

Hinckley & Bosworth Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy 2024 to 2028

Scope and Purpose

This strategy sets out the actions and opportunities that Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council (HBBC) will undertake to continue to address the climate change emergency declared in July 2019 and the biodiversity emergency declared in July 2023.

The strategy is underpinned by an action plan which will be reviewed regularly and includes actions the council can take itself and, how the council will lead others to take steps towards addressing the climate crisis through influencing behaviours and by creating the policy and regulatory framework to ensure others take appropriate action.

The strategy identifies the need to reduce carbon switching from the dependence on fossil fuels to cleaner resources such as renewables and the resulting impact of climate change on biodiversity. This will be achieved through the following themes:

1. Biodiversity
2. Buildings and Land
3. Community
4. Economy
5. Travel
6. Waste and Pollution

Vision

To work towards making HBBC carbon neutral by 2030 (direct council emissions) and ensure the borough is net zero by 2050, considering both production and consumption costs, minimising the environmental impacts of our activities, and through our leadership role influence and empower others to take similar actions. To ensure all the council decisions consider the carbon usage and the resulting impact. We recognise the importance of a healthy and biodiverse environment that ensures our borough's future prosperity and assists the wellbeing of all who live and work in the borough.

Corporate Plan links

The Climate Change Strategy supports the Corporate Plan vision of creating great places to live, work and relax through creating clean, sustainable, and attractive places to live, visit, and work in.



1. Biodiversity

We will manage our land and work in partnership with others to protect, celebrate, increase, and enhance biodiversity.

Over the next 2 years and beyond we will:

- 1** Work towards an increased tree canopy in the borough
- 2** Increase biodiversity on our property and enhance our green infrastructure
- 3** Through the planning service ensure the delivery of at least 10% biodiversity net gain on all qualifying planning applications which are permitted

To do this we will / what will happen:

The council's biodiversity

We will review our grounds maintenance operations to increase biodiversity. This will include reviewing chemical use to control weeds and mowing regimes

We will maintain and increase our current tree stock, hedgerows, and woodlands on council owned land

We will implement the biodiversity actions within the Green Space Strategy and develop a plan for biodiversity improvements to our housing land

The borough's biodiversity

We will continue our residents free tree scheme

We will deliver biodiversity net gain, green infrastructure projects, and protect at risk species through our planning services

In partnership

We will support biodiversity work at a County level through the climate and nature pact, Local Nature Recovery Strategies and the Green Living Leicestershire partnership

We will seek to build capacity and support our parishes and communities to increase biodiversity

2. Buildings and Land

We will seek to utilise our land for carbon reduction and ensure our buildings are energy efficient

Over the next 2 years and beyond we will:

- 1** Work towards the decarbonisation of all council buildings by 2030
- 2** Promote the use of renewable energy/energy reduction and investigate opportunities for carbon capture and storage
- 3** Minimise carbon usage in new developments through the local plan, neighbourhood plans, and planning decisions
- 4** Support vulnerable households impacted by fuel poverty to access schemes to improve the energy efficiency of their homes
- 5** Understand the principles of adaption to enable opportunities to be explored

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To do this we will / what will happen:

The council's emissions

- We will explore opportunities for renewable energy generation and carbon off set
- We will develop a programme to improve the energy efficiency of all council housing dwellings
- We will take action to decarbonise council owned buildings

The borough's emissions

- We will develop the Local Plan to include policies for climate change mitigation and adaptations to relevant developments, and support, where appropriate, the potential installation of new solar farms and renewable energy schemes
- We will install solar panels on Hinckley leisure centre to reduce its emissions
- We will continue to support, where possible, the installation of solar farms

In partnership

- We will target fuel poor/vulnerable households with energy efficiency measures and facilitate access to financial assistance for homeowners to carry out home energy efficiency measures
- We will work with businesses to identify opportunities for carbon reduction and improved energy efficiency measures
- We will deliver the Solar Together scheme for residents to collectively purchase solar panels
- We will work with our partners to understand what adaptation measures are needed

3. Community

We will work with the community to lead change and increase climate change engagement

Over the next 2 years and beyond we will:

- 1** Build capacity and networks within our communities, schools, and businesses to reduce carbon emissions, adapt/ mitigate climate change impacts
- 2** Utilise the council's communication channels to promote climate change awareness to residents, partners, businesses, and staff
- 3** Support communities through our VCS (Voluntary and Community Sector) and partnerships

To do this we will / what will happen:

The council's emissions

- We will identify opportunities to reduce carbon across all service areas
- We will fully consider climate change in our decision making processes

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The borough's emissions

We will identify and support existing volunteer groups to help us promote and support climate change initiatives at events

We will continue to support and engage with young people, schools, and businesses to encourage community events

In partnership

We will create a net zero toolkit for schools and businesses and share funding opportunities

We will continue to share best practice with our partners across Leicestershire

We will continue to support communities with climate change initiatives through the Green Living Leicestershire Partnership

4. Economy

We will seek financial opportunities to support climate change work

Over the next 2 years and beyond we will:

- 1 Consider climate change impacts in procurement activity
- 2 Consider climate change impacts when awarding our own grants and funding
- 3 Identify opportunities to access external funding to support climate change work
- 4 The council will place longer term investments with consideration to environmental and socially responsible practices, subject to financial regulation

To do this we will / what will happen:

The council's emissions

We will ensure climate impacts are considered in procurement processes, medium-term financial strategy, treasury policy, and that the constitution reflects climate change considerations

We will ensure the council remains on a green energy tariff in future procurement processes

We will investigate establishing a carbon budget for the council

The borough's emissions

We will continue to identify funding opportunities for carbon reduction projects

In partnership

We will utilise the Green Living Leicestershire partnership to submit and deliver joint funding proposals



5. Travel

We will work to decarbonise travel across the council and the borough

Over the next 2 years and beyond we will:

- 1 Seek to further reduce the council's fleet emissions
- 2 Encourage residents, staff, businesses, and community groups to switch to electric vehicles and reduce their travel carbon emissions
- 3 Support residents, businesses, and staff to travel more sustainably – including Active Travel

To do this we will / what will happen:

The council's emissions

We will continue to move to lower emission vehicles, machinery and power tools as technology develops and replacements are ordered

We will encourage active travel

The borough's emissions

We will promote active travel to residents and businesses

We will ensure that new developments promote active travel through the local plan

We will monitor and promote the Electric Vehicle (EV) charge points in the borough

In partnership

We will provide new EV charge points at the Hinckley Leisure centre car park

We will work with Leicestershire County Council (LCC-lead authority) to develop an electric vehicle charging infrastructure strategy for Leicestershire

We will support joint initiatives to develop electric vehicle car share opportunities across the county

6. Waste and Pollution

We will seek to minimise pollution and our waste, and increase the borough's recycling rate

Over the next 2 years and beyond we will:

- 1 Continue to work towards our waste collection services achieving the national recycling target through service design and education
- 2 Contribute to the Leicestershire Waste Partnership and implementation of the Leicestershire Waste and Resource Strategy 2022-2050
- 3 Use our statutory services to protect the environment

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To do this we will / what will happen:

The council's emissions

We will consider reuse, repair, and end of life waste disposal in procurement decisions

We will educate our staff to minimise waste and maximise recycling

The borough's emissions

We will increase the amount of street litter that is recycled and run campaigns to reduce litter and fly tipping

We will review and improve our recycling services

We will use Environmental Protection and Clean Air Act powers to reduce pollution

In partnership

We will deliver the 12 pledges within the Leicestershire Waste and Resources Strategy 2022-2050



Definitions

Active Travel: Making journeys in physically active ways such as walking and cycling

Adaptation: The process of adjusting to the effects of climate change

Carbon: Carbon Dioxide is the primary greenhouse gas (GHG) which contributes to recent climate change

Carbon Budget: The amount of carbon (GHGs) that can be emitted for a given level of global temperature rise (the maximum anthropogenic CO2 emissions that would limit temperature rise)

Carbon Neutral: No net release in carbon dioxide; carbon is being absorbed at the same rate as being emitted

Carbon Storage: The storing of carbon in solid and dissolved forms to prevent being emitted into the atmosphere

Net Zero: No greenhouse gases are emitted into the atmosphere from human activity

Developed in conjunction with the cross party climate member working group. For more information please contact:

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