

Test Valley Borough Council

Climate Emergency Action Plan

Progress Update
May 2023



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 reviewed over time to reflect changing circumstances and opportunities.

This document provides an update on the progress on delivering some of our actions. The council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee receives formal updates twice a year and the papers are available on the [council's website](#).

Council's greenhouse gas emissions

The Climate Emergency Action Plan sets out the approach to calculating the council's greenhouse gas emissions. This concentrates on the energy (gas and electricity) used by the majority of buildings we own and operate, as well as the fuel for our fleet vehicles and smaller machinery (e.g. for managing green spaces). The council's greenhouse gas reporting helps inform our approach to actions to work towards carbon neutrality.

We have published our greenhouse gas emissions report for 2021/22. Table 1 provides a summary of the carbon dioxide equivalent¹ (CO₂e) emissions for the different categories we report on.

Table 1: Greenhouse gas emissions for the Council (tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e))

Source	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Fleet and machinery fuel use	1,025	1,066	1,091	1,102
Gas use	251	260	251	335
Electricity use	436	387	275	255
Gross emissions	1,712	1,713	1,617	1,692
Green tariff	-	-	148	227
Solar power export	8	7	6	5
Net emissions	1,704	1,706	1,462	1,460

As can be seen from the above table, the gross reported emissions in 2021/22 were higher than the equivalent position in 2020/21, with the net emissions broadly the same. The higher gross emissions figure for 2021/22 was driven by the change in gas consumption. The reasons for this are likely to include additional buildings in use compared to 2020/21 with the easing of coronavirus restrictions, increased ventilation requirements because of the pandemic (increasing demand for heating) and potentially lower occupancy rates of some sites causing lower internal heat gains.

¹ This unit of measurement takes account of a number of different greenhouse gases based on the warming potential of each compared to one unit of carbon dioxide.

Emissions within the borough of Test Valley

The government publishes data on greenhouse gas emissions by local authority area. This does not cover all emissions but is a useful source of information. The most recent figures are for 2020. Table 2 shows the emissions by the main categories that are reported on. The figures for 2020 were affected by the coronavirus pandemic, this is most obvious in the transport related emissions.

In order to compare the data to other areas, the emissions per person can be used. In 2020, the emissions in Test Valley were 6.1 tonnes CO_{2e} per person, compared to 4.5 tonnes for Hampshire, and 5.1 tonnes for England. The higher figure for Test Valley is influenced by the rural nature of the borough.



Table 2: Greenhouse gas emissions in Test Valley Borough (kilotonnes CO_{2e})²

Category	2018	2019	2020
Industry	88.2	80.1	73.1
Commercial	65.1	56.3	50.9
Public Sector	24.9	23.0	21.6
Domestic	198.4	188.0	189.5
Transport	456.5	452.0	357.7
Land use, land use change and forestry net emissions	-27.9	-28.5	-28.3
Agriculture	93.1	93.9	89.1
Waste Management	17.1	16.9	16.3
Total	915.4	881.7	769.9

² UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions national statistics: 2005-2020, Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, 2022 (using full dataset).

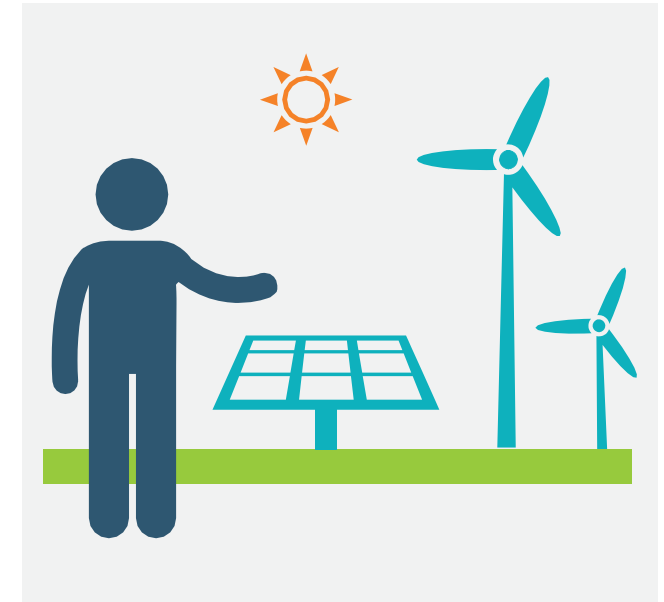
Updates on actions within the Climate Emergency Action Plan

The Climate Emergency Action Plan includes seven themes to group the 57 actions together. Updates on some of these actions are set out below, along with additional items that were not identified within the Action Plan.



Corporate action

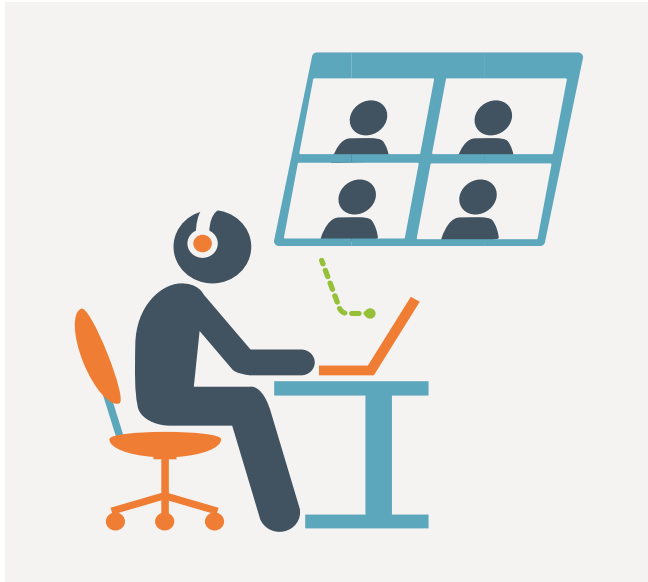
- Following extensive public engagement and evidence gathering, the new corporate plan reflects the importance people place on the natural environment and addressing climate change. The corporate plan will provide the framework for ensuring that the Climate Emergency Action Plan is embedded in service delivery and decision making.
- Continuing to work with partners to share information and learning in relation to the climate emergency, as well as to promote scheme being led by others (such as Solar Together Hampshire).



Property and energy

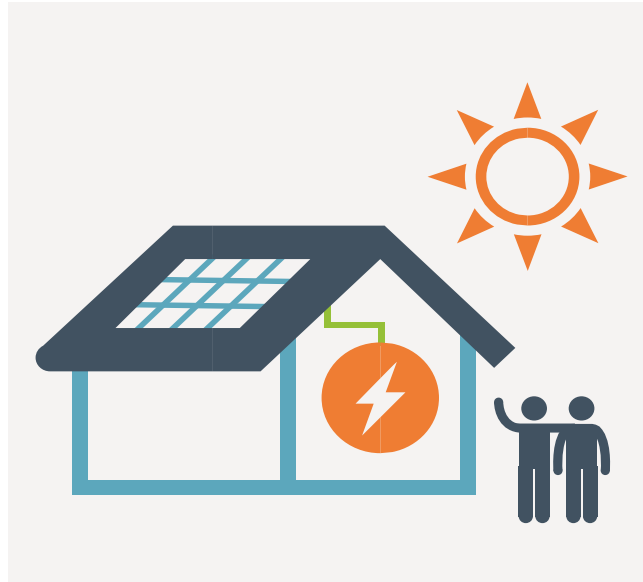
- We have secured funding to help us improve the energy performance and move to a heating system powered by low carbon energy at Bourne House Depot in Romsey.
- The Council's electricity supply continues to be a green tariff bought from a Renewable Energy Guarantee of Origins (REGO)³ backed scheme.

³ More information is available at:
<https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/environmental-and-social-schemes/renewable-energy-guarantees-origin-rego>



Smarter working and use of technology

- More people are using e-billing for Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates, with about 26% and 42% using e-billing respectively. This is helping us to save paper.
- We are continuing to see about 50% of customer contacts via our online, self-serve methods.



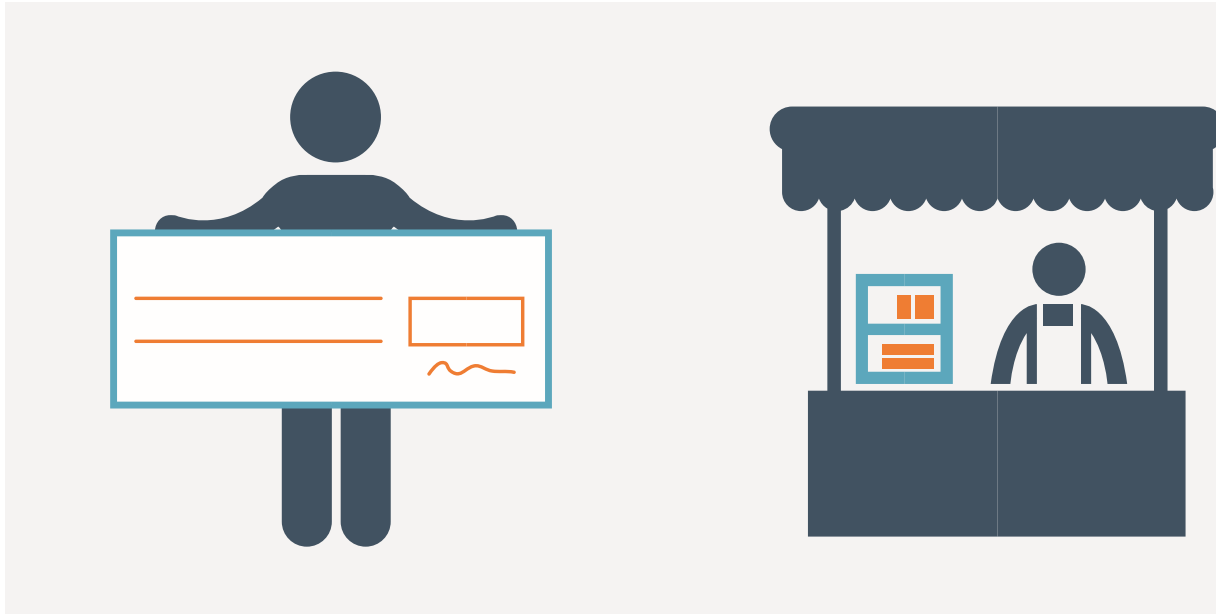
Housing, development and infrastructure

- We have been working with partners to enable fuel poor households living in energy inefficient homes to access funding to improve the comfort of their home. We will continue to look for additional funding to support more households.



Transport, travel and plant

- Our fleet of vehicles includes 11 electric vehicles, with more on order to replace diesel vehicles.
- In April 2023, we switched the fuel used to run most of our fleet vehicles – this could reduce the associated carbon emissions by about 95%.
- We continue to work with Hampshire County Council on their production of Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans, which indicate where investment is needed to improve the opportunities for walking and cycling in the area.
- We approved a bid for funding for a project by Romsey Future to enable greater accessibility for walking and cycling in the Woodley area of the town.



Supporting communities and businesses

- We have updated guidance for council community grants to highlight that climate change and environmental projects are eligible. We have also supported some projects including to improve the energy efficiency of buildings.
- We have secured £100,000 to deliver a project for community energy efficiency and decarbonisation and a further £140,000 to help local rural land-based business to reduce their carbon footprint. These schemes will be delivered over the next two years.
- We have worked alongside partners to deliver or participate in a number of events for communities and businesses, including Andover Vision's second Climate Day of Action.



• Natural Environment

- 2022 was the second year of our urban meadow initiative, which covered over 15 hectares of land, including some highway verges. The change in mowing regime is intended to enhance biodiversity and reduce operational carbon emissions.
- Over the last two planting seasons we have planted over 22,800 trees. As part of this, Andover Trees United led 1,500 trees being planted by 1,500 school children at Bury Hill.
- We continue to work with a range of partners, such as The Anton River Conservation Association (TARCA), Friends of the Parks, and Tadburn Conservation Volunteers, to conduct conservation related tasks.

