be processed so that methane emissions are captured and burnt to create energy and bio-fertiliser is made.

The Council is committed to achievement of a 65% recycling rate by 2030 of the domestic and commercial waste it collects from the current baseline of 47%. Separate food waste collection will be an important step towards that as the food waste can be recycled. Hopefully from 2027, the Council will start collecting plastic film (e.g. plastic film lids on yoghurt pots, soft fruit punnets and ready meals, as well as plastic crisp packets, pasta bags and chocolate or biscuit wrappers). The Council has already been trialling a free, kerbside collection service for unwanted textiles and broken, small electrical items.

Putting stuff into the recycling bin is not the end of the story. It is just the beginning of the next chapter. This material must be made into something else for it to be recycled and the Council is committed to supporting businesses that do this. This is called “closing the loop” or the circular economy. See Section 13 Economic Development.

[Carbon savings: the savings of these initiatives have not been estimated.]

# Council working practices and procedures

Most of the Council’s managers and team leaders have done Carbon Literacy training. Officers publicly report twice-yearly to councillors on climate change projects. They work on a variety of policies that have bearing on carbon emissions. For example, one of the principles applicants seeking funding for a project from the Council’s grants scheme are assessed against is “How have you designed the project to minimise its climate impact?” Council service plans and strategies are reviewed for climate change impact. Officers work in partnership with other organisations to respond to the climate change challenge e.g. share information on climate initiatives. and collaborate on projects where beneficial. Staff can use electric pool cars for business journeys.

[Carbon saving: Mostly indirect savings that have not been fully quantified]

# Council vehicles

Our biggest emission source is from our vehicles. This can be seen from the Graph 3 on page 12. The Council has a policy of switching to electrical vehicles unless there are significant business reasons not to. We have been gradually switching the fleet to electric, although sometimes specialized vehicles are not available as electric versions or are expensive options given their low mileage.

The refuse collection vehicles are the big emitters. They only do very few miles to the gallon due to the waste compactor on the back and stop-start driving. Mandatory food waste collections and new homes in the district will drive up the number of miles that refuse vehicles of all types have to travel in the near future.

Steps have been taken to reduce these emissions. We have two electric refuse vehicles but it’s clear that this type of vehicle is still in a relatively early stage of development. Furthermore, the depot, where most of the fleet is based, needs significant electrical infrastructure upgrades to meet the demand of further electrification.

While work on this is progressed, the Council is considering switching its diesel vehicles to Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) made from used cooking oil. Switching to this product will reduce the Council’s carbon footprint by about a third. Before we take this step, we need to be sure that robust safeguards are in place to check the origin of this fuel is genuinely used cooking oil. This is to avoid unintentionally driving loss of tropical forests to oil plantations. We also need to assess the budget implications of these safeguards.

[Carbon savings: high – equivalent to more than 100 people’s annual footprint]

# Council buildings

The Council’s second biggest source of emissions is Westgate leisure centre largely due to requirement to heat the swimming pool. In 2020 we were awarded a grant of £1.3 million to reduce emissions from the centre with the installation of an air source heat pump, solar thermal heating and solar photovoltaics (PV) panels. Further projects have taken place since, funded through the Swimming Pool Support Fund which included the installation of pool covers and shower flow restrictors. The leisure centre still has a gas-fired Combined Heat and Power Plant and gas boilers, so future proposals could consider opportunities to take the centre off gas.

We have improved the energy efficiency and installed PV panels on some of our public conveniences. We have also carried out major energy efficiency improvements at Westward House, the Council’s short-stay accommodation for people facing homelessness. The Council’s new short-stay facility, Freeland Close, and the Council’s redeveloped industrial estate, St James, both have solar panels and electric vehicle charge-points. Westward House, Freeland Close and St James are all-electric buildings. However, the Council does have other buildings that are heated by gas or LPG. The aim is to work up plans specific to individual buildings to improve their energy efficiency and switch to low-carbon alternatives to these fossil fuels. [Carbon savings: to be estimated]

The Council is also considering switching to a contract with a renewable electricity generator when its current electricity contract ends in 2026. This will reduce emissions from our electric vehicles as well as our buildings.

[Carbon savings: medium – equivalent to 10-100 people’s annual footprint]

# Data

Table 1 Greenhouse gas emissions from district of Chichester in 2019 to 2022 in ktCO2e

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Year | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
| Industry | 75 | 66 | 60 | 63 |
| Commercial | 67 | 59 | 67 | 65 |
| Public Sector | 27 | 28 | 30 | 28 |
| Household | 206 | 204 | 206 | 185 |
| Road transport | 301 | 245 | 251 | 247 |
| Diesel Railways | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Transport Total | 305 | 248 | 254 | 250 |
| Forestry | -137 | -139 | -135 | -134 |
| Cropland | 17 | 17 | 17 | 17 |
| Grassland | -20 | -20 | -20 | -20 |
| Settlements - land use | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| Peatland | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 |
| Bioenergy crops | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Agriculture energy use | 55 | 57 | 58 | 47 |
| Agriculture Livestock | 51 | 49 | 51 | 51 |
| Agriculture Soils | 35 | 31 | 31 | 30 |
| Landfill | 11 | 10 | 4 | 1 |
| Waste 'Other' | 21 | 21 | 23 | 21 |
| Total | 728 | 647 | 661 | 618 |