

## Colchester City Council Climate Emergency Action Plan 2024-2027



Since declaring a climate emergency in July 2019, Colchester City Council has been reporting on both its greenhouse gas emissions and the actions that are being taken to reduce emissions and environmental impacts across Colchester.

This is the latest version of our Climate Emergency Action Plan, the document which summarises the activities and projects we are working on, including those with partner organisations and the community to help make Colchester a city where tackling climate change and reducing environmental impacts is taken seriously.

This document looks a bit different to our previous action plans. This action plan is going to be a 'live' document, meaning when we update the actions and the progress we're making, you'll see all this as well. This will keep us accountable and also help us to be better able to track our achievements and progress.

We're also trying to promote the message that we are not just carrying out these projects for environmental reasons; they have many other benefits for the wider community. This could be through creating jobs, helping others to improve their physical and mental health, encouraging integration and engagement within the community, helping you to save money and more! These are known as the 'co-benefits' of our projects and you will see these listed against the actions we are delivering in the plan.

Beyond the action plan, there's still lots of useful information about the projects we are delivering on our website, [www.colchester.gov.uk/sustainability](http://www.colchester.gov.uk/sustainability). For example we keep our greenhouse gas emissions figures and reports on their own webpage, [www.colchester.gov.uk/sustainability/our-emissions](http://www.colchester.gov.uk/sustainability/our-emissions). We also produce annual updates to show achievements and highlights of our climate and environmental action which can be viewed at [www.colchester.gov.uk/sustainability/our-progress-and-achievements](http://www.colchester.gov.uk/sustainability/our-progress-and-achievements). Reports on our work are also taken to the Council's Environment and Sustainability Panel which you can search at [www.colchester.gov.uk/our-council](http://www.colchester.gov.uk/our-council). We've tried to give website links throughout the document so you can find out more too which you can copy and paste into your browser to look at.

We hope that this action plan inspires you to make changes in your own lifestyle to have less impact on the environment, whilst also benefitting your own wellbeing or perhaps your bank balance. Knowing what you can do and where to start can be tricky so it's best to start with some small changes. For some ideas, why not visit our webpage, [www.colchester.gov.uk/sustainability/what-you-can-do](http://www.colchester.gov.uk/sustainability/what-you-can-do), which gives links to resources which can help you to make some of those changes.

If you have any questions about our action plan, then please email us on [climatechange@colchester.gov.uk](mailto:climatechange@colchester.gov.uk).

## Table of Contents

Our Climate Emergency Action Plan is split into 8 themes to categorise the different projects and actions we are working on. These themes are:

1. Reduce emissions from our buildings and fleet
2. Produce and use renewable energy
3. Enhance biodiversity and protect our natural environment
4. Supporting active travel and improving air quality
5. Provide sustainable waste management and support residents to reduce, reuse and recycle
6. Working with others to take environmental action
7. Sustainable planning, economy and energy efficient homes
8. Changing the way we work

You can see the projects and actions listed under each theme by clicking on the relevant named sheet in this document. These are displayed along the bottom of the document.



# 1. Reduce emissions from our buildings and fleet

Action ID	Action	How will action be achieved?	Team responsible	Timescale	Desired outcome	Co-benefits	Useful links
1.1	Deliver measures to improve energy efficiency at Leisure World	<p>Deliver installation of pool covers and smart motors as funded by the Swimming Pool Support Fund</p> <p>Install water filtration system at Leisure World Fitness Pool</p> <p>Create business case for investment into further measures at Leisure World such as rooftop solar panels, LED lighting and replacement of air handling units</p>	<p>Climate Emergency Officer</p> <p>Energy Manager</p> <p>Sustainability team</p>	<p>Deliver by October 2024</p> <p>Deliver by October 2024</p> <p>To be agreed</p>	<p>Reduced heat loss from pools and energy savings from ventilation units</p> <p>Reducing water and energy use by reusing treated water to top up the pools</p> <p>Funding secured for further measures to make Leisure World a more energy efficient building that produces fewer greenhouse gas emissions in its operation</p>	Reduced water loss will increase resilience to drought	
1.2	Review opportunities to deliver energy and cost savings through improvements to building metering and carrying out a series of energy efficiency audits at several Council buildings in order to identify measures for improving energy efficiency	<p>Have a full environmental audit completed at Leisure World with action plan for improvements which will include opportunities for energy savings</p> <p>Follow up business case for lighting improvements at the Town Hall</p> <p>Create a list of other buildings to conduct energy efficiency audits at</p>	Energy Manager	<p>Leisure World audit to take place in November 2024</p> <p>TBD</p> <p>Building audits and identifying opportunities for improved metering will be an ongoing process</p>	<p>Identification of new ways to save energy in order to cut operational costs and greenhouse gas emissions</p>		
1.3	Continue plans to achieve a fully low emission fleet by 2030.	<p>Develop updated Fleet transition strategy to achieve a low emission fleet by 2030</p> <p>Identify opportunity to use alternative fuels like hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) or electric fuelled vehicles and trial further vehicles to collect data</p>	Fleet & Depot Manager	<p>Strategy was approved by Cabinet in June 2024</p> <p>Ongoing trials and opportunities to procure fleet using more sustainable fuels will be considered</p>	<p>Council continues its fleet decarbonisation, delivering greenhouse gas emission savings whilst also producing other benefits such as improved air quality, and improved staff wellbeing from reduced vehicle noise</p>	<p>Improved physical and mental health of staff using vehicles such as electric vehicles which are quieter than fossil fuel vehicles.</p> <p>Improved local air quality by using low emission vehicles that produce significantly less tailpipe pollutants</p>	
1.4	Embed research on offsetting opportunities that could contribute to achieving the Council's carbon neutral target	<p>Complete and analyse research on offsetting, and use to feed into carbon reduction plans.</p> <p>Look to identify potential projects that could be delivered as offsetting, with early case on estimating carbon savings and costs.</p> <p>Keep up to date with latest guidance on offsetting for local authorities alongside innovative approaches to delivering local offsetting projects through models such as Area Based Insetting (ABI)</p>	<p>Climate Emergency Officer</p> <p>Multiple teams throughout CCC</p>	<p>Work completed in February 2024</p> <p>Ongoing and dependent on any emerging guidance for local authorities on offsetting</p> <p>Ongoing research</p>	<p>Increased knowledge on key offsetting considerations such as costs, verification options, timescales for delivery etc.</p> <p>Council develops/identifies projects to offset its greenhouse gas emissions in order to reach carbon neutral by 2030</p> <p>Council involved in innovative work with the potential to help more projects happen locally that deliver greenhouse gas reductions alongside other relevant local co-benefits</p>		<p><a href="https://www.anthesisgroup.co.uk/solutions/carbon-credits-and-projects/area-based-insetting/">https://www.anthesisgroup.co.uk/solutions/carbon-credits-and-projects/area-based-insetting/</a></p>
1.5	Review opportunities for improving the use of Council owned buildings through creating a new Asset Management Strategy, ensuring space is used efficiently and recognising ways to save energy through disposal of assets where necessary	Identify ways to save energy across the estate, including selling or leasing buildings that we no longer need	Multiple teams throughout CCC	Ongoing	Council uses its building space efficiently, and help to reduce emissions from our estate		

1.6	<p>Improve the energy efficiency of the Council's housing stock so each property has an Energy Performance Certificate Rating of C by 2030.</p>	<p>Deliver energy efficiency measures through the Housing Improvement Programme (HIP) and additional measures delivered through the Council's Climate Emergency funding.</p> <p>Deliver energy efficiency and decarbonisation improvements in 105 homes, installing measures such as loft insulation, external wall insulation and air source heat pumps. This project has been part funded by Council funding and funding from the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF).</p> <p>Monitor building conditions, trialling the use of switchee thermostats in 490 properties to ensure people are managing their energy use effectively and attempting to avoid issues like damp and mould occurring.</p> <p>Delivery of new homes through acquisitions, and development. Properties acquired (mostly former stock lost through the Right to Buy) are then upgraded to improve energy efficiency.</p>	<p>Head of Asset Management at Colchester Borough Homes (CBH) - the arms length management organisation who manage the Council's housing stock)</p>	<p>All homes to meet EPC C by 2030</p> <p>SHDF Works to be complete by September 2025</p> <p>Switchee pilot - Ongoing</p> <p>New Homes/Aquisitions - Ongoing</p>	<p>Improved energy efficiency of each property to an EPC C, resulting in improvements that lower the property's emissions whilst also helping the residents stay warmer and reduce their energy bills</p> <p>SHDF &amp; Retrofit programmes comply with PAS2035 improving ventilation measures</p> <p>Help prevent issues such as damp, mould and overheating which can impact on the health of residents.</p>	<p>Improved thermal comfort for residents, Lower costs of energy bills for residents</p> <p>Improve resident health by improving indoor air quality</p>	<p><a href="https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/advice/guide-to-energy-performance-certificates-epcs/">https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/advice/guide-to-energy-performance-certificates-epcs/</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/social-housing-decarbonisation-fund-wave-2">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/social-housing-decarbonisation-fund-wave-2</a></p> <p><a href="https://switchee.com/">https://switchee.com/</a></p>
-----	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

## 2. Produce and use renewable energy

Action ID	Action	How will action be achieved?	Team responsible	Timescale	Desired outcome	Co-benefits	Useful links
2.1	Continue to keep up to date with the Energy Act, including plans for heat network zoning and implications for Colchester	Respond to Government consultations and follow progress of Energy Act  Deliver a feasibility study for a new heat network at the University of Essex, which could help decarbonise university buildings, parts of the new Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community and also some Council owned homes	Sustainability  Sustainability, working with University of Essex, Greater South East Net Zero Hub and a consultant.	Ongoing  By March 2025	Council keeps up to date with latest information on heat networks and use it for high level planning about future energy supply and demand.  Council better understands opportunity to create a heat network to provide low carbon heat to buildings and housing		
2.2	Continued development of the Northern Gateway Heat Network to generate low carbon heat for nearby development	Construction of the main energy centre and beginning to build connections to residential, commercial, health and leisure sites	On hold	On hold	On hold		
2.3	Explore the possibility of creating a Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP) to better plan out and identify new opportunities for energy generation and areas where energy consumption will increase.	Research further about LAEPs, including working with other North Essex Councils including Essex County Council to better understand how an LAEP can be created.	Sustainability Other North Essex local authorities	Ongoing	Council expands its outlook to think about energy supply and demand across Colchester		
2.4	Continue to develop plans for a solar farm and microgrid at Northern Gateway	Apply for a grid connection for the solar farm  Progress feasibility of developing solar farm at Seven Saints Farm through planning application stage and understand more about what buildings and operations it could provide electricity to.	Sustainability	Delivered  Ongoing	Council invests in renewable energy supply to either supply its own buildings with clean energy, or to sell to other buildings for an income stream whilst supporting local decarbonisation.		

### 3. Enhance biodiversity and protect our natural environment

Action ID	Action	How will action be achieved?	Team(s) responsible	Timescale	Desired outcome	Co-benefits	Useful links
3.1	Continue with the arable field reversion project to enhance Cymbeline Meadows Local Wildlife Site by creating new habitat on current arable fields	Work with local wildlife interest groups to collect baseline wildlife data for the site and survey site biodiversity throughout the project. Work with the tenant farmer to plant trees and hedgerow on site and leave areas of natural regeneration. Create new wildflower meadow areas and plant an area for winter bird seed. Seek external funding to create wetland areas.	Parks and Countryside	Project on hold due to decisions on funding. Provisionally 2024-2028	Extend and link up existing habitats of high conservation value. Increase biodiversity. Designate whole site a Local Nature Reserve	Flood management. Carbon capture. Reduction in soil erosion. Cleaner river. Recreation opportunities. Good for health and wellbeing	
3.2	Research opportunities for the Council to benefit from Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) legislation through investment from developers into habitat improvements/creation on Council owned green spaces	Understand more about costs and feasibility of opportunities to deliver 'off site' biodiversity net gain, using Council sites that deliver habitats and benefits for biodiversity. These sites and the benefits or the 'units' they deliver can be bought by developers to help meet BNG legislation for delivering biodiversity improvements from development	Parks and Countryside, Planning, Collaboration with Essex County Council colleagues where relevant	Ongoing	Deliver enhancements in green space and biodiversity in Colchester, that may in turn have other benefits such as acting as carbon stores, mitigate flood events etc.	Potential for improvements in adaptation to climate change such as increasing water retention, providing 'cooler areas' to counter extreme temperatures	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/biodiversity-net-gain">https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/biodiversity-net-gain</a>
3.3	Deliver River restoration project at Cymbeline Meadows to improve water quality	Fence off part of the River Colne in Cymbeline Meadow stopping cattle accessing the river for drinking water. Provide alternative drinking water in cattle troughs filled by solar powered pumps. Install coir rolls on the river edge to reduce bank erosion and narrow the river at key points to increase the speed of the river flow thus reducing silt build up and thus reduce aquatic plant growth in the central channel.	Countryside	Project to complete in 2024/25, with outcomes monitored thereafter	Reduced river bank erosion. Cleaner water. Increase in biodiversity. Reduce aquatic plant build up in the river. Improved flood management.	Potential for improvements in adaptation to climate change such as improved water quality, reduced soil erosion and improved flood management	
3.4	Deliver public access and biodiversity improvements at the Ferry Marsh Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	Continue to gather feedback from the public and local wildlife interest groups. Monitor wildlife on site to inform decisions. Work with wetland and conservation specialists and hydrological engineers to formulate an action plan for the site.	Countryside	Ongoing	Maintain a suitable water level on site to achieve conservation targets. Reach a suitable balance on site between public access and wildlife conservation	Improvements of drainage of water on site, protecting nearby housing Improvements to health and wellbeing from access to green space	

3.5	Continue to undertake environmental initiatives on our green spaces that benefit biodiversity and impacts on climate change	<p>Continue the use of peat free compost for plants in our outdoor spaces. Continue to not use Glyphosate in control of native, non invasive weeds.</p> <p>Continue to maintain, and monitor the outcomes for biodiversity of, green spaces that have had reduced mowing regimes applied to them to help support the growth of wildflowers and plants</p>	Parks	Ongoing	Ensure our green spaces are managed to deliver benefits for wildlife and reduce impacts on production of emissions.	Improvements to health and wellbeing from access to green space	
-----	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------	---------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------	--

## 4. Supporting active travel and improving air quality

Action ID	Action	How will action be achieved?	Team(s) responsible	Timescale	Desired outcome	Co-benefits	Useful links
4.1	Promotion of walking and cycling through developing, and informing the public about, projects that help improve signage for walking and cycling (wayfinding), alongside information on dedicated walking and cycling routes	<p>Continue delivery of several wayfinding projects such as Fixing the Link and Walk With Words to promote walking and cycling between key locations throughout Colchester.</p> <p>Influencing funding decisions through section 106 for new developments to encourage signage for walking and cycling throughout the development and connect up to existing signage in place.</p> <p>Updating the Cycle Colchester website to provide information on cycling routes throughout Colchester, designed with feedback from the community.</p>	<p>Sustainability, Teams from across Essex County Council departments</p> <p>Planning, Sustainability</p> <p>Sustainability</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>New website by August 2024</p>	<p>People feel more comfortable with cycling and walking around parts of Colchester by knowing distances of travel and routes to take</p>	<p>Improved air quality</p> <p>Physical and mental health benefits from active travel</p>	<p><a href="https://walkwithwords.co.uk/">https://walkwithwords.co.uk/</a></p> <p><a href="https://cyclecolchester.co.uk/">https://cyclecolchester.co.uk/</a></p>
4.2	Promote the uptake of cycle training and support for increasing cycling confidence	<p>Promote Essex County Council's free adult cycle training</p> <p>Input into the development of 'Bikeability boost' cycle training for school children, to help encourage children to continue cycling after completing the initial bikeability training in primary school.</p> <p>Update the Cycle Colchester website, with input from community, providing information that is useful particularly for new cyclists e.g. cycle maintenance, cycle routes, buying a bike, bike training etc.</p> <p>Support the externally funded 'Essex Pedal Power' project taking place in Greenstead to provide residents with access to 800 free bikes and bike training</p>	<p>Sustainability</p> <p>Sustainability</p> <p>Sustainability</p> <p>Sustainability, Community, Health and Wellbeing. Project run by Active Essex</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Website developed by August 2024.</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Increased cycling confidence in the community</p> <p>Residents more informed of cycling options and resources in Colchester</p> <p>People supported to access work and leisure opportunities through being supported to cycle</p>	<p>Has created volunteer opportunities and helps improve ability for residents to access new jobs and leisure opportunities.</p>	<p><a href="https://www.essexhighways.org/safer-greener-healthier/safer-greener-healthier-cycling">https://www.essexhighways.org/safer-greener-healthier/safer-greener-healthier-cycling</a></p> <p><a href="https://cyclecolchester.co.uk/">https://cyclecolchester.co.uk/</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.activeessex.org/ess-ex-pedal-power/essex-pedal-power-colchester/">https://www.activeessex.org/ess-ex-pedal-power/essex-pedal-power-colchester/</a></p>
4.3	Deliver and support a range of shared travel projects, giving residents choice for completing journeys using sustainable travel options	<p>Support the electric scooter (escooter) pilot</p> <p>Supported the set up of hire electric bikes (ebikes) in Colchester, working with TIER to help promote access to the bikes.</p> <p>Creation of an electric car club scheme. Two cars are currently available for hire and further cars will be provided throughout new developments where allocated from section 106 funding</p> <p>Creation of an electric bike/electric cargo bike (eCargo bike) hub in the city centre, and one in New town led by the community to facilitate access to these for residents .</p>	<p>Sustainability. TIER provide the escooters and ebikes</p> <p>Sustainability. Enterprise Car Club provide the electric cars</p> <p>Sustainability. Community leading project in New town</p>	<p>Till May 2026</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Both hubs now open - Ongoing promotion of these whilst looking to support communities to set up new hubs</p>	<p>Increase choice of travel modes that people can use to get around Colchester and that have a lower impact on the environment</p>	<p>Improved air quality</p> <p>Physical and mental health benefits from active travel</p>	<p><a href="https://www.tier.app/en/tierinessex">https://www.tier.app/en/tierinessex</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.enterpriseclub.co.uk/gb/en/programs/regions/south-east-england/colchester.html">https://www.enterpriseclub.co.uk/gb/en/programs/regions/south-east-england/colchester.html</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.spokesafe.com/colchester-secure-bike-park">https://www.spokesafe.com/colchester-secure-bike-park</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.newtownbikehub.co.uk/">https://www.newtownbikehub.co.uk/</a></p>



4.4	Improve awareness of air quality and promote actions residents, businesses and the wider community can take to help contribute to improving air quality in Colchester	<p>Promote the CAREless Pollution toolkit to schools, expanding on existing activities to promote the benefits of active travel for air quality</p> <p>Begin new project working with businesses to raise awareness around air quality, including the development of an elearning module on the topic</p>	<p>Sustainability, Clean Air Colchester community group</p> <p>Sustainability</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>October 2024 - Ongoing</p>	Increase awareness of actions that people can take to improve local air quality in Colchester	Improved air quality	<a href="https://www.cleanaircolchester.org/careless">https://www.cleanaircolchester.org/careless</a>
4.5	Promote access to secure cycle parking in Colchester and provide information on secure locking of bikes	<p>Promote the Secure Cycle Park in Colchester City Centre, where residents can lock their bikes up in a secure pin coded facility</p> <p>Support the 'Bikewise' campaign in collaboration with the Police and other organisations to promote using secure bike locks and effective bike locking methods.</p> <p>Research the possibility of introducing residential cycle hangars into parts of Colchester to enable people to lock their bikes up near their home (where they may lack a secure place to lock their bike currently)</p>	<p>Sustainability</p> <p>Sustainability, Police</p> <p>Sustainability</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>TBD</p>	Provide greater support for people to lock their bikes up securely in Colchester with the aim of reducing bike theft.		<p><a href="https://www.spokesafe.com/colchester-secure-bike-park">https://www.spokesafe.com/colchester-secure-bike-park</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.safercolchester.co.uk/bike-wise/">https://www.safercolchester.co.uk/bike-wise/</a></p>
4.6	Continue to promote the use of eCargo bikes as an alternative for completing journeys using cars and vans	<p>Continual promotion of the short term loan scheme for businesses to trial an eCargo bike for their operations</p> <p>Promote eCargo bike loan scheme for residents to trial using an eCargo bike for various journeys like shopping, school run and more</p> <p>Support of the Colchester eCargo bike delivery service, including seasonal promotion during Christmas holidays</p>	<p>Sustainability</p> <p>Sustainability</p> <p>Sustainability Colchester Business Improvement District (BID), Colchester e-Cargo</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	Increase awareness of the benefits of eCargo bikes and how they can be used as a viable option for transporting people or goods instead of using cars and vans.	Improved air quality  Physical and mental health benefits from active travel	<p><a href="https://www.colchester.gov.uk/ecargobikelibrary/ecargo-for-businesses/">https://www.colchester.gov.uk/ecargobikelibrary/ecargo-for-businesses/</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.colchester.gov.uk/ecargobikelibrary/ecargo-for-residents/">https://www.colchester.gov.uk/ecargobikelibrary/ecargo-for-residents/</a></p> <p><a href="https://ecargobikecolchester.com/">https://ecargobikecolchester.com/</a></p>
4.7	Work with local businesses and other organisations to promote sustainable travel to their staff and customers through the Colchester Travel Plan Club	Review and provide advice on workplace travel plans produced by organisations. Providing access to incentives and support that organisations (e.g. marketing materials, bus discounts) could use to promote sustainable travel options to staff and customers	Colchester Travel Plan Club Co-ordinator (based within Colchester City Council)	Ongoing	More businesses employing initiatives to encourage their employees to travel to work using active modes		<a href="https://colchestertravelplan.club/">https://colchestertravelplan.club/</a>
4.8	Collaborate with Essex County Council on a range of projects that help support access to active and sustainable travel	<p>Keep informed and feed into the delivery of electric vehicle chargepoints in car parks and on street provision led by Essex County Council (ECC) and informed by the ECC Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy.</p> <p>Support and provide advice on the development of physical transport infrastructure in Colchester, including creation or enhancement of cycle lanes amongst other measures, much of which is identified in the Colchester Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.</p>	Essex County Council lead.	Ongoing	Support people with the transition to use electric vehicles		<p><a href="https://www.essexhighways.org/getting-around/driving/electric-car/ev-strategy">https://www.essexhighways.org/getting-around/driving/electric-car/ev-strategy</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.essexhighways.org/colchester-walking-and-cycling">https://www.essexhighways.org/colchester-walking-and-cycling</a></p>

4.9	Promote and support discussions about use of public transport options in Colchester	<p>Keep updated with the development of the Rapid Transit System being developed by Essex County Council to create a new bus lane to connect the Park and Ride site with University of Essex and new garden community, providing more frequent and modern buses throughout the city.</p> <p>Provide feedback and monitor plans for bus improvements in Colchester, through attending networking meetings such as the Bus Blueprint meeting.</p>	Essex County Council lead.	<p>Ongoing with plans for RTS to be operational from end of 2026</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	Support ECC and other organisations in making it easier for people to use public transport to their desired destinations		<a href="https://www.essexhighways.org/colchester-rapid-transit">https://www.essexhighways.org/colchester-rapid-transit</a>
-----	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

## 5. Provide sustainable waste management and support residents to reduce, reuse and recycle

Action ID	Action	How will action be achieved?	Team responsible	Timescale	Desired outcome	Co-benefits	Useful links
5.1	Develop a new Recycling and Waste Strategy for Colchester that promotes waste reduction, reuse, recycling and carbon reduction whilst aligning with waste policy changes outlined in the Environment Act and Essex County Council Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy	Collaboration across Council and consultants to develop the initial strategy followed by a period of public consultation to get feedback on Council's approach to delivering waste collections	Recycling and Waste	Public consultation until 16 August 2024  Will then go to Scrutiny and Cabinet meetings in October 2024	Future proof strategy developed to promote waste reduction and improved recycling across Colchester  Improved financial position		<a href="https://www.colchester.gov.uk/recycling-and-rubbish/">https://www.colchester.gov.uk/recycling-and-rubbish/</a>
5.2	Deliver improvements to the Business waste collections that align with requirements for consistent recycling collections in the Environment Act	Develop business case that aligns with requirement for businesses to recycle all materials (plastics, glass, cans, paper/card, food) by 31st March 2025 for Council to collect these materials from business	Recycling and Waste	Develop business case in 2024, so Council is prepared to offer improved range of materials for collection by April 2025	Increased recycling options developed for business waste collections Improved financial position		<a href="https://www.colchester.gov.uk/business-waste/">https://www.colchester.gov.uk/business-waste/</a>
5.3	Identify method to deliver food waste collection for flats in Colchester	Develop method to collect food waste from flats so as to align with Environment Act requirements for deadline of 31st March 2026	Recycling and Waste	By April 2026	Improved recycling rates in Colchester		
5.4	Keep up to date with support and methods for collecting plastic films and flexible plastics (like plastic wrapping, bags)	Collection of plastic films is not undertaken by many local authorities but Government trial is taking place nationally with Maldon Council participating so can seek to get learnings about this from them	Recycling and Waste	Ongoing. Council will have to collect plastic films from April 2027 under Government legislation	Improved recycling rates in Colchester		
5.5	Continue enforcement and education related to littering and fly tipping working with partner organisations and the community	Work with Waste Investigations Support & Enforcement (WISE) to help with monitoring and enforcing fines for littering/fly tipping  Develop educational campaign materials on tackling different types of litter such as cigarettes, chewing gum, dog fouling and general litter.  Continue to work with Litter Warriors to promote and educate around the topic of littering	Recycling and Waste	Ongoing	Improve cleanliness of Colchester and support community engagement around this area		<a href="https://wasteenforcement.co.uk/">https://wasteenforcement.co.uk/</a>

5.6	Reusing tree waste from Council managed trees for management of weed growth	Chipping tree waste to produce chippings used by our outdoor space maintenance contractor (Idverde) for use on shrub borders to reduce weed growth and use of chemicals to manage weeds.	CCC Tree team alongside Idverde	Ongoing	Generate cost savings by reusing tree waste instead of buying in mulch product.	Cost savings	
-----	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------	---------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------	--

## 6. Working with others to take environmental action

Action ID	Action	How will action be achieved?	Team responsible	Timescale	Desired outcome	Co-benefits	Useful links
6.1	Promoting and supporting environmental grant funding opportunities for communities	Researching grant funding for community environmental projects and supporting organisations to make applications where required - Producing monthly newsletter which shows available grant funding	Sustainability team	Ongoing	Enable more projects to be delivered that generate carbon savings and positive co-benefits		
6.2	Providing opportunities for the community to participate in the delivery of Council projects and activities that deliver environmental benefits	<p>Providing the yearly 'Trees for Years' event to help residents get access to trees and shrubs to benefit biodiversity in their gardens.</p> <p>Providing opportunities for residents to do voluntary work such as conservation activities and visitor centre volunteers at Highwoods Country Park</p> <p>See other community projects as detailed in Theme 5</p>	Parks	<p>Annual event</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	Community are able to deliver environmental projects in Colchester, with Council acting as support where relevant	Benefits for mental health,	
6.3	Continue to provide opportunities for schools and further education institutions to find out about the Council's work to tackle the climate emergency and deliver environmental improvements	<p>Engage with schools to provide learning materials related to air quality such as the air quality schools toolkit, use of pollution monitors, cycle training.</p> <p>Provide Education Ranger led environmental educational opportunities for schools at Highwoods Country Park, alongside educational events for families during holiday periods. Also working in schools and at Countryside sites delivering Forest School programmes.</p> <p>Hold regular meetings with Colchester Institute, University of Essex and Colchester Sixth Form College to promote knowledge sharing on tackling climate change whilst also setting up opportunities where possible to educate students about the Council's climate and environmental action</p>	<p>Sustainability</p> <p>Parks, Countryside and Open Spaces</p> <p>Sustainability</p>	Ongoing Education Rangers on 2 yr grant funded project	<p>Young people supported to learn more about air quality and how they can contribute to reducing air pollution.</p> <p>Enable young people to learn about the natural environment and wildlife, promoting an awareness of environmental conservation.</p> <p>Maintain awareness of projects happening in further education and harness opportunities for collaboration between each of us.</p>		<p><a href="https://www.cleanaircolchester.org/schools">https://www.cleanaircolchester.org/schools</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.colchester.gov.uk/countryside-parks-and-nature-reserves/?id=&amp;page=educational-visits--and--forest--schools">https://www.colchester.gov.uk/countryside-parks-and-nature-reserves/?id=&amp;page=educational-visits--and--forest--schools</a></p>
6.4	Continue to offer support where possible to help Town and Parish Councils deliver environmental activities and promote actions to their communities.	Provide support as appropriate for the Town and Parish Councils, whether that be helping with applications for funding, presentations about the Councils work and opportunities etc.	Sustainability	Ongoing	Support Town and Parish Councils to take further environmental action and engage closer with local communities in their areas		
6.5	Work with other Essex Local Authorities to share knowledge and collaborate on projects where there is the opportunity for mutual benefit	Participate in the North Essex Climate Partnership to identify shared workstreams such as local area energy planning, Greenhouse gas emissions reporting and other joint procurement or financing opportunities	<p>Sustainability</p> <p>Other Essex local authorities, particularly those in North Essex</p>	Ongoing	Councils are not duplicating work, using staff resource effectively to help tackle climate change throughout Essex		
6.6	Work with other key partner organisations across Colchester and Essex to share opportunities for tackling climate change	Participate in the Essex Climate Action Commission's Climate Action Working Group to work with other local authorities, NHS trusts and other organisations to contribute to knowledge sharing and taking action across Essex on climate change	<p>Sustainability</p> <p>Various partner organisations across Essex</p>	Ongoing	Council understands action being taken across Essex and harnesses valuable opportunity to share resources		

6.7	Continue to develop engaging and informative content for the Council's external communications that educate residents on climate change, and promote opportunities for them to take environmental action in their own lifestyles	Contribute to delivery of bimonthly 'Greener Living' enewsletter with the latest environmental news and projects for residents to hear about  Prepare communications to highlight specific events and projects that are of interest for residents, ideally including engaging content like photos and videos	Many teams across Colchester City Council	Ongoing	Residents hear more about different Council projects and feel inspired to take their own environmental action		
-----	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------	---------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--	--

## 7. Sustainable planning, economy and energy efficient homes

Action ID	Action	How will action be achieved?	Team(s) responsible	Timescale	Desired outcome	Co-benefits	Useful links
7.1	Provide access to an energy advice service for residents to receive support for helping to apply for energy grants and other support to make their homes warmer	<p>Promote the 'Better Housing, Better Health' impartial energy phone service that helps to process resident referrals for energy advice, fuel vouchers, funded energy efficiency measures and energy grant funding.</p> <p>Promote the 'Green Doctor' service alongside Community Energy Colchester, both of which can provide in person independent advice to residents on a range of topics such as energy switching, dealing with energy debt and more</p>	Many across the Council including Sustainability, Healthy Homes, Private Sector Housing, Health Partnerships and Wellbeing	Ongoing	Residents are supported to get access to support to help keep their homes warmer, whilst saving on utility bills where possible.	<p>Cost savings</p> <p>Improved mental and physical health</p>	<p><a href="https://www.bhbh.org.uk/">https://www.bhbh.org.uk/</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.groundwork.org.uk/greend-actor/our-partners/cadent-foundation-green-doctor/">https://www.groundwork.org.uk/greend-actor/our-partners/cadent-foundation-green-doctor/</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.colchester.gov.uk/energy-grants">www.colchester.gov.uk/energy-grants</a></p>
7.2	Promote grant funding and offers/support that are available to residents for improving the energy efficiency of their homes.	Promote and advertise schemes such as Solar Together, Energy Company Obligation, Home Upgrade Grant and other associated schemes that can help residents save money on their energy bills	Many across the Council including Sustainability, Healthy Homes, Private Sector Housing, Employment and Financial Support teams	Ongoing as and when schemes open. Home Upgrade Grant will be promoted till deadline of March 2025	Support uptake of available grant funding for keeping residents homes warmer in Colchester	<p>Cost savings</p> <p>Improved mental and physical health</p>	<p><a href="https://solartogether.co.uk/essex/home">https://solartogether.co.uk/essex/home</a></p> <p><a href="https://hugapply.co.uk/">https://hugapply.co.uk/</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.colchester.gov.uk/energy-grants">www.colchester.gov.uk/energy-grants</a></p>
7.3	Continue to work with Essex County Council on net zero policies for the Local Plan Review that delivers greater environmental improvements and carbon savings	<p>Consider including ECC's Net Zero homes policies for new homes being developed in Colchester in partnership with Essex County Council's Climate Action Planning Unit.</p> <p>This will build on the supplementary planning document (SPD) developed on climate change. Other SPDs will complement some of this work including active travel and biodiversity.</p>	Planning, alongside ECC's Climate Action Planning Unit	ECCs net zero policies published for early stage engagement in April 2024 asking the question: are these policies suitable and appropriate to include in the local plan review? A Preferred Options Plan will be drafted this summer with consultation autumn 2024	Homes in Colchester are built to standards that require less energy to heat and light appropriately, going above minimum building regulations	<p>Cost savings</p> <p>Improved mental and physical health</p> <p>Increased climate resilience through localised renewable generation</p>	<p><a href="https://www.essexdesignguide.co.uk/climate-change/essex-net-zero-policy/">https://www.essexdesignguide.co.uk/climate-change/essex-net-zero-policy/</a></p>

7.4	Promote training opportunities for businesses to learn more about their environmental impact and how they can reduce it, alongside diversifying the services they deliver to support environmental projects/industries.	<p>Increase awareness of business carbon literacy training courses offered by Colchester Institute, alongside courses specifically aimed at training local installers in installing environmental energy technologies like solar panels, heat pumps and insulation that are being delivered through the Institute's Net Zero Centre.</p> <p>Work in partnership with NEEB and ECC to support the development of a comprehensive Advice Pack to help businesses reduce their environmental impact and help to promote business engagement with it.</p>	Various Council teams	<p>Ongoing, with Net Zero Centre promotion starting from September 2024 when the centre opens.</p> <p>Summer 2024</p>	More businesses are trained up to understand their environmental impact and ways for them to take advantage of emerging industries linked to the environment.	Creation of new jobs in the environmental sector and opportunities for extra income.	<a href="https://www.essexclimate.org.uk/sites/default/files/10035%20Business%20Advice%20Pack%20v4%20ACCESSIBLE.pdf">https://www.essexclimate.org.uk/sites/default/files/10035%20Business%20Advice%20Pack%20v4%20ACCESSIBLE.pdf</a>
-----	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------



## 8. Changing the way we work

Action ID	Action	How will action be achieved?	Team responsible	Timescale	Desired outcome	Co-benefits	Useful links
8.1	Deliver a programme for both councillors and Council staff to learn more about climate change and ways that they can reduce their environmental impact at work and home	Promote the elearning course created for staff to learn about climate change and environmental awareness  Deliver yearly training/presentations for members on environmental awareness and actions the Council is taking to tackle climate change	Sustainability	Ongoing	Improved staff awareness of Council's sustainability work, and increased embedding of sustainability and climate change considerations within their own behaviours and projects		
8.2	Continue to keep the Council's staff travel plan updated to provide staff with incentives and support to travel to work using more sustainable travel modes (e.g. walking, cycling, public transport)	Providing support such as discounted bus and train tickets, alongside access to the use of pool electric bikes and electric car for meetings	Sustainability	Ongoing	Reduced greenhouse gas emissions associated with staff commuting and business travel		
8.3	Participate in the Green Events Code of Practice (GECOP) local authority pilot project, to understand ways to improve and promote the reduction of environmental impacts produced from outdoor events	Work to update the Council's Event Policy so it incorporates more sustainability considerations for event organisers and introduce a self assessment tool for events organisers to demonstrate how they will be reducing the environmental impact of the event they deliver and to receive guidance about further actions they could take.	Colchester Events Sustainability Maldon District Council Relevant Event organisers	February 2024 - December 2024	Increased awareness of opportunities to reduce environmental impacts of outdoor events and implement actions to help deliver this in Colchester		<a href="https://www.vision2025.org.uk/national-pilot-prioritises-sustainability-for-festivals-and-events/">https://www.vision2025.org.uk/national-pilot-prioritises-sustainability-for-festivals-and-events/</a>
8.4	Update Council procurement practices to incorporate a greater ask of companies that the Council works with for various contracts to demonstrate actions they are taking to reduce their environmental impact and emissions	Introduce a new question into the procurement tender bid process, asking how companies are limiting their environmental impact and emissions through contracts they are delivering. This will be the first stage of further improvements that could occur in the procurement process	Sustainability Procurement	Question introduced in January 2024. Completion of responses reviewed from February 2024 with a view to making further improvements later in 2024/25	Greater understanding of the ways companies we work with are reducing their environmental impacts and emissions on contracts they deliver for us, so we can aim to work with companies who value sustainability in their operations		
8.5	Increase the Council's understanding of the risks posed by climate change and the ways in which the Council can prepare for these.	Take part in the Government climate adaptation reporting pilot for local authorities. Complete a climate change risk assessment and high level action plan, based on projections of climate risks and how these may impact Council actions and operations	Climate Emergency Officer	Complete by December 2024	Climate Change Risk Assessment produced, which can feed into the Council's Strategic risk register	Increased climate resilience and planning for future climate impacts	
8.6	Ensure staff have access to regular updates on projects, news and support through posting in internal communications, staff intranet and staff meetings	Schedule in communications for staff intranet, internal bulletin and look to attend staff meetings to ensure staff are aware of support available to them, and to help them increase consideration of environmental issues within their work.	Sustainability	Ongoing	Staff are regularly informed of Council's environmental work and projects and can support by considering environment in their own projects		
8.7	Museums team continue to deliver environmental initiatives within buildings that help with resident education and awareness	Environmental champions seek out options to procure more sustainable products, ensure exhibition materials can be reused where possible and energy saving opportunities explored	Museums	Ongoing	Staff and residents supported to increase understanding of, and ability to take action on, environmental issues.		