St Albans City & District Council

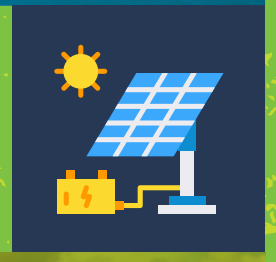
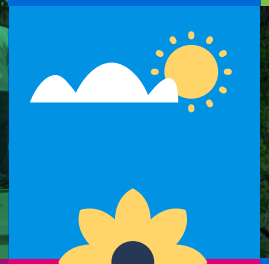


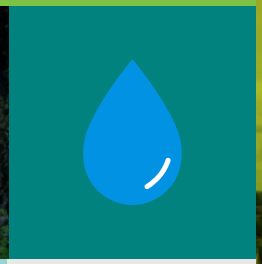




Sustainability and Climate Crisis Strategy


Our Phase 1 approach to tackle the climate crisis and create a more sustainable District (2020-2023)







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Joint statement from St Albans District political party group leaders

On 10 July 2019 we as a Council voted unanimously to declare a Climate Emergency. We all recognise, such is the gravity and severity of the climate crisis we are now facing, that the only way to avoid irreversible and catastrophic damage to our natural world is to work together. This crisis is one that affects us, transcending political lines. All parties, council officers, businesses and residents must all do their part and work together to help tackle the greatest challenge we have ever faced.

The stakes could not be higher. The devastating wildfires that raged across Australia, South America and the USA and the floods in Bangladesh, show us this all too well. Locally, water levels in the River Ver and lakes make clear the impact of climate change on our District.

In recognition of the urgency of the situation, and as a sign of our determination to work towards a sustainable future, this plan sets out how St Albans City and District Council aims to eliminate our own emissions, and work together to decarbonise our District by 2030, twenty years in advance of the government's current net zero target of 2050. We know that this is ambitious. Significant investments and changes in organisational culture from the way we manage our buildings, deliver high quality services and procure our products will be required. However, we must not also forget that this challenge, great though it undoubtedly is, offers an exciting opportunity to help transform our District for the better, helping to deliver economic and public health benefits, creating 'green' jobs, and reducing spending on energy.

We cannot do this alone. As a Council, we recognise that the total support of local businesses, schools, community and faith groups and residents is vital to our success. By working collaboratively, consulting and listening to our residents and business, we will strive to meet our objectives to achieve positive outcomes across the entire District.

We also call on local people to help work with us to find ways to reduce our impact on the environment, never underestimating the power that small changes we can all make can have on protecting the natural world.

If we work together with the determination that a challenge of this scale must be met with, then we are confident we can achieve substantial long-term benefits to us a council, the District and the wider environment.

Cllr Grover (Green Party)

Cllr Maynard (Conservative Party)

Cllr Pakenham (Labour Party)

Cllr White (Liberal Democrats)

Foreword from the Chief Executive

In July 2019 St Albans City and District Council voted unanimously to declare a Climate Emergency and do everything we can to reduce St Albans District carbon emissions to net zero by 2030. Climate change is already happening; we can no longer continue 'business as usual'.

In May 2019 the UK parliament became the first in the world to declare a climate emergency. The government has committed to reducing emissions to net zero by 2050. As a country we will all need to work together with urgency, to decarbonise our energy and transport systems by using cleaner and greener approaches. The City and District of St Albans will play its part in this transition, enabling this to happen, while seizing the opportunities that result in green jobs, more efficient use of energy, cleaner air and healthier transport.

None of us could have expected that something like Covid 19 would come along, as we prepared this strategy, and challenge us to rethink the way we go about our lives. Despite all the difficulties, people everywhere commented on how nice it was to have clean air, peaceful streets, to hear the birds and to see wildlife come home again. Our intention is to turn these events into opportunities for dramatic positive change. We don't want to go back to normal, we want to create a better, cleaner, healthier future.

This document is our plan of action to tackle the immense task of eliminating our own emissions by 2030, while also doing everything we can to help the wider District do the same. The actions in this strategy involve every Council department. Cultural change will be needed at every level to put it into action. This strategy overarches all the other Council priorities, including increasing the quantity and quality of social housing, supporting our communities and becoming a business-friendly Council. It builds on existing initiatives and covers sustainable development in the widest sense, tackling air quality, water and biodiversity as well as climate change.

The Council has already cut emissions from our offices and contracted services by nearly 42% since 2008. To meet our objective of releasing net zero emissions by 2030 we will need to reduce emissions from our energy and transport use by 348 tonnes of CO_2 equivalent every year. These changes will require significant initial investment and radical changes to the way we manage our buildings, deliver services, procure products and services. In the long-term these changes will bring substantial efficiencies and benefits to the local and global environment.

We hope that local people, businesses and organisations will work with us to find ways to reduce their impact on the environment, whether that is how we all travel; how we heat our homes; what food we choose to eat; or how we deal with our waste.

As a Council we will do all we can to support our community to take action and lead the way to a more sustainable district.

Amanda Foley, Chief Executive

Introduction

The news is filled with disturbing stories of an environment polluted in the most remote areas due to human activities. We hear about plastics in the oceans, declining air quality, habitat loss and species extinction. Every aspect of our lives is dependent upon the health of the global environment. The air we breathe, the water we drink, the food we eat, the materials that make the products we use, and the energy that powers our homes and businesses all come from this 'natural capital'. It's therefore important that we conserve and sustain the health of our environment.

Sustainability is about ensuring we don't create irreversible impacts, or use so many resources that others in the future suffer at our expense. It's about thinking of the future today and making sure that we protect the health of ourselves and the ecosystems we depend upon. Done well, it can also ensure that our actions are cost effective, delivering economic and public health benefits, creating jobs, and cutting spending on energy.

As a Council we recognise that we have an important part to play in acting on climate change and becoming more sustainable through our role as community leader, service provider and estate manager. We want to do as much as we can to treasure our environment and community and ensure resilience in the face of a changing world.

There is no denying that if we are to create a new more sustainable way of living, significant changes will be needed in the way we travel, use energy and consume materials and food.

The Sustainability and Climate Crisis Action Plan (Appendix 1) sets out all the actions we have committed to taking that will reduce overall greenhouse gas emissions, save energy and water, minimise waste and pollution and enhance local habitats and green space. This is followed by our Climate Crisis Action Plan (Appendix 2) which focuses only on those specific actions that will begin reducing our measured greenhouse gas emissions associated with energy and transport.

We are focusing our attention on the following key areas of work:

Monitoring and review process

This plan is intended to be a dynamic, working document. To keep you up to date we will provide an annual update on our **Sustainability and Climate Crisis webpage**. A full revision of this plan will take place in 2023, this will ensure our plan is current.

Progress towards the commitments in this Strategy will be monitored regularly via the Climate Crisis Response Working Group (CCRWG) and the Community, Environment and Sport Scrutiny Committee (CESSC). The CCRWG may seek further discussion if it has concerns about a project's or policy's consistency with this plan or the objective of achieving net zero by 2030.

People power - we are all in this together

It is our hope that local businesses, organisations, schools, groups and residents will recognise the scale of the task required and support this strategy by developing their own plans and taking actions to improve the sustainability of their day-to-day activities. We invite you to email us a link to your own sustainability plans so that we can learn about what you are doing to help create the healthy, low carbon and sustainable future we all aspire to. We will list your organisation or group as an active participant and supporter on our **Sustainability and Climate Crisis webpage**. We have provided guidance on how to reduce your own impacts on our **Environment and Sustainability webpages**.

How to get involved and learn more:

Climate Crisis Response Working Group: This cross-party working group feeds into, and scrutinises, the Council's overall approach to the Climate Emergency. This evening meeting is open to members of the public to attend and people may submit questions in advance. Individuals may, on occasion, be invited to sit on the Working Group and participate in discussion.

Sustainability Officers Meetings: These meetings are for sustainability professionals working within organisations in St Albans. The meeting provides an opportunity to share experience, best practice, identify problems and solutions.

Quarterly Sustainability Newsletter: We publish a quarterly electronic newsletter which you can subscribe to through your **MyStAlbans account.**

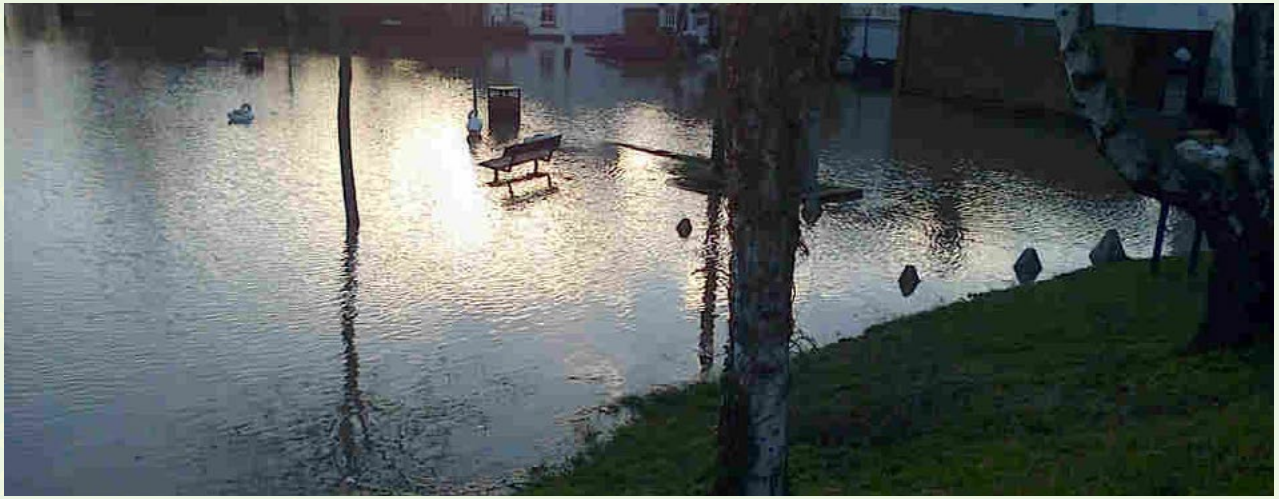
Join a group: There is a wide range of groups getting together in the District to learn about and take action on environmental issues. For a list of groups you can get involved in, please visit our **Getting Involved webpage**.

We are all in this together and we believe that with concerted targeted action, we can make the changes necessary to avoid run-away climate change and minimise the impacts of human activities on our environment, both for ourselves and for the natural world.

Getting to Net Zero

Climate Change

Climate change is one of the most significant challenges facing us today. **Extensive scientific information** tells us that human activities are the primary cause. Burning fossil fuels (for energy and transport), and releasing gases into the atmosphere from refrigeration, chemical processes and landfill sites is a large part of the problem.



What is Net Zero?

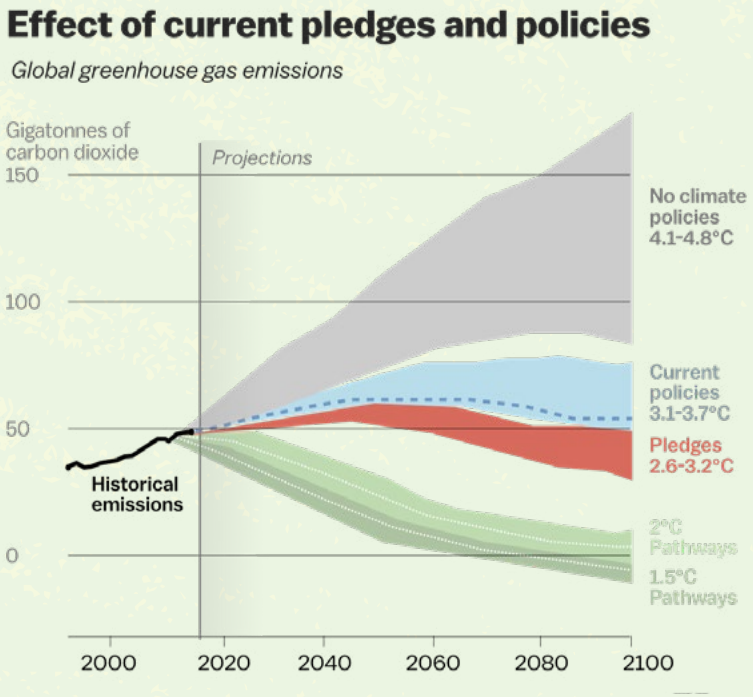
Achieving 'net zero' means there is a balance between the emissions produced and the emissions taken out of the atmosphere. Under a net zero emissions scenario we reduce emissions into the atmosphere as far as reasonably and practically possible and then remove enough emissions from the atmosphere by natural means (e.g. tree planting) or engineered means (e.g. carbon sequestration) to balance out the residual emissions and achieve 'net zero'.

Net Zero emissions is more realistic than a gross zero target as it allows for some residual emissions from some sectors where there is currently no feasible alternative to fossil fuels.

Global temperatures have increased by around 1.1C since the late 19th century, and continue to **increase by about 0.2C per decade**. UK temperatures are increasing even faster. Nearly half of permanent Arctic sea ice by volume has **melted since 1979**. The main risks from climate change include extreme heat, flooding, sea level rise, effects on food and water supplies, and associated economic and migratory impacts. These are already occurring. For example Met Office scientists found that the probability of extreme weather such as the **UK winter floods in 2013/14** has increased due to climate change.

Limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees

There has been growing political pressure on governments, cities and organisations to act by cutting emissions. The 2018 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) **Special Report on Global warming of 1.5 degrees** says that consistently reducing emissions to reach net zero by around 2050 is needed to prevent the most destructive impacts. The report states that 'climate-related risks to health, livelihoods, food security, water supply, human security, and economic growth are projected to increase with global warming of 1.5C and increase further with 2C'.



Present emissions trends (even with current efforts to cut emissions) put the world on a course towards a temperature rise of 4C by the 2100.

According to the president of the World Bank, "the 4C scenarios are devastating: the inundation of coastal cities; increasing risks for food production potentially leading to higher malnutrition rates; many dry regions becoming dryer, wet regions wetter; unprecedented heat waves in many regions, especially in the tropics; substantially exacerbated water scarcity in many regions; increased frequency of high-intensity tropical cyclones; and irreversible loss of biodiversity, including coral reef systems".

The UK Commitment

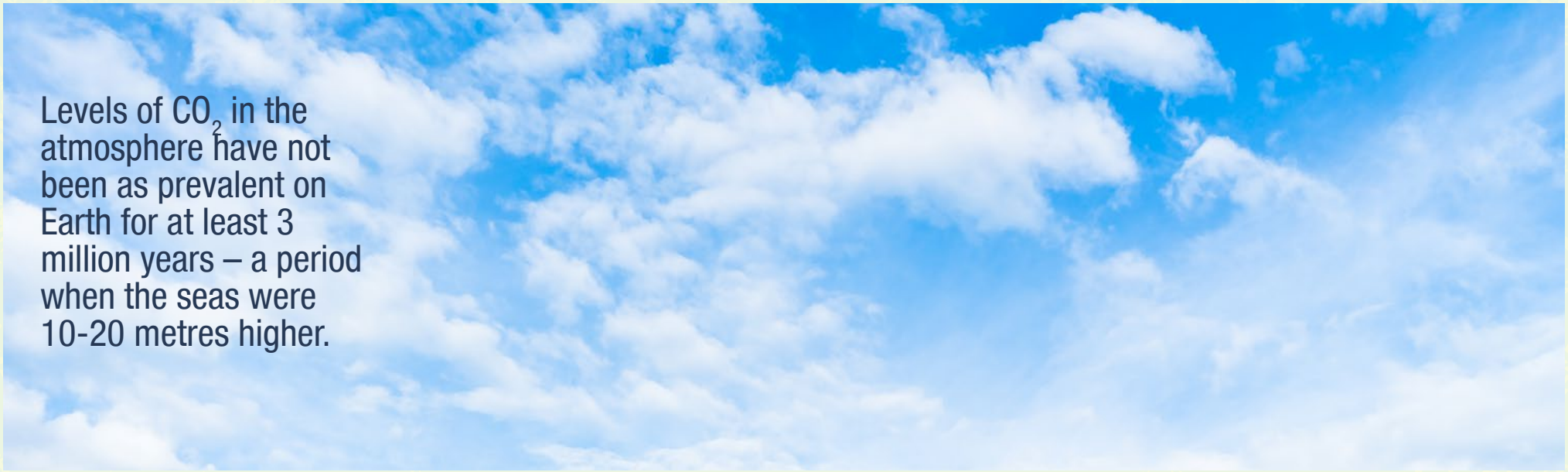
In the UK, the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) sets legally binding science-based carbon budgets and recommends policies and actions to drive change. The CCC estimates that UK emissions will need to be reduced by **at least 3% per year** from now on, and local councils have a vital role to play.

In response to the CCC recommendations the UK has now passed the **Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019** which commits the UK to reducing emissions to net zero by 2050. While details on how the UK plans to reach net-zero emissions remain to be set out, the Government has confirmed that it will, broadly, follow the **CCC's framework**.

Both the costs and benefits of deep decarbonisation are unknowable with any precision. The CCC states that the costs of this decarbonisation are "**unknowable**, because they depend on deeply uncertain outcomes, such as the damages from climate change in the long term, and the evolution of the costs of low-carbon technology over several decades". They also state that achieving net-zero is cost effective and feasible, because the cost of key technologies is likely to fall to a level commensurate with the accepted costs of meeting the original climate change target of 80% reduction by 2050.

The **Green Finance Task Force** estimates that investments in infrastructure to meet the fifth carbon budget (spanning 2028-32) will need to be around 1% of GDP (£22 billion) per year, of which public investment would be about £2.2 billion. It also estimates that approximately 10% of the investment will need to be from public funds. Much of this would be a redirection of, rather than additional, investment. It includes investments in electricity generation (renewables, nuclear, carbon capture and storage) transmission and distribution networks; smart grids (with storage); heat delivery (electric heat pumps, district heating networks or possibly hydrogen-fuelled boilers) to energy-efficient buildings; electric vehicles, using batteries or hydrogen fuel cells, with the associated recharging and refuelling infrastructure; active and public transport infrastructure; and carbon capture and storage (CCS).

The costs of climate changes are likely to be substantially more expensive. **Estimates** suggest that the damage caused by going beyond 1.5C, would cost USD 15-38.5 trillion by 2100 (2.3-3.5% of Gross World Product).



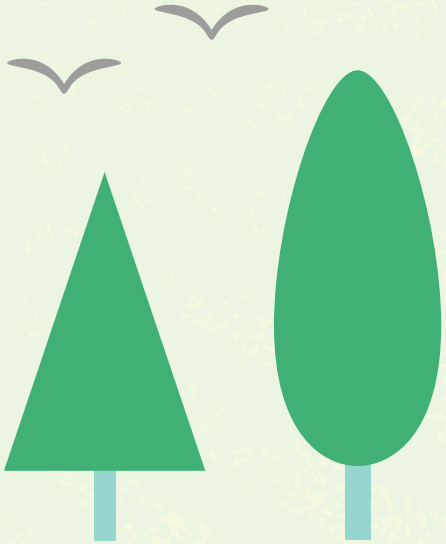
Carbon Offsetting

Carbon offsetting allows individuals and organisations to compensate for any emissions they cannot avoid or reduce, by paying for an equivalent amount of emissions to be removed elsewhere. Emissions savings projects range from planting trees to installing solar panels, often, but not exclusively, in developing countries.

While this approach is positive because it allows polluters to pay for remedying their impacts, there are also complexities which need to be considered. For instance, is the project verified, reliably and permanently absorbing CO_2 from the atmosphere? Is it 'additional', meaning that it wouldn't have happened otherwise? The way to guard against this is (i) to only offset what you cannot reduce, and (ii) to use offsetting schemes that meet strict quality standards such as the 'Gold Standard'.

Offsets which meet Government criteria can be included within the Council's greenhouse gas emissions report. Reductions can be noted as part of the net CO_2 figure. The gross figure would still need to be reported.

Our objective is to focus our efforts primarily on reducing emissions, and use offsetting as a last resort where there is no other means to reduce them.



Capturing Carbon through the Regeneration of Nature

The natural environment, including soils, plants, grass and trees, absorbs carbon from the atmosphere. By allowing more space for nature, we help to balance the impact of human emissions, and help to conserve wildlife. This is vital to stem the mass extinctions that we are currently seeing across the planet.

While tree planting is a positive step, it doesn't provide the level of benefit that occurs when nature is permitted to mature by itself (ecological succession). Tree stocks purchased from abroad bring the risk of pests. There is also the use of peat, plastics (in ties and deer guards) and water, as well as resources for ongoing maintenance. Natural regeneration does not bring these risks.

In contrast, as the land is allowed to 'succeed' from grassland to scrub and then woodland, it will attract and support a huge diversity of wildlife along the way. St John's Wood in Harpenden was open grassland in the 1960s, and in the 50 years since sheep grazing came to an end, has developed naturally into a diverse, attractive and valued oak woodland. In the Lea and Colne valleys, wetlands created through the gravel extraction process during the 1960s have succeeded into diverse willow and alder woodlands purely through seeds falling on damp ground and being left to grow. We see in these examples that natural regeneration works best when humans take a hands-off approach and allow nature to thrive.

So while tree planting is still going to play an important role in offsetting our carbon emissions, natural regeneration, in many instances, might be quicker and more effective.

The area of land required to offset Hertfordshire's emissions through tree planting/natural regeneration.

Corporate Emissions - Where we are as a Council

How do we calculate our emissions?

St Albans City and District Council has been monitoring and reporting on our corporate emissions since 2008/09. Our approach to calculating our emissions is based on the **Government's guidance on energy and carbon reporting**, as this standardises reporting across different sized industries and sectors. Our approach is based on an internationally recognised standard for corporate greenhouse gas accounting from the World Resources Institute and World Business Council for Sustainable Development: the GHG Protocol Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard. It corresponds with national and international voluntary schemes such as the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) 14064-1, CDP, and the Climate Disclosure Standards Board's Climate Change Reporting Framework.

What is included?

Our corporate emissions analysis covers energy consumption from buildings, fuel consumption from business mileage, and energy and fuel consumption by our largest contractors. These contractors are responsible for providing waste collection, grounds maintenance and leisure services on our behalf. Our emissions analysis does not include emissions from water or waste processing, procured materials, staff commuting or refrigerants and air conditioning.

Each type of emission is reported under one of three 'scopes'. The table below sets out the emissions that fall under each scope. It also highlights emissions that are not included.

What greenhouse gases are measured?

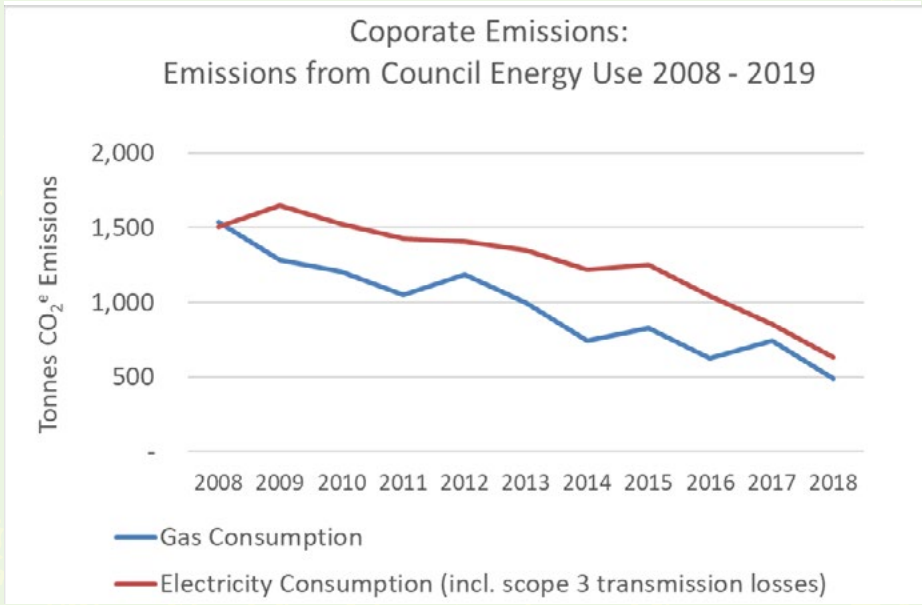
Our calculations cover the six greenhouse gases covered by the Kyoto Protocol: Carbon dioxide (CO_2), Methane (CH_4), Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), Nitrous oxide (N_2O), Perfluorocarbons (PFCs) and Sulphur hexafluoride (SF_6). Our calculations aggregate these greenhouse gas emissions in 'tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO_2^e)'. This standardises all the gases against the 'equivalent warming potential of CO_2'.

	Scope 1 *Direct*	**Scope 2** *Indirect*	**Scope 3** *Other indirect*
Included	Gas used in Council-owned and controlled buildings Fleet (Council-owned) vehicles	Electricity used in Council-owned and controlled buildings or equipment	Business travel in private vehicles and public transport Energy use and business travel of the Council's largest contractors Transmission and distribution of electricity
Excluded	*Fugitive emissions from refrigerants in air conditioning* *Process emissions*		*Water use* *Waste production* *Staff commuting* *Purchased materials* *Well-to-tank of fuels*

Where are we now?

We first set emissions reduction targets in 2008/09, when total emissions from Council buildings, transport and our largest directly subcontracted services were 7,171 tCO_2^e/yr. Since 2008/09 we have steadily reduced emissions from our energy and Council business mileage. In 2018/19, the most recent year for which data is available, total emissions were 4,191 tCO_2. This represents a reduction of 42% in ten years.

Scope		08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19
	Total gross emissions	7,171	7,229	6,701	5,704	6,362	6,063	6,015	6,090	5,395	5,413	4,191
	% change to baseline	-	1%	-7%	-20%	-11%	-15%	-16%	-15%	-25%	-25%	-42%
1	Council gas	1,537	1,283	1,207	1,050	1,188	997	744	826	627	741	487
	Council fleet	11	9	8	7	6	6	8	7	6	7	8
2	Council electricity	1,395	1,531	1,411	1,316	1,307	1,241	1,122	1,153	956	783	584
3	Council business travel	97	69	64	59	51	43	45	42	46	42	31
	Council electricity transmission losses	108	121	114	113	103	106	98	95	86	73	50
	Contractor gas and electricity	1,383	1,616	1,575	1,263	1,457	1,580	1,785	1,472	1,891	1,353	1,055
	Contractor transport	1,113	1,229	1,116	1,121	1,106	784	1,164	946	750	882	608



We haven't achieved these reductions alone. The Carbon impact of electricity has reduced by 48% since 2008/09 due to national action to decarbonise the energy system with nuclear and renewable energy.

To reduce our corporate emissions to net zero by 2030, we need to achieve the following emission reductions:

51% reduction by 2021/22 (on 2008/09 levels)

70% reduction by 2024/25 (on 2008/09 levels)

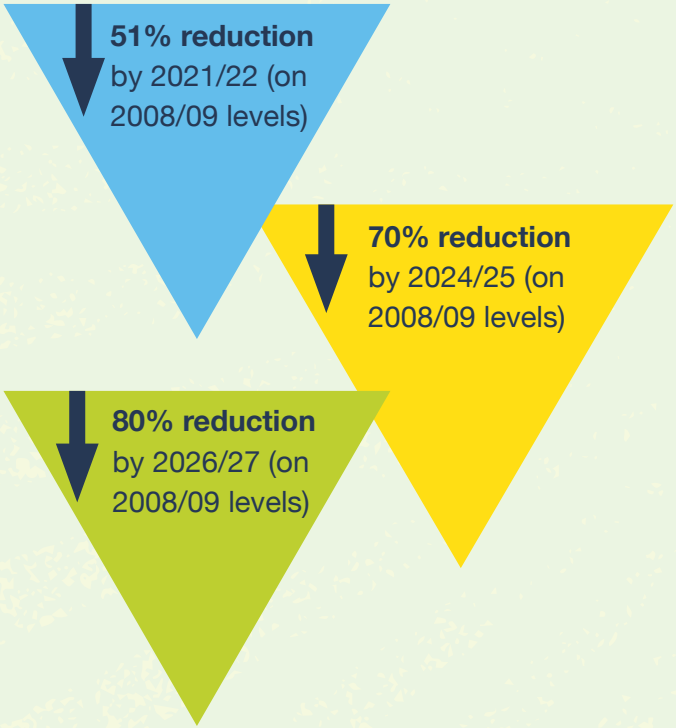
80% reduction by 2026/27 (on 2008/09 levels)

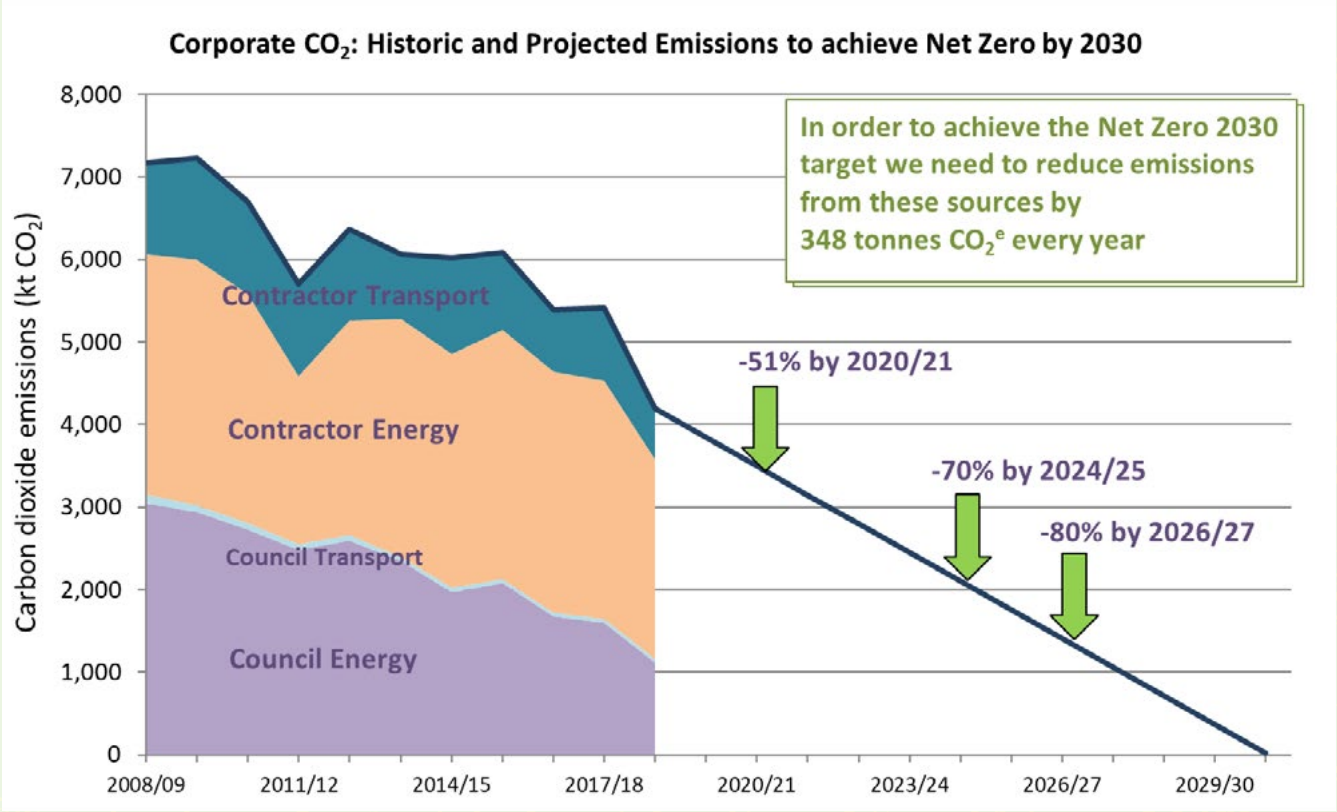
Our goal

There is currently no target set by Government for local authorities to reduce emissions. In 2017, the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) released a **draft strategy for cutting public sector emissions.** This mentioned the possibility of voluntary or mandatory carbon targets for local authorities in future.

St Albans City and District Council has formally declared a climate emergency. We are keen to lead by example by prioritising emissions reductions from our own buildings, transport and services and have set ourselves a goal of doing everything we can to reduce our corporate emissions to net zero by 2030. If we are to achieve this, we will need to cut emissions by 348 tCO_2^e each year from 2019/20 onwards. The scale of this task is evident when viewed against the previous target of 1.8% per year. We will need to significantly ramp up our efforts and ensure we are taking emissions into account as part of every decision we make. This strategy sets out where we are now, where we want to get to (net zero), and how we are going to get there in the first phase to 2023.

To ensure we are on track, we will strive towards the following intermediary targets:





Community Emissions - Where we are as a District

How do we calculate emissions?

We do not calculate these emissions ourselves but rely on data which is produced for us by the **Government.** The Office for National Statistics publication provides estimates of CO_2 for Local Authority areas, on a calendar year basis, 2 years in arrears. This makes up part of the UK's annual inventory of greenhouse gas emissions, which is used to monitor progress against domestic and international targets such as the Kyoto Protocol. The sub-set of the data that we use is called 'CO_2 Emissions Within the Scope of Influence of Local Authorities'.

What is included?

The data includes CO_2 emissions from domestic energy, road transport and businesses in the St Albans administrative area only. Only CO_2 emissions are reported. The figures are only partial; they **exclude** motorways passing through the District, products consumed within the District but produced elsewhere (including building materials and food), and emissions from flights by District residents and businesses. As a result, the true carbon footprint for every resident is likely to be significantly higher than the figures reported below. We will be looking at how we can obtain a more comprehensive data set as part of the Phase 1 Action Plan.

	Included	Excluded
Domestic Energy	Electricity, Gas, Other Fuels	
Industry and Commerce	Electricity, Gas, Large installations, Other Fuels	EU Emissions Trading System (EU ETS) sites (except for energy suppliers who are indirectly included via the end-user estimates for electricity use). Land Use, Land Use Change, and Forestry
Transport	A-Roads, Minor Roads, Other	Motorways, Diesel Railways, Air travel,
Other		Food, Purchased products, Agriculture

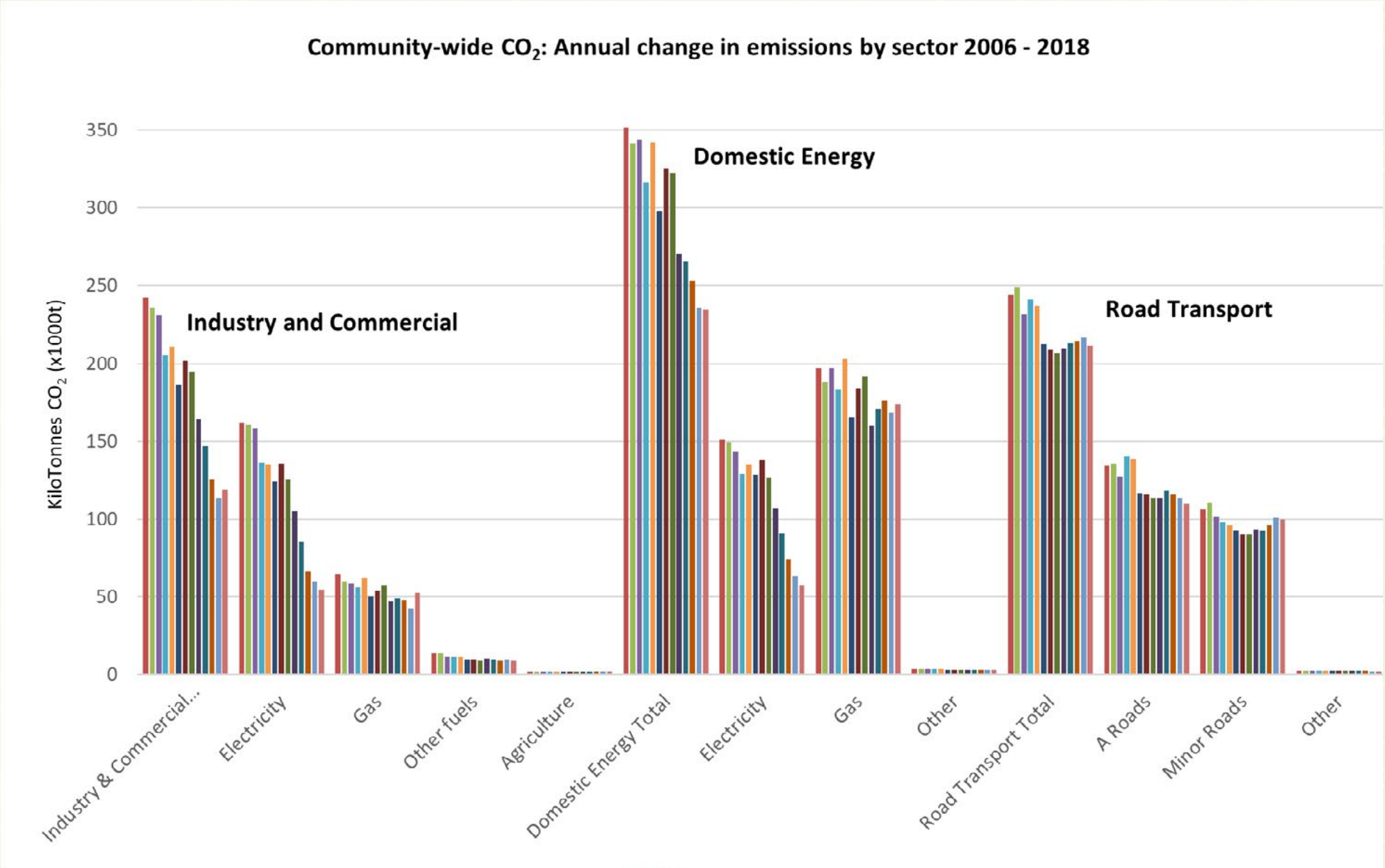
Where are we now?

The baseline year that we use is 2006, when total emissions were 837,290 tCO_2. In 2018, which is the most recent year available, emissions were 264,420 tCO_2 - a reduction of 33% over 12 years. The main cause of this reduction has been the changes in the way our electricity is produced, with a reduction in coal fired power stations and an increase in renewables and nuclear power plants.

Emissions ($ktCO_2$)	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Industry & Commercial	**242**	**235**	**231**	**205**	**211**	**186**	**202**	**195**	**164**	**147**	**126**	**114**	**119**
Electricity	162	160	158	136	135	124	136	126	105	86	66	60	55
Gas	65	60	59	56	62	50	54	58	47	49	48	42	52
Other	14	14	12	11	12	10	10	9	10	10	9	10	9
Agriculture	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Domestic Energy	**351**	**341**	**344**	**316**	**342**	**298**	**325**	**322**	**270**	**265**	**253**	**235**	**234**
Electricity	151	149	143	129	136	129	138	127	107	91	74	63	58
Gas	197	188	197	183	203	166	184	192	160	171	176	169	174
Other	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Road Transport	**244**	**249**	**231**	**241**	**237**	**212**	**209**	**207**	**209**	**213**	**215**	**217**	**212**
A Roads	134	134	136	127	140	117	117	116	114	113	118	116	110
Minor Roads	107	107	111	102	98	93	93	91	90	93	92	96	100
Other	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2
Total Emissions	**837.29**	**825.86**	**806.31**	**761.97**	**789.89**	**696.22**	**736.05**	**723.64**	**644.08**	**624.84**	**593.48**	**565.86**	**564.42**
% from baseline	0%	-1%	-4%	-9%	-6%	-17%	-12%	-13%	-23%	-25%	-29%	-32%	-33%
% previous year	0%	-1%	-2%	-5%	4%	-12%	6%	-2%	-11%	-3%	-5%	-5%	0%
Per capita emissions													
(t CO_2)	6.28	6.15	5.92	5.53	5.66	4.93	5.18	5.04	4.44	4.27	4.04	3.85	3.83

Taking into account population size, per capita emissions in St Albans are the 3rd lowest in Hertfordshire (average 4tCO_2 per person) after Watford and Three Rivers. This is due to the urban nature of the District, our good public transport links, a lack of major industry and high population density.

London on the other hand, has even lower per capita emissions (3.2 tCO_2) because of its condensed population and excellent public transport facilities. It is worth remembering though, the exclusions from the previous page; for example food, purchases and air travel.

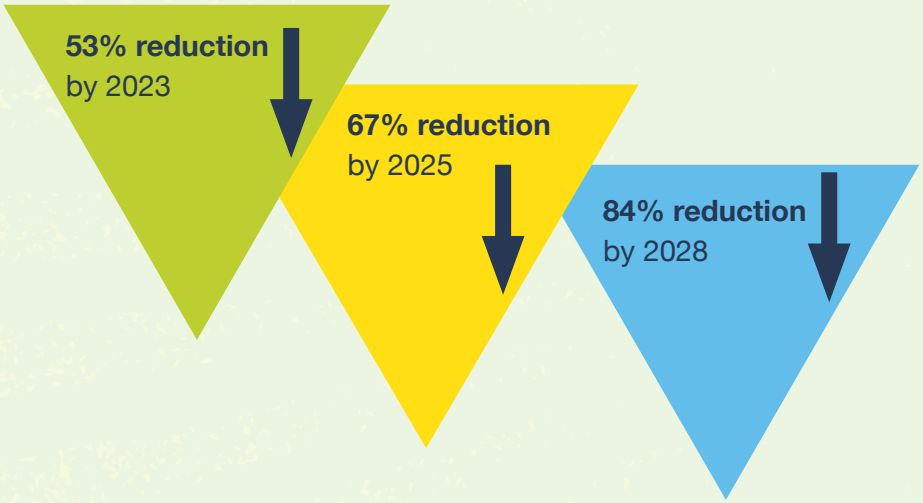


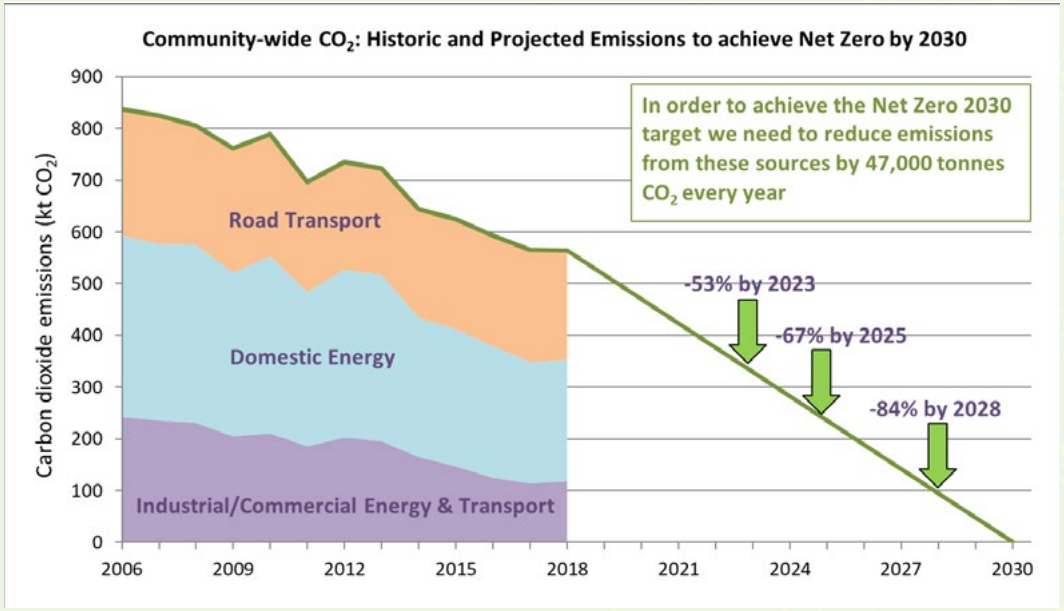
National efforts to decarbonise our electricity have significantly reduced the CO_2 impact of electricity. As you can see from this graph, we have been slower to reduce the impacts of gas and transport. These areas require a particular focus of attention over coming years.

Our Goal

As well as focusing on our corporate emissions, we will continue to support and encourage local residents, schools, businesses and the non-profit sector, to cut emissions across the entire District. While we don't have total control over these emissions, their scale (about 100 times that of our own operations), means that it is vital that we use the levers that we do have, to create influence and action wherever we can. This includes planning and transport policy, procurement, social housing and our marketing, events and communications.

To reach net zero emissions across the District by 2030, we all need to work together to reduce CO_2 emissions from energy and transport by 47,000 tonnes per year. It will require extensive community engagement by ourselves and our partners. To check if we are on track we will aim for the following interim milestones:





The Government's legal commitments under the Climate Change Act 2008 are likely to reduce UK emissions by a further 25% (1 tCO_2 per person per year) by 2030, leaving something in the region of the equivalent of 3 tCO_2 per person per year to reduce. By the time we are ready to commence Phase 2, we expect to have sufficient data available to be able to provide a clear trajectory of how our actions will help take us to Net Zero 2030. It is worth bearing in mind that since the Government data set is not available until 2 years later, we will be unable to track our immediate progress.


To get to net zero emissions across our District by 2030, we need to achieve the following emissions reductions:
53% reduction by 2023
67% reduction by 2025
84% reduction by 2028

Climate Crisis Action Plan: Phase 1 Priority Actions

The Sustainability and Climate Crisis Action Plan (Appendix 1) sets out ALL the actions that we have committed to undertaking over the next 3 years to reduce our environmental impacts. Most of these actions will have a beneficial effect on overall carbon emissions.

The Climate Crisis Action Plan (Appendix 2) summarises only those specific actions that will begin reducing our measured greenhouse gas emissions. It focuses only on those activities that affect the emissions we have data on (e.g. energy and transport).

While all the actions in the Climate Crisis Action Plan play a necessary part in achieving our ultimate aim of net zero emissions, the following actions will lead to the most significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. These will therefore be initiated and funded as a priority. These priorities may change in future reviews as more detailed analysis of projects becomes available.

Priorities for Action - The number in brackets refers to the action in the Sustainability and Climate Crisis Acton Plan

Ensure Council projects, purchases, contracts and policies are scrutinised for carbon impact before actions are taken

1. Strengthen use of the revised Sustainability Impact Assessment (SIA) process to ensure that all Council projects, policies and large purchases are assessed for their carbon impact. (1.3)
2. Update the Council's Sustainable Procurement Policy to provide clear criteria on selecting low carbon options when making purchasing decisions, setting contract specification and managing contracts. (1.4)

Reduce energy consumption from our buildings and generate clean energy

3. Undertake energy and renewable technology of Council-owned premises to identify the most cost-effective means to decarbonise our property portfolio. (2.3)
4. Develop a Council-wide construction standard for Council housing, commercial new-builds and refurbishments to achieve appropriate low carbon buildings standard. (2.9)
5. Raise the energy performance of Council-owned housing to EPC B by 2030. (2.13)
6. Explore possibilities for large-scale energy generation. (2.14)

Reduce energy consumption from new and existing buildings and increase renewable energy generation

7. Develop Planning Policy requiring high standards of sustainable construction, resource efficiency, on-site renewable or low carbon energy generation (2.15)
8. Explore financial and other ways to secure carbon offsetting measures in major developments. (2.18)

Improve facilities and infrastructure for low carbon travel in order to initiate a step-change in travel behaviour

11. Submit an innovative and comprehensive Sustainable Travel Town Vision to Hertfordshire County Council. (3.7)
12. Increase electric vehicle infrastructure across the District. (3.14)
13. Tackle emissions from local authority-authorised taxis. (3.15)
14. Introduce an all-electric (or hybrid) pool car club for businesses and residents of the District. (3.17)

Raise community awareness and encourage action to emissions

9. Work in partnership with local groups to deliver a climate change and sustainability public engagement program to empower local citizens, organisations and businesses and help overcome barriers to action. This may include a Citizens Assembly should we have a specific idea or project to explore. (1.11)
10. Encourage and support community engagement through groups, forums, events and partnerships that focus on local environmental action. Encourage organisations to network, share experiences, and identify opportunities to play their part. (1.10)

Reduce the impacts of Council travel

15. Provide electric pool cars for staff to use for business purposes. (3.1)
16. Replace all Council fleet with ultra-low emission vehicles at the end of life or by 2028. (3.2)

Key Sustainability Themes

one

Theme 1: Governance & Leadership

- Top-down leadership
- Working together
- Improving expertise
- Sustainability embedded into policy and decision-making
- Teams accountable for progress
- Avoid greenwashing

Why is this important?

To succeed in our carbon reduction and sustainability goals, structures and processes need to be in place to ensure that staff are held accountable for the actions; the strategy is appropriately financed; progress is monitored and reported; and the strategy is kept up to date. For the strategy to be truly embedded, all staff and elected councillors across the organisation will need to be well-informed about sustainability impacts, solutions and the science of climate change.

As a community leader, it is also important that we speak up about the environment and the changes that are needed to promote a healthy and sustainable environment so that we can pave the way for other groups, organisations and residents to follow suit. We are in a prominent position to be able to raise awareness of environmental issues and solutions and bust the myths that keep people repeating behaviour that has negative impacts.

Key Projects for 2020-2023:

- Increase sustainability-related staff resourcing.
- Introduce a protocol by which the sustainability impacts of relevant projects, policy changes, purchases and contracts are assessed before actions are taken.
- Set clear guidance for staff on sustainable procurement options and ensure that suppliers are obliged to offer the environmentally preferable option.
- Ensure all staff and Councillors receive regular training in sustainability-related matters.
- Encourage and support community education and engagement

Progress so far:

- Established a cross-party Climate Emergency Working Group to explore the ensure the progress of all actions in this plan.

Theme 2: Energy Use

two

Why is this important?

Roughly 64% of the emissions from the wider St Albans District come from energy use. In 2016, residents and businesses in the District used the equivalent of **141,000 tonnes** of oil for our electricity and gas. Over the next 10 years we will need to reduce our energy consumption substantially, through improving the energy performance of new and existing buildings, and transforming the way we use energy across communities and within industrial processes. There will need to be a complete shift to very low or zero carbon electricity generation, mostly from renewables and much of it decentralised. As well as reducing emissions, this will ensure we have a resilient energy supply, affordable energy for everyone in the long-term, warmer homes, and lower levels of air pollution.

While we can ensure that new buildings are built to the highest standards, the carbon saving of this will be relatively small given the number of homes expected to be built up to 2030 (10,506), when compared to the existing homes that need to be decarbonised (62,556). How we retrofit existing homes is therefore a key challenge, and one that is largely beyond the remit of the Council. However, with a housing stock of 4,684 buildings, we can reduce the impact of a proportion of local buildings.

Building energy use makes up 85% of the Council's Corporate emissions, therefore reducing our own energy use is a key concern for the organisation. Reducing our energy use will help us make financial savings in the longer term. If we can reduce our energy consumption by 62% by 2025/26, we will save £287,000 per year at today's energy prices.

By improving energy efficiency, we can also ensure that everyone, even the most vulnerable, can afford to stay warm enough in their home. **In 2018, 4,114 households** in St Albans (6.9%) experienced fuel poverty. This means that these residents may not have been able to keep their homes warm enough at a reasonable cost. This happens when homes are inefficient at retaining heat, income is low, and fuel costs are high. As a result, people can find themselves having to make choices between warmth or food. Over time this can affect physical and mental health. In 2018/19 the East of England had a **higher excess winter death index** (15.2%) than the England average (14.2%) for the same period.

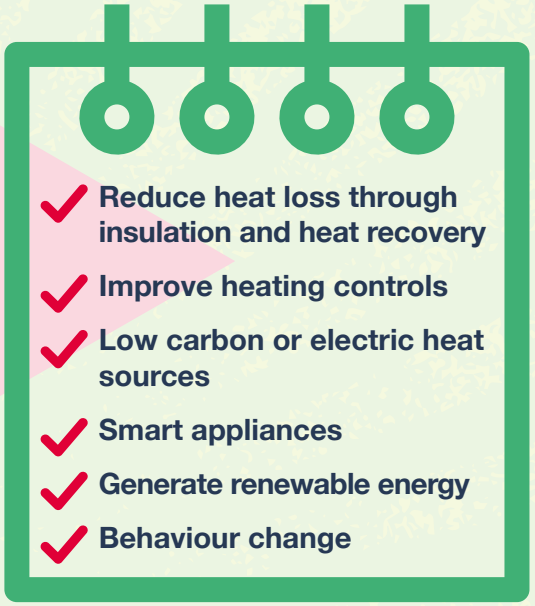
Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT) Zero Carbon Britain research shows that we could halve the energy we use for heating by designing new buildings to high 'Passivhaus' standards, retrofitting all existing buildings, and improving internal temperature control.

We could produce all our energy from renewable and carbon neutral energy sources - without fossil fuels or nuclear. This requires improving energy efficiency, converting our systems to electricity, generating that electricity from a range of renewable sources such as solar, wind, geothermal, hydro and tidal and using heat and battery storage so we can use it when we need it.

As the national grid continues to decarbonise, UK emissions have continued to fall. The UK made headlines in June 2020 when we didn't use coal to generate electricity for two months - the longest period since the 1880s. In June, zero-carbon sources overtook fossil fuels in their power generation for the first time. Currently 1,200 buildings (domestic and business) within the District have roof mounted solar photovoltaic (PV) panels. In total, our District has 4.7MW capacity of renewable capacity. This is lower than the UK average of 32MW. There are just three domestic wind turbines.

St Albans City and District Council has installed PV systems on Westminster Lodge Leisure Centre, Batchwood Sports Centre, Cotlandswick Leisure Centre, and the Civic Centre Offices. We have also installed solar thermal systems on eighteen Council houses to provide water heating.

Despite the loss of the feed-in-tariff, solar PV uptake is likely to increase in future years. This is because of developments in home battery storage, increased uptake of electric vehicles, smart home energy systems, and energy storage. It is also because of advances in commercial power purchase agreements, and the continued decline in prices, combined with effective communication. These improvements are likely to ensure continued uptake. PVs can be accommodated on existing roofs but there will also be a need for field-scale schemes directly linked to end users.



Key Projects for 2020-2023:

- Undertake energy and renewable technology audits of our largest Council-owned premises, to identify the most cost-effective means to begin decarbonising our property portfolio.
- Develop a phased plan of action to decarbonise the rest of our property portfolio. This will include replacing gas fired boilers with low carbon heat sources such as heat pumps or heat networks at their end of life. It will also explore possibilities for large-scale energy generation such as District-Heating and solar panel farms.
- Develop a Council-wide construction standard for Council new-builds and refurbishments to ensure that high standards of energy efficiency and sustainability are incorporated into building design and construction.
- Move the Council electricity supply contract to a supply that is derived from renewable power sources.
- Explore options to divest from investments in fossil-fuel industries.
- Produce Planning Policy requiring high standards of sustainable construction, resource efficiency, on-site renewable or low carbon energy generation.
- Incorporate our net zero reduction goals into existing contracts and incorporate a requirement to reduce emissions to every new large Council contract.

Progress so far:

Council Greenhouse Gas Emissions: Between 2008/09 and 2017/18 we reduced emissions from our own buildings, transport and our four largest contractors by 19% (1,298 tCO_2^e).

Energy Efficient Lighting: By upgrading the Council Offices lighting to LED we have reduced the building's total energy bill by **£22,973, and emissions by 64 tCO_2^e, in 2017 compared to 2016.**

IT Upgrade: All Council IT equipment has been replaced with more energy efficient equipment. Monitors have been replaced with wider screens to reduce printing, and all desktops and laptops have been replaced with new EPA Energy Star 6.0 laptops.

Screensavers have been turned off and energy saving tips have been included to the training programmes. Our new Customer Relationship Management Software dramatically reduces paper use.

Energy Efficiency of Council Housing: Over the past 2 years we have installed 839 A-rated condensing boilers, 43 loft insulations, and replaced 3,567 windows and doors with A-rated double glazing. This is estimated to save around 1,226 tCO_2 per year from domestic energy use.

Energy Efficient and Sustainable Construction: High standards of energy efficiency were incorporated to Westminster Lodge Leisure Centre which was built in 2013. The building was awarded 'Most Sustainable Construction' at the Building Futures Awards in November 2013. It also received a Gold Award in the Community Construction category of the Green Apple Awards 2014. Batchwood Sports Centre was redeveloped in 2014 to an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of A and Cotlandswick Sports Centre was built in 2015 to an EPC rating of B.

Herts Warmer Homes Scheme: Over the past one and a half years we have been able to support nineteen people (who meet criteria for vulnerability) to access Energy Company Obligation (ECO) funding to improve the energy efficiency of their home.

Renewable Energy: We have generated 407,136 kWh electricity from our own solar panels. This is enough to provide electricity to 131 homes for a year.

Further Information:

- Local Authority and Regional CO_2 Emissions Statistics
- Local Energy East: Tri-LEP Area Strategy

Theme 3: Transport & Air Quality

three

Why is this important?

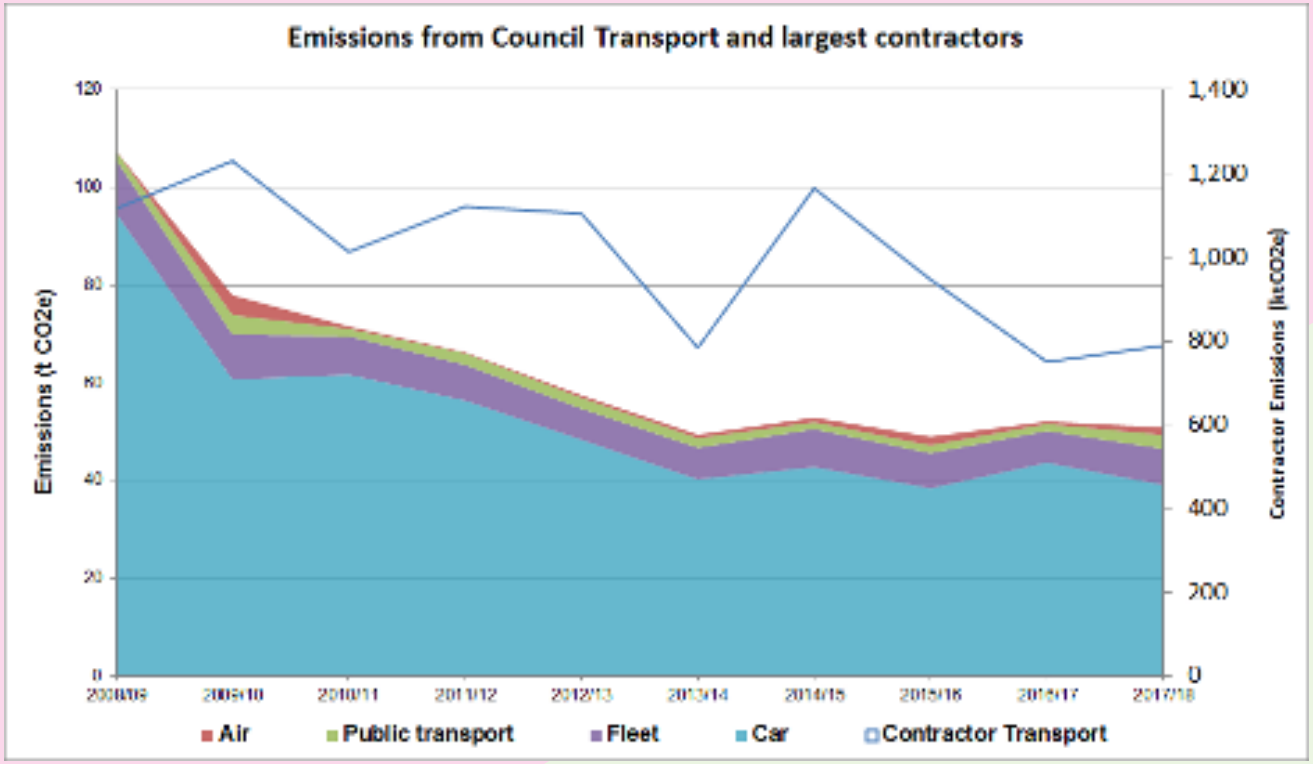
Air pollution is known to be a contributing factor in the onset of heart disease and certain cancers and can exacerbate conditions such as asthma, heart and lung disease. The most vulnerable in society are affected, particularly those with heart and lung problems, the elderly and children. In children these chemicals can affect long-term mental development and lung function. Traffic noise also adversely affects health and concentration. Public Health England estimates that 514 people die prematurely each year in Hertfordshire as a result of ultrafine particulate matter ($PM_{2.5}$) alone. Across the UK, it is thought that air pollution is responsible for the premature deaths of 50,000 people each year. This is twice the number of people dying from alcoholism, and 26 times as many dying from road traffic incidents, which highlights the magnitude of this health risk.

The most common air pollutants in the air include: nitrogen oxides (from transport); sulphur dioxide (from power stations); fine particulate matter (from stationary fuel combustion and transport); volatile organic compounds and toxic organic micropollutants (from the combustion of fuel); benzene (from fuel and transport); 1,3- butadiene (from petrol combustion); and carbon monoxide, lead and heavy metals (from fuel and industrial processes). Because of our high level of traffic and congestion, levels of nitrogen dioxide (NO_2) and particulate matter (PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$) have exceeded the annual mean levels set by national legislation, in three designated Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) in the District.

- Widespread home working
- Improve public transport infrastructure
- Walking and cycling infrastructure
- Electrify transport systems
- Reduce air travel and improve aviation fuel
- Hydrogen Fleet

As well as being a source of greenhouse gas emissions, road transport is also the main source of air pollution in St Albans District. Government figures for 2016 suggest that across the District, we used the equivalent of **161,800 tonnes** of oil to fuel our vehicles. In order to reduce our emissions and improve air quality, our transportation systems need to be transformed. This includes reducing traffic volumes, while improving traffic flows; making walking and cycling safe and accessible for all; ending the availability of petrol, diesel and hybrid vehicles; ensuring zero emissions buses and freight; improving public transport options; making vehicles more fuel efficient; and playing our part in implementing the Government's **Road to Zero** and **Clean Air Strategies**. There are considerable **public health benefits** from the promotion of active transport options such as walking and cycling, and these also take up less road and parking space, reducing congestion and **freeing up land for other uses**. Hertfordshire County Council has responsibility for roads and transport, but as a District Council we can play our part in this transition through our powers of responsibility for parking provision and enforcement, and licencing. We can also contribute in our role as a community leader, through influence and education.

Our largest contractors, which work across the District to provide waste and recycling collections, street cleansing, grounds maintenance, parking and leisure services, create 15 times more emissions than Council staff (blue line, right axis). Decarbonising our services is therefore a priority.



Key Projects for 2020-2023:

We need to improve the average annual NO_2 measurements across the District to 40ug/m^3

- Work with the County Council to develop a comprehensive plan to reduce congestion, improve traffic flows, encourage walking and cycling, and increase 20 mph zones significantly. This will include the pedestrianisation of Market Place. This may make use of Clean Air Zone funding, or the Hertfordshire County Council Sustainable Travel Towns programme.
- Introduce an electric pay-by-hour pool car club for Council staff, residents and visitors.
- Undertake an electric vehicle charging infrastructure study to identify the most effective way to increase electric vehicle charging points across the District, and tackle problems associated with small streets with terraced housing.
- Install more electric vehicle charging points in the City.
- Develop a local cycling and walking implementation plan for the District. This is to identify measures required to increase the number of trips made on foot or by cycle. As part of this we will explore options such as pay as you go cycle hire, cycle route maps and improvements to the walking and cycling routes through Verulamium Park.
- Introduce anti-idling zones with an effective programme of enforcement, alongside continued education.

Progress so far:

Council Mileage: The Council has reduced emissions from business travel by 53% since we started monitoring in 2008/09, by introducing and promoting a range of green travel measures such as online conferencing facilities, pool bikes, car sharing and discounted rail and bus travel.

The Green Ring: In November 2018 we formally opened the Green Ring. This 9km walking and cycling route around St Albans City, links green spaces, schools, places of worship, heritage sites, retail centres and both of the City's railway stations. It makes it easier for people to travel on foot and by bike for everyday travel and leisure.

Air Quality Monitoring: 34 out of 38 air quality monitoring sites showed an improvement in NO_2 levels in 2017 compared to 2016. 7 sites are new or have moved so cannot be compared to the previous year.

Further Information:

- SADC 2018 Air Quality Annual Status Report
- SADC NO_2 monitoring data
- Herts and Beds Air Quality Monitoring Network
- Herts County Council Air Quality and Health Joint Strategic Health Needs Assessment (JSNA)
- Air Quality Strategic Plan for Hertfordshire

Our Idling Action St Albans Campaign aims to educate drivers about the impacts on our health and environment of sitting stationary with the engine running.

Theme 4: Waste

four

Why is this important?

- Reduce consumption of goods and materials
- Consistent, extensive recycling facilities
- Producers responsible for waste
- Better distribution of food
- All plastics recyclable or alternatives found
- Business recycling obligations

In 2019/20, District households produced 50,390 tonnes of waste. 31,732 tonnes of this (62.97%) was recycled, composted or sent to an anaerobic digestion plant to produce energy. The remaining 18,658 tonnes were disposed of. 90% was incinerated to create energy, and the remaining 10% was buried in landfill outside of Hertfordshire.

Recycling saves energy and money by avoiding the need to use new materials to make products. It also prevents waste littering our natural environment.

Keeping food waste out of landfill sites, by composting it or making energy through anaerobic digestion, prevents methane being released to the atmosphere. This greenhouse gas has a warming effect on the atmosphere 28 times greater than CO_2.

Reducing waste isn't just about disposing of it sustainably; it is also about the way we use and consume products. This has a corresponding impact on our use of energy and transport, as well as our impacts on the ecological world. It's easy to forget how much energy has gone into the products we consume; for example, in the extraction of materials, the manufacturing, the distribution and then the sale. In some cases, this process moves items all over the world. The manufacture and distribution of clothing and footwear alone accounts for some **8% of global GHG emissions**. Moving towards a more circular economy can help save both energy and money.

The Government's vision is to eliminate all avoidable waste by 2050, eradicate food waste to landfill by 2030 and ensure that all plastic packaging is recyclable, reusable or compostable by 2025. The UK goal is to recycle at least 65% of municipal waste by 2035, with no more than 10% being sent to landfill.

Burying waste in landfill sites and burning waste has a negative impact on the environment. Harmful chemicals and greenhouse gases are released, and we are running out of landfill space. Waste that is not managed properly pollutes the environment. Locally, we see the impact through fly-tipping and litter.

But we are also becoming more aware of the global impacts of waste, for example through the images of an ocean ecosystem disturbed by decades of irresponsible and unmanaged plastic disposal.

Plastic is fast being widely recognised as a key pollutant that needs to be tackled. The equivalent of one entire truck of plastic (8 tonnes) is dumped in the sea every minute. That's 12 million tonnes of plastic each year. By 2050 we could have more plastic than fish (by weight) in the sea if we carry on as we are. The Great Pacific Garbage Patch is now three times the size of France and is rapidly getting worse. Of the 400 million tonnes of plastic produced each year, 40% is single-use. This is why the Council is committed to eliminating its use of single use plastic.

Key Projects for 2020-2023:

- Explore how we can increase recycling rates by households and businesses across the District through ongoing education, communications, awareness-raising and service improvements, to achieve a District-wide recycling rate of 70% by 2030.
- Develop a plan for increasing recycling from flats.
- Work with other Councils, farmers and the police to reduce fly-tipping.
- Reduce waste produced from the markets and Council events.
- Develop a plan of action to become a Plastic Free Council and encourage other businesses and organisations to do the same.
- Review the Council's Sustainable Procurement Strategy to ensure that as far as possible, waste is minimised from procured goods and services.

Progress so far:

Working Paperless: We have introduced a variety of electronic processes within the Council and for customers to reduce the amount of paper used. This has included new customer management systems, moving our printers to a single hub, encouraging laptops to be used in meetings instead of printing papers and replacing paper documents with electronic alternatives.

Recycling Rates: Household recycling performance has increased from 46% to 61% between 2013 and 2018 as a result of improvements to our waste and recycling service. All households and flats now receive collections for paper, card, food, glass, plastics, cans and tins, small electrical items, batteries and textiles. Houses also receive a garden waste collection. In 2017 the District sent 919 fewer tonnes of waste to landfill, despite there being more properties than in previous years.

Engaging householders: In 2017 we produced a new recycling services brochure for all households to make it easier to understand what can and can't be recycled through Council services. We undertook a comprehensive engagement programme in two of the wards with the lowest recycling rates and engaged directly with residents in flats to address any issues.

Anaerobic digestion facility tours: are held throughout the year to show the public what happens to food waste after it is collected from the kerbside. These provide a great opportunity for people to ask questions and find out more about recycling in general.

Fly Tips and Street Cleansing: Wherever possible, the waste collected from fly-tips, mechanical street sweeping, and bulky waste is now sorted and recycled to reduce landfill waste.

Grounds Maintenance: All the green waste produced from the grounds maintenance contract is composted on site. In the last year we produced over 200 tonnes of compost, which was used for grounds maintenance and delivered to allotment holders.

Council Recycling:
A comprehensive recycling scheme is in place across all Council buildings for recycling paper, cardboard, cardboard vending cups, cans, tins, plastic bottles, plastic cups, ink cartridges, batteries, confidential waste, electronic equipment and food waste. We also collect unwanted items from staff for charity. In 2018 we removed the plastic cups that had previously been provided with the water fountains.

Opt-in Green Waste: Our opt-in subscription service now allows householders to sign up for additional green waste collections.

Reusing Council waste:
Market canopies which were being replaced, are now all used by allotment holders for use in winter weed suppression. This has reduced waste and also reduced the need for chemicals to be used.

Refill St Albans: Our new bottle refill fountains have been installed outside the Council Offices in the town centre and in Clarence Park, allowing people to access drinking water without buying bottled water. This is in addition to the 82 refill outlets across the District that have registered with the **refill app** to provide free water refills to anyone who requests it.

Further Information:

- SADC Recycle for St Albans District Facebook Page
- SADC Recycling Webpages
- WasteAware Herts

2016/17
recycling rate
57%

2019/20
recycling rate
63%

St Albans Recycling Rank out of 350 local authorities

2016/17
23rd

2018/19
5th

Total household waste collected:

2016/17
52,133

2019/20
50,703

Number of fly tips reported

2016/17
1324

2019/20
746

We've been working hard to make our events more sustainable. We've removed as many single-use plastics as we can such as cups, cutlery, plates, stirrers, bottles, bags, straws and takeaway packaging. We banned polystyrene and offered traders the option of using reusable cups which we hand-washed for them with a team of volunteers. We asked traders to use recyclable food packaging such as aluminium containers and cardboard boxes with a greaseproof liner in them. To help people understand what waste could be recycled in the bins, we created big colourful bin toppers and had teams of volunteers watching the bins and helping visitors with their waste throughout the day. All these actions have helped to significantly reduce the amount of waste the events produce and have been hailed a great success!

Theme 5: Nature & Food

five

Why is this important?

- Double the amount of forested area
- Expand and rewild green space
- Restore peat bogs
- Reduce consumption of animal products
- Produce more food in the UK
- Reduce chemical Use

Globally, wildlife and habitats are in **decline**. Some 75% of the earth's land surface has been significantly altered. Over the past 40 years we have lost 60% of mammals, birds, fish, reptiles, and amphibians. In the UK, **60% of the 3,000 species** that have been studied have declined over the past 50 years. 97% of the UK's wildflower meadows have been lost since the 1960s and we have 44 million fewer breeding birds. Around **1 million species** face extinction within coming decades. Changing temperature and rainfall patterns due to climate change **are part of the reason for this**, as well as rapid urban and agricultural development. This is not just a loss for the interconnected ecological systems that depend upon these species, it's a loss for us. It is imperative that habitats are restored and protected wherever possible so that there is a net-gain in wildlife value.

In 2020 the Covid pandemic has made us even more conscious of the vital role of green spaces in our lives. Protecting and enhancing green spaces is important as it provides a habitat for wildlife. Natural green spaces are also important as they help to clean the air, absorb excessive rainwater to reduce flooding, absorb noise and reduce the 'urban heat island' effects. We also know that having easy access to natural greenspace such as parks and woodland, brings **positive effects for mental and physical health** and has even been associated with increased longevity. Yet **research has shown** that around 12% of children in the UK do not spend any time in natural green space.

Trees, for instance, provide a vital habitat for birds, insects and small mammals. They also offer shade, which is increasingly important as temperatures increase and they absorb carbon from the atmosphere. Trees are becoming more susceptible to diseases and pests due to the changing climate and imports. It is particularly important to retain and protect them wherever possible.

One of the most important habitats in the District is the River Ver, a chalk stream habitat rarely found outside of southern and eastern England. Chalk streams are important habitats for species such as **crayfish and kingfishers**. Our work to clean up Verulamium Park lake and the River Ver will help to increase biodiversity and local wildlife.

The way that food is produced also has an impact on wildlife as more and more land is given over to agricultural use. Food production, transport and processing is a major source of greenhouse gas emissions. Changing diets to eat less meat and better quality, more local and seasonal produce can have large positive impacts on emissions, and also on land-use by freeing up large amounts of land for other uses. Eating more fruit and veg isn't just good for the environment, it is also **good for people's health** - and we don't all need to become vegans to achieve it!

Key Projects for 2020-2023:

- Greatly increase the quantity of tree cover in the District
- Work with the Environment Agency to maximise the natural habitats of the River Ver and the lake.
- Work with partners to 'rewild' the District, including using vacant land and streets for tree planting, pocket gardens and to grow food where possible.
- Encourage developers to provide space for UK sourced and native plants and trees, including on our own developments.
- Negotiate with the County Council for new ways of managing grass verges and trees alongside highways.
- Use Green Spaces Management Plans to increase climate resilience and biodiversity where possible.
- Work with partners, including Schools in Bloom and the RSPB, to raise public awareness of how to protect wildlife and maximise opportunities for nature conservation.
- Actively support the protection, creation, enhancement and access to green spaces and networks.
- Lead by example by providing more vegetarian and vegan food at events and functions, as well as reducing food packaging.

Progress so far:

Traditional Management Methods:
Grazing has been introduced as a more sustainable and effective conservation management technique at Bricket Wood Common SSSI.

This is improving the previously unfavourable conditions and restoring and maintaining the wet lowland heath habitat.

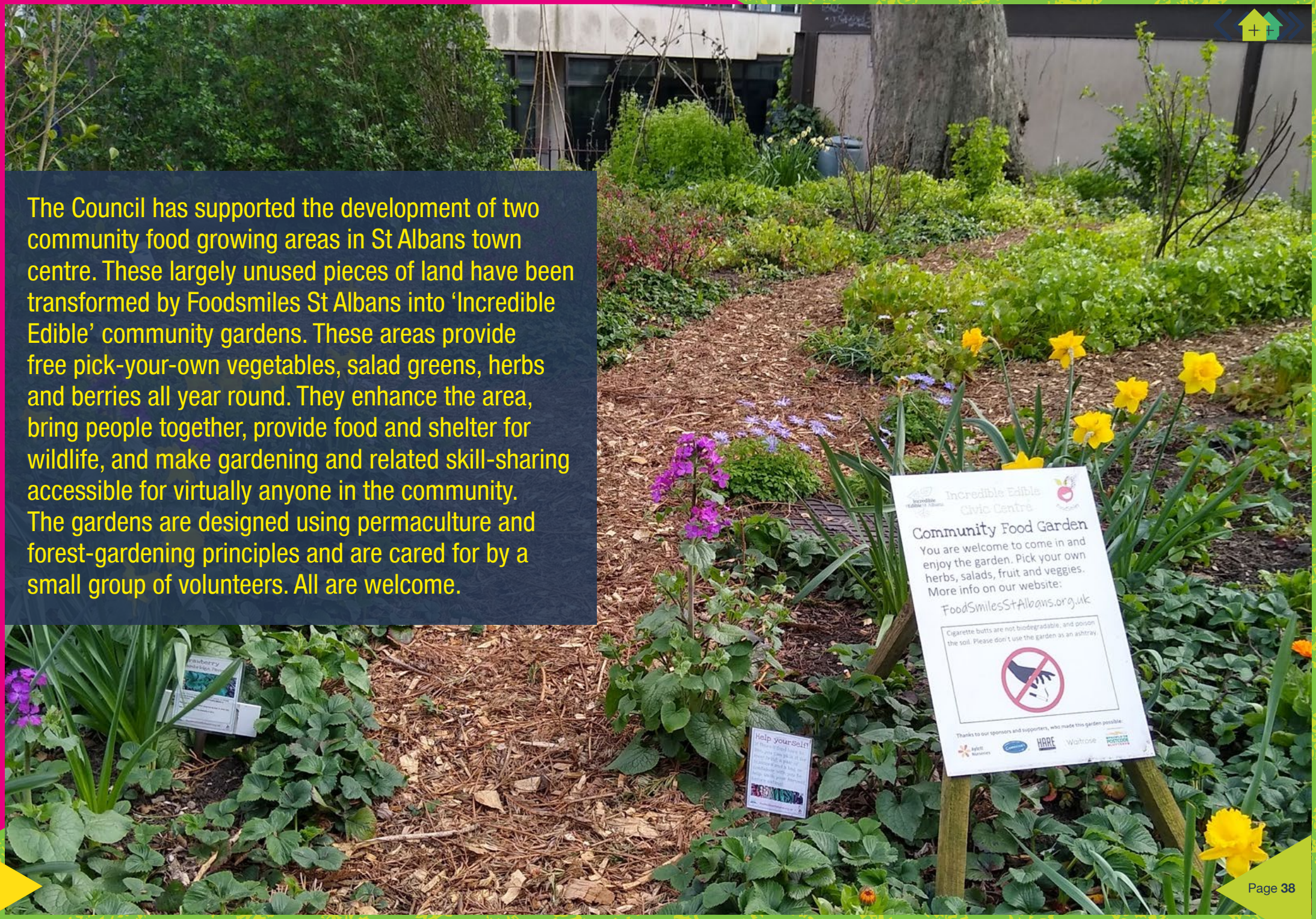
Woodland Management:
Reintroducing coppicing after 100 years to Bricket Wood Common at Hornbeam Coppice, which is saving the woodland in the long term and restoring biological diversity. We have also undertaken woodland management at Nomansland Common, creating a varied age structure in the trees whilst encouraging more varied woodland species.

Sustainable Planting:
All seasonal planting has been replaced with annual seeding and permanent planting, which has reduced consumption of water, transport and materials previously used to replace the plants in beds each season. They also provide natural food sources for butterflies and bees.

Green Burial Area: A small area with space for about 80 new graves (not reclaimed) has been laid out for those who wish to have a grave in a quiet secluded place with wildflowers and trees, at Hatfield Road Cemetery.

At FoodSmiles St Albans, subscribers grow food together, learn growing skills, and share the harvest in a weekly seasonal veg box. Members find it less daunting and more sociable and educational than taking on an allotment alone, and benefit from the fresh air, exercise and being close to nature as well as getting local organically-grown food. Everyone gets a share of the harvest in their weekly box. FoodSmiles directly serves around 35 families in the St Albans District, and has many more contacts in the community via its regular open days and events, newsletters and more.

The Council has supported the development of two community food growing areas in St Albans town centre. These largely unused pieces of land have been transformed by Foodsmiles St Albans into 'Incredible Edible' community gardens. These areas provide free pick-your-own vegetables, salad greens, herbs and berries all year round. They enhance the area, bring people together, provide food and shelter for wildlife, and make gardening and related skill-sharing accessible for virtually anyone in the community. The gardens are designed using permaculture and forest-gardening principles and are cared for by a small group of volunteers. All are welcome.



Theme 6: Water & Climate Change Adaptation

six

Why is this important?

As well as reducing carbon emissions to reduce the impacts of climate change, we need to make sure we are prepared for the climate changes that are predicted to take place. Some of these are already happening. The latest Meteorological Office **Climate Projections** provide the most up-to-date assessment of how our climate is likely to change. This highlights key risks such as: surface water flooding, heatwaves and drought for the District.

In 2018 we witnessed the hottest summer ever recorded, leading to excess summer deaths and **low flow levels on the River Ver**. Heatwaves can lead to issues like buckling rail tracks, higher demands on water resources, subsidence of houses and buildings, pipe movement and breakages due to soil shrinkage and fires. By the middle of the century we could see summers as hot as in 2018 occurring with a 50% probability. If emissions are not reduced this could rise to 90% probability in the second half of the century, with many summers being much hotter.

- ✓ **Reduce water demand and wastage**
- ✓ **Improve drainage to reduce flood risk**
- ✓ **Retain trees and provide shading**
- ✓ **Well insulated and ventilated buildings**

Verulamium lake - October 2019

In the UK and Europe, flooding is one of the most economically and socially disruptive natural hazards with impacts on transport, housing, infrastructure and energy supply. The risk of flooding from rivers in St Albans district is limited to London Colney and Colney Heath. The risk of flash surface flooding from heavier downpours is likely to grow in future.

Most of our water is abstracted from aquifers deep below ground level. The South East of England is classified as a water stressed area. This is because we get less rainfall than other parts of the country but have relatively high population and water abstraction. Despite this, the Colne Catchment (which includes St Albans) uses on average 10 litres per day more than the UK average **(142 litres per person per day)**. Affinity Water estimate the population in its supply area will increase by 12% by 2025 and 27% by 2045, and climate change is likely to reduce the supply of water in the Affinity Water area by 39 million litres of water per day by 2080. Over coming years, households will likely face more **significant restrictions** in water usage. The Environment Agency's aim is to reduce consumption to 110 litres per person per day by 2025.

Chalk streams: In England, we are home to 85% of the world's chalk stream habitats. Chalk streams have a delicate and unique ecology that supports a wide array of wildlife and flora. They depend upon a healthy flow of water and a variety of natural habitats to thrive. Currently our chalk streams, such as the River Ver, are at risk from over abstraction, pollution and climate change.

Key Projects for 2019-2023:

- Update the Corporate Climate Change Risk Assessment in lieu of the UKCP18 data, to assess the future climate risks to the delivery of Council services and local communities. We will use this to ensure that key risks are included in Council strategies and policies such as the Flood Response.
- Operational Plan to ensure that our own buildings, parks, and services are resilient.
- Ensure that planting schemes by the Council and our contractors use species adapted to flooding or drought conditions.
- Centralise the Council's water billing to allow us to more accurately monitor actual water consumption and set targets for reductions where it is observed to be high.
- Ensure that all new developments constructed by the Council incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUD) and measures to reduce the incidence of flooding where appropriate.
- Monitor and reduce water consumption within our own estate, operations, and services; and engage the community to reduce water consumption through education and awareness-raising.

Key Achievements 2017-2019

Winter Treatment Operational Plan: Our Winter Treatment Operational Plan has been developed to reduce the risks associated with the conditions of ice and snow on pavements and roads.

Appendix 1:

Sustainability and Climate Crisis Strategy Action Plan 2020-2023

Department Key:

CD: Commercial & Development

CEXP: Chief Executive & Policy

CorpS: Corporate Services

CS: Community Services

H: Housing

F: Finance & Legal

P: Planning & Building Control

Theme 1: Governance and Leadership

Leading by Example

We will…	Action		Lead	Completed By
Demonstrate commitment to sustainability and tackling the causes of climate change by integrating into decision-making processes	1.1.	Increase staff resourcing to coordinate and deliver the actions in this strategy. It is anticipated that we need up to 2 additional Sustainability Officers and 1 Energy Manager.	CS / Public Realm Manager. CD / Procurement Manager.	Dec 2020
	1.2.	Review financing mechanisms available to fund the actions in this plan. This should include a clear policy of financing Invest to Save proposals based on specific carbon and cost saving criteria. We will also explore options to engage with the local community with a view of encouraging sponsorship and donations if appropriate.	F / Head of Finance. CEXP / Economic Development. CS/ Public Realm Manager	Mar 2021
Reduce the overall impacts of our projects, purchases and services	1.3.	Review and strengthen use of the Sustainability Impact Assessment (SIA) process across the Council to ensure that issues and impacts are addressed early in the project management, development and procurement process. An SIA will now need to be completed for new projects, policies and large purchases and will be incorporated to the Council's decision-making processes.	CS/ Public Realm Manager / Sustainability Projects Officer	Mar 2021
	1.4.	Review and update the Council's Sustainable Procurement Policy with clear criteria and guidance on how to select the most sustainable options when making purchasing decisions, setting contract specification and managing contracts. As part of this we will ensure that our Procurement Rules require that suppliers demonstrate the best possible environmental option and adhere to the Council's Sustainable Procurement Strategy. All new contracts will include sustainability performance measures and carbon reduction targets wherever appropriate to do so. **While emissions from products are not included to our GHG calculations, Ashden estimate that for every £1M of general expenditure, London authorities produce an average 337 tCO_2. This would amount to emissions of 27,263 tCO_2. If we could affect the procurement of contracts and goods by even 20% that would represent a reduction of 5,453 tCO_2**	CS / Sustainability Projects Officer. CD / Procurement Manager. F / Solicitor for the Council	Dec 2020
	1.5.	Monitor which contracts are due for renewal over the forthcoming year to assess current sustainability impacts and methods of making improvements at the next contract upgrade.	CS / Sustainability Projects Office	Apr 2021 then annually

Ensure staff and members are informed and aware of the Council's sustainability goals.	1.6. Incorporate sustainability and carbon reduction to staff inductions , new contracts, job description templates and new job descriptions.	CorpS/ OD Manager	Dec 2020
	1.7. Develop a sustainability eLearning module to be completed by all staff during induction and then on an annual basis as part of the yearly Performance Review process.	CS / Sustainability Projects Officer. Corp S/ OD Manager	Oct 2020
	1.8. Deliver ongoing engagement and awareness raising to staff, contractors and service providers on sustainability issues and solutions through the, 'StAN' staff portal, weekly Team Brief, staff emails and direct training. Particular teams will require specialised training (e.g. Building Services).	CS / Sustainability Projects Officer	Monthly

Education and Working with Others

We will…	Action	Lead	Completed by
Raise community awareness and encourage action to reduce environmental impacts and greenhouse gas emissions	1.9. Deliver strong and consistent messages to the public about sustainability, the environment and climate change through the Council's publicity channels which include the Community News publication, **www.stalbans.gov.uk**, **MyStAlbans account**, press releases, social media, events, Sustainability News and the **Building Futures website**.	CEXP / Policy and Communications Manager. CS / Sustainability Projects Officer	Throughout the year
	1.10. Encourage and support community engagement through groups, forums, events and partnerships that focus on local environmental action. This includes where appropriate, using Council resources to leverage the impact that groups or organisations can have where this is the most effective way to raise awareness. Encourage organisations to network, share experiences, and identify opportunities to play their part. This includes, for example, the Climate Crisis Response Working Group, Strategic Local Partnership (SLP), Town and Parish Council groups, Sustainable St Albans events, Hertfordshire Community Energy Group and Herts Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership. Partners will be encouraged to develop action plans and report back about progress.	CS / Public Realm Manager / Sustainability Projects Officer	Monthly
	1.11. Work in partnership with local groups to deliver a climate change and sustainability public engagement programme to empower local citizens, organisations and businesses and help overcome barriers to action. This may include a Citizens Assembly should we have a specific idea or project to explore.	CS / Public Realm Manager / Sustainability Officer. CEXP/ Policy and Communications Manager	Mar 2022
	1.12. Work with the Business Improvement District and other business networks, to develop and deliver city-wide environmental schemes and improvements. This may include Greening Business Support Schemes or Business sponsored renewable projects.	CS / Public Realm Manager / Sustainability Officer. CEXP / Principal Policy & Economic Development Office	Monthly
Influence the Government	1.13. Influence government to introduce more stringent sustainability policy in areas such as building, housing, renewable technologies, energy, water, waste and habitat protection, through responding to consultations and working with organisations such as the Local Government Association.	CEXP / Principal Policy & Economic Development Officer	As opportunities arise

Theme 2: Energy Use

Leading by Example

We will…		Action	Lead	Completed by
Reduce energy consumption from Council estate and services	2.1	Analyse and report on our corporate greenhouse gas emissions and progress towards our targets via the website and the Council's Performance Report. As part of this we will also undertake an annual review of the community-wide CO_2 emissions published by the Department of Business and Industrial Energy. We will explore the options and costs to obtain a more accurate measurement of corporate and community-wide emissions.	CS / Sustainability Projects Officer	Annual Oct
	2.2	Explore approaches to allocate greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets to individual Departments and services.	CS / Sustainability Projects Offic	Jun 2021
	2.3	Develop a structured plan of action to undertake energy and renewable technology audits of every Council owned premises to identify the most cost-effective means to decarbonise our property portfolio. This will include properties managed by 3rd parties such as the leisure centres. It should also include works to ensure that all Council buildings have an Energy Performance Certificate of B or above by 2030. Low carbon heat sources such as heat pumps or heat networks will need to replace gas fired boilers. The study should explore means to obtain cost neutral improvements through Energy Services Company schemes such as Re:FIT or interest-free programmes such as Salix. If we were to reduce energy use from the properties on our central energy account by 70% by 2025/6, we would save 784 tCO_2 p.a. If leisure buildings are included to that estimate, we would save 2,318 tCO_2 p.a.	CS / Estates Services Manager / Housing Asset Manager.	Mar 2021
	2.4	Undertake a high-level analysis of our emissions, realistic trajectory towards becoming a net zero Council and District and the costs and options for decarbonisation.	CS/ Public Realm Manager / Sustainability Projects Officer	Aug 2021
	2.5	Ensure that all lights are replaced with LED (preferably sensor operated) as and when they reach the end of their life. Payback periods depend on the type of lighting replaced and the operating hours but tend to lie between 2-6 years and can often be funded by Salix.	H / Housing Asset Manager. CS / Estates Services Manager	Ongoing policy
	2.6	Upgrade our energy supply contract to ensure that any electricity purchased by the Council is sourced from renewable energy. The energy supplier should be actively investing in renewable technology. Any energy purchased which is not supplied from renewable energy (e.g. gas) will be offset through an appropriately certified offsetting scheme by 2023. Obtaining our corporate electricity from renewables would save ~667 tCO_2 per year. Including our leisure buildings would save ~1,456 tCO_2 p.a. NB: This cannot be reported as zero emissions on our greenhouse gas emissions report but can be noted as a gross emissions reduction.	CD / Procurement Manager. CS / Sustainability Projects Officer .	Nov 2020
	2.7	Sign up to a Bureau Service for a 1-year trial to assess the savings to the Council of having them manage the utility bill entry, validation, database management, supplier engagement and automatic reporting on our behalf. This is anticipated to reduce our energy costs by up to 3% p.a.	CS / Sustainability Projects Officer. CD / Procurement Officer	Mar 2021
	2.8	Work with our energy suppliers to encourage them to more rapidly install Automatic Meter Reading (AMR) technology to the remainder of Council-owned properties, to allow for more accurate monitoring of energy consumption	CD / Procurement Offic . CS / Regeneration & Estate Manager. Housing / Housing Asset Manager	Jan 2021

Reduce energy consumption from Council estate and services	2.9	Develop a Council-wide construction standard for Council housing and commercial new-builds and refurbishments to ensure that high standards of energy efficiency and sustainability are incorporated to building design and construction to achieve appropriate zero carbon buildings standard. Government has provided Planning Authorities with the green light to go above and beyond Building Regulations. This policy should also address material sourcing requirements to reduce carbon impacts of product transport. Government aspirations include the Future Homes Standard, the commitment to phase out fossil fuel heating installations off the gas grid, and aspirations and initiatives around home retrofits (EPC band by 2035) and low-carbon heating. The Future Homes Standard for example, will ensure new build homes have low-carbon heating and world-leading levels of energy efficiency by 2025. The World Green Building Council also provide frameworks as does Passivhaus. Ultra-high energy efficiency standards, installed alongside an air source heat pump, represent a 1-4% uplift on build costs relative to a home built to current regulations. Passivhaus is estimated to lift costs for the developer by 7% but could come down to 3% in future. Taking into account whole life costs, high efficiency buildings are cheaper in the long-run. It costs a 1/3 of the price to incorporate efficiency measures such as low carbon heat to a new build, than to retrofit them to existing buildings. A requirement for Passivhaus standard is estimated to save ~1.4 tCO_2 per property. In St Albans we have target to build 565 properties per year between 2020-2025. Hypothetically if these were to be built to Passivhaus standard this would save 791 tCO_2 p.a.	CD / Acting Head of Service Estate Services Manager. H/ Housing Asset Manager	Jun 2021
	2.10	Keep abreast of technological advances and novel technologies such as hydrogen power, heat and power battery storage and hybrid heat pumps so that we can exploit opportunities when appropriate. Staff will be expected to demonstrate this as part of annual appraisal and development process.	CD / Acting Head of Service. CS/ Sustainability Projects Officer/ H/ Housing Asset Manager	Ongoing
	2.11	Formally communicate with HCC to investigate options for divesting from fossil fuel pension scheme.	F / Head of Finance	Dec 2020
Reduce energy used by IT systems	2.12	Seek opportunities to reduce emissions further from IT equipment. As part of the re-procurement of the server infrastructure and network switches, investigate options to significantly reduce power use for cooling.	CorpS / Digital ICT Manager	Mar 2021
Reduce energy use from new and existing Council Housing	2.13	Undertake an ongoing programme to improve energy efficiency of Council-owned housing incorporatin the advice in the energy audits. Currently this includes work to install A-rated boilers, insulate lofts and cavity walls, install double glazing and energy efficient lighting to interior and exteriors. The gov nment has set a target of all homes being improved to Energy Performance Certificate C by 2035. Our aim is that all Council Housing meet EPC B by 2030. This will require the conversion of gas boilers to low carbon heat sources, renewable technology, and improvements to insulation. We will explore the potential for whole house refurbishments such as the Dutch 'Energiesprong' (energy leap). This achieves an 86% reduction in emissions and currently costs around £70k per average home. Costs are forecast to come down to £35k per property in the near future. Annual savings can be obtained from reduced maintenance and income generated from energy savings made by the residents, and potentially the Renewable Heat Incentive. Upgrading a home to EPC C costs on average £4,385 per home and reduces emissions by around 30%. **Ashden estimates that whole-house Energiesprong refurbishments save ~27.5 tCO_2 per house per annum. Were we to upgrade 10 homes in one year this would save ~275 tCO_2 p.a. Ashden estimate that refurbishing a home to meet EPC C saves ~1 tCO_2 p.a. per house. To improve building fabric and install low carbon heat costs ~£16-25k per home.**	H / Housing Asset Manager	Sept 2021
Generate more renewable energy	2.14	Investigate the possibility of using land or developments for a large-scale energy generation to enable us to produce our own energy and decarbonise our operations, and as a means of income generation and energy resilience. **In West Sussex, two solar farms provide enough energy to power 12.4 MW of electricity and reduce emissions by 2,388 tCO_2 p.a. Locally, finding land is the first step**	CD / Infrastructure Manager. CD / Acting Head of Service	Mar 2022

Developing Infrastructure			
We will…	**Action**	**Lead**	**Completed By**
Use the planning system to promote energy efficiency, renewables and a low carbon community	2.15 Develop Planning Policy requiring high standards of sustainable construction, resource efficiency, on-site renewable or low carbon energy generation. **Ashden estimate that setting a requirement on new homes would lead to a reduction of 600 tCO_2 in the first year, doubling in each year thereafter. In St Albans we have target to build 565 properties per year between 2020-2025. Hypothetically if these were to be built to Passivhaus standard or equivalent, this would save 791 tCO_2 per annum compared to existing building standards.**	P / Spatial Planning Manager	Dec 2021
	2.16 Ensure that the Planning Department is equipped with expertise in sustainable construction methods and low carbon technology to be able to understand the best solutions available and demand appropriate improvements.	P / Spatial Planning Manager	Dec 2021
	2.17 Explore financial and other ways to secure carbon offsetting measures in major developments. This can incentivise the construction of energy efficient buildings and finance the transition to a low carbon district. Similar measures have been introduced in London and Milton Keynes. Extrapolating Milton Keynes data to St Albans would suggest that we could generate £650k and 4,290 tCO_2^e (over 7 years). **Ashden estimates 885 tCO_2 p.a. saving, at a cost of £45k pa to cover 1FTE administrator.**	P / Spatial Planning Manager	Dec 2021
	2.18 In the next review of the new Local Plan, seek to allocate suitable areas of land within the District following paragraph 151 of the NPPF for renewable and low carbon energy and heat. Increasing renewable energy capacity requires finding suitable sites. 1MW wind requires 25-54 acres of land, 1MW solar requires 4 acres (though wind has 3 times more capacity to generate energy per MW than solar). The average town in UK has 32MW of renewable energy whereas in St Albans we have just 4.7MW. Enfield has installed several solar farms and generating 58.4MW. **In West Sussex, two solar farms provide 12.4 MW of electricity and reduce emissions by 2,388 tCO_2 p.a. Locally, finding land is the first step Ashden estimates that every 1MW renewable energy capacity installed saves 1,286 tCO_2 pa.**	P / Spatial Planning Manager	Dec 2023
Reduce energy use from Council infrastructure across the District.	2.19 Accelerate the conversion of streetlights to LED by supporting Herts County Council in their upgrade programme. We will upgrade our own street lighting and develop a policy for Council owned street light operating hours to ensure a safe environment for residents whilst also reducing light pollution and energy consumption. We will aim that a proportion of new street lights should be replaced with integrated EV charging units where possible. **Ashden estimates 1,590 tCO_2 when all completed.**	CD / Infrastructure Manager	Mar 2021
	2.20 Undertake further studies to explore possible locations for district-heating schemes.	CD / Acting Head of Service. P / Spatial Planning Manager	Mar 2023

Education and working with others				
Support householders to improve energy efficiency, reduce fuel poverty and protect vulnerable residents	2.21	Deliver a scheme to support vulnerable and low-income households by making use of Energy Company Obligation funding to improve the energy efficiency and warmth of their homes and reduce excess winter deaths. We will make best possible use of the 'Flexibility Eligibility' so that local householders who need it, are able to access support.	CS / Sustainability Projects Officers H / Private Sector Housing Officer	Sept 2020
	2.22	Collaborate with Parish Councils and local groups to actively promote advice and information on reducing energy consumption, managing energy bills, renewable technology and tackling fuel poverty. We will promote national grants, subsidies and initiatives as they become available.	CS / Sustainability Projects Officer	Throughout the year
	2.23	Improve promotion of the **Home Repairs Assistance Grant** providing support for improving the energy efficiency of vulnerable households, by improving visibility on the website and through a specific leaflet.	H / Private Sector Housing Officer	Dec 2020
	2.24	In response to complaints from tenants in private rented housing, we will enforce the requirements of the Housing Health and Safety Rating Scheme (HHSRS) and the minimum energy efficiency standards, to reduce the hazard of excess cold. Where homes aren't adequately heated, landlords will be requested to carry out energy efficiency improvements.	H / Private Sector Housing Officer	In response to complaints
	2.25	Establish how the Council might more proactively monitor and enforce Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards given the existing resources to do so. Minimum energy efficiency standards have been set by the Government for homes that are privately rented, with a minimum 'Energy Performance Certificate' of E required. Councils are responsible for ensuring that these standards are met, but research suggests that many councils aren't effectively enforcing them at the moment, thus missing a key opportunity for cutting carbon and improving housing quality. Cost £45k pa to cover a full-time officer. Some of this can be recouped through fees. **Estimates suggest that this would save around 170 tonnes for every 100,000 homes. Ashden estimates 255 tCO_2 reduction p.a.**	H / Private Sector Housing Officer	Jul 2021
	2.26	Attend Landlord Forums and work with lettings agents and private landlords on an occasional basis to disseminate information and to raise awareness of Landlords' duties to meet minimum standards and to provide advice on the assistance available.	H / Private Sector Housing Officer	Quarterly

Theme 3: Transport and Air Quality

Leading by example

We will…		Action	Lead	Completed By
Reduce the greenhouse emissions from transport used in the delivery of Council business and services	3.1	Provide 2-4 electric pool cars for staff to use for business purposes. These cars will be available for public use outside of working hours. **Based on mileage figures for pool car usage at Luton Boroug Council upon introduction of their pool cars, the Council could save ~1.4 tCO_2 p.a. from business travel. Community-wide emissions would be reduced by at least ~14 tCO_2 p.a. due to Council employees leaving their cars at home. Assuming the public use 2 vehicles for ~ 8,000 miles each, outside of working hours, a further saving would be made of 6 tCO_2 p.a. compared to if they had used a fossil fuel powered vehicle. Further reductions are possible as some householders might decide to give up their personal vehicle.**	CD / Infrastructure Manager. CS / Sustainability Projects Officer.	Mar 2021
	3.2	All Council fleet will be replaced with ultra-low emission vehicles at end of life or by 2028 starting with markets vehicles. This will include service vehicles such as those required for parking enforcement and the recycling collection vehicles. **Replacing Council fleet with fully electric vehicles would reduce emissions by ~8 tCO_2 p.a. Including our contractors' vehicles would reduce our emissions by ~790 tCO_2^e p.a. This represents about 14% of our total emissions.**	CS / Public Realm Manager. CD / Museums Business Manager. F / Insurance Officer.	Mar 2023
	3.3	Flights will only be authorised in exceptional cases where there is no reasonable alternative and that long-distance journeys must be made using lower carbon options such as rail or else journeys will not be reimbursed. **On average around 1 short haul flight is taken each year. This would reduce our emissions by 0.01 tCO_2 p.a.**	CorpS / Senior HR Business Partner	Jan 2021
	3.4	Explore options to reward and incentivise staff to choose lower emission travel. As part of this we will incentivise cycling by providing a mileage reimbursement for business trips travelled by bike. We will also explore how making changes to the Essential Car Allowance can support this aim.	CorpS / Senior HR Business Partner	Aug 2021
	3.5	Ensure computer systems are set up to best make use of laptop video conferencing facilities, thereby reducing the need for travel.	CorpS / Digital ICT Manager	Sept 2020
Improve facilities and green travel benefits for staff	3.6	Introduce the Cycle to Work scheme for staff to allow them to purchase tax-free bicycles and equipment. This will be introduced as part of a wider package of staff benefit	CorpS / Senior HR Business Partner	April 2021

Developing the infrastructure			
We will…	**Action**	**Lead**	**Completed By**
Reduce emissions from private vehicles by improving public transport, cycling walking and road infrastructure	3.7 Develop an innovative and comprehensive Sustainable Travel Town Vision to be submitted to Hertfordshire County Council as part of their development and support programme. This would include establishing a clean air zone in the centre of town which only allows low emission buses, taxis and cars through the town centre. **Ashden estimates that reducing vehicles in the city centre by 20% would equate to a reduction of 1,800 tCO_2 pa at a cost of £45kpa for 1FTE and set up costs (dependent on system chosen).**	CD / Infrastructure Officer. P / Spatial Planning Manager. CS / Sustainability Projects Officer	Jan 2021
	3.8 Work with the County Council to develop planning guidance policies around the installation of electric vehicle charging points in new developments.	P / Spatial Planning Manager	Dec 2021
	3.9 Identify locations to install secure cycle storage in the District to maximise use of bicycles and encourage cycling. This includes the provision of on-street cycle cages for streets of terraced houses.	CS / Infrastructure Manager	April 2021
	3.10 Explore options to introduce novel shared transport services such as on-demand buses.	CD / Infrastructure Manager. CS / Sustainability Projects Officer.	Mar 2023
	3.11 Explore possibilities of introducing pay-by-the-hour bicycles for public use in partnership with Herts County Council.	CD / Infrastructure Manager. CS / Sustainability Projects Officer	Mar 2022
	3.12 Develop a Local Cycling and Walking Implementation Plan (LCWIP) setting out the cycling and walking improvements required to increase the number of trips made on foot or by cycle, including key links such as the routes from the City Centre to the rail stations.	P / Spatial Planning Manager	Dec 2021
	3.13 Develop a comprehensive plan with the County Council for measures to reduce congestion and encourage walking and cycling, potentially including the pedestrianisation of Market Place and a significant inc ease in 20mph zones. As part of our work to improve and extend cycle routes we will develop additional routes leading from the Green Ring to outlying villages. We will also explore opportunities to widen high pedestrian use sections of the cycleway/footpath through Verulamium Park to improve access and enjoyment to all users. **Ashden estimates a reduction of 442 tCO_2 savings based on increasing cycling commuting from 25 to 26% over a 5-year period. This includes all other cycling actions.**	CD / Infrastructure Manager	Mar 2022

Promote a step change in the uptake of low emission vehicles	3.14 Evaluate the most cost-effective and practical options to inc ease EV charging infrastructure across the District utilising OLEV funding. This will increase our understanding of future needs, management options, costings, and inform our policies on residential charging and appropriate requirements for new developments. Estimates suggest that we will need around 62 electric vehicle chargers in place before 2030 at a cost of £100k. Installation of EV charging to key Council sites is expected to commence before the end of 2020. **Ashden estimates 5,160 tCO_2 pa reduction based on a 6% of vehicles being replaced with electric vehicles per year.**	CD / Infrastructure Offic . CS / Sustainability Projects Officer	Dec 2020
	3.15 Develop a strategy, and associated incentives, to reduce emissions from the pool of local authority-authorised taxis. This will include programmes to encourage electric vehicles through education, marketing, loans, vehicle emissions restrictions, vehicle inspections, reduced licensing costs and determine end date for fossil fuelled licensed vehicles. We will review the proportion of large taxis we demand and agree a timetable for retiring existing polluting vehicles. **Ashden estimates a reduction of 368 tCO_2 pa should our entire taxi pool be converted to electric vehicles.**	CS / Senior General Enforcement Officer	Sept 2021
	3.16 Discourage use of larger, more polluting cars through rewarding lower emissions vehicles within our parking charges.	CS / Senior General Enforcement Officer	Sept 2021
	3.17 Introduce an all-electric (or hybrid) pool car club for businesses and residents of the District. This provides vehicles for club members to use on demand thereby reducing the need for car ownership. **Assuming the public use 2 vehicles for ~8,000 miles each, outside of working hours, we would save 6 tCO_2 p.a. compared to the equivalent use of fossil-fuel powered vehicles. Further reductions are possible as some householders might decide to give up their personal vehicle, or reduce the number of vehicles they own. If so, this could help relieve pressure on-street parking too.**	CD / Infrastructure Manager. CS / Sustainability Projects Officer	Dec 2020
Reduce emissions from commercial and freight vehicles.	3.18 If funding is made available, explore the potential to introduce Urban Consolidation Centres, to enable last miles deliveries to be made using electric freight vehicles rather than diesel-powered HGVs. Located at the edge of a town or city, goods would be transferred from heavy vehicles at the UCC to the electric vehicles. These projects have been successful in Camden and City of London. **Ashden estimates 6,600 CO_2 pa based on a 20% reduction in freight emissions. This would be expected to rise to a 26,400 CO_2 reduction pa with full utilisation). Initial cost to explore £45k pa for 1FTE.**	CEXP/ Economic Development. / Principal Policy and Economic Development Officer	Mar 2023
Improve air quality with attention on the Air Quality Management Areas.	3.19 Continue to develop and implement the measures of our Air Quality Management Plan to reduce emissions from road transport and improve air quality. As part of this we will look to introduce Air Quality Monitoring points across the District for particulate air pollution.	CS / Specialist Office (Env. Compliance). CS / Regulatory Compliance Manager	Mar 2022
Reduce air quality impacts from developments outside our area.	3.20 Continue to resist the Luton Airport expansion where we are able to.	P / Spatial Planning Manager	Dec 2021
Reduce the impacts of idling vehicles	3.21 Widely promote the Idling Action St Albans Campaign to raise awareness of the impact of idling vehicles on health and air quality. We will also introduce anti-idling zones and use enforcement measures to underpin their effectiveness. Children and parents will be the core focus of any campaigns.	CS / Sustainability Projects Officer / Parking Services Manager	Aug 2021
	3.22 Restrict or remove permits for traders such as ice cream vans if they idle their engines to deliver their services.	CS / Estate Services Manager	Mar 2021
	3.23 Install utility access points in the city centre for traders and events staff to avoid the need for idling engines and generators	CS / Public Realm Manager	Mar 2022

Working with others				
We will…		**Action**	**Lead**	**Completed By**
Work with bus users and providers to identify opportunities to improve services, raise awareness and achieve a modal shift in travel behaviour.	3.24	Facilitate a regular transport stakeholder meeting to bring together Herts County Council, local transport providers and Intalink to encourage improvements to local public transport provision, cycle and walking routes and roads. The meeting will provide a forum to share best practice, address and overcome issues, apply for funding and implement improvement projects, for example to convert local buses to electric, hydrogen or biogas. **Ashden estimate that converting buses to electric would save 70 tCO_2 per bus p.a. at a cost of £335,000 per bus.**	CD/ Infrastructure Manager	Dec 2021
	3.25	Continue to lobby Govia Thameslink (GTR) for improved rail services and support improvements to the Abbey Line by participating in the Community Rail Partnership.	CEXP / Principal Policy & Economic Development Officer CD / Infrastructure Manager	At least annually
	3.26	Continue to meet regularly with St Albans Cycle Forum, St Albans Bus Users Forum, and Herts County Council Integrated Transport Team to discuss issues and future projects, and to give passengers a means to voice concerns and experiences to those who plan and operate their services.	CD / Infrastructure Manager	Quarterly
	3.27	Progress work to hold regular car-free periods on St Peters Street.	CS / Community Engagement Officer	Mar 2021

Theme 4: Waste

Leading by example

We will…		Action	Lead	Completed By
Reduce waste produced from Council buildings, operations and services.	4.1	Deliver ongoing improvements to the Council recycling scheme with regular staff awareness-raising around office recycling.	CS / Sustainability Projects Officer	Throughout the year
	4.2	Increase recycling of waste from the market to 60%. We will look at whether additional recycling facilities can be provided to market stall holders and methods of encouraging or enforcing their use. As part of this project we will be working with stall holders to reduce plastic bag use.	CS / Markets Manager / Principal Waste Contracts Officer	Nov 2021
	4.3	Develop a Waste and Sustainability Policy for Council events particularly focusing on waste reduction and elimination of single-use plastics.	CS / Public Realm Manager / Community Engagement Officer	Jan 2021
	4.4	Introduce a 'Working Paperless' strategy for Council transactions and internal operations. As part of this we will reduce the number of printers available and place them in one location to discourage unnecessary printing of documents.	CorpS / Digital Services Manager	Oct 2020
	4.5	All Council buildings projects will require contractors to reuse or recycle over 90% of their non-hazardous demolition and construction waste when developing or refurbishing Council buildings. This is in line with the UK average.	CD / Acting Head of Service	Mar 2021

Developing the infrastructure

We will…		Action	Lead	Completed By
Deliver a comprehensive and efficient recycling service to the community	4.6	Explore options to improve recycling rates further to achieve a 70% recycling rate by 2030. This will include evaluation of options such as the introduction of TetraPak and plastic films to kerbside recycling collections, reducing refuse collections and increasing the materials captured for recycling from bulky waste collections.	CS / Principal Waste Contract Officer	Mar 2022
	4.7	Develop a strategy to increase recycling collection from flats; ensuring that every flat has access to bin and that bin areas are fit for purpose and that managing agents have the right information to be able to run their bin areas effectively.	CS / Principal Waste Contract Officer	Mar 2021
	4.8	Continue with the rolling programme to replace on-street waste bins with dual recycling bins for more recycling on the go. Waste collected from the street cleansing operations to be sorted to ensure as much as possible is recycled.	CS / Principal Waste Contract Officer	Mar 2021

Working with others				
We will…		**Action**	**Lead**	**Completed By**
Engage the public to encourage participation in the Councils reuse and recycling services	4.9	Raise awareness of the recycling services through the provision of community talks, regular communications, promotional roadshows, WasteAware initiatives and market stalls. Provide compost giveaways to give something back to residents.	CS / Principal Waste Contract Officer	Throughout the year
	4.10	Open up local recycling facilities throughout the year to enable residents to have an opportunity to see what happens to their recycling and ask questions.	CS / Principal Waste Contract Officer	At least 4 times a year
Work with schools to improve recycling facilities and deliver recycling education.	4.11	Promote recycling to schools in partnership with Herts County Council and the waste contractor by attending assemblies and workshops. Attention will be focused on promoting food waste collections.	CS / Principal Waste Contract Officer	Throughout the year
Reduce fly-tipping and littering	4.12	Support community litter-picks by providing gloves, litter pickers, bags and picking up collected waste for recycling.	CS / Principal Waste Contract Officer	Throughout the year
	4.13	Work with other councils, farmers and the police to reduce fly-tipping	CS / Principal Waste Contract Officer	Throughout the year
Promote local and national schemes to reduce waste.	4.14	Work towards becoming a single-use Plastic Free Council. This will involve auditing our use of single use plastics and replacing them wherever possible with more sustainable alternatives.	CS / Public Realm Manager	Mar 2022
	4.15	Introduce a scheme by which businesses are encouraged and rewarded for reducing single-use plastics.	CS / Principal Waste Contract Officer	Mar 2023
	4.16	Use the Council's publicity channels to promote the Refill St Albans scheme across the District to reduce plastic bottle waste.	CS/ Sustainability Projects Officer	Annually

Theme 5: Nature and Food

Leading by Example

We will…	Action		Lead	Completed By
Improve the wildlife value of Council's own land and buildings	5.1	Consider and incorporate initiatives for improving the wildlife value of all Council owned new buildings or when doing external works to existing buildings.	CD / Acting Head of Service / Estates Services Manager	Throughout the year
	5.2	Incorporate refuge areas for wildlife, green corridors and wildlife friendly and perennial planting wherever possible to new buildings.	CD / Acting Head of Service	Throughout the year

Developing the infrastructure

We will…	Action		Lead	Completed By
Maximise the wildlife value of green areas across the District.	5.3	Implement the environmental actions of the Green Spaces Management Plan. This includes heathland restoration, woodland management and identifying areas to leave as meadow.	CS / Green Spaces & Cemeteries Team Leader	Throughout the year
	5.4	Develop a scheme for 'rewilding' parts of Council land to increase biodiversity.	CS / Green Spaces & Cemeteries Team Leader	Mar 2023
	5.5	Develop planning policy that encourage developers to create and manage open spaces to create new wildlife habitats and provide new tree planting and growing spaces. We will encourage the use of UK sourced and native species wherever possible and will expect to see an overall net gain in wildlife value.	P / Spatial Planning Manager	Dec 2021
	5.6	Implement the new allotment rules concerning use of pesticides and encourage holders to reduce use of chemicals and manage allotments by more natural means.	CS / Green Spaces Officer	Dec 2020
	5.7	Negotiate with the County Council for new ways of managing grass verges and trees alongside highways, and to reduce the use of glyphosate.	CS / Green Spaces Office	Jan 2021
	5.8	Implement the Revitalising the Ver project to transform and naturalise the River Ver and the associated the Verulamium Park Lakes.	CS / Green Spaces & Cemeteries Team Leader	Mar 2024
	5.9	Where appropriate, make unused areas of land available for residents and community groups to create pocket gardens for food growing, tree planting, wildlife and community wellbeing.	CS / Green Spaces Team Leader / Sustainability Projects Officer	Throughout the year

Increase the extent, quality and diversity of trees and woodlands	5.10	Implement the actions and objectives of the Tree Strategy which aims to ensure that trees and woodlands within the District are adequately protected, cared for and supported by new planting. We will actively seek to significantly inc ease the number of trees in the District and prevent removal of trees where possible. **Ashden estimate that for every 2,350 trees planted, ~52 tCO_2 pa (23kg per tree p.a.) at a cost of around £8,800 (tree cost only).**	P / Strategic Planning Manager	Throughout the year

Education and working with others				
We will…	**Action**		**Lead**	**Completed By**
Raise awareness of the value of wildlife and encourage others to take action to preserve and enhance habitat quality for biodiversity.	5.11	Work with partners such as Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), Countryside Management Service (CMS) and Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust (HMWT) to engage and educate the public on the value of conservation and habitat management and on how they can help protect wildlife. We will encourage these groups to undertake local monitoring and to advise us on how we can support these species groups more.	CS / Green Spaces & Cemeteries Team Leader	Throughout the year
	5.12	Continue running the Schools in Bloom Competition to encourage schools to explore ways of managing their outdoors paces sustainably.	CS / Green Spaces & Cemeteries Team Leader	Annual
	5.13	Encourage traders at the local markets and at events, to offer more local, organic or sustainable food, especially at the Farmers Markets.	CS / Markets Manager / Events	Mar 2022

Theme 6: Water and Climate

Leading by example

We will…	Action		Lead	Completed By
Prepare for and adapt the Council's buildings, operations and services to the predicted impacts of climate change	6.1	All new developments constructed by the Council will incorporate sustainable drainage systems and measures to reduce flooding.	CD / Acting Head of Service	Mar 2021
	6.2	Update the Council's Climate Change Departmental Risk Assessment in lieu of the UKCIP18 data and ensure that these risks are appropriately addressed within our risk management and business continuity processes through the Flood Response Operational Plan and Winter Treatment Operation Plan.	CS / Sustainability Projects Officer / CEXP / Emergency Planning Officer	Mar 2022
	6.3	Select plants which are tolerant of our changing climate. This should include pollinator-friendly, flood and drought resistant species that are UK sourced and preferably native species.	CS / Green Spaces & Cemeteries Team Leader	Throughout the year
Water-efficiency in our own buildings and services	6.4	Re-procure the Council's water supply to ensure best price and centralised billing of water accounts. This will allow us to monitor water consumption the same way as we do energy	CD / Procurement Manager	Jan 2021
	6.5	Install water efficient toilets and taps to all new buildings when refurbishing existing buildings or when replacing appliances.	CS / Green Spaces & Cemeteries Team Leader. CD / Acting Head of Service / Estates Services Manager. H / Housing Asset Manager	Throughout the year

Developing the Infrastructure				
We will…		**Action**	**Lead**	**Completed By**
Improve resilience of parks and natural areas to a changing climate	6.6	Ensure parks and recreational facilities are resilient to projected seasonal changes in ground conditions (e.g. by improving drainage systems to alleviate greater risks of flooding and waterlogging in winter) whilst also welcoming new species that replace native species in the area.	CS / Green Spaces & Cemeteries Team Leader	Throughout the year
	6.7	Ensure the resilience of Council's tree stock is considered by selecting tree species which are deemed to be resilient to both new pests and climatic changes. We will undertake mixed planting to minimise the impacts from pests and diseases.	P / Strategic Planning Manager	Throughout the year
Education and working with others				
We will…	Action		Lead	Completed By
Support the community to prepare for and increase their resilience to the possible impacts of climate change.	6.8	Alleviate and minimise the risk of flooding through engineering solutions; provision of Aquasacs to Parish Councils for use by vulnerable residents; and by working with partners such as the local highway authority to undertake drainage and gully clearing.	CD / Infrastructure Manager	Throughout the year
	6.9	Work with communities at greatest risk from climate change (particularly flooding) and work with Parish Councils to assist them as part of their neighbourhood planning activities. Identify community flood wardens in Colney Heath/London Colney. Provide advice and assistance on measures to alleviate flooding.	CEXP / Emergency Planning Officer	April 2021
Engage the public to encourage water saving awareness	6.10	Continue to work with partners such as Groundwork, Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust and Affinity water to deliver awareness raising programmes that encourage lower water consumption.	CS / Sustainability Projects Officer	Ongoing throughout the year

Appendix 2:

Climate Crisis Action Plan (2020-2023)

This Climate Crisis Action Plan (Appendix 2) sets out those specific actions that we are committing to take over the next 3 years which will begin reducing our measured greenhouse gas emissions. This action plan focuses on ONLY those activities which affect the emissions we have data on (e.g. energy and transport) whilst the Sustainability and Climate Crisis Action Plan in Appendix 1 addresses all environmental impacts. We hope to be able to add actions which address additional emission sources in future years as more data becomes available.

The actions marked as priority will lead to the most significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. These will therefore be initiated and funded as a priority.

Colour Key:		Department Key:
	Necessary precursor to other actions. Gets people on board in order to encourage further action	**CD:** Commercial & Development
	Moderate impact	**CEXP:** Chief Executive & Policy
	High Impact	**CorpS:** Corporate Services
	High Impact - Priority	**CS:** Community Services
		H: Housing
		F: Finance & Legal
		P: Planning & Building Control

Reducing Corporate Emissions

We will...		Action	Lead	Completed	Priority
Governance, Communication and Behaviour Change					
Demonstrate commitment to sustainability and tackling the causes of climate change across the Council by integrating into decision-making processes.	1.1 1.2 1.3 1.6	Demonstrate top-down leadership of this plan through clear corporate support to forward the actions; provision of additional staff resource and financing; regular scrutiny and monitoring and a cross-service management level board. Job descriptions of Senior Managers will incorporate a requirement to proactively ensure that their department's activities are consistent with the Council's sustainability and carbon reduction targets. We will also make it easier for Departments to propose carbon reduction projects and apply for Invest to Save funding.	CS / Head of Community Services / Public Realm Manager. CorpS/ OD Manager. F / Head of Finance	Ongoing	
Ensure staff and members are informed and aware of the Council's sustainability goals.	1.6 1.7 1.8	Deliver ongoing engagement and awareness raising to staff, contractors and service providers on sustainability and carbon reduction through the Council's internal communication channels. Carbon reduction will be incorporated into job descriptions and induction training. They will also be required to complete mandatory e-learning on climate change and sustainability on a regular basis as part of their annual Performance Review process. Particular teams will receive specialised training (e.g. Planning Policy, Building Services). The aim of this is to ensure that staff a e aware of the Council's climate change policies and processes so that they are thinking about carbon reduction in their day to day work, reducing waste, making intelligent purchasing decisions, procuring greener contracts and choosing lower carbon transport options.	CS / Sustainability Projects Officer CorpS/ OD Manager	Ongoing	☆

Council Energy

Reduce the overall impacts of our projects, purchases and services	1.3	Revise and strengthen the use of the Sustainability Impact Assessment (SIA) process across the Council to ensure that issues and impacts are addressed early in the project management, development and procurement process. An SIA needs to be completed for new projects, policies and large purchases and will be incorporated into the Council's decision-making processes.	CS/ Public Realm Manager / Sustainability Projects Officer	Mar 2021	
	1.4 1.5	Update the Council's Sustainable Procurement Policy with clear criteria and guidance on how to select the most sustainable options when making purchasing decisions, setting contract specification and managing contracts. As part of this we will ensure that our Procurement Rules require that suppliers demonstrate the best possible environmental option and adhere to the Council's Sustainable Procurement Strategy. All large contracts will include stringent sustainability performance measures and carbon reduction targets wherever appropriate to do so. An annual review of all Council contracts due for renewal over the forthcoming year to assess current sustainability impacts and methods of making improvements at the next contract upgrade.	CS / Sustainability Projects Officer CD / Procurement Manager. F/ Solicitor for the Council	Dec 2020	

Reduce energy consumption from Council estate and services	2.1	Analyse and report on our annual corporate greenhouse gas emissions and progress towards our targets via the website and the Council's annual Performance Report. We will also undertake an annual review of the community-wide CO_2 emissions published by the Department of Business and Industrial Energy. As part of this we will explore the options and costs to obtain a more accurate measurement of community-wide emissions.	CS / Sustainability Projects Officer	Annual Oct	
	2.2	Explore approaches to allocate greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets to individual Departments and services.	CS / Sustainability Projects Officer	Jun 2021	
	2.3 2.5	Develop a structured plan of action to undertake energy and renewable technology audits of every Council owned premises to identify the most cost-effective means to decarbonise our property portfolio. This will include properties managed by 3rd parties such as the leisure centres. It should also include works to ensure that all Council buildings have an Energy Performance Certificate of B or above by 2030.	CS / Regeneration & Estate Manager. H / Housing Asset Manager	March 2021	★
	2.4	Undertake a high-level analysis of our emissions, realistic trajectory towards becoming a net zero Council and District and the costs and options for decarbonisation.	CS/ Public Realm Manager / Sustainability Projects Officer	Jul 2021	
	2.6	Upgrade our energy supply contract to ensure that any electricity purchased by the Council is sourced from renewable energy. The energy supplier should be actively investing in renewable technology. Any energy purchased which is not supplied from renewable energy will be offset through an appropriately certified offsetting scheme by 2025.	CD / Procurement Manager / Sustainability Projects Officer	Nov 2020	
	2.7 2.8	Ensure that Council energy bills are correct and fully validated to ensure accurate monitoring. In order to ensure correct billing, we will also work with our energy suppliers to more rapidly install Automatic Meter Reading (AMR) technology to the remainder of Council-owned properties, to allow for more accurate monitoring of energy consumption.	CS / Sustainability Projects Officer. CD / Procurement Officer Regeneration & Estate Manager. H / Housing Asset Manager	Mar 2021	
	2.9	Develop a Council-wide construction standard for Council housing and commercial new-builds and refurbishments to ensure that high standards of energy efficiency and sustainability are incorporated to building design and construction to achieve appropriate zero carbon buildings standard.	CD / Acting Head of Service (Commercial Programme)	June 2021	★
	2.10	Keep abreast of technological advances and novel technologies such as hydrogen power, heat and power battery storage and hybrid heat pumps so that we can exploit opportunities when appropriate. Staff will be expected to demonstrate this as part of annual appraisal and development process.	CD / Acting Head of Service (Commercial). H / Housing Asset Manager. CS / Sustainability Projects Officer	Ongoing	
	2.13	Undertake a programme to raise the energy performance of Council-owned housing incorporating the advice in the energy audits. Our aim is the Council Housing meet EPC B by 2030.	H / Housing Asset Manager	Sep 2021	★

Reduce energy used by IT systems	2.12	Seek opportunities to reduce emissions further from IT equipment. As part of the re-procurement of the server infrastructure and network switches, investigate options to reduce power use for cooling significantly.	CorpS / Digital ICT Manager	Mar 2021	
Increase the amount of energy generated by the Council	2.14	Explore possible sites for large-scale energy generation to enable us to produce our own energy and decarbonise our operations, and as a means of income generation and energy resilience.	CD / Infrastructure Manager / Acting Head of Service	Mar 2021	☆

Council Transport

Reduce the greenhouse emissions from transport used in the delivery of Council business and services	3.1	Provide 2-4 electric pool cars for staff to use for business purposes with dedicated charging facilities nearby. This may be part of a District-wide pool car scheme or a stand-alone Council scheme.	CD / Infrastructure Manager. CS / Sustainability Projects Officer	March 2021	
	3.2	All Council fleet will be replaced with ultra-low emission vehicles at the end of life or by 2028. This will include service vehicles such as those required for parking enforcement and the recycling collection vehicles.	CD / Museums Business Manager. F / Insurance Officer	Mar 2023	☆
	3.3	Flights will only be authorised in exceptional cases where there is no reasonable alternative and that long-distance journeys must be made using lower carbon options such as rail or else journeys will not be reimbursed.	CorpS / Senior HR Business Partner	Jan 2021	☆
	3.4	Explore options to reward and incentivise staff to choose lower emission travel. As part of this we will incentivise cycling by providing a mileage reimbursement for business trips travelled by bike. We will also explore how making changes to the Essential Car Allowance can support this aim.	CorpS / Senior HR Business Partner	Nov 2021	
	3.5	Ensure computer systems are set up to best make use of laptop video conferencing facilities, thereby reducing the need for travel.	CorpS / Digital ICT Manager	April 2021	
Improve facilities and green travel benefits for staff	3.6	Introduce the Cycle to Work scheme for staff to allow them to purchase tax-free bicycles and equipment.	CorpS / Senior HR Business Partner.	April 2021	

Reducing Community Emissions

We will…		**Action** (Number links to Sustainability Strategy Action)	**Lead**	**Completed by**	**Priority**
Communication and Behaviour Change					
Raise community awareness and encourage action to reduce environmental impacts and greenhouse gas emissions	1.9	Deliver strong and consistent messages to the public about sustainability, the environment and climate change through the Council's publicity channels.	CEXP / Policy and Communications Manager. CS / Sustainability Projects Officer	Monthly	
	1.10	Encourage and support community engagement by convening the Climate Crisis Response Working Group. Support and encourage groups, forums, events and partnerships that focus on local environmental action, including where appropriate, using Council resources to leverage the impact that groups or organisation can have where this is the most effective way to raise awareness. Encourage organisations to network, share experiences, and identify opportunities to play their part.	CS / Sustainability Projects Officer	At least monthly	★
	1.11	Work in partnership with local groups to deliver a climate change and sustainability public engagement programme to empower local citizens, schools, faith groups, charities and businesses and help overcome barriers to action. Identify low cost ways in which the Council can enable these groups to achieve more.	CS / Sustainability Officer	Mar 2022	★
	1.12	Work with the Business Improvement District and other business networks, to develop and deliver environmental schemes and improvements. This might include Greening Business Support Schemes or Business sponsored renewable projects.	CS / Public Realm Manager / Sustainability Officer. CEXP / Principal Policy & Economic Development Officer	Ongoing action	

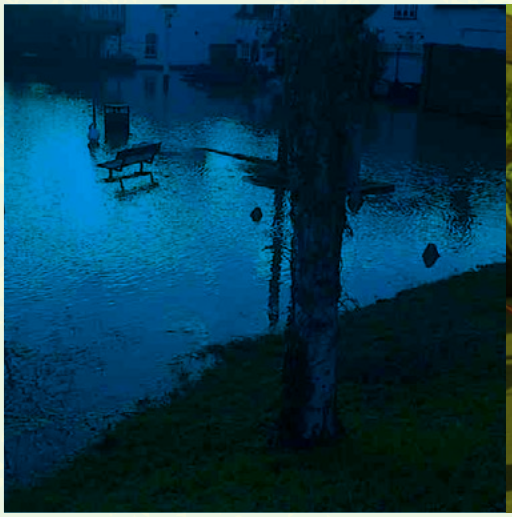
Influencing the Government	1.13	Influence gove nment to introduce more stringent sustainability policy in areas such as building, housing, renewable technologies and energy, through responding to consultations and working with organisations such as the Local Government Association.	CEXP / Principal Policy & Economic Development Officer.	Throughout the year	
Domestic and Business Energy Use					
Use the planning system to promote energy efficiency, renewables and a low carbon community	2.15	Develop Planning Policy requiring high standards of sustainable construction, resource efficiency, on-site renewable or low carbon energy generation.	P / Spatial Planning Manager	Dec 2021	☆
	2.16	Ensure that the Planning Department are equipped with expertise in sustainable construction methods and low carbon technology to be able to understand the best solutions available and demand appropriate improvements.	P / Spatial Planning Manager	Dec 2021	☆
	2.17	Explore financial and other ways to secure carbon offsetting measures in major developments. This can incentivise the construction of energy efficient buildings and finance the transition to a low carbon district.	P / Spatial Planning Manager	Dec 2021	
	2.18	In the review of the new Local Plan, seek to allocate suitable areas of land within the District following paragraph 151 of the NPPF for renewable and low carbon energy and heat.	P / Spatial Planning Manager	Dec 2023	☆
	2.19	Accelerate the conversion of streetlights to LED by supporting Herts County Council in their upgrade programme. We will upgrade our own street lighting and develop a policy for Council owned street light operating hours to ensure a safe environment for residents while also reducing light pollution and energy consumption.	CD / Infrastructure Manager	Mar 2021	
Reduce energy use from Council infrastructure across the District.	2.20	Undertake further studies to explore possible locations for district-heating schemes.	CD / Acting Head of Service. P / Spatial Planning Manager	Mar 2023	

Support householders to improve energy efficient, reduce fuel poverty and protect vulnerable residents	2.21	Deliver a scheme to support vulnerable and low income households by making use of the Energy Company Obligation funding to improve the energy efficiency and warmth of their home and reduce excess winter deaths.	CS / Sustainability Projects Officer. H / Private Sector Housing Officer	Dec 2020	
	2.22	Collaborate with Parish Councils and local groups, we will actively promote advice and information on reducing energy consumption, managing energy bills, renewable technology and tackling fuel poverty.	CS / Sustainability Projects Officer	Throughout the year	
	2.23	Improve promotion of the Home Repairs Assistance Grant providing support for improving the energy efficiency of vulnerable households, by improving visibility on the website and through a specific leaflet.	H / Private Sector Housing Officer	Dec 2020	
	2.24	In response to complaints, we will enforce the requirements of the Housing Health and Safety Rating Scheme (HHSRS) and the minimum energy efficiency standards to reduce the hazard of excess cold.	H / Private Sector Housing Officer	In response to complaints	
	2.25	Establish how the Council might more proactively monitor and enforce Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards given the existing resources to do so.	H / Private Sector Housing Officer	Jul 2021	
	2.26	Attend Landlord Forums and work with lettings agents and private landlords on an occasional basis to disseminate information and to raise awareness of Landlords' duties to meet minimum standards and to provide advice on the assistance available.	H / Private Sector Housing Officer	Quarterly	

Transport

Support the development of safe, convenient and resilient walking and cycling facilities	3.12	Develop a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) for the District to identify cycling and walking improvements required to increase the number of trips made on foot or by cycle, including key links such as the routes from the City Centre to the rail stations.	P / Spatial Planning Manager. CD / Infrastructure Manager	Dec 2021	
Reduce emissions from private vehicles by improving public transport, cycling walking and road infrastructure	3.7	Develop an innovative and comprehensive Sustainable Travel Town Vision to be submitted to Hertfordshire County Council as part of their development and support programme. This would include establishing a clean air zone in the centre of town which only allows low emission buses, taxis and cars through the town centre.	CD / Infrastructure Officer. CS / Sustainability Projects Officer	Jan 2021	★
	3.8	Develop planning policies that require the installation of EV charging points to new developments.	P / Spatial Planning Manager	Dec 2021	
	3.9	Identify locations to install secure cycle storage in the District to maximise use of bicycles and encourage cycling. This includes the provision of on-street cycle cages for streets of terraced houses.	CS / Infrastructure Manager	April 2021	
	3.11	Explore possibilities of introducing pay-by-the-hour bicycles for public use in partnership with Herts County Council.	CD / Infrastructure Manager	Mar 2022	
Promote a step change in the uptake of low emission vehicles	3.14	Evaluate the most cost-effective and practical options to increase EV charging infrastructure across the District using OLEV funding.	CD / Infrastructure Officer / Sustainability Projects Officer	Dec 2020	★
	3.15	Develop a strategy, and associated incentives, to reduce emissions from the pool of local authority-authorised taxis.	CS / Senior General Enforcement Officer	Sep 2021	★
	3.16	Discourage the use of larger, more polluting cars through parking charges.	CS / Senior General Enforcement Officer	Sep 2021	
	3.17	Introduce an all-electric (or hybrid) pool car club for businesses and residents of the District. This provides vehicles for members to use on demand thereby reducing the need for car ownership.	CS / Sustainability Projects Officer. CD / Infrastructure Manager.	Mar 2021	
Introduce measures to improve air quality	3.19	Continue to develop and implement the measures of our Air Quality Management Plan to reduce emissions from road transport and improve air quality.	CS/ Specialist Officer (Env. Compliance)	Mar 2022	

Reduce emissions from commercial and freight vehicles.	3.18	Explore the potential to introduce Urban Consolidation Centres, to enable last miles deliveries to be made using electric freight vehicles rather than diesel-powered HGVs. Located at the edge of a town or city, goods would be transferred from heavy vehicles at the UCC to the electric vehicles.	CD / Infrastructure Manager. CS / Sustainability Projects Officer. CEXP / Principal Policy and Economic Development Officer	Mar 2023	
Reduce the impacts of idling vehicles	3.21 3.22	Widely promote the Idling Action St Albans Campaign to raise awareness of the impact of idling vehicles on health and air quality. We will also introduce anti-idling zones and use enforcement measures to underpin their effectiveness. Children and parents will be the core focus of any campaigns. As part of this we will seek to restrict or remove permits for traders such as ice cream vans if they idle their engines to deliver their services.	CS / Sustainability Projects Officer / Parkin Services Manager. CS / Regeneration & Estate Manager	Aug 2021	
	3.23	Install utility access points in the city centre for traders and events staff to avoid the need for idling engines and generators.	CS / Public Realm Manager	Mar 2022	
Work with users and providers to work together to identify opportunities to improve services, raise awareness and achieve a modal shift in travel behaviour.	3.10	Explore options to introduce novel shared transport services such as demand-responsive transport.	CS / Sustainability Projects Office. CD / Infrastructure Manager	Mar 2023	
	3.24	Facilitate a regular transport stakeholder meeting to bring together Herts County Council, local transport providers and Intalink to encourage improvements to local public transport provision, cycle and walking routes and roads.	CD/ Infrastructure Manager	Dec 2021	
	3.25	Continue to lobby Thameslink for improved rail services and support improvements to the Abbey Line by participating in the Community Rail Partnership.	CEXP / Principal Policy & Economic Development Officer. CD / Infrastructure Manager	Throughout the year	
	3.26	Continue to meet regularly with local groups and forums to discuss issues and future projects and give passengers a means to voice their concerns.	CD / Infrastructure Manager	Throughout the year	
	3.27	Progress work to hold regular car free periods on St Peters Street.	CS / Community Engagement Officer	Mar 2021	



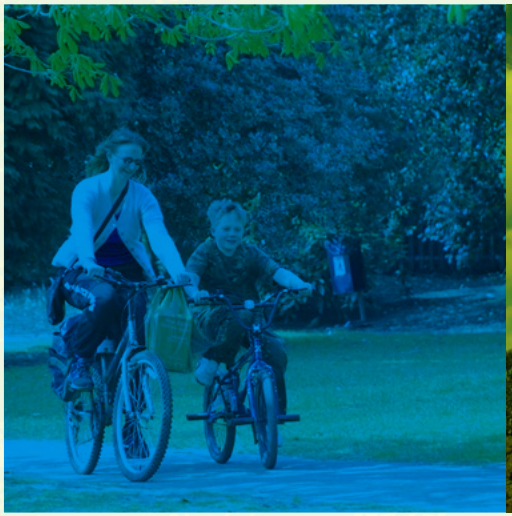


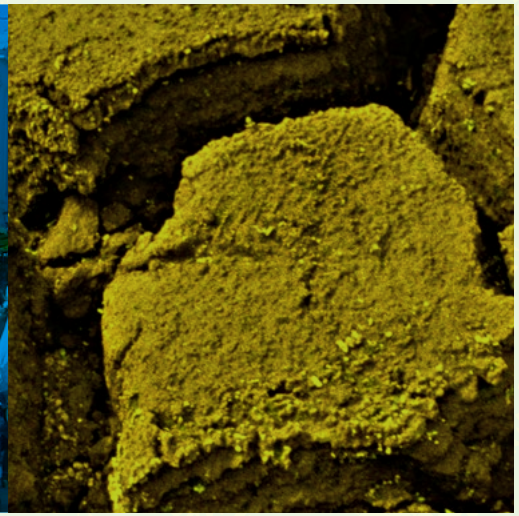
Staying in Touch

Web - our **Environment and Sustainability webpages** contain a wealth of information on all aspects of sustainability. We will provide progress updates here and promote relevant local schemes and initiatives.

Email - **sustainability@stalbans.gov.uk**

Write - Sustainability Team, St Albans City and District Council. St Peters Street, St Albans, Herts, AL1 3JE



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