

Test Valley Borough Council

Climate Emergency Action Plan

Progress Update
2024



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 progress delivering on our actions.

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 most 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 publish our greenhouse gas emissions each year, with the latest information for 2023/24. Table 1 provides a summary of the carbon dioxide equivalent¹ (CO_{2e}) emissions for the different categories we report on. This shows a 60% reduction in gross emissions since 2018/19, and an 68% reduction in net emissions over the same period.

Table 1: Greenhouse gas emissions for the council (tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO_{2e}))

Source	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Fleet and machinery fuel use	1,025	1,067	1,090	1,102	1,090	108
Gas use	251	260	251	329	313	308
Electricity use	434	385	273	248	234	245
Gross emissions	1,710	1,712	1,615	1,679	1,637	660
Green tariff	n/a	n/a	147	217	191	195
Solar power export	8	7	6	5	2	4
Net emissions	1,702	1,705	1,462	1,457	1,444	461

As can be seen, there has been a significant reduction in the reported emissions associated with the fleet and machinery fuel usage between 2022/23 and 2023/24. This is a result of switching to Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) fuel for the majority of our vehicles.

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 information is for 2022. Table 2 shows how the emissions have changed in recent years, with the coronavirus pandemic having an impact.

Between 2021 and 2022, it is indicated that emissions reduced by about 4%, with the rate of change varying between the categories. For example, transport emissions increased by just under 2% (mainly associated with road based transport on the sections of motorway in the borough), while domestic emissions went down by just over 10%. National scale analysis suggests that warmer temperatures in 2022 compared to 2021 are likely to have resulted in less energy being used to heat homes, which was considered to be the main driver for national reductions in emissions from the domestic energy sector.



Between 2005 and 2022, this data shows that emissions in Test Valley reduced by about a third. Again, the level of change varied between the different sources, with about a 44% reduction in domestic emissions and a 16% reduction in transport emissions. The national decarbonisation of power supplies will have played a role in the change in emissions

Table 2: Greenhouse gas emissions in Test Valley borough (kilotonnes CO₂e)²

Category	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Industry	55.1	52.1	50.9	58.9	55.4
Commercial	95.9	79.5	62.9	69.9	62.0
Public Sector	21.5	19.7	21.1	21.8	19.1
Domestic	201.9	192.8	191.2	192.7	171.8
Transport	446.8	445.1	352.6	378.4	385.3
Land use, land use change and forestry net emissions	-34.9	-35.7	-36.0	-34.3	-33.8
Agriculture	96.0	100.9	96.7	97.3	95.9
Waste	28.3	23.8	19.5	23.3	17.7
Total	910.7	878.2	758.9	808.1	773.3

² UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions statistics: 2005 – 2022, Department for Energy Security & Net Zero, 2024.

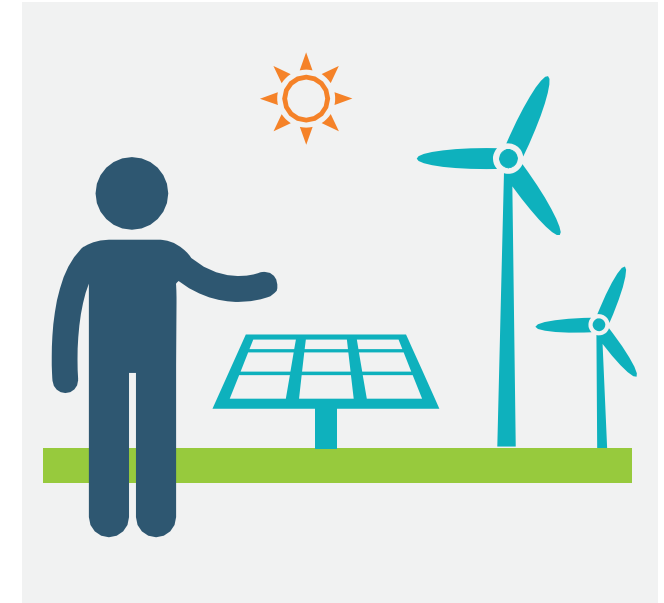
Updates on actions within the Climate Emergency Action Plan

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.



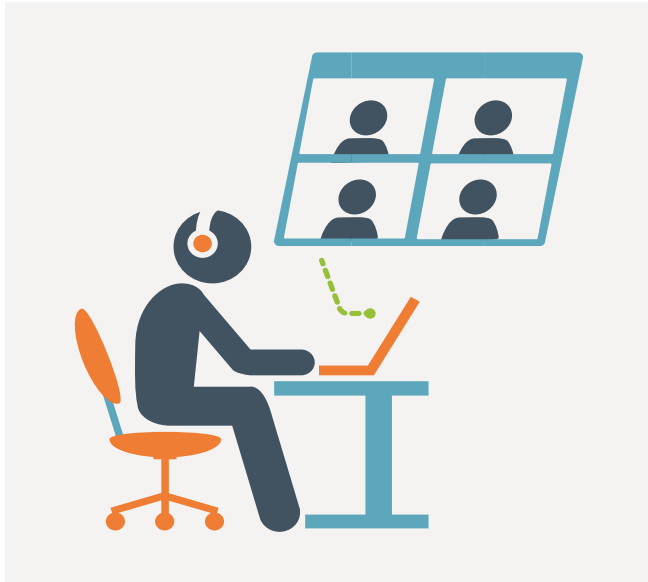
Corporate action

- The Climate Emergency Working Group has been established. This is made up of seven cross-party councillors, with a purpose of investigating and recommending appropriate approaches on climate change, and helping to monitor the council's progress.
- Working on updating the council's Climate Emergency Action Plan.



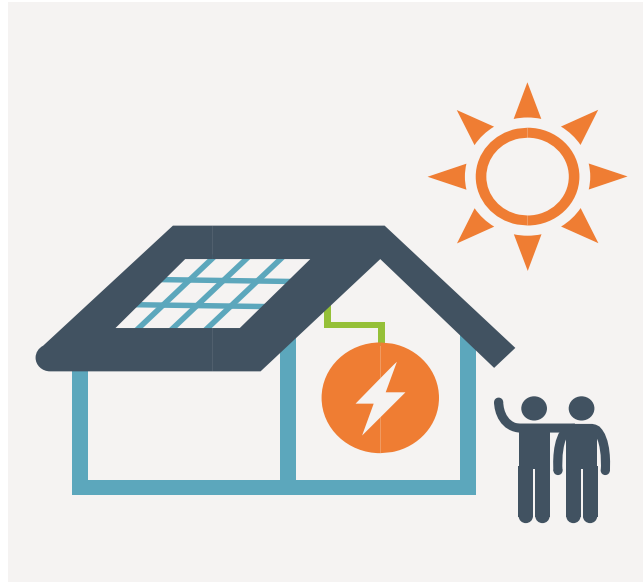
Property and energy

- In March 2023, we completed a decarbonisation project at our Bourne House depot in Romsey, this included improving insulation, installing solar panels on the roof and changing the heating to low carbon systems.
- Consultants have been commissioned to help us understand the potential for heat networks in the borough.



Smarter working and use of technology

- Committee meetings are now available to listen to a live audio stream, with recordings also available.
- The Green Test Valley newsletter continues to be issued providing updates and information on the environment, countryside, climate and more, to those who have signed up to the bulletin.



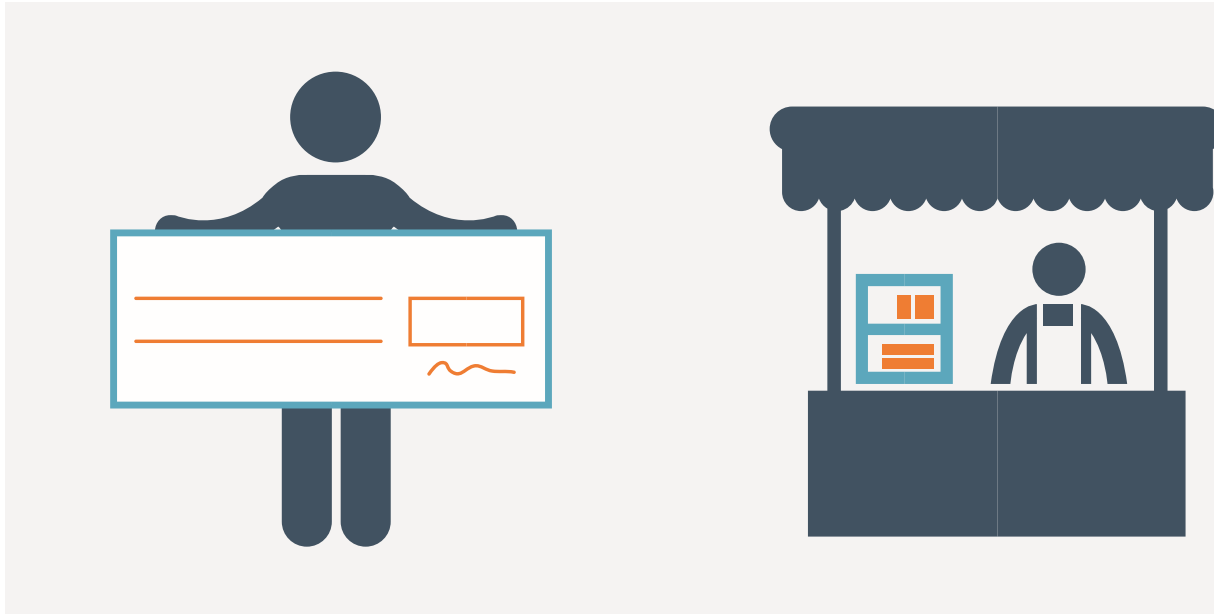
Housing, development and infrastructure

- The council has approved a [Net Zero Carbon Advice Note](#) to provide guidance on how to achieve net zero for homes (new build and retrofit).
- Continued to work with partners to enable fuel poor households living in inefficient properties to access funding to improve the comfort of their homes.



Transport, travel and plant

- In April 2023, we switched the fuel used to run most of our fleet vehicles, which has resulted in a reduction in the direct emissions. In addition, there are 15 electric vehicles in our fleet.
- Continuing to work with Hampshire County Council in relation to active and sustainable travel matters. This includes engagement on the preparation of a Local Walking and Cycling Strategy for northern Test Valley.



Supporting communities and businesses

- We have awarded grants to communities and businesses to help them to save energy and reduce their carbon footprint. This has included grants through the Community Asset Fund to improve energy efficiency of community buildings.
- The council is working with IncuHive to provide advice to businesses as part of the Rural Net Zero Business Support Service, which runs until March 2025. Additionally, funding has been [awarded to two farms](#) for a pilot scheme in relation to the use of nutrients.



• Natural Environment

- Over the last three planting seasons, which have planted about 33,300 trees. This has been undertaken with support from volunteers.
- We have further increased the area of green space that are being managed as urban meadows.

