

Colchester City Council Climate Emergency

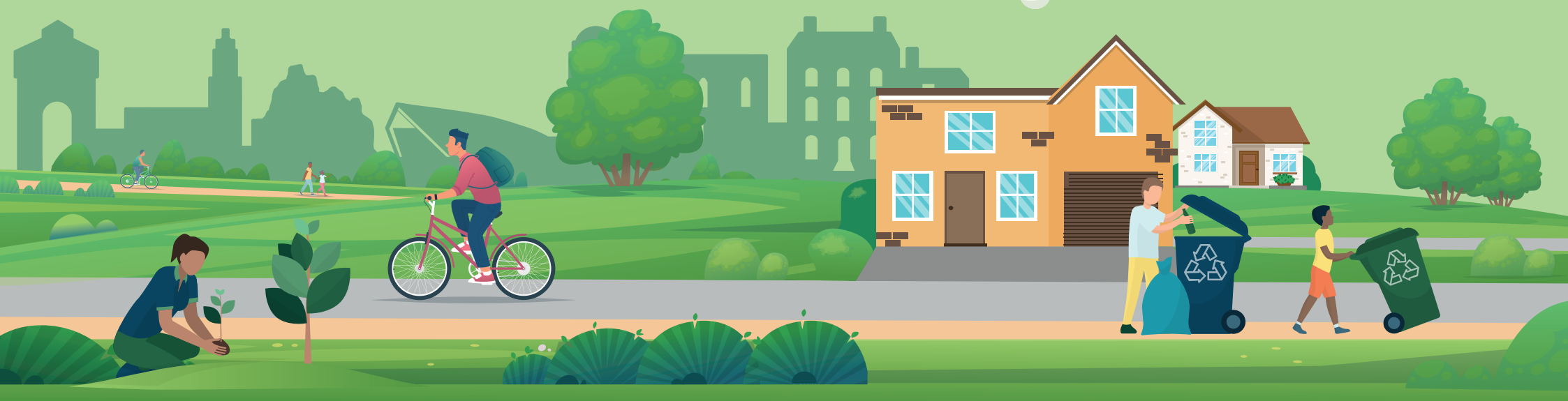


TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Themes of the Climate Emergency Action Plan</u>	<u>04</u>
<u>Co-benefits</u>	<u>05</u>
<u>Greenhouse Gas Emissions – In the Council and the borough</u>	<u>06</u>
<u>The Climate Emergency Action Plan</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>What can you do?</u>	<u>55</u>

INTRODUCTION

Taking action to tackle our climate emergency is an absolute priority for Colchester City Council (CCC).

The plan aims to address the urgent challenge of climate change faced by the Council; one which is made harder because, Colchester has already completed many of the 'easier', 'quick win' projects. This means that moving forward at pace to achieve our climate targets will require significant investment of resources from the Council, the government, our partners and citizens.

Since declaring a climate emergency, the Council has taken action to understand its baseline emissions and understand what assets contribute to these. Work has also been done to project our emissions to 2030, based on planned projects the Council intends to have completed by that time. This work identified we would still have 2,617 tonnes of emissions left, what is known as our 'gap to target', so there is still plenty of work to do to help the Council reach net zero. The Council is therefore looking to identify further opportunities for reducing emissions across its buildings, looking to utilise grant funding for this as it becomes available.

Several significant Council projects exist that respond to this climate emergency declaration as are described in our action plan. But we will need all Council staff, partners and residents to be on board with tackling the climate emergency if we are to make a real difference in creating a cleaner, greener Colchester together.

This action plan aims to show you what action the Council is taking to reduce its environmental impact and highlight some opportunities for you to be involved in these as well.

To keep up to date with our climate and environmental work, visit the Council's [sustainability page](#) or view meeting reports and minutes from the [Environment and Sustainability Panel](#) which monitor the Council's progress on environmental action. A review of actions completed in the action plan from 2021-2022 that was presented at this Panel can be found [here](#).

If you have any questions about this action plan, or any of our environmental and climate work please email climate.change@colchester.gov.uk, or come and '[have your say](#)' at the Environment and Sustainability Panel.



THEMES OF THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN

Theme 1 – Reduce emissions from our buildings and fleet

Theme 2 – Adapting to a changing climate

Theme 3 – Produce renewable energy

Theme 4 – Enhance biodiversity and protect our environment

Theme 5 – Facilitate sustainable and active travel and improve air quality

Theme 6 – Provide sustainable waste management and support residents to reduce, reuse and recycle

Theme 7 – Enable partnerships and community action for sustainability

Theme 8 – Sustainable planning, built environment and green economy

Theme 9 – Change the way we work to achieve our climate commitment

CO-BENEFITS

Alongside climate action delivering positive environmental benefits such as reducing emissions and improving levels of biodiversity, it can also produce other benefits for wider society. These are known as 'co-benefits' and the Council's action plan contains many actions that produce co-benefits such as producing costs savings, improving air quality, increasing jobs and increasing community engagement and cohesion.

In this plan, co-benefits are split into four categories. Actions that contribute to producing a particular co-benefit will be marked with the corresponding symbol to show this is being delivered.



Improving physical and mental health

Improving air quality,
creating warmer homes,
supporting active travel,
improving access to
green spaces



Supporting local economy

Job creation,
opportunities for
local investment,
businesses reducing their
environmental impact,
cost savings



Reducing inequalities

Reducing fuel poverty,
increasing community
engagement



Increasing resilience to impacts of climate change

Increasing local renewable
energy supply, reducing
flood risk

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

The Council publicises its greenhouse gas emissions on an annual basis on the Council's [website](#). There are lots of different greenhouse gas emissions such as carbon dioxide (CO₂), nitrogen oxides (NO_x), methane (CH₄) and others. There are several Council activities and operations that contribute to emissions. The Council has set a target of reaching net zero emissions by 2030. This means the Council will reduce emissions from its activities to as close to zero as possible. As a last resort, and to reduce residual emissions that are not considered viable to reduce, the Council will seek to understand the potential to reduce its emissions locally through offsetting projects, that can produce both environmental and community benefits.

There are several emission sources that are included in the Council's net zero target:

- Electricity and gas consumption in Council buildings (including emissions associated with working from home)
- Fuel used in the Council's fleet
- Emissions associated with waste production in Council buildings (type of waste, transportation of waste)
- Emissions associated with water consumption (emissions produced during the treatment and supply of water to Council buildings)
- Emissions from staff commuting and business travel (e.g. for meetings, site visits)

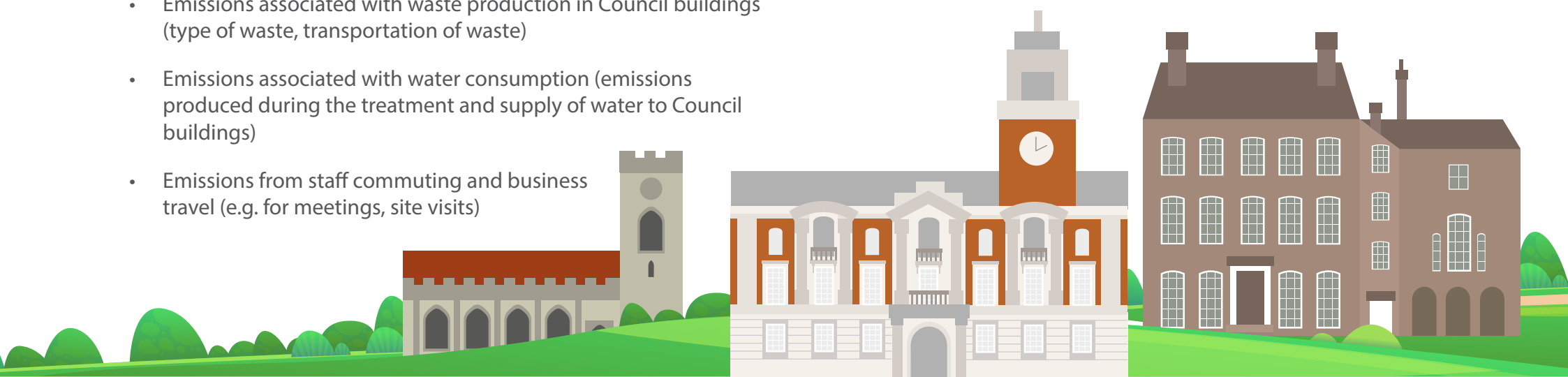
The Council reports its emissions in terms of tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂e).

All types of greenhouse gas emissions have varying impacts on climate change (known as their global warming potential), but for simplicity, we equal and report on our emissions in the terms of if they were all CO₂ (as this is the predominant emission type). The 'e' in CO₂e stands for equivalent and is used as the Council captures all the greenhouse gas emissions in its reporting as if they were equivalent to the global warming potential of CO₂.

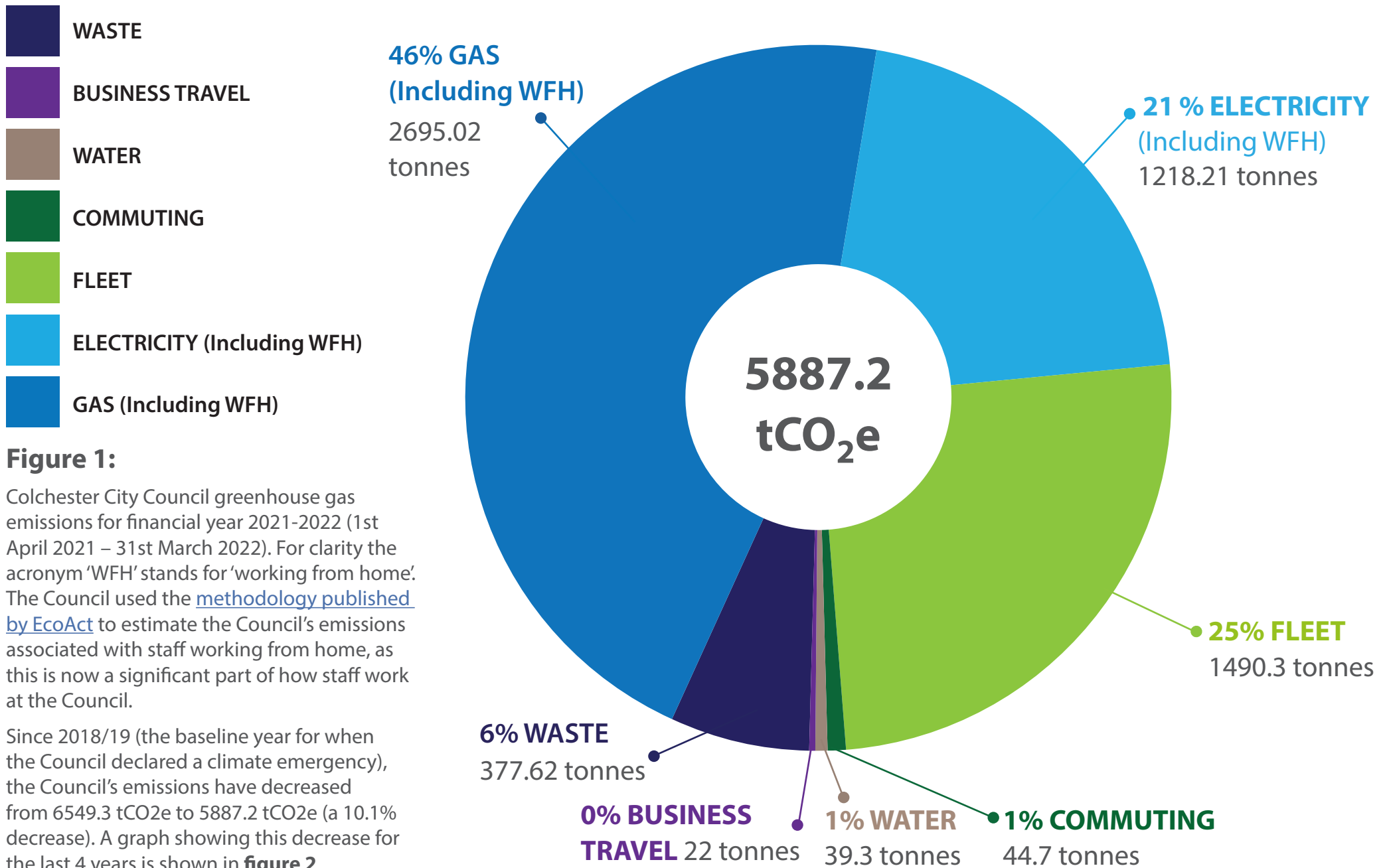
For instance, methane (CH₄) has a global warming potential of 27-30, compared to carbon dioxide (CO₂) of 1. This means 1 tonne of methane has the same impact on climate change and warming as 27-30 tonnes of CO₂.

For more information on global warming potentials, [click here](#).

The Council's emissions from 1st April 2021 – 31st March 2022 are reported below in figure 1.



THE COUNCIL'S EMISSIONS FROM 1ST APRIL 2021 – 31ST MARCH 2022



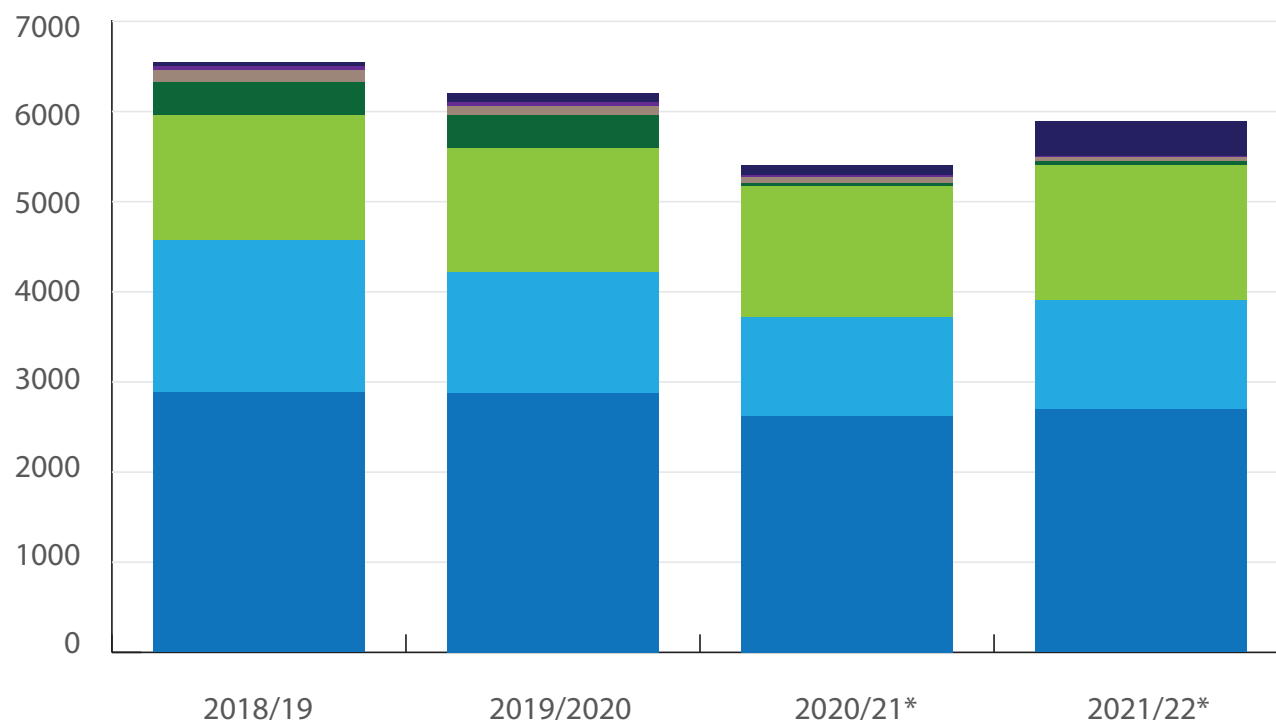


Figure 2:

Change in Council's greenhouse gas emissions between financial year 2018/19 and financial year 2021/22. The asterisk (*) refers to years where estimated emissions associated with staff working from home were factored into the overall emissions calculation.

Note that financial year 2020-2021 was a year significantly impacted by covid, meaning the forced closure of some buildings and operations led to decreases in emissions that were unrealistic of normal operations. All Council emissions are recorded in the Council [emissions archive](#).

In the most recent projection out till 2030, based on planned projects the Council's emissions will be 2,617 tonnes of CO2e. This figure is still sizeable so the Council will be continuing to identify projects to help further reduce emissions through the creation of a new Carbon Management Plan.

There are several other emission sources that the Council records emissions data for. However, these are emissions which are classed as 'indirect' emissions associated with the Council's operations. The Council has not set an emission reduction target for all of these emission sources, mainly because of lack of data quality as these emissions sit with other organisations and it can be difficult to access this from them. These emissions sources are:

- Emissions from Colchester Borough Homes who manage the Council's housing stock – Colchester Borough Homes have set a target to reach net zero emissions by 2050 for the housing stock.
- Emissions from procured goods and services
- Emissions from leased buildings (buildings the Council own, but leases out to another organisation to operate out of)
- Emissions associated with the extraction, production and transportation of the electricity and gas the Council uses in its operations (i.e. this is separate to the emissions involved in the generation of energy that the Council uses to provide heating and lighting to its buildings)

Emissions for these sources can be viewed on the Council's [website](#).

EMISSIONS IN THE BOROUGH

There are also emissions that occur in the wider borough, including from transport, domestic and commercial energy usage, agriculture and waste disposal and treatment. As shown below, the greatest chunk (44%) of Colchester's emissions comes from transport, primarily road transport.

The emissions in the wider borough are estimated from 2018 (the most recent data source) and are detailed below:

Borough wide emissions (<u>SCATTER CITIES, 2018</u>)		
Category	Emissions (tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent, TCO2e)	
	Scope 1 (emissions from heating, fuel usage)	Scope 2 (electricity usage)
Energy use (domestic)	177,186	87,765
Energy use (commercial/institutional/ industrial)	116,542	103,088
Transportation (road, off road, railways)	325,461	-
District waste operations (waste treatment including wastewater)	76,495	-
Industrial products and product use	44,314	-
Agriculture and land use	-4789*	1
Total	735,209	190,854

1. REDUCE EMISSIONS FROM OUR BUILDINGS AND FLEET

Key to tackling the climate emergency is reducing the emissions associated with the Council's buildings and fleet that it owns and operates. Approximately 66% of the Council's emissions are from its buildings, and 25% from fleet (based on financial year 2021-22). The actions below state how the Council is responding to this, including plans set out for decarbonising these assets and specific actions that are already being carried out to put those plans into action.

Not all of our assets listed below are included in our net zero target by 2030. The main asset not included is the Council's housing stock consisting of nearly 7000 properties. These properties are managed through a separate Asset Management Strategy with the target of all properties reaching an energy performance certificate of a C by 2030, and for the whole housing stock to be net zero by 2050.



Key Highlights from actions completed in 2021/22 include:

- **Estimating the Council's emissions in 2030**, based on planned projects occurring at several different assets. This revealed that there were still 2,617 tonnes of CO₂e that will need to be reduced by 2030 that can be accomplished by agreeing actions at other assets to reduce emissions.
- **Sourced Council's electricity from a 100% renewable energy green tariff.** This meant the Council pays a premium on its electricity bill to support the production of renewable energy, but does not mean renewable electricity is directly used by assets (unless these have rooftop solar photovoltaic panels, which are on some assets like Leisure World Colchester, the Crematorium and others).
- **4 hybrid electric vehicles** purchased for the Helpline response team and 5 fully electric vehicles purchased by North Essex Parking Partnership. The Council has also purchased 5 fully electric vans so far for its own fleet. These are part of the contribution to the Council's outlined Fleet Transition Plan to use fully electric/low carbon fuel alternatives for the fleet by 2030.
- **Installation of electric vehicle charge points** in several Council owned car parks including 3 at Priory Street car park and 10 chargers in St John's car park (for Council fleet vehicles).

1 Reduce emissions from our buildings and fleet

	Action	How will action be achieved?	Officer/Team responsible	Timescale	Measurement of Success	Co-benefits
1.1	Development of a new Carbon Management Plan (CMP) based on insight and evidence gathered from a detailed pathway modelling of the Colchester City Council (CCC) footprint.	Work with Ingleton Wood to develop a new CMP for 2022-27, establishing possible actions to reduce emissions from key CCC assets such as Leisure World, Colchester Castle and the Town Hall amongst others.	Climate Emergency Officer	June 2022 - December 2022	New CMP produced by December 2022	
1.2	Continue to report on our emissions annually, and look to collect more refined data on our indirect emissions	Review other data sources and report annually, including calculating emissions associated with working from home. Where possible, look to improve collection of data on the Council's indirect emissions (e.g. those from procurement, leased buildings)	Climate Emergency Officer	Emissions reported annually	Report on emissions produced, in better detail where possible.	
1.3	Take steps to ensure the council's future electricity supply is provided by 100% renewable generated sources	Source Council's electricity from a supplier providing 100% renewable electricity. Explore opportunities for renewable energy generation such as solar PV that can be used to contribute directly to powering Council buildings through Carbon Management Plan	Facilities Management team Climate Emergency Officer and building operators, working with Ingleton Wood	Reprocure green tariff at each procurement cycle April 2022 – December 2022	Continue to reprocure green tariff. Identify more options for installing solar PV on rooftop of CCC assets.	
1.4	Review our estate and assets to investigate means of increasing energy efficiency of heating, lighting and cooling systems	Building maintenance programme to consider opportunities for decarbonisation of buildings as part of building surveys that are conducted	Estate Manager	Ongoing action	Building Maintenance surveys to include carbon reduction assessment and activities to maximise opportunities to decarbonise assets when carrying out repairs.	

1 Reduce emissions from our buildings and fleet






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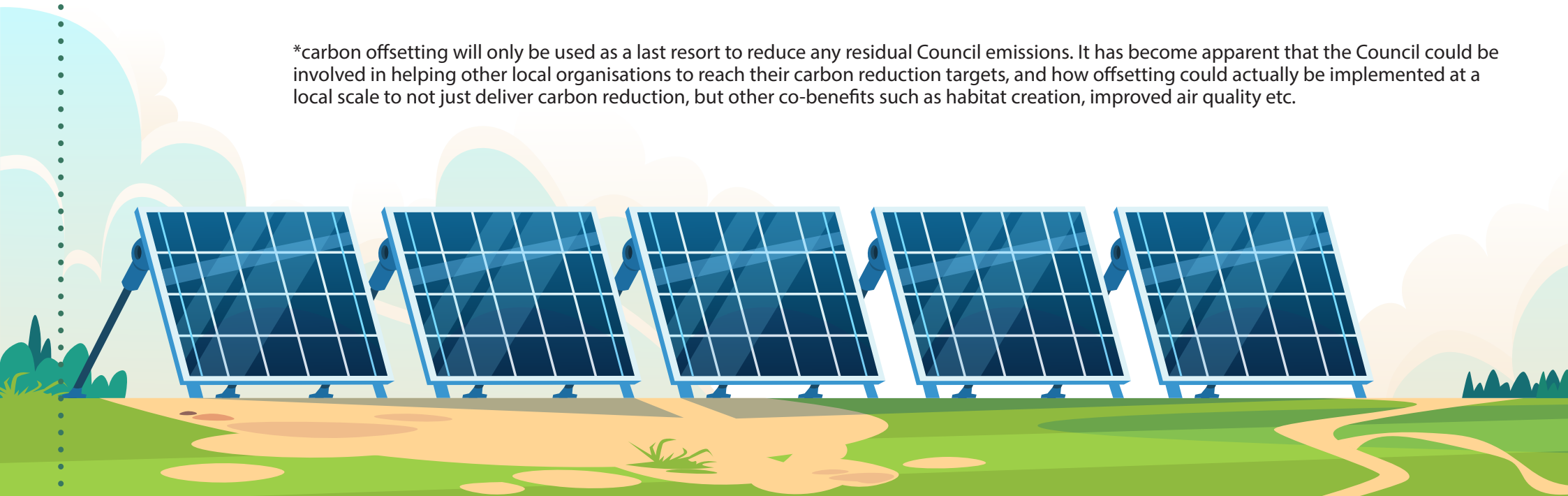
Action	How will action be achieved?	Officer/Team responsible	Timescale	Measurement of Success	Co-benefits
Decarbonisation of Rowan House, the Council's main office	Replacement of existing heating and ventilation systems with heat pump. Also adding in extra roof insulation, LED lighting, and 12 electric vehicle (EV) charge points	Rowan House project team	March 2022 – Spring 2023	Realization of predicted energy savings (and associated carbon emissions) during first full year of operation.	
Increasing the energy performance of 100 Homes to reduce energy use and tackle fuel poverty	100 Homes Project – Purchasing 100 former Council homes to increase energy performance certificate (EPC) rating to an average of EPC C (SAP 79).	Housing officer	Sept 2020 – Sept 2022	Increase EPC rating to average of EPC C (SAP 79) for the 100 properties	 
	Purchase of 90 new social homes will include grant funding allocated to increase energy efficiency of the properties		Spring 2022 – Spring 2024	Increase EPC rating to average of EPC C (B for houses, C for flats)	
Decarbonising the housing stock through the Housing Improvement Programme (HIP)	Housing Improvement Programme Works to upgrade most energy inefficient properties to an EPC of C or above on average.	Colchester Borough Homes	July 2022 – July 2023	40 properties to be raised above D in 12 months	
	Boiler replacement works – Replacement of outdated and inefficient boilers			382 boilers to be replaced, of which 10 will be air source heat pumps	
Redevelopment of Elfreda House (sheltered housing) to reduce carbon emissions	Redevelopment of Elfreda House to Future Homes 2025 standard.	Colchester Borough Homes	April 2021 – April 2023	Site built to standard to produce no more than 33.4 kg/m2 CO2 per year	
Take a phased approach to the renewal of the fleet to meet our target of having a fully electric vehicle (EV)/low carbon fuelled fleet by 2030	Procurement of a further 9 electric vehicles to replace diesel vehicles, building on the 6 electric vehicles procured in June 2022	Fleet Manager	December 2020 – April 2030	Procurement of electric vehicles and achievement of carbon emission savings	

1 Reduce emissions from our buildings and fleet

1.10

Action	How will action be achieved?	Officer/Team responsible	Timescale	Measurement of Success	Co-benefits
Develop an understanding of local offsetting opportunities to inform our pathway to net zero*	Work with Kent Wildlife Trust to understand potential for nature based solutions to contribute to carbon offsetting and benefit biodiversity	Climate Emergency Officers and Parks, Countryside and Greening Manager	January 2022 – November 2022	Established potential carbon savings that could be delivered from one nature based project for CCC	
	Work with Anthesis Group to understand the emerging concept of 'Authority Based Insetting' (ABI) and how it can help the Council and local organisations/businesses to achieve their carbon reduction targets	Climate Emergency Officer	March 2022 – December 2022	Report produced to develop the concept of ABI, local businesses and organisations engaged about concept, and increased awareness about opportunity for using ABI at CCC	

*carbon offsetting will only be used as a last resort to reduce any residual Council emissions. It has become apparent that the Council could be involved in helping other local organisations to reach their carbon reduction targets, and how offsetting could actually be implemented at a local scale to not just deliver carbon reduction, but other co-benefits such as habitat creation, improved air quality etc.



CASE STUDY

COLCHESTER'S CITY COUNCIL FLEET TRANSITION

The Council's ambition is to transition the whole fleet to electric or low carbon alternative fuels by 2030. We have a [fleet transition programme](#) that sets out when different vehicles are due for replacing in procurement cycles.

In June 2022, the Council purchased its first electric vehicles, 6 vans to be used by the pest control and street care and safety teams. The replacement of more Council vehicles with electric alternatives will continue in 2023. Over 20 electric vehicle charge points have been installed to support these with more to come, and we've even trialled an electric refuse collection vehicle for our refuse team to see what these are like when the time comes to invest in these!

The Council is also exploring other methods of using vehicles for work purposes in the fleet, including the use of eCargo bikes for delivery of items.





2. ADAPTING TO A CHANGING CLIMATE

The Council recognises that the impacts and risks posed by climate change such as flooding, drought and extreme weather events are already occurring. These can have severe impacts on residents' wellbeing, wildlife and habitats and the economy. Therefore, we consider it important to take action to adapt to these climate risks, so that we can minimise the impact of climate change as much as possible and ensure people are prepared.





2 Adapting to a changing climate

2.1

Action	How will action be achieved?	Officer/Team responsible	Timescale	Measurement of Success	Co-benefits
Warn the public of severe weather incidents such as flooding, extreme heat and drought and provide advice for how to be prepared for these incidents	CCC signed up to receive Met Office weather warnings and has access to Met Office Hazard Management site to see detailed severe weather information	Resilience Officer	All year	CCC kept up to date with latest weather information enabling it to act when required.	
	Will then act as necessary to provide early warning of severe weather to residents via social media and via Parish Councils.	Resilience Officer	Act when necessary	Sufficient warning of severe weather events, alongside good communication to ensure residents are informed of risks.	
	Disseminate information on the website about how residents can adapt to a changing climate.	Climate Emergency Officer	All year	Website pages updated with information	
Raise awareness of sea level rise and coastal erosion as key climate change threats to coastal regions of Colchester borough	Work with the University of Essex to understand potential for reusing waste oyster shell to re-establish oyster colonies along the coast to act as a physical barrier to protect against coastal erosion, alongside providing habitat for wildlife.	Sustainability team in collaboration with University of Essex academics	May 2022 – December 2022	Report produced to improve understanding of how oyster shells can offer natural protection against sea level rise and coastal erosion.	
	The project will be used to raise awareness generally about the changing climate and what impacts it might bring.			Residents informed about climate adaptation through creation of engaging art piece to provoke discussion and thought about the topic.	

2.2

2 Adapting to a changing climate

	Action	How will action be achieved?	Officer/Team responsible	Timescale	Measurement of Success	Co-benefits
2.3	Manage flood risks along River Colne by enhancing the natural environment	Tree planting along parts of the River Colne, as well as works to manage flooding from riverside lake near Castle Park.	Greening Team	Ongoing during planting seasons	Monitoring of flooding events in Castle Park and see if changes are helping to mitigate risk	
2.4	Ensure CCC is kept up to date with latest climate risks to keep severe weather plans updated	Attend Essex Resilience Forum meetings to align our plans to that of the forum's, and keep up to date with latest research on climatic changes.	Resilience Officer	Ongoing	Severe weather plans kept updated with the latest knowledge	
2.5	Ensure that policies such as consider actions that will help contribute to adapting to a changing climate	Long term policies such as the Local Plan and Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on sustainability and carbon reduction to consider climate adaptation in their development	Various CBC staff	Ongoing	Climate adaptation considered within key CBC policies where relevant	
2.6	Increase the 'greening' of the city centre and surrounding urban areas with street trees and shrubs to naturalise urban areas and contribute to increased shading to provide natural cooling through several projects	Planting trees along North Station Road as part of Fixing the Link project	Various officers	Ongoing	Increased amount of trees and shrubs planted in urban areas	
		Planting of street trees in areas such as New Town and Christchurch using funding from Local Authority Treescape Fund				
		Greening of St Nicholas Square as part of the Town Deal				

3. PRODUCE RENEWABLE ENERGY

Energy is linked into all parts of our lives, from powering our individual homes to larger businesses. Energy demand, particularly for electricity, is increasing as people look to decarbonise their lifestyles and electrify their heating and vehicles. To support this demand, extra energy supply is required and the Council, through its wholly owned energy company [Colchester Amphora Energy Limited](#), is looking to generate more renewable energy. How this is being done is shown in the below table.

Key Highlights from actions completed in 2021/22 include:

- Progress made in the development of the idea for a solar PV farm, Energy Storage and microgrid to provide renewable electricity to the Northern Gateway Development. This work will be progressed in 22/23, with the development of a detailed business case for this project.
- Continued progress developing the Northern Gateway Heat Network for which implementation has been delayed due to planning issues of the main development.

3 Produce renewable energy

	Action	How will action be achieved?	Officer/Team responsible	Timescale	Measurement of Success	Co-benefits
3.1	Continued development of Northern Gateway Heat Network site to generate low carbon heat	Construction of the main energy centre and beginning to build connections to residential, commercial, health and leisure sites.	Energy Manager, Colchester Amphora Energy	Project ongoing and due for Energy Centre completion in 2023	Heat Network Energy Centre commissioned and supplying heat.	 
3.2	Explore the creation of a microgrid to link up new development sites with solar PV generation and energy storage at Colchester Northern Gateway	Conduct feasibility study and development of a business case.	Energy Manager, Colchester Amphora Energy	April 22 to Oct 2023	Business case produced and investment decision made.	 

CASE STUDY

HEAT NETWORK CASE STUDY

The Northern Gateway Heat Network is an innovative project that will use an open loop ground source heat pump to provide heating and hot water to homes, businesses and leisure spaces.

The heat network will be the biggest of its kind in the UK, using a confined chalk aquifer 75 metre below ground as the heat source, providing low carbon heat to 200 homes, 450 flats and nearly 35,000m² of office space and a healthcare area. The boreholes into the aquifer have been installed and tested and construction of the Energy Centre is due start in late 2022



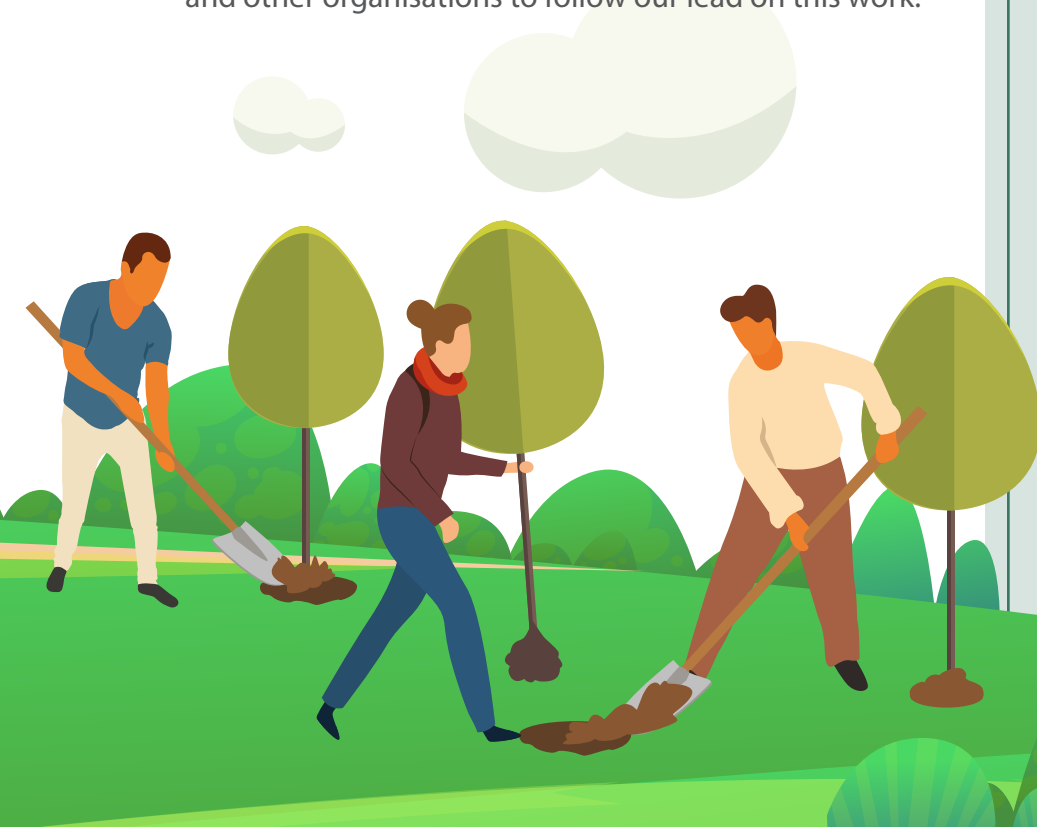
4. ENHANCE BIODIVERSITY AND PROTECT OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

The natural environment and landscapes in and around Colchester are important to protect for the valuable services they provide to us. They provide habitats for wildlife, which in turn support our food systems, absorb and filter out pollutants, store carbon and support many recreational opportunities amongst other benefits.

The Council recognises this, and in recent years has taken several steps to change the way that Council owned green spaces are managed for the benefit of the environment and wildlife. We aim to encourage partners and other organisations to follow our lead on this work.



Key Highlights from actions completed in 2021/22 include:

- **Banning the use of glyphosate herbicide** on Council owned green spaces, with many different alternative approaches to managing weeds being trialled such as hand weeding and using potato starch based hot foam. From March 2022, Colchester Borough Homes also committed to phasing out and banning the use of glyphosate herbicide on green spaces surrounding council housing. Taking this action will have beneficial outcomes for both wildlife and humans.
- **Trialling 'no mow' or reduced mow approaches** on Council green spaces, in an effort to 'rewild' green spaces, creating habitats and an environment suitable for wildlife such as insects and pollinators. On 24 green spaces, mowing regimes were reduced from once every three weeks, to once at the end of the growing season (in mid-Autumn). Since the reduction in grass cutting, 18 butterfly species have been recorded in these areas, about a 1/3 of all species found in England, alongside a large number of bee species. We worked with Wivenhoe Town Council, adopting this approach on green spaces owned by them, and records taken showed that there were 3-29 more species of wildflower in the unmown compared to the mown spaces.
- **Increasing the number of trees planted across Colchester** through the Woodland and Biodiversity Project. Around 7,170 trees were planted on 11 different Council spaces between November 2021-February 2022, along with 23,000 trees given to community groups, parish councils and schools. These trees will help to provide habitats for wildlife, and contribute to storing carbon.



4 Enhance biodiversity and protect our environment

4.1

Action	How will action be achieved?	Officer/Team responsible	Timescale	Measurement of Success	Co-benefits
Deliver the Woodland and Biodiversity Project	Work with relevant experts and communities to ensure planting sites are chosen appropriately to ensure tree planting will benefit biodiversity.	Woodland and Biodiversity Project Manager	November 2021 – March 2024	Planting targets	
	Environmental Impact Assessments will also be undertaken on new tree planting sites.		Ongoing	Continue to work with experts/communities to ensure tree planting is carried out at appropriate sites	
Creation of a new Nature Reserve at Cymbeline Meadows	Cymbeline Meadows Nature Reserve - To create a hub of biodiversity in the heart of Colchester using existing agricultural fields. The site currently has a tenant farmer who we are working with to continue to be involved with the management of and maintenance of the land to make it sustainable.	Greening Team	Ongoing	Creation of a new Nature Reserve rich in biodiversity	
Deliver Trees for Years campaign to give out free trees and shrubs to residents, community groups and schools and more	Build on success of ' Trees for Years ' campaign that took place in February 2022, offering free trees and shrubs. The click and collect process was introduced in February 2022 making the tree giveaway more accessible than ever. This enabled local residents to attend a number of sites to collect their trees to plant in their garden or within their local community, and will be followed again for a giveaway later in 2022/beginning of 2023	Greening Team	Ongoing	Over 1400 trees given away to local residents, parish councils and local schools in February 2022. Build on this figure for 2022/2023 Trees for Years.	

4.2

4.3

4 Enhance biodiversity and protect our environment

4.4

Deliver Colchester's Greening Policy

Continued review of how we deliver our services including the cessation of Glyphosate and identifying sites to rewild

Greening Team

Ongoing

Existing habitats improved
New habitats created
More Grow – Less Mow initiatives



4.5

Create a new Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy which will highlight opportunities for managing our green spaces, rivers and coastal environments in ways that benefit biodiversity and the natural environment.

Work with the University of Essex to begin the process with engagement with communities that will use a participatory budgeting approach to value blue and green spaces situated along the River Colne.

Work with the Policy Panel to develop the new Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy to an agreed programme.

Greening Manager

July 2022

Workshops undertaken to understand areas of interest and focus for the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy



September 2022 – Ongoing

Work to the agreed programme for the strategy development and make recommendation to Cabinet.

4.6

Ceasing the use of glyphosate herbicides in Council operations through a phased approach as a way to manage weeds in a more environmentally friendly way, and encouraging other stakeholders to do the same

Agreement reached to phase out glyphosate use for general maintenance by end of March 2021

Alternative ways of managing weeds without glyphosate will commence at the start of the growing season and will be monitored for effectiveness

Evaluation of alternative approaches to weed control, and look to rollout in other CCC green spaces.

Help Colchester Borough Homes to eradicate the use of glyphosate on land surrounding housing stock.

Greening Team

September 2020 – April 2021

Ongoing

October 2022 – March 2023

March 2022 – April 2023

Significant reduction in glyphosate use.
Increases in biodiversity found on Council green spaces.

New methods adopted for managing weeds going forward.



4 Enhance biodiversity and protect our environment

	Action	How will action be achieved?	Officer/Team responsible	Timescale	Measurement of Success	Co-benefits
4.7	Trialing 'no mow' or reduced mow approaches to rewild Council green spaces and support biodiversity, particularly pollinators.	Build on learnings from the 14 green spaces where areas of reduced frequency mowing have been implemented to allow for the growth of grasses and wildflowers, with rewilding approach developed through engagement with Town and Parish Councils	Greening Team	September 2022 - Ongoing	Weed and verge maintenance policy agreed and implemented. Trial for no mow/reduced mow approaches leads to formally adopting new mowing regimes for Council green spaces going forward.	
4.8	Securing our Open Spaces to protect them from unauthorized access	Audit all open spaces and prioritize a list of sites that need further enhancement	Greening Team	March – Sept 22	Installation of additional security measures such as height barriers and bollards at key site locations	
4.9	Producing Countryside Site Management Updates	Creation of site management plans for all Countryside and Destination sites.	Greening Team	June 2022 – March 23	Each site will have its own 5 year management plan outlining what management and maintenance is required	
4.10	Taking over management of Iron Latch Woods	Adoption of Iron Latch Woods which consists of mature woodland, wetlands and informal mountain bike course. Creation of site management plan which enhances the biodiversity of the site and manages the informal recreational needs of the mountain bike users.	Greening Team	September 22 – ongoing	Installation of notice boards, interpretation and site infrastructure. Working with the existing mountain bike community to create ownerships and volunteer opportunities. Carry out habitat surveys to monitor and enhance the biodiversity.	

CASE STUDY

WOODLAND AND BIODIVERSITY PROJECT

This project has three key areas in which it aims to deliver value; For our communities, for our wildlife, for our environment. Central to the project has been its emphasis on engaging with the community as much as possible, for example involving volunteers in tree planting activities, getting school children to design signage to promote the rewilded green spaces and supporting volunteers to become 'tree guardians' to monitor the growth of the planted trees. The project has also worked in collaboration with Together We Grow CIC, who have helped to lead tree planting activities and expand community engagement throughout the project, for example involving organisations such as Refugee Action Colchester to give refugees the chance to take part in outdoor activity to help their physical and mental health.

Following the success of planting over 7000 trees in recent years on Council spaces along with 23,000 trees given to community groups, parish councils and schools, the Woodland & Biodiversity Project will continue to develop in 22/23 by continuing to plant trees in suitable areas and by focusing on the naturalisation of sites, enhancing the biodiversity further and reviewing the management regimes and continue to communicate changes to our communities. Find out more about the project on the [Woodland and Biodiversity Project webpage](#).



5. FACILITATE SUSTAINABLE AND ACTIVE TRAVEL AND IMPROVE AIR QUALITY

Transport is the biggest contributor to emissions in Colchester, and it's something we're doing everyday whether that's to work, school or for leisure. The Council is committed to promoting sustainable transport around Colchester, not only to reduce emissions but also as a way to increase physical activity. Traditional transport classed as 'sustainable' would be walking, wheeling, cycling and using public transport like trains and buses. When car use is necessary, lift sharing, using a car club, driving an electric vehicle or eco driving (i.e. switching off your engine every time you wait) are recommended. This follows the travel hierarchy approach as outlined in the below diagram.



In recent years, Colchester has been a pioneer in encouraging other innovative, greener ways of moving people and goods around, such as the use of electric cargo (eCargo) bikes and electric scooters (escooters), reducing the need to use private cars and vans. As the electric vehicle transition is also well underway, the Council is in the process of understanding how it can support people to use electric vehicles in and around Colchester too.

The Council's sustainable travel work is facilitated by many partners, most prominently Essex County Council who are the Transport and Highways Authority.





Key Highlights from 2021/22:

- Over 20,00 miles travelled by eCargo bikes that are part of the Colchester eCargo bike library. The project grew over time, and in 2021 a new eCargo bike delivery service was developed which the Council has helped support. This service offers local organisations and businesses the opportunity to have products delivered to, or for, them by an eCargo bike rather than a car or van
- Delivered the Clean Air for Colchester project, including the air quality awareness campaign 'CAREless Pollution'. The campaign engaged with residents, businesses, schools and community groups to raise awareness of air quality in Colchester and what we can all do to improve air quality. The campaign received a 'Highly Commended' award in the Consumer Engagement category at the Edie Sustainability Leaders Award.
- Significant progress made to help move forward the creation of a secure bike park and shared ebike hub in the city centre. The bike park will provide a facility for visitors to store their bikes while in the city centre. The bike hub will provide access to electric bikes and electric cargo bikes for residents to use on a pay as you go basis. A premises has been identified, planning permission approved and work is being done to have the site open for residents to use in Winter 2022/23.

5 Facilitate sustainable and active travel and improve air quality


5.1

Action	How will action be achieved?	Officer/Team responsible	Timescale	Measurement of Success	Co-benefits
Encourage uptake and usage of eCargo Bikes by the council and the business community to reduce travel emissions Colchester Electric Cargo (eCargo) bike Library	Work with Council teams to increase usage of eCargo Bikes in place of cars and vans	Sustainable Travel team	May 2020 – May 2023	eCargo bikes used for several routine Council services	 
	Work with eCargo Bike Champions and partners to provide case studies and help promote the short term loan scheme.	Sustainable Travel team, project champions and partners		Good uptake of short term loan scheme	
	Expand eCargo Bike delivery service to offer new concierge service to city centre shoppers and businesses to reduce driving into the city centre and encourage walking, cycling and using outlying car parks instead.	Sustainable travel team, working with ICT, Colchester Business Improvement District and En-Form		Normalisation of eCargo bikes in Colchester and providing encouragement to businesses and other organisations to buy their own to replace cars/vans for their operations	




5 Facilitate sustainable and active travel and improve air quality

5.2

Action	How will action be achieved?	Officer/Team responsible	Timescale	Measurement of Success	Co-benefits
<p>Raise awareness of the health and environmental impact of air pollution and encourage residents to change their behaviour in relation to engine idling and home burning</p> <p>For more information on air quality projects in Colchester visit https://www.colchester.gov.uk/environmental-protection/clean-air-for-colchester-project/</p>	Behaviour change campaign led by community volunteers, to encourage more people to not idle their vehicle engines.	Air Quality Community Engagement Officer	June 2020 – June 2023	Post project survey results demonstrating increased awareness of pollution and its effects and a change in attitudes towards idling	
	Explore the installation of artwork in the city centre to raise awareness of air pollution and improve air quality in Colchester	Air Quality Community Engagement Officer, plus community engagement create the artwork	August 2022 – Spring 2023	Artwork created that raises awareness of air pollution and gets people thinking about how they can contribute to keeping the air cleaner.	
	Psychological signage trials encouraging no idling to be installed in East Street/ Brook Street and monitored for effectiveness.	Air Quality Community Engagement Officer and the University of Essex	Phase 3 – January 2022 – September 2022	Evidence of reduction in air pollution and idling in air quality management areas.	
	Raise awareness of the negative impacts of home burning and encourage residents to burn responsibly including using seasoned wood and smokeless fuels	Air Quality Engagement Officer	December 2022	Post project survey results which demonstrate increased awareness of pollution and its effects and a change in attitudes towards home burning	
	Work with ECC to monitor air pollution in the AQMA using air quality monitors to evaluate the effectiveness of behavioural campaigns and initiatives.	ECC and Environmental Protection manager	December 2021 – June 2023	Lower levels of particulate matter in the air within the air quality management areas	

5 Facilitate sustainable and active travel and improve air quality

5.3

Action	How will action be achieved?	Officer/Team responsible	Timescale	Measurement of Success	Co-benefits
Provide enabling policies and strategies to promote sustainable and active travel.	Prepare/update a Sustainable and Active Travel SPD which will incorporate an update of the existing Colchester Cycling Delivery Strategy and consider including the walking environment, shared bike schemes, Car Clubs, Travel Planning, mobility hubs, and electric vehicle charging.	Sustainable travel and planning policy	Draft prepared by March 2023	Influence future developments and lobby for funding	
	Assist with and advise on review of ECC's Local Cycling and Walking Investment Plans and support in implementation of Colchester Future Transport Strategy, to help steer City Centre Masterplan.	Sustainable travel and Essex County Council	Input October 2022 & ongoing	Influence others to increase uptake for sustainable travel	
Promote walking and cycling routes in Colchester through improving signage and wayfinding	Introduce wayfinding signage along the University to City Centre routes to encourage walking	Sustainable travel team	Complete by March 2023	Signage improved and more people using the routes on foot and by bike	
	Include Greenstead to University as part of the Safer Streets project		Complete by March 2023		
	Animating King Edward Quay to encourage more walking and cycling and access to the Rowhedge Trail		Complete by November 2023		
	Animating Swing Basin to encourage more walking and cycling and access to the Wivenhoe Trail		Complete by November 2023		
	Make improvements to the wayfinding signage between City centre and port		Complete by December 2022		

5.4

5 Facilitate sustainable and active travel and improve air quality

5.5

Fixing the Link phase 2 implemented to encourage walking from Colchester rail station to the City centre.

Trees in planters placed along the route, new waymarking flags installed and plans for wayfinding planting and lighting on Albert roundabout.

Sustainable Travel team

November 2022

Increased numbers of people walking along the route, by clear wayfinding and enjoying a quality welcoming experience.



5.6

Encourage the uptake of shared sustainable travel opportunities as an alternative to personal car use and ownership

Taking part and supporting the electric scooter (escooter) trial

ECC lead, with sustainable travel team supporting

February 2021 – ongoing

Learn how scooters can be used as a sustainable mode of travel for getting around Colchester.



Creation and launch of a shared bike hub in the City centre, providing pay as you go access to electric bike and eCargo bikes with the aim of working with the community to expand bike hubs to other areas of the borough in the future.

Sustainable Travel Team

1st hub complete by December 2022

Residents supported with more options for travelling sustainably in and around Colchester.

Influence Rapid Transit system linking Garden Communities, park and ride site with City centre, hospital and Colchester Station, route and provision.

Planning Policy & Sustainable Travel team

Community bike hubs ongoing

Input into and influence ECC's Strategy to enable projects which promote sustainable travel are taken forward

Work with ECC to review bus operations and to increase usage.

ECC with support from sustainable travel

Ongoing

Encourage greater usage of buses to get around Colchester

Launch electric pay as you go car club starting in Colchester City centre with two cars with the aim of expanding to other areas of the borough in the future

Sustainable travel

Complete by November 2022

Residents given option for using electric vehicles for infrequent trips, helping them to transition from second car ownership or eliminate need for a private car altogether

5 Facilitate sustainable and active travel and improve air quality

5.7

Facilitate walking and cycling in Colchester by providing suitable infrastructure.

Creation of a secure bike parking facility in the City centre and monitoring its usage to inform design of permanent facility

Sustainable travel team

Complete by December 2022

Secure cycle parking implemented and monitored.



Working with ECC to support the introduction of infrastructure such as segregated cycle lanes and school streets along key routes in and around Colchester City Centre as part of the Active Travel measures

Sustainable travel team, alongside ECC

Ongoing

Improvement of cycling infrastructure in and around the city centre meaning greater uptake of cycling

Reviewing S106 funding to plan and work with others to install and improve a range of measures and infrastructure.

Sustainable travel team, working with others as appropriate

Ongoing

S106 identified and schemes promoted/designed ready for implementation.

5.8

Develop actions as part of the Positive Parking Strategy that will help to reduce congestion in the city centre and promote sustainability.

Park Active – A project to encourage people to park in car parks on the outside of the city centre – A review of this scheme to take place during Autumn 2022

NEPP/Sustainable travel team

April 2023

Fewer cars parking in the city centre and encouraging active travel



Review usage and requirements of Council car parks to determine the quantity of parking required, where parking should be located and parking tariffs. This will take into account Levelling Up Fund requirements as well as agreed Parking Strategy outcomes.

Parking team at CCC

Ongoing

Charge points installed to support a transition to electric vehicles

Ensuring car parking is used more efficiently and in a way that promotes active, and greener forms of travel.



Promotion of the Park and Ride service in Colchester

NEPP and Sustainable transport team

Ongoing

More people using the Park and Ride service.

5 Facilitate sustainable and active travel and improve air quality

5.9

Work with Essex County Council through the Town Deal to increase walking and cycling between Colchester city centre and Greenstead through improvement to infrastructure and making bikes available to residents in Greenstead,

Provision of 2.96km of walking and cycling paths to link up to existing networks to make walking and cycling along this route easier and safer between Greenstead, University and city centre.

Sustainable travel, economic development and ECC colleagues

Ongoing

New route created and increased use of the route by walkers and cyclists monitored.



£1m investment in providing 750 bikes for residents in Greenstead through the 'Pedal Power' scheme to support residents who want to cycle but cannot afford a bike.

This includes the above teams, plus those from community enabling

Bikes being used by residents for journeys, helping to save any costs for using cars/public transport



5.10

Creation of an EV charging Strategy to guide provision of EV charging across Colchester

Development of an EV strategy to set out guidance for provision of EV charge points across the borough, working with ECC as the Transport and Highways Authority.

Resource TBC

TBD

Strategy approved and in place

Installation of EV charge points throughout the borough, particularly in Council owned car parks.

Increase EV charge points coverage, with charge points at Council car parks in line with EV charging strategy outcomes.

Resource TBC

TBD

Increased number of electric vehicle charge points for residents to access.



5 Facilitate sustainable and active travel and improve air quality

5.11

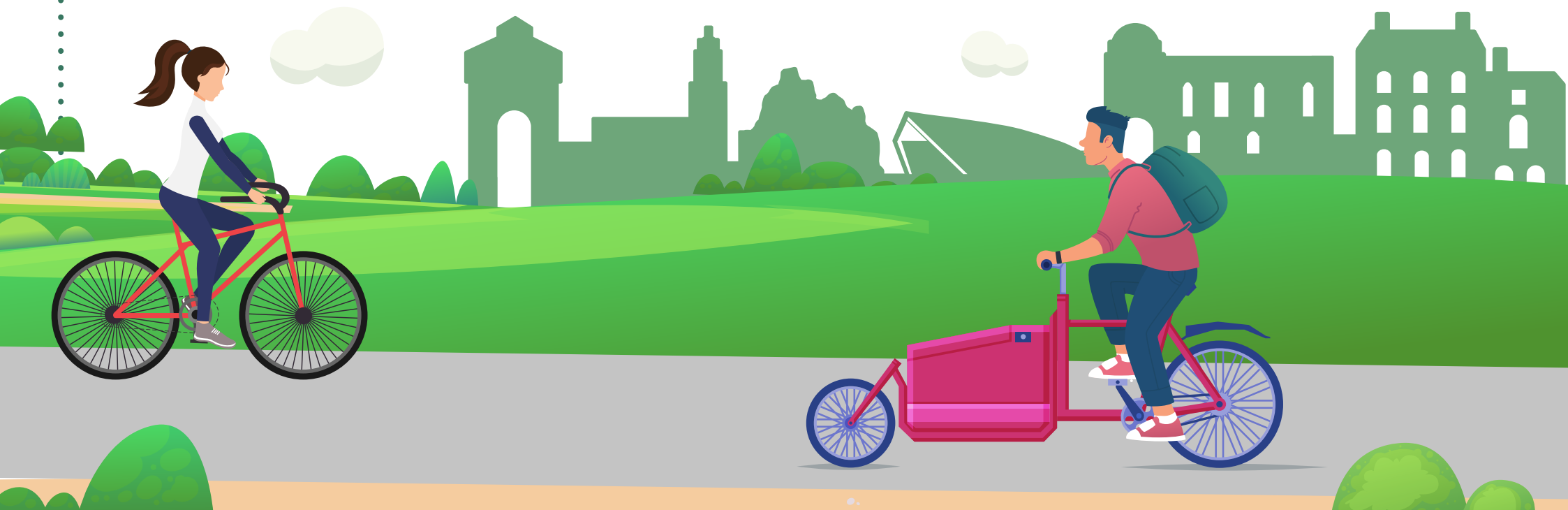
Action	How will action be achieved?	Officer/Team responsible	Timescale	Measurement of Success	Co-benefits
Support residents and businesses to take up active and sustainable travel.	Work with local businesses to reduce reliance on private cars for commuting through implementing work place travel plans	Colchester Travel Plan Club coordinator	Ongoing	Deliver annual plan of action including review and refresh of workplace travel plans	 
	Promote free adult cycle training to improve confidence to cycle	Sustainable Travel team working with ECC	Ongoing till March 2023	Increased numbers of residents taking part in this training to help support uptake in cycling in Colchester	 
	Pilot enhancements to Bikeability scheme to increase the uptake of cycling in primary aged school children post training	Air Quality Engagement Officer, Anglia Ruskin University, Safer Essex Roads Partnership	Complete by December 2022	Increased uptake in cycling in primary aged school children at the point of evaluation	
	Support the 'Get Monkwick moving' project that aims to raise awareness and increase usage of the off road walking and cycling route to the city centre.	Air Quality Engagement Officer in partnership with EnForm	Ongoing till December 2022	Greater awareness of, and more use of, the route amongst local people. Lower pollution levels in the Mersea Road part of the Air Quality Management Area	
Look to identify opportunities for improving options for sustainable and active travel into the city centre, through the City Centre master planning work	Working with Essex County Council and consultant to understand what people want to see improved within Colchester City Centre and how this then relates to opportunities to improve access to the city centre using active and sustainable travel options	Various officers from Council and Essex County Council	TBD	Creation of City Centre masterplan helps to identify new opportunities for travelling into Colchester using active and sustainable travel modes.	 

5.12

5 Facilitate sustainable and active travel and improve air quality

5.13

Action	How will action be achieved?	Officer/Team responsible	Timescale	Measurement of Success	Co-benefits
Subject to approval of grant funding, use Levelling Up Fund (LUF) to introduce options to support active and sustainable travel modes in the St Botolph's area	<p>Use LUF to replace St Botolph's Circus with new junction layout to support walking and cycling into city centre and to Castle Park.</p> <p>Additionally there are plans for the introduction of a hub for storing and hiring bikes, ebikes, scooters.</p>	Various officers from Council and Essex County Council	TBD	Funding secured to implement replacement of St Botolph's Circus and support active travel modes.	 



CASE STUDY

COLCHESTER ECARGO BIKE LIBRARY

The Colchester eCargo bike library project has been funded by an Energy Saving Trust grant, and aims to promote and encourage the use of electric cargo (eCargo) bikes for transporting materials and people, rather than using cars or vans. The grant funded 25 eCargo bikes and 5 electric trailers which were shared out across the Council and with 10 'champion' organisations to use on a long term loan. The rest are available for organisations to try out on short term loans of 1-3 months.

The project has been very successful with nearly 20,000 miles travelled on the bikes between January 2021 – June 2022. There have been several notable pioneers of the bikes, with Colchester eCargo bike delivery project being one. The project has helped to do deliveries for local businesses, community groups and charities in a more environmentally friendly way.

The success of the project has led to two further successful grant bids involving eCargo bikes; the creation of a shared travel hub for residents to use eCargo bikes (and other bikes) on a pay as you go basis and the creation of a city centre eCargo delivery service that businesses can use to deliver shopping to their customers. These are both exciting developments so watch this space! See more on our [website](#).



6. PROVIDE SUSTAINABLE WASTE MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT RESIDENTS TO REDUCE, REUSE AND RECYCLE

Waste and recycling is something that's pretty close to home, literally! Most of us have it ingrained with us to make sure we recycle as much as we can, from aluminium cans to food waste. In Colchester we are in the top 30 local authorities for our recycling rates, and were recognised as the most '[recycling conscious town](#)' in June 2022, which is impressive but there is more that can be done.

However it's important to think beyond recycling. How can we reduce the amount of waste we produce? How can we keep more materials in circulation so that they last longer?

Waste and recycling is an action that we all have some control over, and we can all take steps to reduce how much we produce. Can we all use reusable water bottles and cups? Do we really need to buy that thing as a present for someone, or could we instead look to gift someone an 'experience' like a theatre ticket?

The Council works hard to ensure it provides a quality and comprehensive recycling service for residents. However, we need everyone to help us by recycling what they can, and cutting down the waste they produce.

Key Highlights from 2021/22:

- 4 smart waste bins have been installed in Dedham on a trial to see how these bins could support the effective collection of litter. The bins have a solar powered compacting feature to help fit five times more rubbish into them compared to the average bin. The bins are also programmed to close when they are full to prevent overflow, and will notify waste operatives when the bins are nearing full capacity so they can be emptied. They can also talk and engage with residents.
- Reduced contamination and improved quality of recycling collected by asking residents to separate cans and glass for their kerbside collections.



6 Provide sustainable waste management and support residents to reduce, reuse and recycle

6.1


Action	How will action be achieved?	Officer/Team responsible	Timescale	Measurement of Success	Co-benefits
Create a new Waste and Recycling Strategy to set out the Council's direction and approach, in line with Environment Act 2021.	<p>Work with the Environment & Sustainability Panel on strategy development (including business waste collections)</p> <p>Deliver trial projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Married quarters project – to improve resident behavior in relation to residual waste Route rebalancing – to improve capacity on collection routes Hard to reach – to improve collection methodology Flats food waste – to trial new methods of food collection 	Waste and recycling team	September 2022 – April 2023	<p>Work with the Environment & Sustainability Panel the agreed programme of strategy development, with a recommendation presented to Cabinet.</p> <p>Deliver the trial projects to the agreed programme and budgets</p>	
Work with the Essex Waste Partnership on the development of the new Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy	<p>Regular attendance to meetings and workshops, providing input, making contributions, and sharing data.</p> <p>Presenting at agreed points to the Policy Panel.</p>	Neighbourhood Services Manager	Ongoing	Presentation to Policy Panel and recommendations made to Cabinet	
Complete roll out of recycling equipment distribution	Identify outlets to provide coverage to Castle and Berechurch Wards	Waste and recycling team	December 2022	Residents have access to suitable recycling equipment to enable them to separate items for recycling appropriately	

6.2

6.3

6 Provide sustainable waste management and support residents to reduce, reuse and recycle

6.4

Action	How will action be achieved?	Officer/Team responsible	Timescale	Measurement of Success	Co-benefits
Improve outcomes for residents in flats with Communal Bin Stores	Engage Management Companies to address reported issues.	Business Improvement Team	March 2023	Launch new 1100 litre bin provision capabilities including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outright sale, • short term rental, • short term rental renewal, and • rental to sale products Deliver better outcomes for residents by rapidly addressing broken bins in bin stores so that we can continue to collect weekly	
Love Essex campaign "It's for driving on, not littering on", working with local business partners (e.g. KFC and McDonalds) and local authorities	Campaign messaging at petrol stations	Street care and safety team	August 2022 – September 2022	6 week monitoring of littering	
	Campaign messaging on rear of buses				
	Social media campaign				
6.6 Understand the barriers businesses face to reducing their use of single-use plastics, and identify examples of good practice in Colchester which can be shared with others	Work with the University of Essex academics who will do surveys and interviews with local businesses about their use of single-use plastics. They will also use their academic research to propose ways in which the Council or other organisations could help to support businesses to reduce their use of single-use plastics.	University of Essex, Colchester Business Improvement District with support from some CCC colleagues	July 2022 – December 2022	Increased understanding of barriers businesses face to reducing use of single use plastics, with some ideas of how the Council or other organisations could help to encourage businesses to shift away from single use plastics for some operations	

CASE STUDY

LITTER PICKING HUBS

We appreciate the help of residents who want to help us keep Colchester green and clean by picking up litter. The Council is now trying to make this easier for residents to do by expanding on our [Litter Warriors](#) programme, and providing litter picking hubs. These hubs provide a place for residents to litter pick on the go, with all litter picking equipment provided in one area. The number of these hubs is increasing across the borough, and if you would be keen to see one set up in your local area please email climate.change@colchester.gov.uk.



7. ENABLE PARTNERSHIPS AND COMMUNITY ACTION FOR SUSTAINABILITY

The Council cannot tackle climate change on its own. That's why we are working with many partners such as the University of Essex to share knowledge and resources to help with tackling this challenge. One of our key partners is Essex County Council who have announced their own climate action plan which may be of interest to residents. This can be found at this [link](#).

However, it's not just up to the Council to reduce its environmental impact, we need residents across the borough to all help. Through many of our environmental projects, we provide opportunities for residents to do this, whether it be raising awareness of actions people can take to improve air quality or tree planting. Click [here](#) for some suggestions of actions you could take to reduce your environmental impact, and links to useful sites that may help support you take action.

Key Highlights from 2021/22:

- Supporting the delivery of Colchester's first 'Eco Festival'. Many Council staff were present at the event, raising awareness of Council environmental projects. The event was a great success with over 3500 people attending, with Eco Festival 2022 taking place on 3rd September 2022 which attracted over 4500 residents and enabled the Council to engage communities with information about its environmental projects.
- Collaboration with many partner organisations to share knowledge and enhance the delivery of projects. For example, the Council worked with the University of Essex on several projects in 2021-22, and will be working with them in 2022-23 to deliver a range of projects including supporting the creation of the Blue and Green Infrastructure Strategy and delivery of two environmental projects on understanding potential of using oysters to protect against sea level rise, and reducing the use of single-use plastics in the city centre.
- Providing opportunities for residents to find out more about, and take part in, our environmental projects. For example the 'Clean Air for Colchester' project gave residents the opportunities to be involved in the design of promotional campaign materials to raise awareness of air pollution in Colchester. The Woodland and Biodiversity Project gave residents the opportunity to take part in tree planting activities, get a free tree/shrub for their garden as part of 'Trees for Years' and involved schools in the design of signage to show why some green spaces were being mowed less (visit the [Woodland and Biodiversity Project webpage](#) for more information).

For more information on some of the ways the Council engaged with the community in 2021/22, please see the [committee report](#) that went to the Environment and Sustainability Panel on this topic on 22nd March 2022.



7 Enable partnerships and community action for sustainability and low carbon development




7.1

Action	How will action be achieved?	Officer/Team responsible	Timescale	Measurement of Success	Co-benefits
Support community organisations in the borough to help deliver environmental benefits within communities	Work with community organisations/ individuals to help spread the message of their work and provide expertise where required.	Community Enabling	Ongoing action	Raise awareness of existing community groups that are acting to produce positive environmental change	
	Support the delivery of Eco Festival 2022, with Council staff volunteering and holding stalls at the event	Multiple Council teams	March 2022 – September 2022	Council helps Eco Festival to be run with event engaging many residents around climate change and the environment	
	Make communities aware of Climate Action Challenge Fund funding from Essex County Council that can fund local environmental projects	Community Enabling and Sustainability team	Ongoing till March 2023	Residents get access to funding to kickstart community environmental projects	
	Continue with the Trees for Years programme	Greening team	October 2022-February 2023	Residents collect plants for their gardens	
	Introduce site improvements to facilitate community activities at East Bay Community Allotments	Greening team	November 2022	More community activity at the allotments	
	Implementation of self management at Drury Road allotments	Greening team	October 2022	Increased ownership and activity at the allotments	

7 Enable partnerships and community action for sustainability and low carbon development


7.2

7.3

Action	How will action be achieved?	Officer/Team responsible	Timescale	Measurement of Success	Co-benefits
Provide opportunities for residents to participate in Council projects and action on environmental issues	Working with University to trial a 'participatory budgeting' approach to valuing natural environment around River Colne which will involve opportunity for residents to be involved in this.	Neighbourhood Services team alongside University of Essex	May 2022 – August 2022	More opportunities provided for residents and increased numbers of residents taking part in this.	
	Multiple opportunities for residents to support the Council's no idling air quality project. Schools activity toolkits and campaign materials can be found on the Council website .	Air Quality engagement officer	Ongoing		
	Tree planting opportunities to be provided in Winter 2022/2023	Greening team	Winter 2022/2023		
	Creation of a Borough-wide Friends Group	Greening team	March 2023	Creation of Friends Group for St Botolph's Creation of a distribution list	
Provide support to help residents transition to more sustainable lifestyles, showing how environmental actions can bring about other benefits such as cost savings and health benefits	Support residents to get free bikes through the ' Community Cycle ' project where preowned bikes are donated, repaired and then given to the community.	Community Enabling team, with support from sustainable travel	May 2022 – September 2022 (with possible rollout in future years)	Increased support required to link environmental and social agendas together so the Council can help to reduce environmental impacts across the borough, whilst also reducing inequalities.	 
	Promote Warm Homes Essex website run by ECC and Citizen's Advice Bureau for information on tips for energy and cost saving as well as grants for energy efficiency (see 8.3)	Various CCC colleagues	Ongoing		

7 Enable partnerships and community action for sustainability and low carbon development

7.4

Action	How will action be achieved?	Officer/Team responsible	Timescale	Measurement of Success	Co-benefits
Collaborate with the University of Essex to ensure actions we develop are informed by academic expertise (where appropriate)	Support the delivery of 2 projects that emerged from the challenge lab on oyster conservation (see action 2.2) and the links with climate adaptation, and reducing single-use plastics usage with local businesses (see action 6.6)	Multiple CCC teams working alongside University of Essex	April 2022 – December 2022	Projects completed, with short term achievements and enhanced community engagement	
	Build rapport with researchers on existing Council projects, and understand the expertise available at the University.	Multiple teams	Ongoing	Continue work with the University of Essex to inform design/operation of our projects and actions and share best practice/knowledge.	
Increase engagement with schools in Colchester to promote and support awareness raising and behaviour change around environmental issues	Support the Essex Schools Green Day on 6th July 2022, enabling schools to learn more about environmental issues and take action to protect the environment at their school.	Climate Emergency Officer with Community Enabling plus other local organisations.	January 2022 – July 2022	Schools signed up to the event and accessing CCC and other organisations support for the day.	
	After the Green Day, continue to maintain engagement with schools to ensure they know about environmental projects that may be of relevance to them and the students and provide webpage of resources detailing support and information available to them.	Multiple Council teams	Ongoing	Increase number of schools engaged with through Council projects.	
Develop a Climate Emergency communications plan which will support the delivery of, and engagement around, the Council's Action Plan.	Keep an external communications plan updated with key messages and content to deliver to residents on Council environmental projects and key environmental tips	Sustainability and Communications teams	Ongoing	Communication Plan developed and updated, with key projects, events and tips advertised	

7.6

7 Enable partnerships and community action for sustainability and low carbon development

7.7

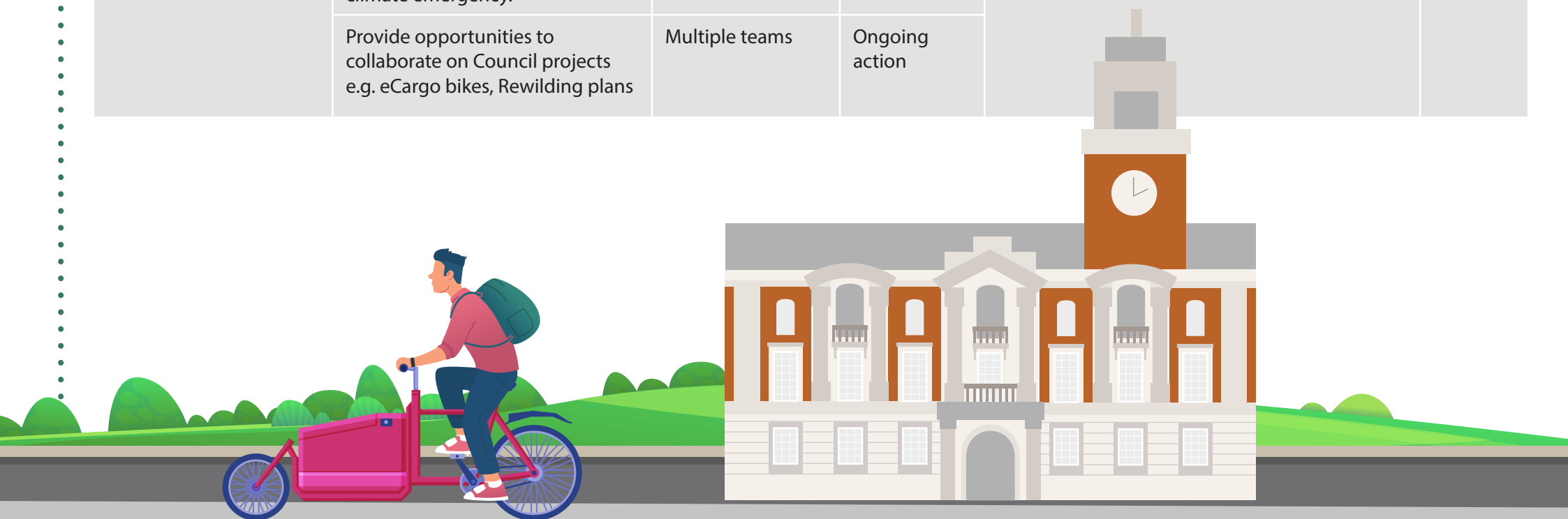
Action	How will action be achieved?	Officer/Team responsible	Timescale	Measurement of Success	Co-benefits
Collaborate with Essex County Council (ECC) and other local authorities (LA's) in Essex and those in the UK to share learnings around work on the climate emergency	Take part in Carbon Reduction Across Essex (CORE) meetings with other Essex local authorities to hear about latest projects from other LAs and keep up to date with developments from ECC.	Climate Emergency Officer	Ongoing action	Continue good relationship with Essex County Council and other Essex LA's to help share learning	
	Maintain good communication with ECC to be aware of latest environmental projects, news and grants that we can help promote and collaborate on when relevant	Sustainability team	Ongoing action	Regular meetings scheduled with ECC to hear latest environmental updates	
	Participate in national local authority forums such as the Collective for Climate Action to share learning, ask questions about work on the climate emergency and keep up to date with latest environmental news, grants etc.	Climate Emergency Officer	Ongoing	Use forums to gain ideas, knowledge and experience from other LAs on how to tackle the climate emergency.	
	Participate in the Essex Woodland Partnership	Greening team	Ongoing		
	Participate in the Essex Waste Partnership	Portfolio Holder and Neighbourhood Services Manager	Ongoing		
Work with the Essex Climate Action Commission to support partnership working with key ('anchor') institutions across Essex to ensure joined up thinking around tackling climate change	Participation in climate action working group meetings to support campaigns and work across Essex that support tackling climate change	Sustainability and Climate Change Manager	Ongoing	Council is plugged into thinking about tackling climate change across Essex, and ensure that it can play its part in supporting any actions and campaigns	
	Participation in workshops and ongoing meetings to discuss the development of a ' climate focus area ' in Essex, where actions and projects to contribute to reaching net zero would be tested as pilots in a defined area to accelerate change.	Various CCC staff	Ongoing	CCC linked into work of the Commission, to ensure we can contribute to the recommendations made in their Essex wide report .	

7.8

7 Enable partnerships and community action for sustainability and low carbon development

7.9

Action	How will action be achieved?	Officer/Team responsible	Timescale	Measurement of Success	Co-benefits
Communicate with Town and Parish Councils to understand how we can work together to tackle the climate emergency and ensure this reflects the wishes of communities we serve	Sharing resources and support with Town and Parish Councils that will help them reduce their environmental impact e.g. the ECC Climate Action Challenge Fund	Climate Emergency Officer	Ongoing action	Successful collaboration and communication with Town and Parish Councils on climate emergency related work.	
	Presentation to Town and Parish Councils to explain CCC action on climate emergency and understand help and support they may require to take action on climate emergency.	Climate Emergency Officer	Winter 2022/ Spring 2023	Presentation completed and discussion created with Town and Parish Councils about how CCC can help them with their own climate/ environmental ambitions	
	Provide opportunities to collaborate on Council projects e.g. eCargo bikes, Rewilding plans	Multiple teams	Ongoing action		



CASE STUDY

GO GREEN SCHOOLS

The 'Go Green Schools' project was a collaborative initiative between the University of Essex and the Council, funded by the Local Government Association's Net Zero Innovation Programme.

The project aimed to understand the varying levels with which primary schools had embedded environmental education and action into their ethos and operations. The project engaged with 6 primary schools in Colchester, with interviews conducted with headteachers and environmental leads to understand this.

The project also worked closely with one school, Unity Primary Academy, to help deliver environmental improvements in the schools grounds. Many activities were run including bird and bat box making, planting of trees, marine wildlife demonstrations, planting for pollinators and more.

Through engaging with the school, the teachers and children became more aware of the potential for the school grounds to be used to enhance biodiversity. The project also had benefits outside the environment. Below are quotes from the environmental lead at the school who supported the project.

"There has always been very positive feedback about the various sessions and all staff have commented on how much their children have enjoyed the activities. Several staff have made a comment that children's behaviour improved when undertaking the practical activities.

Children have been very enthusiastic about all the activities. They have been very keen to talk about the

new experience and they were very proud to be part of improving the school grounds.

It has given all children at the school different experiences and because they have been involved with the activities taking place around the school it has really helped them to have a sense of pride towards the school grounds. On numerous occasions children have wanted to show me the plants or trees growing and discuss their involvement in it".

Encouraged by this project, and wanting to continue to deliver more work, the school successfully approached a local councillor for funding to continue outdoor gardening sessions with Together we Grow CIC.

The Council is keen to support schools to become greener, please see our [webpage](#) for more information.



8. SUSTAINABLE PLANNING, BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND GREEN ECONOMY

Planning can play an important role in influencing the environmental standard of developments and how Colchester as a city is set out to support sustainable travel. Buildings are also a key contributor to emissions in the borough, through the energy use so it is important that existing buildings are retrofitted to reduce their energy use and new buildings built to use low carbon forms of heating and built to high energy efficiency standards.

Linked into both of these elements is the requirement to build a green economy that can support this transition. There is a challenge in ensuring that there are enough local companies and individuals are trained with 'green skills' in being able to support this transition, across a range of sectors from low carbon construction and retrofit, energy generation and distribution, land management and more.

Green skills are knowledge, experience, values, attitudes and abilities that support carbon reduction and resource efficiency to increase climate resilience and enhance natural assets. This is not the same as a green jobs sector, green skills will be relevant to all sectors of the economy.

A [review of green skills infrastructure](#) completed by [Mace Group](#) found that there would be an increased demand for green skilled jobs of 997 per year in Essex that will have to be overcome, based on predicted growth outlined in the Government's ['The Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution'](#) report.

The demand for businesses to become greener is also increasing, and so all businesses need to understand ways that they can reduce their environmental impact, and recognise the benefits from doing so including opportunities for cost savings and reaching new audiences. One of the Council's four priorities in its Economic Strategy 2022-2025 is 'Planet', focussing on how the Council can provide support to businesses to decarbonise and reduce their environmental impact.

Key Highlights from 2021/22:

- Working with community partners such as Community 360, Age Concern and Citizen's Advice Bureau to promote grant funding for energy efficiency improvements for residents on low incomes and living in energy inefficient homes. 4 homes in Colchester received improvements totalling £18,165 in 21/22, with many more scheduled for 2022.
- Ensuring S106 funding was allocated to support sustainable travel as part of new developments, such as the allocation of parking spaces for electric car clubs and electric vehicle charge points amongst others



8 Sustainable Planning, built environment and green economy

8.1

Create & adopt a new Supplementary Plan Document (SPD) on sustainability and carbon reduction

Creation of a new Supplementary Planning Document to provide guidance and encouragement to developers to consider carbon reduction and sustainable design within new developments (including consideration of biodiversity net gain)

Planning team

September 2022 – Spring 2023 (with consultation to follow)

Supplementary Planning Document adopted and used as a material planning consideration

Co-benefits

8.2

Information on sustainable travel choices to be included in marketing of new residential developments that have a travel plan or travel planning co-ordinator allocated, in order to promote active, sustainable travel, reducing the use of private cars.

Provision of information is produced for new tenants on sustainable, active travel options in Colchester.

Planning team

Ongoing

Information on sustainable travel options is included in all new homes



8.3

Provide opportunities for residents to increase the energy efficiency and decarbonise their homes

Delivery of the Local Authority Delivery Scheme (phases 2 and 3), providing funding to low income households to make their homes more energy efficient and greener

Sustainability and Communities teams

June 2022 – March 2023

Number of homes receiving energy efficiency and decarbonisation improvements.



Promotion of Essex County Council schemes that provide support to help residents become greener and cut energy bills such as the Solar Together scheme and Essex Energy Switch.

Sustainability and Communities teams

Ongoing

Increasing numbers of Colchester residents signing up for these schemes.



Signpost and provide access to residents to organisations and funding/advice that can provide support for increasing energy efficiency and managing fuel bills

Communities and financial support teams

Ongoing

Increasing numbers of residents supported to access services and support to help manage their fuel bills



8 Sustainable Planning, built environment and green economy

8.4

Unlock opportunities for local organisations to upskill staff in energy efficiency and domestic retrofit

How will action be achieved?
Colchester Borough Homes (CBH) receiving training provided by The Retrofit Academy to learn more about how the most up to date energy efficiency/retrofit standards (PAS 2035 standards) can be applied to the Council's housing stock

Officer/Team responsible
CBH staff

Timescale
Ongoing

Measurement of Success
CBH aware of the latest energy efficiency standards and can support process of following these standards in management of the Council's housing stock

Co-benefits



Explore opportunities for housing associations and local retrofit installers in Colchester to receive support from The Retrofit Academy to upskill their workforces so they have the understanding of PAS 2035 standards and know the process for completing works to this standard

Economic Development Officer

October 2022 – Ongoing

Housing associations have increased understanding of the latest energy efficiency standards and how the process should be applied for homes they manage.

8.5

Work with partners to identify how to close green skills gaps across Essex

Work with further education organisations such as Colchester Institute to ensure courses are available in green building techniques, and existing courses have sustainable elements embedded.

Various CCC and ECC officers working with further education organisations

TBD

Actions identified in collaboration with others as to how more people can be trained up to support the green economy



Work with Essex County Council to identify areas where there are additional green skills gaps and explore ways to overcome these such as by demonstrating demand for green retrofit of estates across Essex to stimulate interest from local installers to train in green retrofit.


Various CCC and ECC officers

TBD

Identify solutions for overcoming green skills gaps and demonstrating there is demand in Colchester for green retrofit/new build.

8 Sustainable Planning, built environment and green economy

8.6

Action	How will action be achieved?	Officer/Team responsible	Timescale	Measurement of Success	Co-benefits
Promote support and funding available to businesses to help them become greener	Promotion of Colchester Business Enterprise Agency's (Colbea) Net Zero Business support programme for small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) to understand their carbon footprint and how they can reduce this.	Economic development team	May 2022 – December 2022	Businesses increasingly understand the opportunities available to help them become greener and decarbonise their operations	
	Fund and support the promotion of Colbea's ' Colchester Business Cost Reduction Programme ' to help SMEs by providing advice on ways to save costs by reducing their energy use and waste production	Economic development team	Ongoing		
	Promote the Low carbon across the South East (Locase) programme for businesses to access funding to support energy efficiency and other environmental improvements.	Climate Emergency Officer/Economic development team	April 2022 – March 2023		
	Signpost businesses to Essex Climate Action Commissions advice pack to help businesses become greener	Climate Emergency Officer/Economic development team	July 2022 – ongoing		



9. CHANGE THE WAY WE WORK TO ACHIEVE OUR CLIMATE COMMITMENT

To achieve our net zero target by 2030, and reduce the Council's environmental impact, we need to change the way we do things at the Council. From how we travel to work to how we manage our projects. Achieving this organisational change helps to make sure all staff are on board with tackling the climate challenge, and for them to understand how they can play a part in their professional and personal lives to reduce their environmental impact.

Key Highlights from 2021/22:

- Introduce training on climate change and sustainable travel as a part of Councillor training. This was run for the first time in 2021 to ensure councillors understood the Council's approach to these issues, and this will now become a regular part of the training package for councillors.
- Created the Sustainability and Carbon Reduction Assessment, to enable staff to consider the environmental impacts of their projects and how these could be managed. Associated guidance was also produced to help staff complete the assessment effectively, and think about how their projects could be adapted to become more environmentally friendly.
- Supported staff to travel to work sustainably through running bike maintenance sessions, eCargo bike try out sessions and understanding staff travel patterns through the annual staff travel survey. The team have also done some focussed work at Shrub End Depot, providing regular bike maintenance sessions for the staff based there and securing funding to create a bike shelter to enable staff to store their bikes more securely.



9 Change the way we work to achieve our climate commitment

	Action	How will action be achieved?	Officer/Team responsible	Timescale	Measurement of Success	Co-benefits
9.1	Ensuring internal strategies and policies are consistent with the climate change emergency	Review of internal core strategies and policies with at least 3 updated to show consideration of the climate emergency, including Waste and Recycling Strategy, Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy and Business rates relief policy	Multiple teams	July 2022 – December 2023	At least 3 key strategies reviewed and updated by end of 2023	
9.2	Capture progress made on Climate Emergency Action Plan and Council's progression to become more environmentally sustainable	Continue with regular reporting on the progress of the action plan to the Environment and Sustainability Panel	Multiple teams involved with keeping progress up to date.	Ongoing	Action plan progress reported at every Panel meeting	
9.3	Develop a learning and development programme for staff (and members) on climate change and environmental issues to help increase awareness and promote behaviour change	Ensure councillors receive member training on sustainable travel and climate change to understand the importance of these elements to Council projects.	Sustainability, transport and climate change team.	Delivered in November 2022	Training delivered, and any feedback and support asked for by councillors followed up on	
		Creation of an e-learning course for staff to help them understand environmental issues, and how they can act within their work and personal lives to reduce their environmental impact	Climate Emergency Officer	August 2022 – December 2022 for development. Delivery thereafter.	E-learning course created, and feedback collected from staff on its usefulness.	
9.4	Embed consideration of the environment and climate change within internal communications to promote awareness and behaviour change of environmental issues and the climate challenge	Keep internal comms plan updated to plan out how to inform staff of environmental work and projects.	Climate Emergency Officer	Ongoing	Comms plan stays updated	

9 Change the way we work to achieve our climate commitment

9.5

Strengthen assessment of environmental impacts in all levels of Council decision making

Monitor completion of sustainability and carbon reduction assessment (and associated guidance) to help staff consider and reduce the environmental impacts/emissions throughout their projects, and where relevant see how this could be improved.

Climate Emergency Officer

Ongoing

New assessment and guidance created that staff use effectively to increase their knowledge of environmental impacts/emissions from their projects and how these can be reduced.

Co-benefits

9.6

Reviewing the Council's Travel Plan to ensure this continues to promote sustainable travel to staff

Review the Council's Travel Plan in light of changes to staff working location patterns to ensure Travel Plan facilitates sustainable travel to staff going forward, exploring actions such as options for electric vehicle salary sacrifice schemes.

Travel Plan Officer

Ongoing

Council Travel Plan reviewed and updated

9.7

Reduce the environmental impacts of events organised by [Colchester Events](#)

Review 'travel pages' for Colchester Events so that sustainable travel options are shown and prioritised over private car travel in line with the travel hierarchy.

Travel Plan Officer

May 2022 – July 2022

Information provided on Events Company websites/ticket information about sustainable travel to events

Research opportunities to make events run and facilitated by Colchester Events greener

Sustainability team alongside Colchester Events

Ongoing

Measures and actions identified to make the operation of events taking place in Colchester greener, which in turn can help with behaviour change



9 Change the way we work to achieve our climate commitment

9.8

Action	How will action be achieved?	Officer/Team responsible	Timescale	Measurement of Success	Co-benefits
Ensure the environmental impacts of our ICT systems and processes are considered and reduced as much as possible	Not replacing physical telephone handsets from offices, with work calls routed directly to Microsoft Teams	ICT team	July 2022 – March 2023	Telephone handsets removed, resulting in avoided purchase of 100 physical handsets and removal of supplier's dedicated servers and computer application that supported the use of handsets.	
	Reviewing data retention to ensure unnecessary data in emails and files is not being stored (the systems that store data use energy and have an impact on carbon emissions)	ICT team	July 2022 – July 2023	Ongoing review of data retention to identify opportunities to reduce emissions from storage of data.	
	Ensure that sustainability is considered in the lifecycle of using ICT equipment (from procurement to disposal)	ICT team	Ongoing action	Council assesses need for ICT equipment and looks to dispose of equipment responsibly after use (e.g. getting it repaired, giving to other organisations to reuse, sending parts for recycling). Device specification choice is made by balancing performance and power consumption impact	
	Connecting directly to the cloud and the internet to use applications, cutting out the need for desktop applications that require energy to power	ICT team	Ongoing action	Minimise the number of desktop applications used on CCC laptops, in order to reduce energy usage.	
	Use of the cloud to store files resulting in lower emissions than using a data centre (more efficient equipment used for operating cloud)	ICT team	Ongoing action	Calculator provided by Microsoft to show and estimate our IT based emissions savings from storing files in the cloud.	
9.9 Reduce printing and postage at Council to contribute to reducing waste and saving emissions	Staff behaviour change project to identify opportunities to digitalise paper-based processes to reduce printing and posting where possible.	Multiple teams across Council	January 2022 – Ongoing	Measured reductions in quantity/cost of printing and postage done across CCC, Colchester Borough Homes and Colchester Commercial Holdings Limited	

CASE STUDY

COLCHESTER CITY COUNCIL TRAVEL PLAN

Helping staff travel sustainably The Council has a Travel Plan which is kept up to date to support Council staff to travel to and for work sustainably. For example, discounts are available for buses, Park and Ride and train travel, alongside a salary sacrifice scheme for bikes. There are also a selection of pool bikes and electric cargo bikes available for staff to use to travel to meetings and events.

Support has also been offered to help staff keep their bikes in good condition through the offering of 'Dr Bike' maintenance sessions, as well as providing useful bike equipment such as helmets, puncture repair kits and bells. In the last year, Council staff made a concerted effort to help staff who travel to the Shrub End Depot offices do so by bike. Surveys were run to understand the main barriers to cycling, and alongside the bike maintenance sessions provided, a new covered bike shed has been provided to increase the provision of secure, quality cycle storage for the staff.



CASE STUDY

COLCHESTER MUSEUMS TEAM GOING GREEN

The Colchester Museums teams are taking lots of steps to make their operations more environmentally friendly. In addition to exploring opportunities to decarbonise the museum buildings, the team have also been working to raise awareness of environmental issues and reduce their environmental impact. This includes:

- Developing displays and regular activities focused on local wildlife and habitats, or ways to be greener. Much of this fits naturally into the programme for the Natural History Museum, which already features a Climate Change gallery and is due to be redeveloped in the next few years.
- Having an 'Environmental Champions' group that meet to come up with ways to make museum operations greener and how museums can be used to raise environmental awareness.
- Having staff trained on Carbon Literacy through SHARE Museums East.
- Cutting out use of single use plastic materials in museum shops. This includes removal of plastic bags, paper bags only provided upon request, using paper tags rather than plastic labels on products. Items are also not hung off rails with plastic kimbles, instead they are on shelves with paper price tags attached
- Stocking new ranges that promote recycling, such as the 'Recycling and reusing since 1076' canvas bag, exhibition-related souvenirs with seed paper

labels and Castle-branded products made from recycled plastics.

- Exploring ways to improve procurement of items to sell in museum shops, so that items are more environmentally friendly.
- Repurposing and reusing materials from old exhibitions into newer exhibitions going forward.
- Moving much of their evaluation to digital, to cut down on physical feedback forms.



WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Taking environmental action also has multiple benefits, with opportunities for you to save money and improve your physical and mental health. For example cycling and walking for more journeys, helps reduce costs for fuel, helps you get fitter and allows you to explore more places. Getting outside and interacting with nature and the environment has proven benefits for mental health.

We all need to help reduce our environmental impact in order to tackle and adapt to climate change. However, it's unrealistic to become 100% green – a great quote from Mike Berners-Lee, author of [‘How bad are bananas?’](#) summarises this well:

“Very few of us are squeaky clean in carbon terms. You don't have to become so overnight, but most of us do need to make serious changes over the next few years.

It's important to keep moving in the right direction and enjoy the process of cutting carbon out of our lives. Don't beat yourself up, but don't let yourself off the hook either.”

Calculating your carbon footprint

If you're just starting on your environmental journey, you may want to understand how your lifestyle contributes to the production of greenhouse gas emissions and environmental impacts. Filling in a carbon footprint calculator like that from the [WWF](#) may be a good place to start. [Giki Zero](#) have also produced an excellent calculator that enables you to add lots of detail about your lifestyle. It then gives you sets of actions that you could take to help lower your environmental impact, along with guidance to help you take them.

Taking action

Ready to take action, but not sure what to start with? The best place to start is with something that is manageable within your daily life, before then proceeding onto bigger actions. Not all actions will be suitable for everyone, but an example of some actions you could take are shown below.

- **Reducing the amount of meat and dairy you eat in your diet.**
Lots of land, energy and water use goes into livestock farming making it [a big contributor to greenhouse gas emissions](#). Switching your diet to become more plant based can help improve your health as well as lowering emissions. See tips and recipes from a range of sites including [Meat Free Monday](#), [BBC Good Food](#) and [Veganuary](#). Eating local and seasonal produce and making the most of leftovers to reduce food waste are also great tips to reduce emissions. See the [Love Food Hate Waste](#) website for more information on reducing food waste.
- **Taking the bike for more journeys** – Cycling to places is a great way to stay healthy, cut costs from fuel and reduce emissions. Perhaps you could help cycle with your kids to school on the school run? Pop to the shops on your bike with some panniers for storage? Find the best routes for cycling to and from different locations using [Cycle Streets](#) or the [Cycle Colchester website](#). If your bike is in need of a maintenance check, take it down to [Colchester Bike Kitchen](#) where they'll help you repair your bike. Want to increase your cycling confidence – Visit [Safer Essex Roads Partnership](#) for information on bike training, a lot of which is FREE till March 2023.

- **Reducing your water use** – Colchester is one of the driest areas of the UK, receiving less rainfall than some places in the Mediterranean! The climate is likely to get drier as climate changes, so we need to get better at using water efficiently and not wasting it. Actions like cutting showering time and frequency, getting a water butt to store rainwater for plants in dry spells and boiling the right amount of water for your cuppa and more are all good ways to save water and your pocket! See more water saving tips on [Anglian Water's website](#).
- **Supporting biodiversity in your garden** – Gardens can be a great way to provide a green space to support nature in an increasingly urban environment. There's lots of ways you can support local wildlife, for example the planting of wildflowers to support insects and pollinators, putting up bird feeders (see how to make your own [here](#)) and nest boxes or creating a pond. Find out more at [Essex Wildlife Trust](#) and on [Colchester Museums site](#) with children's activities that support wildlife.
- **Turning your engine off when stationary** – Air pollution from cars and log fires contributes to damaging human health, with approximately 1 in 20 deaths in Colchester linked to air pollution. One simple way you can help cut air pollution from your car is by turning your car engine off when stationary (not idling your engine), for example when waiting in a long queue at traffic lights or waiting outside schools. For more information on taking action on engine idling, including campaign resources to encourage others to turn off their engine can be found from the Council's [CAReless Pollution project website](#).
- **Environmental volunteering** – There are loads of great organisations where you can learn valuable skills in protecting the environment and also those that will boost your own personal development. In Colchester, there are a wide range of organisations offering volunteering opportunities such as

[Essex Wildlife Trust](#), [The Conservation Volunteers](#), [Eco Colchester](#), [Colchester Litter Pickers](#), [Together We Grow CIC](#) and the [Council](#) (amongst others). Consider looking at volunteering websites such as [Volunteer Essex](#) or visiting the [One Colchester Community Hub](#) in Colchester city centre to find out more.

En-Form are also opening an environment centre in 2023 located on 27-28 Priory Walk, a space for workshops, talks, exhibitions and more, all related to the environment and climate change. There will be volunteering opportunities as well as chances to learn more about environmental issues. Keep your eyes out for developments coming soon!

ONLINE

There are also several great websites which show you actions you could take and provide extra guidance and advice to help you take these actions.

[The Jump](#) – A grassroots project encouraging the take up of 6 specific actions or 'shifts' to lifestyles to help reduce environmental impacts and reduce consumption of resources. Actions can be pledged for different timescales, with support provided along the way.

[Grantham Institute](#) – An educational department within University College London, that has one element researching about climate change and the environment. They have produced some great guides with clear actions that we could all take to [tackle climate change](#), [protect the natural environment](#) and [improve our health and the planet](#). Each guide is simply presented with useful information included on each action you can take.

[Do Nation](#) – A website set up to encourage people to take, and stick to, environmental actions by taking a pledge to do them. The website lists many environmental actions you can take, which is great as an information resource. You can then go one step further and pledge to do any number of environmental actions for a 2 month period, with reminders and encouragement provided. You can use the site as ways to encourage work colleagues or friends to also pledge to take environmental action, perhaps in return for a pledge or action you're doing. Instead of raising money for a marathon you're doing, you could get people to take environmental pledges to support what you're doing instead!

[Essex Residents Climate Advice Pack](#) – Essex Climate Action Commission have produced a climate advice pack for residents, giving ideas of actions you can take to tackle climate change and reduce your environmental impact. This has been produced with local context in mind so there are opportunities for Essex residents to help you become greener such as free cycle training, free water saving kits and more!

[Carbon Copy](#) – This contains lots of environmental case studies that a range of organisations, from individuals, community groups to local authorities, across the UK have carried out. If there's an idea you have for an environmental project in your community, why not see if someone has done it already to get some inspiration and give you a useful starting point.

- Another great resource is the Eco Colchester [website](#) and [Facebook page](#). Eco Colchester are a mainly online environmental community groups supporting local environmental action. Their website has lots of information about environmental actions, and organisations who support this action locally. Their Facebook page is also a great forum for discussion about local environmental issues and actions.

- Got a great idea but need the funding to bring it to life? Check out the Essex Climate Action Challenge Fund – A grant pot offering schools, parish councils and community organisations up to £20,000 to fund environmental projects. Funding is currently available till March 2023

FOR SCHOOLS

Inspired to take action in your school to make it greener? See below for some resources that you may find of use:

CCC school webpages – CCC has produced some dedicated webpages on support for schools to help them become greener. This details support available from the [Council](#), [Essex County Council](#) and other [local](#) and [national organisations](#) that can help you become greener. There's also a section on actions you can take to become greener with some case studies of Colchester schools that have taken some of these. All types of actions are covered from ink cartridge recycling, air quality awareness activities and opportunities to access funding for your green projects!

Essex Climate Action Commission Schools advice pack – This [advice pack](#) includes many actions for schools, with examples of how other Essex schools have become greener which could provide you with some inspiration.

Essex Schools Green Day – This is an annual event organised by the [Multi Schools Council](#). The aim of the event is for schools to dedicate a day to environmental learning, awareness and action. The day normally takes place in June/July each year. Over 20 schools took part in 2022 in Colchester but we'd love to see more taking part. Email mschoolscouncil@gmail.com or climate.change@colchester.gov.uk if you'd like more information.

FOR BUSINESS

With rising energy and fuel bills, you may be looking at ways to save energy for your business. Saving energy equals reducing emissions as well as money. There are lots of other things you can do to make your business greener, which can have lots of other benefits from improve staff wellbeing, meeting customer demand for environmental products and produce further cost savings.

Below are several resources and opportunities that may be of interest in helping your business to become greener:

Colchester Business Enterprise Agency (COLBEA) [Sustainable Business Training](#) – Colbea have been providing support to small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) to help them with the first steps of understanding their carbon footprint and how to take action on climate change. They have had several 1 ½ hour introductory workshops running till November 2022, but it is possible they may offer further workshops as part of their sustainable business training in the future, so do enquire with them if this sounds of interest. They are also currently offering a [cost reduction programme](#) for Colchester based SMEs, with a consultant providing a review of their operations to identify ways to cut costs and overheads related to energy use, waste production and more.

[Colchester eCargo Bike Library](#) – This project is managed and run by Colchester City Council, focussing on breaking down the barriers for businesses to uptake the use of electric cargo (eCargo) bikes for their operations. eCargo bikes are electric bikes with a storage compartment on the front, enabling a variety of items to be delivered in a cheap, fast and green way. Find out more details on our [website](#) for how businesses can apply for a free short term loan of 1-3 months to try out one of the eCargo bikes and see if it could work for their business.

[Low Carbon Across the South and East \(LoCASE\)](#): This grant fund offers £10,000 to businesses to help them increase the energy efficiency of, or contribute to the decarbonisation of, their premises. This funding can also help to reduce other environmental impacts of your business, for example supporting your business to switch to electric vehicles. It is a grant fund that businesses in Colchester and the surrounding area can offer. However, other national grants are mentioned in the Business Advice pack produced by Essex Climate Action Commission (see below).

[Essex Climate Action Commission Business Advice Pack](#) – An advice pack of resources, funding and case studies that can help your business become greener.

For any questions on the Council's climate and environmental work, please visit the [CCC sustainability webpage](#) or email climate.change@colchester.gov.uk