



Climate Strategy ◦

Foreword

As global temperatures rise and extreme weather events become more frequent, the most vulnerable suffer and are least able to adapt. Huntingdonshire's residents and wildlife already feel the effects and more dramatic changes are likely in the decades to come. This Council must consider its duty of care and use its position of influence to act. **We therefore declare a Climate and Ecological Emergency.**

This Climate Strategy outlines the Council's vision for addressing that emergency with an Action Plan designed to lead us to a net zero carbon council by 2040 and to strongly influence district-wide action on emissions and biodiversity. The six objectives reflect the priorities of our residents and the strategic goals of this council.

Actions required by council service areas will be delivered through spending wisely and systemic change. Capital investments will require individual business cases.

The participation of our local communities will be essential. Local people want to take action, but look to this council for leadership. Therefore, we will bring together our parish councils, local businesses and environmental interest groups each year in a Climate Conversation summit. This will provide a platform for knowledge sharing as well as signposting to resources and funding. We will check in with our stakeholders, share our council's progress and review our plans.

Our response to the climate and ecological emergency will be embedded into every action taken and each decision made by this council. Together with the help of local people, we will support the recovery of Huntingdonshire's ecology and play our part in tackling climate change.

Lara Davenport-Ray
Executive Councillor for
Climate & Environment



We will be a Council that proactively tackles the climate crisis and ecological emergency, working closely with partners, and leading by example



BUILDINGS

The buildings and infrastructure around us shape how we live, our health and our well being. We need to ensure what is built is as environmentally sustainable as possible



ENERGY AND RENEWABLES

We need to reduce emissions caused by our activities and ensure that our energy is from renewable sources



NATURE

We know our residents highly value the open spaces and natural environment in Huntingdonshire. We need to protect, restore and improve our environment, and build resilience to extreme weather events



TRAVEL AND TRANSPORT

We want to see a Huntingdonshire where our residents are able to access what they want locally, with effective lower carbon transport options and safe cycling routes



WASTE, RECYCLING AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

We want to see a Huntingdonshire where much less is thrown away



COMMUNITY

Our communities should shape the places they live in to be better adapted to the future climate

The Climate Strategy is the Council’s response to the climate crisis and ecological emergency. It sets out what we will do to play our part in addressing climate change. We will be a **positive example** to others by reducing our own emissions and adapting our service to the changed climate, an **enabler** to support action within our communities and across our partners, and an **encourager** to ensure all efforts help to deliver our ambition of a Carbon Net Zero council by 2040.

ACTIONS



POSITIVE EXAMPLE

Improve the energy efficiency of Council buildings, and by 2040 stop using gas for heating

Adapt our buildings and make our services more resilient to prepare for the impacts of climate change

Look for opportunities to install renewable energy generation on our land and buildings

Implement an Energy Strategy to guide our future decisions on renewable energy supply and resilience

Deliver community developed plans for greater biodiversity gain and more trees on our land

Develop a plan to invest in fleet to reduce emissions from council owned vehicles to zero by 2040

Understand how our staff travel for work, and how we can reduce these emissions

Reduce the carbon impact and waste from our own services and those we commission

Openly share progress against our climate targets

Include climate and biodiversity in our impact assessments to ensure they are embedded in our decision making



ENABLER

Support development of sustainable communities through our Local Plan review to provide lower carbon places for people to live and work

Support schemes that help communities and businesses reduce their emissions and use renewable energy

Engage our communities, partners and businesses in managing their open spaces for nature, sharing opportunities to increase biodiversity

Seek partnerships and funding to enhance our electric vehicle charging infrastructure

Work with partners to expand the infrastructure for sustainable and low carbon travel

Improve information, knowledge and advice to increase the recycling rate of municipal waste and reduce the amount of our waste that goes to landfill

Host Huntingdonshire’s annual Climate Conversation for sharing of best practice, concerns and priorities



ENCOURAGER

Use Sustainable Business Awards to recognise and promote great practice

Work with our partners and communities to adapt to the needs of climate change

Support the sharing of guidance and advice to residents and businesses on measures they can take to improve energy efficiency, insulation, switch to low carbon heating, and install renewables

Work with communities and businesses to help them look after the natural environment, including delivering community litter picking/river cleaning projects

Promote the health benefits of active travel and alternative travel choices

Support and celebrate re-use and recycling schemes to reduce the use of disposable products

Work with communities and partners to support climate action across the district

Vision and Objectives



"77% OF RESPONDENTS* SAID IT IS 'VERY IMPORTANT' OR 'ESSENTIAL' THAT WE TAKE ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE"

* Of those responding to the Council's 2022 Climate Survey.

Why? – Evidenced Priorities

Impacts of the climate crisis and ecological emergency are visible across the world and within Huntingdonshire. All of us need to take action. This Council has an important role in leading this action. This strategy sets out what we will do to improve our own operations, but also how we will work with others to ensure district-wide change. Our approach will also reflect the importance of supporting our residents and businesses at a time of increasing cost of living.

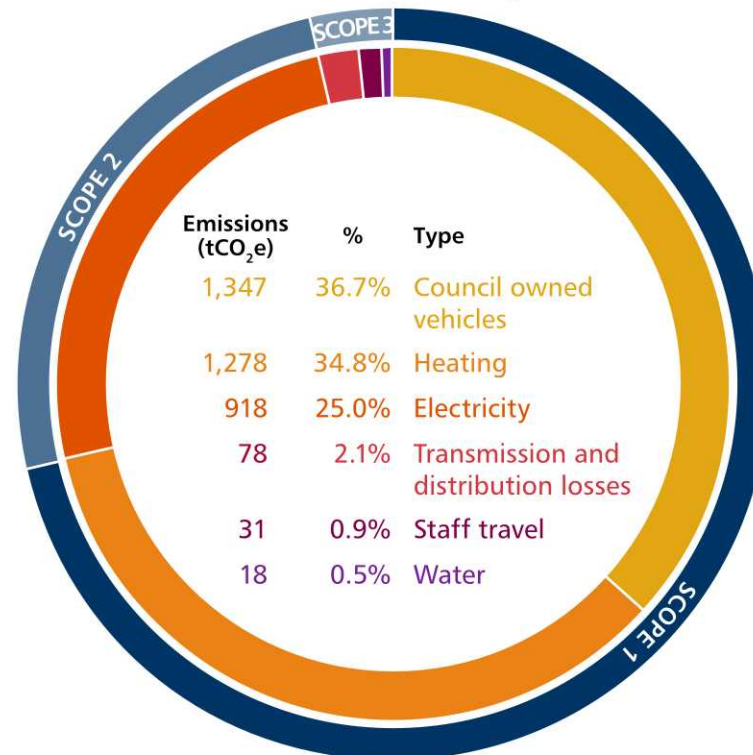
Council Key Priorities

1
Decarbonise Fleet

2
Reduce energy use,
shift to renewables

3
Procure wisely

What Causes the Council's Greenhouse Gas Emissions of 3,670 tCO₂e?



SCOPE 1 EMISSIONS
Direct emissions from the Council's owned or controlled sources. This includes on-site energy, e.g. natural gas and fuel

SCOPE 2 EMISSIONS
Indirect emissions from purchased or acquired energy, e.g. electricity, steam, heat, or cooling

SCOPE 3 EMISSIONS
All indirect emissions that occur in the value chain e.g. the emissions resulting from staff travelling to work

"32% OF RESPONDENTS* SAID THE COUNCIL'S HIGHEST PRIORITY SHOULD BE TAKING ACTION TO REDUCE ITS OWN EMISSIONS"

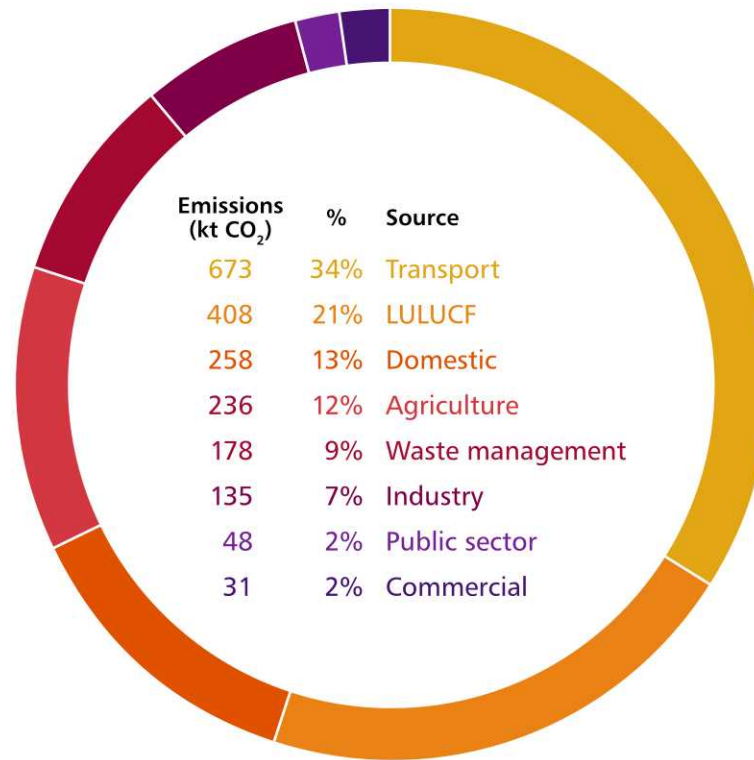
* Of those responding to the Council's 2022 Climate Survey.



District-wide Key Priorities

- 1 Sustainable travel with low emissions
- 2 Reduce energy use, shift to renewables
- 3 Increase biodiversity and natural capital

What Causes Huntingdonshire’s Greenhouse Gas Emissions of 1,966 kt CO₂?



“40% OF RESPONDENTS* SAID THE COUNCIL’S HIGHEST PRIORITY SHOULD BE ENCOURAGING OTHERS TO REDUCE THEIR EMISSIONS”

* Of those responding to the Council’s 2022 Climate Survey.

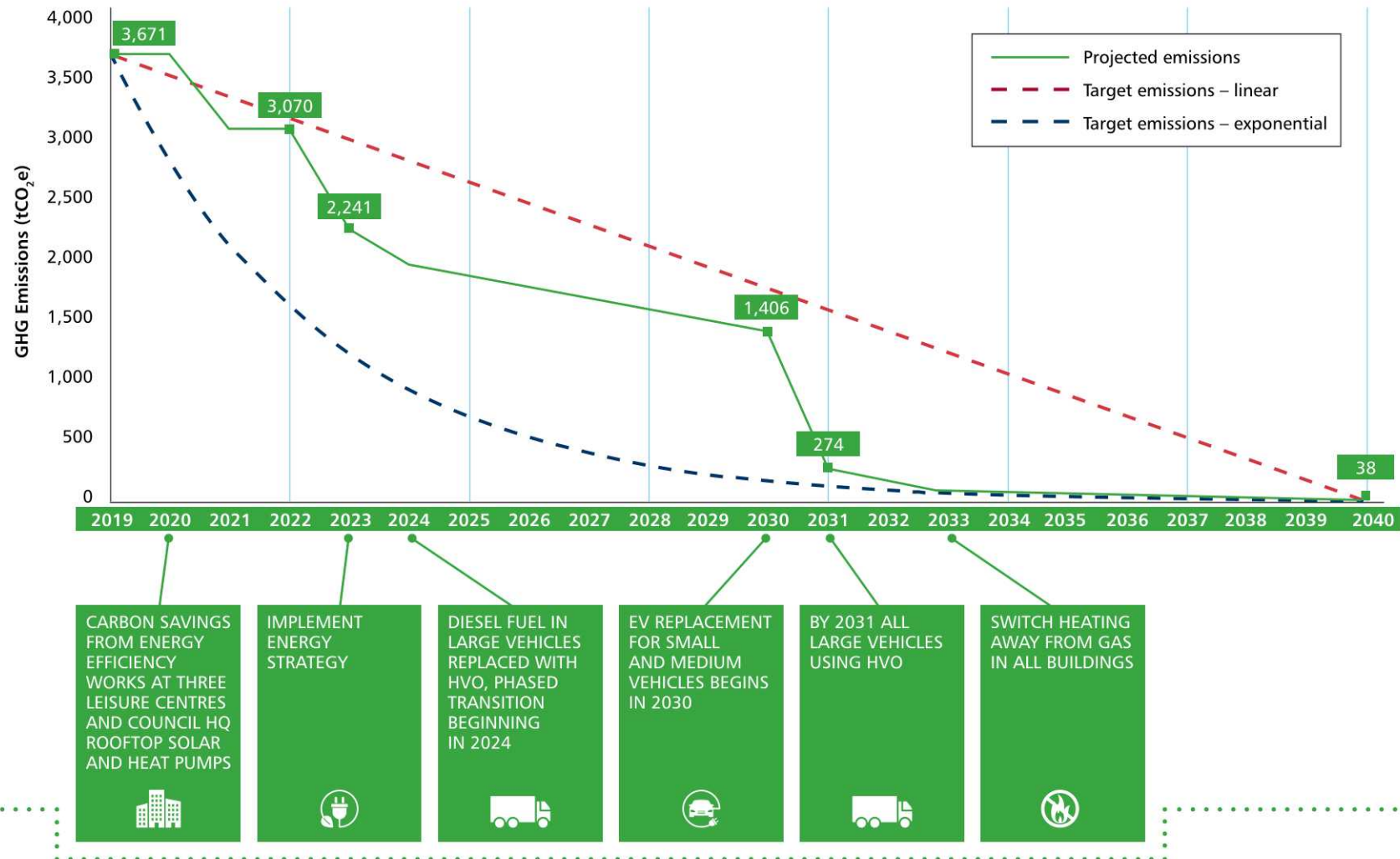
Our Pathway to Carbon Net Zero 2040

The red and blue show two target lines we could follow.

Green shows the impact of the changes we expect to make through our current action plan to reduce emissions, based on what is currently known about improving technology.

Our action plan will be revisited annually, if opportunities arise that improve the business case for action, we will reduce our carbon emissions earlier.

Carbon Pathway Scenarios to 2040



Our Priority Actions

We will be a Positive Example:

**Key
Climate
Actions**



Review our assets to understand opportunities to improve the building fabric, energy efficiency and carbon impact of our buildings

Undertake a fleet review to determine when our vehicles should be switched from petrol/diesel to low carbon alternatives

Define a pathway for the council to move to 100% renewable energy usage

We will Enable and Encourage:



Enhance environmental aspects of the Local Plan where possible to do so

Deliver programme of biodiversity with the CPCA to include Community and Council Open Spaces

Work with partners to promote and support more active and net zero carbon travel

How we will Achieve our Objectives?

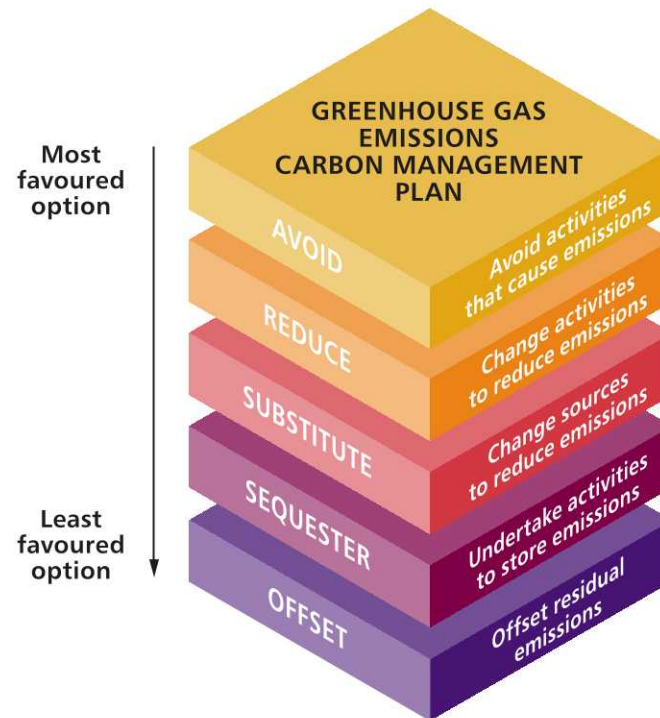
The Council will be a positive example in its approach to making decisions with due regard to the impact on climate and environment.

By focussing on our key actions we will make progress towards our Carbon Net Zero council 2040 target. We will track progress against our pathway, calculated using the Greenhouse Gas emissions calculating tool, developed by Local Partnerships and the Local Government Association. This will be updated and shared with our community and partners at Huntingdonshire's annual Climate Conversation summit.

Actions required by council service areas will be delivered through spending wisely and systemic change. These will be included in the budget for each service area and be subject to the annual budget-setting of the Council.

Capital investments will require individual business cases to ensure prioritised and economically sustainable investment.

The Council will follow a hierarchy of action, prioritising reduction in emissions through changing activity and demand for energy



and fossil fuels, then replacing fossil fuels. Recognising the importance of carbon sequestration and the high value placed on our natural and biodiverse environment, the Council will increase the natural capture of carbon through changed land management regimes and tree canopy enlargement. The Council will only consider carbon offset as a very last resort as this does not address the need to reduce and adapt consumption that the Climate Crisis and Ecological Emergency require.



Priority Actions by Theme



Buildings

The buildings and infrastructure around us shape how we live, our health and our well being. They are also a significant source of GHG emissions. For the Council 60% of our emissions come from heating and using electricity in our buildings.

★ Positive Example

Improve the energy efficiency of Council buildings and by 2040 stop using gas for heating.

Adapt our buildings and make our services more resilient to prepare for the impacts of climate change.

🔌 Enabler

Support development of sustainable communities through our Local Plan review to provide lower carbon places for people to live and work.

👍 Encourager

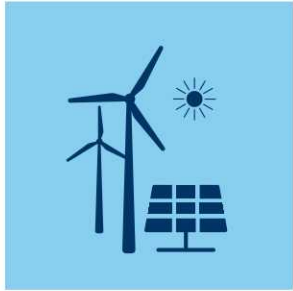
Use the Sustainable Business Awards to recognise and promote great practice.

Work with our partners and communities to adapt to the needs of climate change.

“78% OF RESPONDENTS* SAID THE COUNCIL SHOULD USE PLANNING RULES SO NEW DEVELOPMENTS MEET SUSTAINABILITY STANDARDS”

* Of those responding to the Council's 2022 Climate Survey.

Priority Actions by Theme



Energy and Renewables

Energy is one of the most significant contributors to our emissions. Factors outside of our control, such as recent energy prices rises and the war in Ukraine, highlight the need for us to increase the resilience of our local energy supply, and reduce our consumption.

★ Positive Example

Look for opportunities to install renewable energy generation on our land and buildings.

Implement an Energy Strategy to guide our future decisions on renewable energy supply and resilience.

🔌 Enabler

Support schemes that help communities and businesses reduce their emissions and use renewable energy.

👍 Encourager

Support the sharing of guidance and advice to residents and businesses on measures that they can take to improve energy efficiency, insulation, switch to low carbon heating, and install renewables.

“88% OF RESPONDENTS* SAID THEY HAVE REDUCED THEIR ELECTRICITY USE WITH ENERGY EFFICIENCY MEASURES”

“73% OF RESPONDENTS* SAID THE COUNCIL SHOULD FOCUS ON RENEWABLE ENERGY”

* Of those responding to the Council's 2022 Climate Survey.

Priority Actions by Theme



Nature

Nature benefits health, as well as being a haven of biodiversity, and important natural processes. Huntingdonshire has a wealth of green spaces and natural assets, rich in biodiversity providing a home for many native species and a link to the natural environment for our residents.

★ Positive Example

Deliver community developed plans for greater biodiversity gain and more trees on our land.

🔌 Enabler

Engage our communities, partners and businesses in managing their open spaces for nature, sharing opportunities to increase biodiversity.

👍 Encourager

Work with communities and businesses to help them look after the natural environment, including delivering community litter picking/river cleaning projects.

“83% OF RESPONDENTS* SAID THE COUNCIL SHOULD RESTORE NATURE AND PLANT TREES”

“20% OF RESPONDENTS* SAID THEIR HOME OR BUSINESS HAD BEEN DAMAGED BY EXTREME WEATHER”

* Of those responding to the Council's 2022 Climate Survey.

Priority Actions by Theme



Travel and Transport

In response to climate change we need to consider how we travel and how the food we eat and the products we buy reach us.

We will work with our partners and our transport authorities to support more environmentally sustainable choices through the infrastructure they provide.

★ Positive Example

Develop a plan to invest in fleet to reduce emissions from council owned vehicles to zero by 2040.

Understand how our staff travel for work, and how we can reduce these emissions.

🔌 Enabler

Seek partnerships and funding to enhance our electric vehicle charging infrastructure.

Work with partners to expand the infrastructure for sustainable and low carbon travel.

👍 Encourager

Promote the health benefits of active travel and alternative travel choices.

“46% OF RESPONDENTS* SAID THAT THE COUNCIL SHOULD SWITCH TO ELECTRIC VEHICLES”

* Of those responding to the Council's 2022 Climate Survey.

Priority Actions by Theme



Waste, Recycling and Resource Management

We generate waste as a by-product of almost all of our activities. Resource management describes how we can work together to consume less, reduce waste and recycle the valuable resources we have. Huntingdonshire residents already recycle more than 50% of their waste, but the recycling rate has plateaued.

★ Positive Example

Reduce the carbon impact and waste from our own services and those we commission.

🔌 Enabler

Improve information, knowledge and advice to increase the recycling rate of municipal waste and reduce the amount of our waste that goes to landfill.

👍 Encourager

Support and celebrate re-use and recycling schemes to reduce the use of disposable products.

"80% OF RESPONDENTS* SAID THE COUNCIL SHOULD IMPROVE RECYCLING RATES"

"93.6% OF RESPONDENTS* SAID THEY WERE MAXIMISING THEIR OWN RECYCLING"

* Of those responding to the Council's 2022 Climate Survey.

Priority Actions by Theme



Community

The many communities of Huntingdonshire have a significant role in responding to climate change. The Council must work with our communities to build resilience to future extreme weather events, support community initiatives to benefit the climate and ecology whilst enabling more positive impact to achieve Carbon Net Zero.



Positive Example

Openly share progress against our climate targets.

Include climate and biodiversity in our impact assessments to ensure they are embedded in our decision making.



Enabler

Host Huntingdonshire's annual Climate Conversation for sharing of best practice, concerns and priorities.



Encourager

Work with communities and partners to support climate action across the district.

"12% OF RESPONDENTS*
THINK THE COUNCIL
SHOULD PROVIDE
ADVICE AND GUIDANCE
ON ACCESS TO
INFORMATION AND
FUNDING FOR RESIDENTS
AND BUSINESSES TO
HELP THEM ADDRESS
CLIMATE CHANGE"

* Of those responding to the Council's 2022 Climate Survey.

Monitoring Progress Together

We will **enable** our communities, businesses and partners through an Annual Climate Conversation event to showcase their efforts, share what has worked, challenges and priorities.

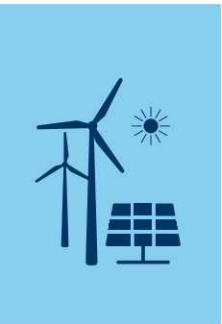
We will continue to **encourage** action through the event and sharing the positive impacts for Huntingdonshire's climate and environment.

We will openly share our own progress in this conversation, but also to listen to changing challenges and priorities which may need to be reflected in revised actions.

The inaugural event will be an opportunity to share progress and seek input on our priority actions:

- Biodiversity for All Programme
- Local Plan Revision
- Sustainable Travel

Feedback from the Climate Conversation will be captured in an annual report. This will sit alongside formal annual reporting of the Council's achievements against its action plan and any revisions that are recommended.



Further Information



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