

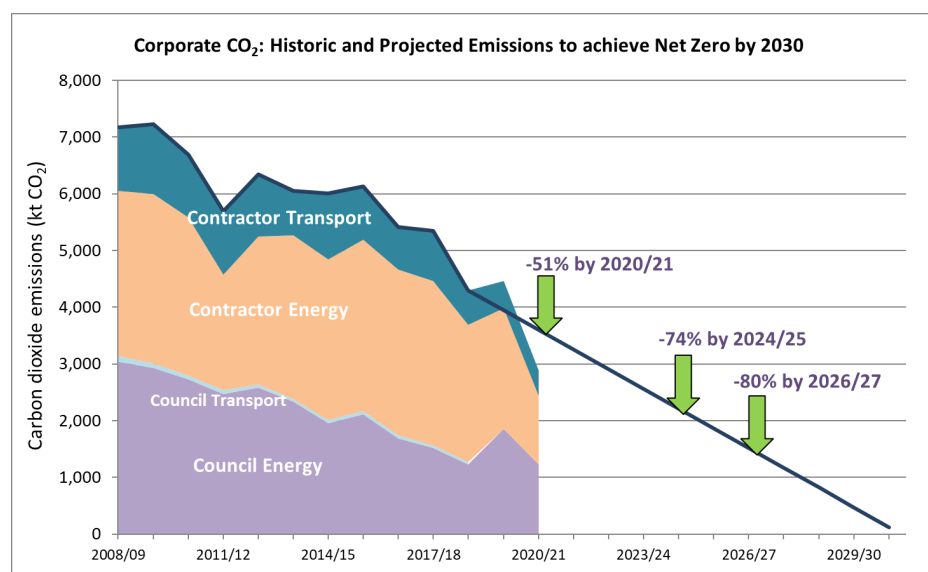
# Sustainability Newsletter

Issue 10: October 2021

## In this issue:

- Council emissions down by 63% since 2008/09
- COP26 comes to Glasgow
- What can you do to support COP26
- Electric bikes
- Cargo bikes
- Walking to Cop26
- What to do if your energy supplier ceases trading

## Council emissions down by 63% since 2008/09



A recent greenhouse gas analysis shows that St Albans City and District Council have reduced emissions from our buildings and services by 63% since 2008/09.

The closure of buildings and services due to the pandemic, caused a 40% reduction in emissions between 2019/20 and 2020/21. This goes above and beyond our intended emissions reduction target. Now that services are back to normal we risk emissions rising again. We are implementing a structured plan of building energy efficiency works which will allow us to achieve sustainable long-term reductions in energy use whilst still maintaining all services.

# COP26 COMES TO GLASGOW

**Every year 200 governments meet to coordinate the global response to climate change at COP, which means Conference of Parties. The 26th COP takes place 1st-12th Nov in Glasgow.**

## **What has been achieved so far?**

- 1997: COP3 established the Kyoto Protocol. Legally binding emission reduction targets were set for developed countries.
- 2009: COP15 established the Copenhagen Accord. Rich nations pledged to provide \$100bn per year to the poorest by 2020 and to limit temperature increase to below 2C.
- 2015: COP21 in Paris saw every nation pledge to constrain emissions and pursue efforts to limit warming to 1.5C. Agreements were struck on finance, adaptation and monitoring measures.

Nations were free to choose how ambitious their carbon cutting pledges are in their 'nationally determined contributions' (NDCs). There is an expectation that, over time, nations will increase their NDCs.

Since 2015, 190 countries have formally approved the Paris climate agreement in their domestic law.

## **Goals for COP26**

COP26 will be the first update from nations on NDCs made at COP21. It is hoped that COP26 will accelerate climate action in five priority areas: nature; adaptation, loss & damage; energy transition; zero carbon transport; and finance.

The official goals are;

- 1. Mitigation: The current climate policies in place across the world are insufficient to limit global warming to below 1.5C. Countries are asked to set ambitious targets and create action plans to achieve net zero by 2050.
- 2. Adaptation: To work together to enable and encourage countries affected by climate change to protect and adapt their infrastructure and ecosystems.
- 3. Finance: To mobilise the \$100bn per year which was committed by developed countries during COP19.
- 4. Implementation: To finalise the details on transparency, carbon trading and common timeframes for accelerating action, in a way that safeguards development and nature.

To find out more visit [www.ukcop26.org](http://www.ukcop26.org)



# WHAT CAN YOU DO TO SUPPORT COP26?

In order to tackle climate change we all need to play our part. If you would like to take action on climate change, there are lots of things you can do locally, to learn about what you can do:

- **Join St Albans Climate Action**

**Network:** is a group of organisations and individuals from across St Albans, Harpenden and the villages, taking action to stop climate change.

<https://sustainablestalbens.org/st-albens-climate-action-network/>

- **St Albans Count Us In:** Sign up and commit to any of the actions to reduce your personal greenhouse gas emissions. The campaign lays out the most effective, research-backed actions individuals can take to reduce their carbon emissions, including flying less; walking & cycling more; greening your money. [www.count-us-in.org/en-gb/businesses/count-us-in/campaigns/st-albens-climate-action-network/](http://www.count-us-in.org/en-gb/businesses/count-us-in/campaigns/st-albens-climate-action-network/)

- **Sustainable St Albans** has produced a weekly blog containing information and tips to help you in making your Count Us In commitments.

<https://sustainablestalbens.org/blog-3/>

- **Join a group:** There are numerous groups and organisations in the district that are committed to the climate and ecological crisis. Whether it's community food growing, campaigning on topical issues or learning with others how to make your lifestyle more sustainable, there are groups for everyone.

[www.stalbens.gov.uk/getting-involved](http://www.stalbens.gov.uk/getting-involved)

- Go to an **Our Planet Our Future event:** Sustainable St Albans hold regular local events. The next one, on Tues 9th Nov is an Open Mic Night to share ideas about the climate emergency.

<https://sustainablestalbens.org/get-started/our-planet-events>

- **Listen to Radio Verulam:** As well as environmental discussions there are a series of weekly 'Count Down to COP' interviews on the morning show which will help you understand the actions you can take to make your lifestyle more sustainable.

<https://radioverulam.com/series/count-down-to-cop>





# ELECTRIC BIKES - THE PERFECT SOLUTION TO ST ALBANS HILLS

**You may have seen more electric bikes on the roads around the district recently. Since March 2020, e-bike sales have more than doubled. The pandemic has seen a boom in cycling and perhaps you are considering making the switch.**

An e-bike is like a normal pedal bike with an extra motor attached to the front, rear, or middle of the bike. To classify as an ebike, the motor needs to help you cycle, rather than propel you on its own. When you push on the pedals, the motor engages, giving you a boost to help you on particularly challenging hills. The motor is programmed to stop propelling when you move above a certain speed – usually around 20mph.

E-bikes also come with a battery. Charging the battery is as easy as charging a mobile phone. Typical charge time is around 3 hours and depending on the capacity can power you for 20 to 100 miles.

Cycling on an e-bike is like cycling on a regular bike. However, the boost from the motor makes cycling more accessible for people who live in hilly locations such as St Albans town centre, and allow trips that involve carrying bags, such as from supermarkets, to be made more easily.



They are a great way to improve your fitness gradually, whilst also helping to reduce air pollution, greenhouse gases and congestion on the roads.

Prices for e-bikes range from £500 to more than £5,000. Factors such as where the motor is placed, the weight of the frame and battery range will affect the price.

There are lots of suppliers selling e-bikes locally. Look online to find one near you.

At the Council we have 2 pool electric bikes for staff to use when they need to make short local journeys, as well as some normal peddle bikes.



# **IDLING...**

# **SWITCH OFF**

# **FOR CLEANER AIR**



Leaving your engine running when you're parked creates 20 times more pollution than when driving at 30mph. These pollutants are harmful to health, the environment and your pocket.

Let's work together.  
If you're parked...

# **TURN IT OFF.**



# CARGO BIKES - BIKES THAT CARRY STUFF

**You might think that cycling is not for you because you need to carry goods, pets or people when you travel. You may have given up cycling once you started a family. But this doesn't need to be the case.**

Cargo bikes are designed to carry bulky loads and make a great sustainable alternative to a car. There are many different designs that can be used for all kinds of errands including the school run, transporting four legged friends to the park or fulfilling your small business needs.

**Boxbikes:** Come in two or three-wheeled versions and look similar to a large wheel barrow. They sit close to the ground, giving a steady feel, which makes them perfect for transporting small children.

**Longtails:** These look and feel more like a regular bike. Longtails are slimmer than boxbikes and can maneuver through narrow lanes and cycle paths more easily. With the right accessories, longtails can even carry adult passengers!

**Pedicabs:** You might think of these as rickshaws, but they can be adapted to carry heavy and bulky loads, up to 250kg!

Using a cargo bike is so simple and can become an integral part of life. And if you are concerned about whether you are fit enough to pedal the load, many are fitted with an electric motor to assist you as you pedal. The batteries can be removed and charged in an ordinary domestic socket.

There are many different types of cargo bikes. The best cargo bike for you depends on what you'd like to use it for. Listed below are the most common types.



**If you are a business and are considering using ecargo bikes as a sustainable transport solution, you may be eligible for grants from the energy saving trust:**

<https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/grants-and-loans/ecargo-bike-fund/>



# WALKING TO COP26

On 7th October St Albans became the first stop for an environmental action group called Walk2Cop26. This group are walking 20 miles a day and holding 500 conversations as they do so on their way to Glasgow in time for the UN Climate Conference.

During the afternoon, St Saviour's Church hosted a talk and workshop by the Walk2Cop26 team attended by students, community groups, businesses and local residents keen to engage with what we can do here in St Albans to help tackle the climate emergency.

Chris White delivered the keynote speech as the City and District Council leader and the panel included speakers from Sustainable St Albans, Herts and

Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Wilderhood Watch, Friends of the Earth, Aecom and Sandringham School. The discussions that took place were very interesting and resulted in a general consensus that we need to raise our voices and have greater collaboration and cooperation in order to tackle climate change.

The following morning the Walk2Cop26 team were joined by a diverse group of people from the St Albans area, including local councillors and Sustainable St Albans, who then walked with the team to Sandridge Village Hall as they began the next leg of their journey to the world's largest climate conference. Waving placards and banners the group were cheered on by local residents as they passed by.





## What to do if your energy supplier ceases trading

**At the time of writing, 12 energy suppliers have ceased trading. This occurred because the price of wholesale gas rose to levels above that which they were allowed to charge customers, leaving them out of pocket.**

If your energy supplier has ceased trading, Ofgem advises that you take a meter read, cancel any direct debits and wait for notice of your new energy supplier.

You can rest assured that Ofgem will protect any credit

on your energy account and your energy will not be disconnected.

Once you are sent details of your new supplier, you should then contact them to confirm that you have been placed on the cheapest tariff and/or shop around to find the best deal.

Energy prices are expected to rise this winter. If you are having difficulty paying your bills please visit the [Ofgem website](#).

Now is a good time to think about how you might reduce your heating costs whilst still keeping warm at home. Insulation, draught-proofing

and glazing is vital to ensure that the heat does not escape. This [blog by a member of Sustainable St Albans](#) sets out how one local household completely transformed the energy efficiency of their Victorian home through insulation.

For advice on energy efficiency visit the [Energy Saving Trust](#) website.

If you are on a low income, have young children or older people in your home, or a health issue that is impacted by the cold, you might be eligible for free insulation.

Contact Yes Energy who manage the [St Albans Warmer Homes scheme](#).

Gas and Power Forward Season Price Graph



Ref: Laser Energy

This newsletter contains information about living more sustainably and is brought to you by the Sustainability Team at St Albans City and District Council. The information provided is not an endorsement of any of the products, sources of information or organisations mentioned.

For inquiries or comments, please contact [sustainability@stalbands.gov.uk](mailto:sustainability@stalbands.gov.uk).