

Climate Emergency Action Plan

Test Valley Borough Council

2021 Update

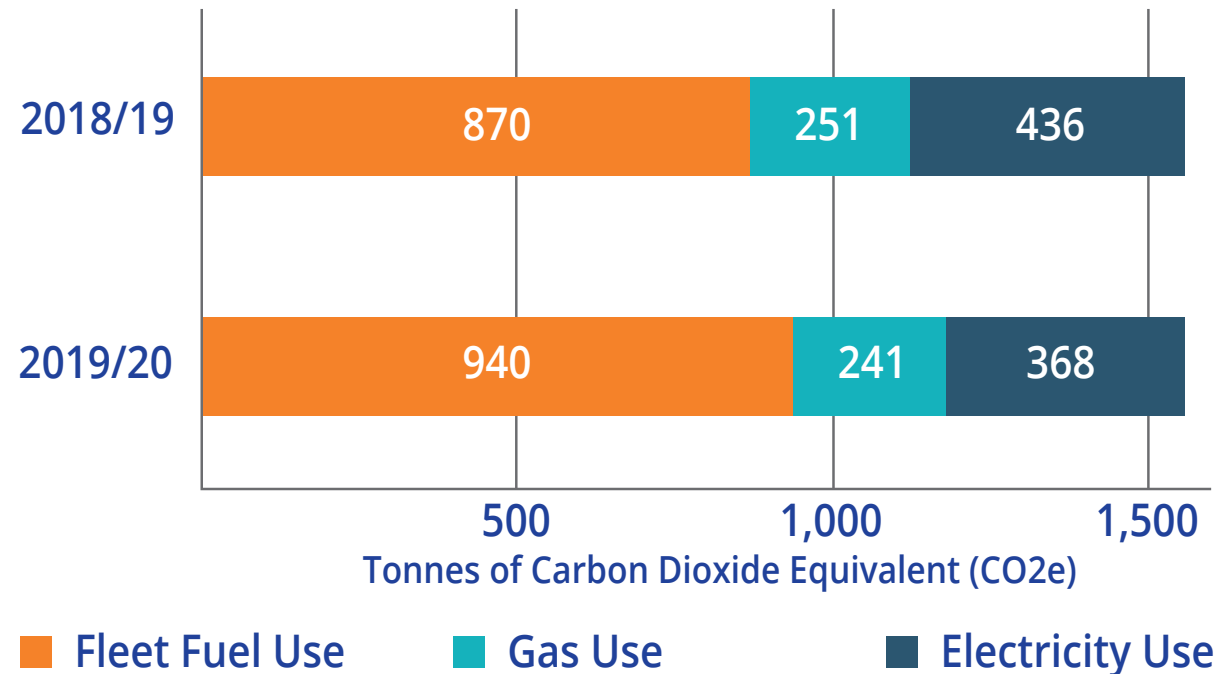


Introduction

The Council declared a climate emergency in September 2019 and committed to 'investigate clear and effective options to become a carbon neutral organisation'. In June 2020 we approved our [Climate Emergency Action Plan](#), recognising that it would need to be kept under review to reflect changing circumstances and opportunities.

This document provides an update on what has happened since the Action Plan was approved. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee gets formal updates every 6 months and the papers are available on the [Council's website](#).

Council's Greenhouse Gas Emissions



The Climate Emergency Action Plan set out our approach to calculating the Council's greenhouse gas emissions. This includes the energy (gas and electricity) used by the buildings we own and operate, as well as the fuel used in running our fleet vehicles and machinery (e.g. for managing green spaces).

There was an increase in our greenhouse gas emissions of about 0.5% between 2018/19 and 2019/20. The graph indicates the split in emissions between gas, electricity and fuel. The change is largely due to an increase in the fleet fuel usage. We are collecting recycling

and waste material from a growing number of homes, and managing additional open spaces, which contributes to increased fuel use. We also took on the collection of glass recycling in August 2019, which was previously provided by another organisation. If we hadn't taken on this service, our emissions would have reduced by approximately 2%.

It is important to recognise that changes in the facilities and services we provide can influence overall emissions both positively and negatively. This helps inform our approach to actions to work towards carbon neutrality.

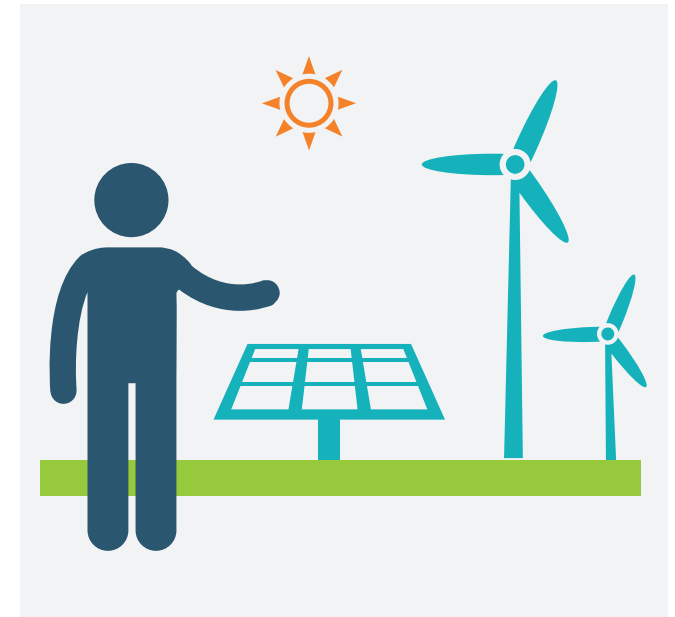
Updates on Actions within the Climate Emergency Action Plan

The Climate Emergency Action Plan includes a number of themes to group the actions together. Updates on some of these actions are set out below, along with additional items that were not identified within the Action Plan. The Covid-19 pandemic has influenced the delivery of actions, with some moving forward quicker than anticipated while introducing challenges for the delivery of others.



Corporate action

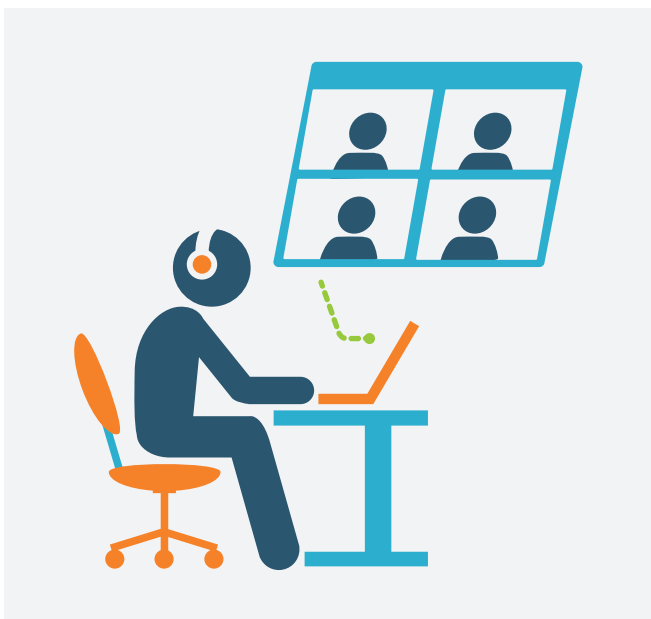
- A number of recent strategies have taken account of climate change, including the Covid-19 Recovery Strategy, Green Spaces Strategy, and Interim Economic Development Strategy
- Ensuring the annual plan prepared for each Council Service (department) includes consideration of climate change



Property and energy

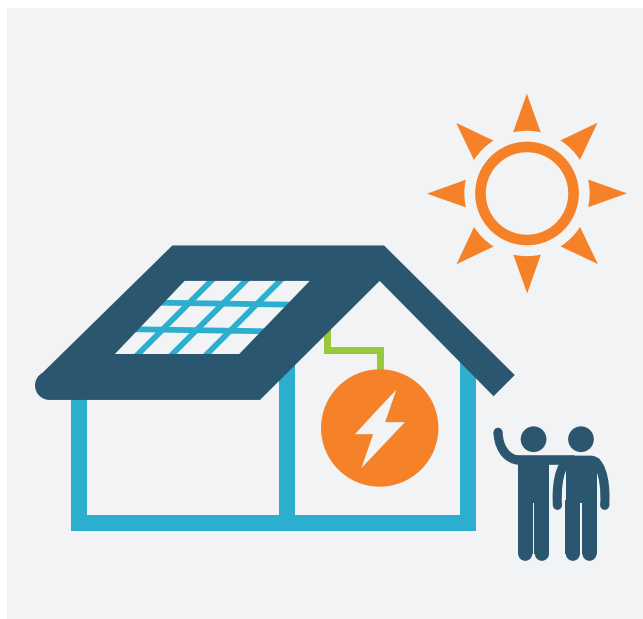
- Lower energy-consuming lighting has been installed at the Chantry Centre car park in Andover
- Replacement of boilers and heating controls at the Council's Beech Hurst office
- The Council's energy supply is now bought from a Renewable Energy Guarantee of Origins (REGO)¹ backed scheme

¹ More information is available at: <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/environmental-programmes/rego/about-rego-scheme>



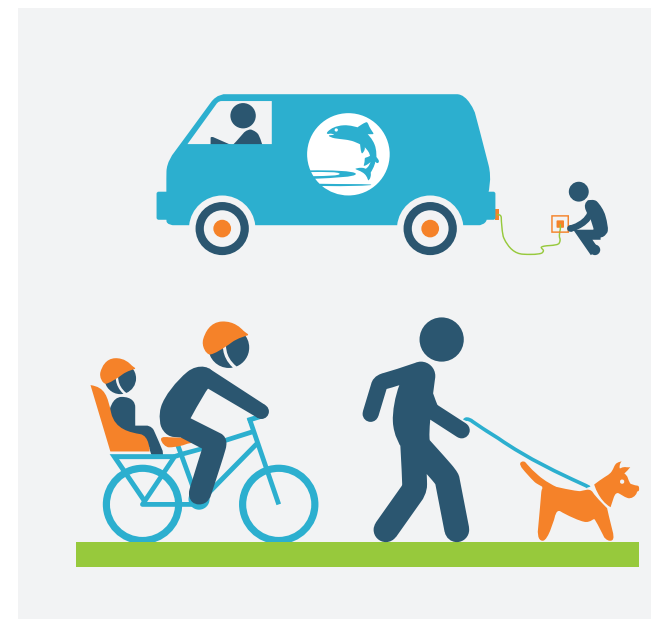
Smarter working and use of technology

- Increased virtual meetings due to the Covid-19 pandemic
- Reductions in printing - in December 2019 the Council printed approximately 147,900 pages, while in December 2020 it was approximately 77,250 pages
- Since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, we have seen approximately an 10-15% increase in customer contacts via our online, self-serve methods



Housing, development and infrastructure

- Sharing information (including via the website) about grants and schemes available to residents to help improve their homes, including energy performance
- A study on renewable and low carbon energy potential within the Borough has been completed, this will help the Council in preparing future planning policy through the next Local Plan



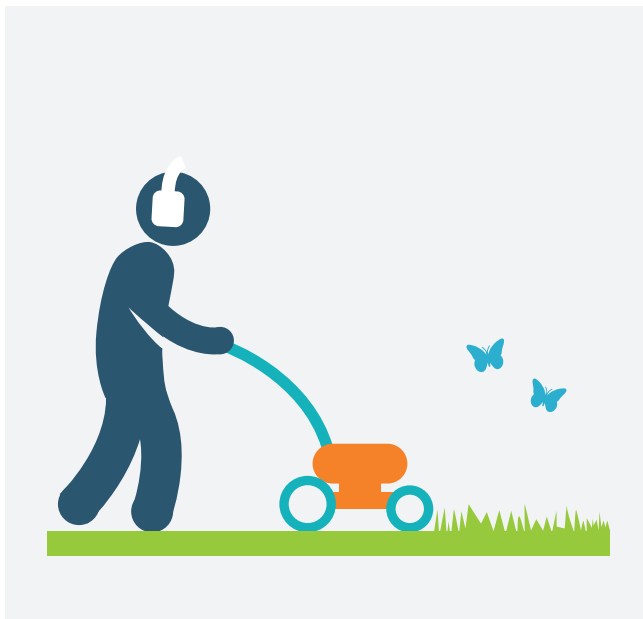
Transport, travel and plant

- 3 waste collection vehicles with electric (rather than diesel fuelled) bin lifts are in operation, with each estimated to save approximately 2 tonnes of carbon dioxide per year compared to the diesel alternatives
- Additional electric vans have been ordered to replace existing diesel versions – by May 2021 the Council will have 11 full electric vehicles in the fleet
- Working with the [Romsey Future](#) Walking and Cycling work stream to look at implementing walking and cycling routes



Supporting communities and businesses

- We have worked with external organisations to help local businesses access energy audits and secure more than £100,000 in grant funding to deliver low carbon projects
- Conducted a survey with town and parish councils on any local climate change and sustainability initiatives they are undertaking
- Working alongside partners through [Andover Vision](#) to contribute to the planning of the Climate Day of Action



Natural Environment

- Looking at opportunities to change mowing regimes for some of our open spaces to enhance biodiversity and reduce operational carbon emissions
- Working with partners on the Wilder Romsey and Wilder Andover projects

