

HIGH PEAK BOROUGH COUNCIL

The Executive

18th April 2024

TITLE:	Climate Change Annual Report
EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR:	Councillor Jean Todd - Executive Councillor for Climate Change and Environment
CONTACT OFFICER:	David Smith - Head of Communities and Climate Change
WARDS INVOLVED:	Non-Specific

Appendices Attached

Appendix A – High Peak Climate Change Annual Report

1. Reason for the Report

- 1.1 The Council is committed to provide an annual report on progress made towards delivery of its Climate Change Strategy. This report presents the Annual Climate Change Report.

2. Recommendations

That the Executive notes the:

- 2.1 Annual Report and progress to date, and
- 2.2 Next steps for the development of future action plans.

3. Executive Summary

- 3.1 The Council approved its [Climate Change Strategy \(Aiming Low: The Way to Net Zero 2021 to 2030\) in 2021](#).
- 3.2 The annual report attached at Appendix A details progress towards delivering the Council's Climate Change plan. Key activities include:
- Utilising funding for domestic energy efficiency and renewable energy measures. This is in partnership with several regional agencies.
 - Identifying opportunities within the Local Plan review process

- The Council is accredited with the Carbon Literacy Bronze Award and are close to receiving silver through training more staff. Members climate induction has taken place to encourage scrutiny of reports and climate mitigation and adaptation impacts.
- Carbon dioxide emissions generated by Buxton Leisure Centre are set to fall by 140 tonnes each year thanks to a £1.3million grant towards improving energy efficiency and reduce the building's impact on the environment.
- The Agile working policy for staff has enabled suitable roles to use blended working approaches to reduce travel time and resources for both commuting and meetings.
- EV salary sacrifice scheme has been developed to support staff transitioning to low emissions vehicles.
- Derbyshire Wildlife Trust are preparing a Plan for Nature for the borough. This will incorporate the Council's response to the Biodiversity Net Gain requirements under Part 6 of the Environment Act 2021, which is mandatory from January 2024. It will also incorporate our strategic approach to improve and increase tree cover, mitigate against climate change and potentially improve air quality.
- Derbyshire Wildlife Trust along with many biodiversity community groups across the borough are working together to create an engagement plan and tools to complement the Plan for Nature.
- The Council continues to be a high performer achieving a 48.2% recycling rate, which is the high compared to national statistics.
- The Council is engaged with several key agencies to assist with the development of our plans including all the other councils of Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire through D2N2 mayoral combined authorities, the Local Authority Energy Partnership, Vision Derbyshire, The Midlands Net Zero Hub, the Energy Saving Trust, Derbyshire Wildlife Trust, Anthesis sustainability consultancy and Keele University.

3.3 Discussions with the Executive Councillor, and with key stakeholders, including members of the Climate Change Working Group, have (re)emphasised the importance of targeting our limited resources on the areas where we can have the greatest impact. These discussions have led to the creation of a "Short List" of prioritised targeted actions that are being proposed to the Executive for delivery, and a "Long List" of deliverable actions that will be uplifted into the short list as these tasks are concluded to ensure that there is always a focused, deliverable list of targeted actions.

3.4 Reducing the Council's own emissions and meeting the ambitious target of achieving net zero by 2030 will always be the main priority as we have most influence over this. Measures for achieving this target will be included in each year's action plan.

3.5 We are proposing that the new action plan concentrates on the following priorities in addition to reducing the Council's own emissions:

- The Way We Live, and zeroing in on domestic energy,
- The Way We Travel, and zeroing in on increasing the use of Electric Vehicles

- The Way We Look After Our Environment
 - The Way We Can Help Change to Occur, spotlighting community engagement through initiatives such as Refill, Wilder Walks, Community Events, attending energy roadshows, highlighting impacts of wildfires.
 - The Way We Work, supporting staff to transition to low carbon travel options and imbedding the sustainable procurement principles.
- 3.6 A detailed action plan will be developed in line with the [Borough Plan](#) to ensure that climate change initiatives complement broader Council priorities wherever possible. We aim to bring the plan before Executive at its Autumn meeting. Current actions will continue to be delivered and this does not represent a pause in activity.
- 3.7 The nature (or biodiversity) crisis links to, but is separate from, the climate change crisis. Derbyshire Wildlife Trust have been commissioned by the Council to develop a Plan for Nature for the borough. The Plan for Nature is currently being finalised and will be brought forward for Councillors' consideration shortly. The Plan is intended to guide borough council and the wider community's actions to halt and reverse the decline of the natural world across the authority area.
- 3.8 A proposed Nature Declaration is being presented to the Executive for approval. This is to cement the Council's determination to improve biodiversity in the borough.
- 3.9 We propose to report on the delivery of "The Way We Look After Our Environment" aspect of the Climate Change Strategy as part of the overall reporting on delivery of the Plan for Nature. This should provide a simpler delivery and reporting structure, ensure that both climate change and nature recovery are given adequate consideration.
- 3.10 When declaring a Climate Change emergency, the Council adopted the target of achieving Net Zero by 2030 for all borough activities. This is amongst the most ambitious targets in Derbyshire.
- 3.11 Much has changed since the declaration of a climate change emergency in 2019 including new national strategies, and legislation; greater cross-Council working within Derbyshire; and an increase in the Council's own skills, knowledge, experience and capacity. Work carried out on the Council's behalf by Anthesis demonstrates that the ambitious aim of achieving Net Zero across the borough is not achievable. This report will be reviewed by the Climate Change Working Group.
- 3.12 Through the Climate Change Working Group, the Council intends to review the borough-wide target with the aim of ensuring that any targets that the Council is working towards are achievable, science-led and consistent with the approach of other key partners within Derbyshire and D2N2. This will include holding discussions about aligned Countywide targets potentially through D2N2.

- 3.13 The Council is strongly committed to achieving Net Zero across its own operations by 2030. This will remain a corporate priority and a key aim of the Council.
- 3.14 Adaptation has not been addressed fully by the plan and moves to include and assess this will be made.

4. How this report links to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 This report supports delivery of Aim 4 of the Corporate Plan: “*To protect and improve the environment, and respond to the climate emergency*”. The focus on domestic energy from a climate change perspective also has a co-benefit / ancillary benefit for fuel poverty, health and cost of living, which helps to deliver priorities under Aim 1 of the Corporate Plan: “*To help create a safer and healthier environment for our communities to live and work*”.

5. Alternative Options

- 5.1 None identified

6. Implications

- 6.1 Community safety, including safeguarding and prevention of terrorism
None

- 6.2 Workforce
Delivery of the plan is co-ordinated through the internal Climate Change and Biodiversity Delivery Group. Heads of Service are responsible for highlighting workforce issues within their objectives in the plan.

A new Biodiversity Officer has been recruited to lead on Plan for Nature.

Additional capacity has been requested to support domestic energy projects (March 2024). Support has already been put in place to improve the energy performance of the Council’s own housing stock.

Internal working groups at officer level have been established for biodiversity, comms and waste initiatives.

- 6.3 Equality and Diversity/Equality Impact Assessment
The plan indicates supporting the most vulnerable. Energy projects tend to be targeted at low income/ health vulnerable households.

Consideration in the adaptation work will look at environmental impacts of vulnerable groups.

- 6.4 Financial Considerations
The plan forms a programme of discrete projects. Some of which need

to be scoped to understand the requirements. Financial implications will be considered within each project.

Where external funding is available, assessment must be made to the implications on capacity, outcomes and risks.

6.5 Legal

Local Authorities do not have a statutory obligation to respond to climate change.

New legislation on biodiversity includes a duty to report approach and to include Biodiversity Net Gain on planning applications and conditions.

6.6 Climate Change and Sustainability

The report sets progress towards delivering the Climate Change Plan and future plan reviews for implementation.

6.7 Conservation and Enhancement of Biodiversity

The report sets out the work to address biodiversity issues strategically and to comply with new legislative duties.

6.8 Consultation

Discussions to inform this report have taken place at the Climate Change Working Group, in meetings with partners such as High Peak Green and Biodiversity Networks, and at County level through Vision Derbyshire and through new Mayoral Combined Authority.

6.9 Risk Assessment

Defra's voluntary adaptation reporting framework will enable the Council to assess the risk of climate change and mitigate potential impacts on operations and community.

ANDREW P STOKES
Chief Executive

Web Links and

Background Papers

[Aiming Low the Way to Net Zero 2021 to 2030](#)

[Plan Summary](#)

Contact details

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7 Detail

- 7.1 The Council approved its Climate Change Strategy (Aiming Low: The Way to Net Zero 2021 to 2030) in 2021.
- 7.2 Our Climate Change Strategy is based upon our 7 Ways to Net Zero approach. A short video that explains the Council's approach can be found [on our website](#) and a [summary is provided here](#)
- 7.3 The Council declared a Climate Change Emergency on 15th October 2019 and made a commitment to achieve carbon net zero.
- 7.4 Local emission reductions rely in a large part upon the implementation of the national Net Zero Strategy that was published in October 2021¹. The Climate Change Committee's most recent report to Parliament described government efforts to scale up climate action as "worryingly slow" and reported that it was less confident than a year ago that the UK would reach its targets for cutting carbon emissions.

"At COP26, the UK made stretching 2030 commitments in its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) – now only seven years away. To achieve the NDC goal of at least a 68% fall in territorial emissions from 1990 levels, the rate of emissions reduction outside the power sector must almost quadruple. Continued delays in policy development and implementation mean that the NDC's achievement is increasingly challenging. Some of the key planks of the UK Net Zero Strategy have substantial lead-times (e.g. hydrogen storage, greenhouse gas removals and carbon capture and storage (CCS) more generally). Progress in other areas is also too slow, including tree planting and the roll-out of low-carbon heating. There continues to be an overly narrow approach to solutions, which crucially does not embrace the need to reduce demand for high-carbon activities".

- Climate Change Committee, June 2023. Progress in reducing UK emissions 2023 Report to Parliament

- 7.5 Several measures within the Net Zero Strategy are not scheduled to begin until 2030 or later, including:
- Fully decarbonise our power system by 2035.
 - Deliver 5 GW of hydrogen production capacity by 2030, whilst halving emissions from oil and gas.
 - Set a path to all new heating appliances in homes and workplaces from 2035 being low carbon.
 - End the sale of new petrol and diesel cars by 2035.
- 7.6 Borough-wide reductions are also dependant on other Countywide and regional actions, particularly those relating to transport and industrial emissions. The Peak Cluster² is an innovative collaboration to capture, transport and permanently store carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions from the cement and lime industry in Derbyshire and Staffordshire, as well as

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/net-zero-strategy>

² Five cement and lime plants across Derbyshire, Staffordshire and Cheshire, owned by Tarmac, Breedon, Lhoist and Aggregate Industries, together with Lostock Sustainable Energy Plant in Cheshire, known locally as LSEP, have come together with Progressive Energy to form Peak Cluster.

neighbouring industries in Cheshire. The project will capture and transport carbon dioxide emissions from industry across the region, before permanently locking it away beneath the eastern Irish Sea. This is a very exciting project, but the scheme, if successful, will not be operational until 2030 and the results will not be realised until after that. From 2030, the project will remove over three million tonnes of CO₂ emissions each year.

- 7.7 The Council commissioned Anthesis to carry out a pathway analysis, to facilitate a series of workshops and identify actions that the borough council could consider implementing locally. Some of the suggested actions may not be considered desirable, affordable, practicable or otherwise deliverable within the borough and many are outside the control of the borough council. However, it does provide a useful list of possible actions that can be considered by the borough council, other statutory agencies, business, community groups and others when developing their plans. Crucially, the Anthesis pathway analysis shows that it will not be possible to meet the 2030 net zero target for borough-wide emissions.
- 7.8 The Net Zero pathways report will be reviewed by the Climate Change Working Group and new targets will be considered reflecting on those at County and D2N2.
- 7.9 The Council is strongly committed to achieving Net Zero across its own operations by 2030. This will remain a corporate priority and a key aim of the Council.

8. Next Steps

- 8.1 The Climate Change Plan is broad and multifaceted, however resource is limited. Prioritising where we can have the greatest impact is key to successful mitigation results.
- 8.2 Reducing the Council's own emissions and meeting the ambitious target of achieving net zero by 2030 will always be the main priority as it is where the most influence is. Measures for achieving this target will be included in each year's action plan.
- 8.3 Borough-wide emissions reduction initiatives will be agreed annually as part of the annual reporting process and will take account of factors such as:
- Potential for carbon savings;
 - Impact;
 - Cost;
 - Achievability, including ability to control or influence;
 - Co-benefits, and links to delivery of other aspects of the corporate plan;
 - Opportunities for accessing external funding or partnership working.
 - Emerging legislation changes and technologies
- 8.4 We are proposing that the next action plan concentrates on the following additional priorities:

WHAT?	WHY?	HOW?
<p>The Way We Live, and zeroing in on domestic energy,</p>	<p>Most in-boundary emissions come from buildings (78%) with around 12% of building emissions coming from residential buildings³.</p> <p>A focus on domestic energy provides opportunities to reduce domestic emissions and supports work taking place to respond to the cost-of-living crisis which has, in part, been fuelled by the volatility in the energy markets. A warm home can eliminate mould and be healthier for people with health issues. It has also been linked to the ability to do school homework more effectively.</p> <p>The Council can help to ensure that our residents benefit from external, energy efficiency funding streams.</p>	<p>The Council can help to ensure that our residents benefit from external, energy efficiency funding streams</p> <p>Strategically maximise funding opportunities</p> <p>Add capacity by using funding to employ an energy officer.</p> <p>Support a comprehensive engagement programme with partners.</p> <p>Secure funding for Social Housing energy improvements.</p> <p>Ensure privately rented properties are compliant with the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES)</p> <p>Work with external partners.</p> <p>Develop a Local Area Energy Plan</p>
<p>The Way We Travel, and zeroing in on increasing the use of Electric Vehicles;</p>	<p>Around 9% of in-boundary emissions come from on-road transport⁴. The Council is not the transport authority but can play an active role in encouraging people to move to lower emission forms of transport.</p> <p>The Council can help to ensure that our residents benefit from external funding streams aimed at increasing the uptake of</p>	<p>Move More is a joint agency programme to encourage more journeys by walking.</p> <p>Active travel paths are being developed to improve networks and safe walking routes.</p> <p>Derbyshire County Council have funding to delivery</p>

³ Scatter Cities Inventory 2019

⁴ Scatter Cities Inventory

	electric vehicles and encourage adopting active travel habits .	electric vehicle charging infrastructure for residents. We are supporting the roll out.
The Way We Look After Our Environment	<p>Nature based solutions can support climate change mitigation and adaption, and deliver co-benefits connected with water management; urban regeneration; social cohesion; economic opportunities and green jobs; green space management, air quality, and public health and well-being.</p> <p>Many of these co-benefits have strong links to other areas of Council responsibility including economic and physical regeneration, management of our parks and open spaces, pollution control, and sport and physical activity.</p> <p>The Council can use its land management function to support this, planning process to futureproof protecting the landscape and working with communities to engage, protect and develop new and existing habitats and green spaces.</p>	<p>Plan for Nature</p> <p>Nature Walks</p> <p>Develop an engagement programmes accessible to all - Wilder High Peak</p> <p>Propose a Nature Declaration</p> <p>Internal working group cross departmental at project officer level.</p> <p>Continue the Climate and Nature Community Fund supporting projects.</p> <p>Continue to work with community groups through the Biodiversity Network</p> <p>Enhance our parks and opens spaces through the Park Strategy</p>
The Way We Can Help Change to Occur, spotlighting community engagement.	Local authorities collectively ⁵ have powers or influence over roughly a third of emissions in their local areas and UK100 estimate that local authorities are responsible for around 6% of emissions. Our Climate Change Plan recognises that more than half of the emissions cuts needed rely on people and businesses taking up low-carbon solutions. It is therefore crucial that we continue to encourage our residents, businesses, suppliers and visitors, to reduce	<p>Sustainability procurement will influence the supply chain and embed sustainability in our procurement decisions.</p> <p>Community Climate and Nature Fund will continue to support groups.</p> <p>Partnership working to support and mutually benefit.</p> <p>Use active community</p>

	their own carbon footprints.	groups, business forums, strategic partners to engage and leverage action and change.
The Way We Work	<p>The Council can influence carbon emissions of its own operations and service provision.</p> <p>There is scope within how the council uses and powers buildings, fleet and how staff, services and contractors operate to reduce emissions and improve biodiversity.</p> <p>The Council can influence suppliers and contracts through the new Sustainable Procurement Policy and push climate change up the supply change, leading by example.</p> <p>Working better with the community, stakeholders and other councils, accelerates the breadth, reach and pace of delivery of initiatives.</p>	<p>All committee reports have climate change, sustainability and biodiversity and nature on the implications which should be scrutinised.</p> <p>Induction to Climate Change Working Group on how to scrutinise reports using doughnut economic principles.</p> <p>Local Plan Review – opportunity to gather evidence to influence decisions Agile working, remote meetings</p> <p>Include Climate Change and nature considerations in all decisions</p>

- 8.5 A detailed action plan will be developed to ensure that the climate change action support broader council priorities wherever possible. We aim to bring the plan before the Executive in autumn 2024. Current actions will continue to be delivered and this does not represent a pause in activity.
- 8.6 The nature (or biodiversity) crisis links to, but is separate from, the climate change crisis. The IPBES (Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services) has identified five key drivers of biodiversity loss: climate change; changes in land and sea use; direct exploitation of natural resources; pollution; and invasion of alien species.
- 8.7 We know that 41% of wild species are in decline nationally and that 15% face extinction and that global wildlife populations have declined by 69% on average since 1970⁶. In response, the Council is proposing to adopt a Nature Declaration and implement the Plan for Nature in 2024.

⁶ Living Planet Report 2022, produced by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and the Zoological Society of London. <https://livingplanet.panda.org/en-GB/>

- 8.8 The Plan for Nature is currently being finalised and will be brought forward for Councillors' consideration shortly. The Plan is intended to guide borough council actions to halt and reverse the decline of the natural world across the authority area and will:
- draw together data on the current state of nature within High Peak
 - offer recommendations on how and where conservation efforts should be prioritised;
 - help the Council to respond to the forthcoming biodiversity net gain requirement that applies from January 2024 for developments in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (unless exempt) and to small sites from April 2024; and
 - complement our Climate Change Strategy with climate actions being implemented in a biodiversity-conscious way where practicable with an adoption of a "Right Action, Right Place" framework to maximise positive biodiversity benefits⁷.
- 8.9 Going forward, we propose to report on the delivery of "The Way We Look After Our Environment" aspect of the Climate Change Strategy as part of the overall reporting on delivery of the Plan for Nature. This should provide a simpler delivery and reporting structure, ensure that that both climate change and nature recovery are given adequate consideration, whilst recognising that there are complementary, win-win solutions for both the climate and nature crises.

⁷Courtney E. Gorman, Andrew Torsney, Aoibheann Gaughran, Caroline M. McKeon, Catherine A. Farrell, Cian White, Ian Donohue, Jane C. Stout, Yvonne M. Buckley, Reconciling climate action with the need for biodiversity protection, restoration and rehabilitation, Science of The Total Environment, Volume 857, Part 1, 2023,