

Council

Date: Thursday 20th November 2025
Time: 6.30 pm
Venue: Council Chamber - Guildhall, Bath

To: All Members of the Council

Dear Member

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **Council** on **Thursday 20th November 2025** in **Council Chamber - Guildhall, Bath.**

The agenda is set out overleaf.

Yours sincerely



Jo Morrison
Democratic Services Manager
for Chief Executive

NOTES:

1. **Inspection of Papers:** Papers are available for inspection as follows:

Council's website: <https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/ieDocHome.aspx?bcr=1>

2. **Details of decisions taken at this meeting** can be found in the minutes which will be circulated with the agenda for the next meeting. In the meantime, details can be obtained by contacting as above.

3. **Recording at Meetings:-**

The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 now allows filming and recording by anyone attending a meeting. This is not within the Council's control. Some of our meetings are webcast. At the start of the meeting, the Chair will confirm if all or part of the meeting is to be filmed. If you would prefer not to be filmed for the webcast, please make yourself known to the camera operators. We request that those filming/recording meetings avoid filming public seating areas, children, vulnerable people etc; however, the Council cannot guarantee this will happen.

The Council will broadcast the images and sounds live via the internet www.bathnes.gov.uk/webcast. The Council may also use the images/sound recordings on its social media site or share with other organisations, such as broadcasters.

4. **Public Speaking at Meetings**

The Council has a scheme to encourage the public to make their views known at meetings. They may make a statement relevant to what the meeting has power to do. They may also present a petition or a deputation on behalf of a group.

Advance notice is required not less than two full working days before the meeting. This means that for meetings held on Thursdays notice must be received in Democratic Services by 5.00pm the previous Monday.

The Council now has a maximum time limit for this, so any requests to speak cannot be guaranteed if the list is full.

Further details of the scheme can be found at:

<https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sch=doc&cat=12942>

5. **Emergency Evacuation Procedure**

When the continuous alarm sounds, you must evacuate the building by one of the designated exits and proceed to the named assembly point. The designated exits are signposted. Arrangements are in place for the safe evacuation of disabled people.

6. **Supplementary information for meetings**

Additional information and Protocols and procedures relating to meetings

<https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/ecCatDisplay.aspx?sch=doc&cat=13505>

Council - Thursday 20th November 2025

at 6.30 pm in the Council Chamber - Guildhall, Bath

A G E N D A

1. EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chair will draw attention to the emergency evacuation procedure as set out under Note 5.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

At this point in the meeting declarations of interest are received from Members in any of the agenda items under consideration at the meeting. Members are asked to complete the green interest forms circulated to groups in their pre-meetings (which will be announced at the Council Meeting) to indicate:

(a) The agenda item number in which they have an interest to declare.

(b) The nature of their interest.

(c) Whether their interest is **a disclosable pecuniary interest** or an **other interest**, (as defined in Part 4.4 Appendix B of the Code of Conduct and Rules for Registration of Interests)

Any Member who needs to clarify any matters relating to the declaration of interests is recommended to seek advice from the Council's Monitoring Officer or a member of his staff before the meeting to expedite dealing with the item during the meeting.

4. MINUTES - 18TH SEPTEMBER 2025 (Pages 5 - 10)

To be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL OR FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

These are matters of information for Members of the Council. No decisions will be required arising from the announcements.

6. TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

If there is any urgent business arising since the formal agenda was published, the Chair will announce this and give reasons why it has been agreed for consideration at this meeting. In making this decision, the Chair will, where practicable, have consulted with the Leaders of the Political Groups. Any documentation on urgent business will be circulated at the meeting, if not made available previously.

7. QUESTIONS, STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

The Democratic Services Manager will announce any submissions received. The Council will be invited to decide what action it wishes to take, if any, on the matters raised in these submissions. As the questions received and the answers given will be circulated in written form there is no requirement for them to be read out at the meeting. The questions and answers will be published with the draft minutes.

8. ANNUAL CLIMATE AND NATURE PROGRESS REPORT 2025 (Pages 11 - 132)

9. WEST OF ENGLAND GROWTH STRATEGY (Pages 133 - 138)

10. APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The report will follow, following interviews on 12th November.

11. TREASURY MANAGEMENT MONITORING REPORT TO 30TH SEPTEMBER 2025 (Pages 139 - 160)

12. AVON PENSION FUND ANNUAL REPORT (Pages 161 - 194)

13. AUDIT COMMITTEE 2024/25 ANNUAL REPORT (Pages 195 - 206)

14. MOTION FROM THE GREEN GROUP - AI (Pages 207 - 210)

15. MOTION FROM THE INDEPENDENTS FOR B&NES GROUP - COMMUNITY LIBRARIES (Pages 211 - 212)

16. MOTION FROM THE LIBERAL DEMOCRAT GROUP - SEND PROFITS (Pages 213 - 214)

17. QUESTIONS, STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

The Democratic Services Manager will announce any submissions received. The Council will be invited to decide what action it wishes to take, if any, on the matters raised in these submissions. As the questions received and the answers given will be circulated in written form there is no requirement for them to be read out at the meeting. The questions and answers will be published with the draft minutes.

The Committee Administrator for this meeting is Jo Morrison who can be contacted on 01225 394358.

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING

Thursday 18th September 2025

Present:- **Councillors** Michael Auton, Alex Beaumont, David Biddleston, Colin Blackburn, Alison Born, Anna Box, Paul Crossley, Chris Dando, Jess David, Sarah Evans, Fiona Gourley, Kevin Guy, Alan Hale, Liz Hardman, Gavin Heathcote, Steve Hedges, Saskia Heijltjes, Oli Henman, Joel Hirst, Lucy Hodge, Duncan Hounsell, Shaun Hughes, Grant Johnson, Samantha Kelly, John Leach, Hal MacFie, Ruth Malloy, Lesley Mansell, Paul May, Matt McCabe, Simon McCombe, Sarah Moore, Robin Moss, Michelle O'Doherty, June Player, Manda Rigby, Dine Romero, Paul Roper, Sam Ross, Onkar Saini, Toby Simon, Shaun Stephenson-McGall, George Tomlin, Malcolm Treby, Chris Warren, Tim Warren CBE and Joanna Wright

Apologies for absence: **Councillors** Tim Ball, Mark Elliott, Ian Halsall, David Harding, Dr Eleanor Jackson, George Leach, Ann Morgan, Bharat Pankhania, Andy Wait, Karen Walker and Sarah Warren

25 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chair drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure, as set out on the agenda.

26 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

27 ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL OR FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The Chair reminded the meeting that the Council was currently in the pre-election period for the Widcombe & Lyncombe ward, and to bear this in mind for any contributions.

The Chair invited Councillor Colin Blackburn to briefly address the meeting. Councillor Blackburn made the following statement;

“At our last Full Council meeting, a member of the public addressed us about an issue of alterations made to council owned grade listed buildings, without listed buildings consent, which, by definition, is a criminal offence. He addressed the Council Leaders and in my factual question after the statement, I referred directly to the Chief Executive. I acknowledge that in asking that question I treated said officer unfairly and wish to withdraw the question.”*

The Chair then made the customary announcements regarding microphones and phones and announced that the meeting was being webcast. Anyone who did not wish to be filmed should make themselves known to the camera operators.

28 MINUTES - 17TH JULY 2025

The Council considered the minutes of 17th July 2025.

On a motion from Councillor Kevin Guy, seconded by Councillor Paul May, it was

RESOLVED that the amended* minutes of 17th July 2025 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

29 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

There was none.

30 QUESTIONS, STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

Statements were made by the following members of the public;

Clive Humphries addressed the meeting about student HMOs in Bath. A copy of Clive's statement has been placed on the Minute book and added to the online record. Councillor Tim Warren asked Clive if he considered landlords should be paying business rates, to which Clive responded that he didn't. He added that he thought landlords should pay a contribution to the Council that is equitable to rates.

Mark Jerzak made a statement about the Chew Valley community trail, highlighting the benefits of the northern section of the path and calling on the Council to complete the circuit. A full copy of Clive's statement has been placed on the Minute book and added to the online record. Councillor Lucy Hodge asked Mark if he thought it would be helpful for the Council to contact Bristol Water again, and the speakers on this issue meet with her to discuss this. Mark agreed that it would.

Nick Baker, a Parish councillor from Chew Stoke, also spoke in support of completing the Chew Valley recreational trail for the many health, wellbeing and environmental benefits it brings. A full copy of Clive's statement has been placed on the Minute book and added to the online record.

Nicola Wilson, also a Parish Councillor for Chew Stoke, made a statement about the trail, bringing a historical family aspect to the issue as her grandmother had first come up with the idea of a trail around Chew Valley 25 years ago. A full copy of Nicola's statement has been placed on the Minute book and added to the online record. She urged the Council to take steps to press for completion of the trail.

The Chair thanked all the speakers and referred their statements to the relevant Cabinet Members.

31 APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTOR OF FINANCE (SECTION 151 OFFICER)

The Council considered a recommendation from its Restructuring Implementation Committee regarding this appointment.

On a motion from Councillor Kevin Guy, seconded by Councillor Robin Moss, it was unanimously

RESOLVED to agree the appointment of a new Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer), Mr Stuart Donnelly, from 5th January 2026 (*final date confirmed after the meeting*).

32 POLICY DEVELOPMENT & SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025

The Council considered the Policy Development & Scrutiny annual report.

On a motion from Councillor Dine Romero, seconded by Councillor Robin Moss, it was unanimously

RESOLVED to note the contents of the Policy Development and Scrutiny Annual Report 2024-2025.

33 ANNUAL REPORT ON THE USE OF THE REGULATION OF INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT 2000 (RIPA) & INVESTIGATORY POWERS ACT (IPA) 2016

The Council considered a report updating them on the use of Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act and Investigatory Powers Act, Policies, and Procedures.

On a motion from Councillor Manda Rigby, seconded by Councillor Robin Moss, it was unanimously

RESOLVED

1. To note the summary of statistics on the use of Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 and Investigatory Powers Act 2016 (RIPA/IPA) by the Council (Appendix 1);
2. To note the RIPA & IPA training module (link para 3.4 of the report); and
3. To note and approve the Council's Policy on the use of Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) & Investigatory Powers Act (IPA) 2016 (link at para 3.5 of the report) which has been unchanged since the report to Council in 2024.

34 STANDARDS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

The Council considered the annual report of its Standards Committee.

On a motion from Councillor Toby Simon, seconded by Councillor Tim Warren, it was unanimously

RESOLVED to note the work of the Standards Committee, as set out in the annual report.

35 LIBERAL DEMOCRAT MOTION - HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION

The Council considered a motion from the Liberal Democrat group.

Councillor Alan Hale raised a point of order, although the specific procedural rule which he considered had been breached was not specified. His query, supported by various other councillors, was whether it was appropriate to have this motion on the agenda in a pre-election period. Councillor Hardman explained that advice had been sought from the Chief Executive (and Returning Officer) and Monitoring Officer and that her decision had been to permit the motion, the core element of which was requesting additional powers from Government

On a motion from Councillor Sarah Moore, seconded by Councillor Jess David, it was then

RESOLVED that

Council believes:

1. HMOs are an essential part of the local housing market, particularly within Bath, providing affordable accommodation not only for students, but also for professionals, key workers, lower-income workers and temporary workers among others.
2. Students are an important part of the fabric of life here in Bath and North East Somerset; that the universities and colleges are vital strategic partners; and that both bring important social, community, cultural and economic benefits to our area.

Council notes that:

3. 'House in Multiple Occupation' (HMO) and 'large House in Multiple Occupation' are defined terms under housing legislation.
4. Council tax exemptions applied to those HMOs solely occupied by students represent a reduction in potential income to the local authority and in funds available to support the vital public services on which all residents rely.
5. Government no longer compensates local authorities for this reduced tax income via grant funding.
6. More widely, overall grant funding awarded to B&NES has been reduced by central government from £31 million in 2013/14 to just £1.3 million in 2025/26, a reduction of over 95%.
7. Government has indicated willingness to recognise the impact of mandatory discounts and exemptions in the Fair Funding Review.
8. B&NES faces a housing affordability crisis which is exacerbated by new HMO conversions reducing the supply of affordable family homes.
9. B&NES Council has previously adopted planning policies to support the aim of maintaining an appropriately balanced housing mix in the city of Bath.

10. The forthcoming Local Plan Options consultation represents an opportunity to consult on new potential policy approaches to HMOs.

Council therefore:

11. Calls on government to recognise the challenges faced by university cities in the Fair Funding Review formula proposals.
12. Highlights the opportunity for B&NES residents to participate in the Local Plan Options consultation, from 3 October to 13 November 2025.
13. Invites the Council Leader and local MPs to press central government to acknowledge the impact of student HMOs on local authority finances and to address it with a Fair Funding formula that compensates local authorities in full.

[Notes;

1. The above resolution was carried with the votes set out below;

For (36) – Councillors Michael Auton, Alex Beaumont, David Biddleston, Alison Born, Anna Box, Paul Crossley, Chris Dando, Jess David, Fiona Gourley, Kevin Guy, Liz Hardman, Steve Hedges, Oli Henman, Joel Hirst, Lucy Hodge, Duncan Hounsell, Grant Johnson, Samantha Kelly, Hal MacFie, John Leach, Sarah Moore, Ruth Malloy, Lesley Mansell, Paul May, Matt McCabe, Simon McCombe, Robin Moss, Michelle O’Doherty, Manda Rigby, Dine Romero, Paul Roper, Onkar Saini, Toby Simon, Shaun Stephenson-McGall, George Tomlin, Malcolm Treby

Abstain (11) – Councillors Colin Blackburn, Sarah Evans, Alan Hale, Gavin Heathcote, Saskia Heijltjes, Shaun Hughes, Sam Ross, June Player, Chris Warren, Tim Warren, Joanna Wright]

36 QUESTIONS, STATEMENTS AND PETITIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

The Chair made reference to the Q&A document that had been circulated to the meeting.

The meeting ended at 7.46 pm

Chair

Date Confirmed and Signed

Prepared by Democratic Services

This page is intentionally left blank

Bath & North East Somerset Council			
MEETING	Council		
MEETING DATE:	20th November 2025		
TITLE:	Annual Climate and Nature Progress Report 2025		
WARD:	All		
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM			
List of attachments to this report:			
Attachment1: Annual Climate and Nature Progress Report 2025			
Attachment 2: Action Plan Review 2025 (Annex A to the Annual Climate and Nature Progress Report)			
Attachment 3: Climate and Nature Resident Survey 2025_Summary Report			

1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 This report updates Council on the progress made in tackling the Climate and Ecological Emergencies in 2024-25, both as a Council and as a wider district.
- 1.2 This report notes that there is significant activity underway and planned within the Council and across the district to tackle both emergencies. It recognises that more action is needed if we are to meet our climate change targets and enable the district to become Net Zero by 2030, as set out in the Corporate Strategy 2023-27.

2 RECOMMENDATION

Council is asked to:

- 2.1 Note the progress made in tackling the Climate and Ecological Emergencies during 2024-25, as set out in the Attachments.
- 2.2 Approve the Annual Climate & Nature Progress Report before publication.

3 THE REPORT

- 3.1 The Council's commitment to delivering against the Climate and Ecological Emergencies declared in 2019 and 2020 remains as strong as ever. Whilst the Climate and Ecological Emergencies are not the same, they are linked and share causes and solutions. The Council recognises it has an important role to play in tackling both emergencies, through a combination of its own delivery and enabling others to take action.
- 3.2 This year the Council continued to invest in tackling the Climate and Ecological Emergencies and is grateful for continued partnership working that enables it to reach further towards a low carbon, nature positive and climate resilient district. Tackling climate change will help support the recovery of nature and vice versa and we work where possible to deliver benefits for both emergencies together and the community, for example as we bring forward updated Local Plan proposals.
- 3.3 The Council has made progress reducing emissions on our own estate, reducing our Scope 1 and 2 Emissions by 44% since our baseline year of 2016-17. In February, we agreed to set aside the budget to electrify our waste fleet as vehicles become due for replacement, as well as to decarbonise more of our own buildings. We have continued to install upgrades, including solar PV at Bath Sports and Leisure Centre and have been successful in securing a further £312k from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund to upgrade Carrswood Adult Day Centre and the Civic Centre in Keynsham.
- 3.4 The most recent territorial emissions data, reported by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ), shows the steady progress that is being made to reduce emissions across Bath and North East Somerset. Emissions per capita have decreased by 53% since 2005 to 3.4tCO₂e per person per year, ahead of England and South-West decreases.
- 3.5 Progress to reduce emissions sufficiently quickly towards Net Zero is challenging, however. Greenhouse gas emissions across BANES arise from all the services supporting civic life, the approximately 8,535 businesses, 79,250 homes, and the 3,250,000 km driven each day on our roads, as well as from agriculture. They are the result of many thousands of decisions by residents, visitors and businesses as well as national, regional and local government action and policies.
- 3.6 Between 2005 and 2023, greenhouse gas emissions for the district fell by 46%. The 2022 to 2023 drop of 46 ktCO₂e was driven by decreases in domestic emissions, public sector, industry and commercial sector emissions. While this annual decrease continues the downward trend in our area's emissions reduction, the district is not on track to achieve net zero by 2030, in common with other local authorities and the national pathway.
- 3.7 The Council is proud to have worked with regional partners to develop the first Local Nature Recovery Strategy in England and delighted to be part of a consortium of partners, led by the Forest of Avon, who were successful in securing funding to develop the first new national forest in 30 years. This new forest will span Bath and North East Somerset (BANES), North Somerset, Bristol, Wiltshire and Gloucestershire and aims to create at least 2500 hectares of new woodland and other tree habitats in its first five years.

- 3.8 We have also made significant progress on our ability to monitor the state of nature across the district. We have calculated the land being managed for nature across our own estate, and we have worked with WECA and neighbouring local authorities to establish a baseline for land managed for nature in BANES and to develop a regional 'wildlife index'.
- 3.9 We have progressed our own Green Infrastructure delivery programme, providing benefits for nature, health and climate resilience. We have developed new Green Infrastructure Standards and a revised Local Plan Green Infrastructure policy.
- 3.10 The approach to the Local Plan has been reset due to updates to national Planning Policy, and we are still ensuring it will be our most ambitious for nature recovery. We are exploring the option of requiring 20% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), rather than the mandatory 10%, and planned policies include a requirement for sustainable drainage systems and local targets for tree cover.
- 3.11 The Council's regional work has also expanded on climate. We are an active participant in regional energy planning project Mission Net Zero, a £5m initiative, funded by Innovate UK, to accelerate the West of England's transition to Net Zero. We are also contributing to work on regional climate resilience chaired by the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority (WECA). This complements a project running internally this year to understand how we need to adapt our services as the impacts of climate change are felt.
- 3.12 In Spring 2025, over 800 residents told us how they felt about the state of climate and nature, what they had been doing and why, as well as what the Council could support more of. The most important issues raised were around water, how we restore nature, the energy we use and how we travel. Next was concern about the waste we produce and how we prepare for the impacts of climate change.
- 3.13 Feedback as to how the Council could play a greater role included improving transport options, enabling more energy efficient housing upgrades, protecting and increasing green spaces as well as pursuing stronger policies, enforcement, leadership, and lobbying higher government.
- 3.14 This survey complements the Council's annual Voicebox survey that this year was answered by 1072 residents. This survey told us that access to nature and green spaces was the most important to them in making somewhere a good place to live, alongside affordable, decent housing and the level of crime & antisocial behaviour.
- 3.15 The detailed feedback shared is helping guide us as we update our Climate and Nature Strategy to focus council action, as well as prepare for more community conversations about the roles we all play.

4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 The Council's climate action plans are in keeping with the role identified for local government in the Climate Change Act 2008 and the regular reports of the UK's climate advisory body, the UK Climate Change Committee.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

- 5.1 The Annual Climate & Nature Progress Report outlines the next steps that are covered by existing budgets or notes where there are resource constraints associated with delivery. Business case development will be undertaken and opportunities to increase external funding will be sought.

6 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 This report recommends that Council note the positive progress achieved over the past year across the priorities set out in the Climate Emergency Strategy and Ecological Emergency Action Plan. As such, a risk assessment has not been conducted in relation to this report.

7 EQUALITIES

- 7.1 An EIA has not been carried out as this is a report on progress, not new policy. It should be noted that actions to tackle the Climate and Ecological Emergencies have benefits that extend beyond just climate and nature. Home energy efficiency improvements and domestic retrofit can reduce household energy bills. Improved access to public transport and active travel can improve health outcomes and reduce social isolation. Access to nature and green social prescribing can have positive impacts for people experience limiting health conditions.

8 CLIMATE CHANGE

- 8.1 This Report provides a direct update on the Council's progress towards tackling the Climate and Ecological Emergencies, built on the Climate and Ecological Emergency Declarations in 2019 and 2020 respectively. It delivers on our commitment to report annually.
- 8.2 The Report presents the combined actions of services across the Council and where the Council has worked in partnership and sets out the next steps across the identified priority areas for climate (decarbonising buildings, decarbonising transport, increasing renewable energy generation and decarbonising council operations) and ecology (leadership and evidence, land and water management, nature-based solutions, access and engagement, evidence and monitoring, and working in partnership).

9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 9.1 None – providing an annual progress report was a commitment set out in the Climate Emergency Strategy and Ecological Emergency Action Plan.

10 CONSULTATION

This report has been reviewed and cleared by the Executive Director of Sustainable Communities, the Head of Legal Service & Monitoring Officer, and the Council's S151 Officer.

Contact person	Jackie Clayton, Head of Place Shaping
-----------------------	---------------------------------------

	jackie_clayton@bathnes.gov.uk
Background papers	<p>Climate Emergency Strategy – available online - https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/read-our-climate-strategy-and-action-plan</p> <p>Ecological Emergency Action Plan – available online - https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/ecological-emergency-action-plan</p> <p>Corporate Strategy 2023-27</p>
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	

This page is intentionally left blank



Bath & North East
Somerset Council

Improving People's Lives

Bath & North East Somerset Annual Climate and Nature Progress Report 2024-2025



TACKLING THE CLIMATE &
ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCY

Contents

Foreword	3
Working with Communities	4
Climate Emergency	7
Ecological Emergency	27
Sources, Abbreviations and Glossary	36
Annex A: Progress on Actions Summary (see also separate document)	40

Foreword

Our commitment to delivering against the Climate and Ecological Emergencies declared in 2019 and 2020 remains as strong as ever. I hope that the progress set out in this update helps convey this commitment, as well as encouraging everyone across our communities to act where they can.

Whilst the Climate and Ecological Emergencies are not the same, they are linked and share causes and solutions. The Council recognises it has an important role to play in tackling both emergencies, through a combination of its own delivery and enabling others to take action.

This year we have continued to invest in tackling the Climate and Ecological Emergencies, and we are grateful for continued partnership working that enables us to reach further towards a low carbon, nature positive and climate resilient district. Tackling climate change will help support the recovery of nature and vice versa and we work where possible to deliver benefits for both emergencies together and the community, for example as we bring forward updated Local Plan proposals.

We have made progress reducing emissions on our own estate. In February, we agreed to set aside the budget to electrify our waste fleet as vehicles become due for replacement, as well as to decarbonise more of our own buildings. We have continued to install upgrades, including solar PV at Bath Sports and Leisure Centre and have been successful in securing a further £312k from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund to upgrade Carrswood Adult Day Centre and the Civic Centre in Keynsham.

**Councillor Sarah Warren,
Deputy Council Leader and Cabinet
Member for Climate and Sustainable Travel**



We are proud to have worked with regional partners to develop the first Local Nature Recovery Strategy in England and delighted to be part of a consortium of partners, led by the Forest of Avon, who were successful in securing funding to develop the first new national forest in 30 years. This new forest will span Bath and North East Somerset (BANES), North Somerset, Bristol, Wiltshire and Gloucestershire and aims to create at least 2500 hectares of new woodland and other tree habitats in its first five years.

Our regional work has also expanded on climate. We are an active participant in regional energy planning project Mission Net Zero, a £5m initiative, funded by Innovate UK, to accelerate the West of England's transition to Net Zero. We are also contributing to work on regional climate resilience chaired by the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority (WECA). This complements a project running internally this year to understand how we need to adapt our services as the impacts of climate change are felt.

I would like to thank the over 800 residents who took the time to share feedback on what matters to them as part of our Spring 2025 climate and nature survey, as well as those who came to workshops in Midsomer Norton and Bathavon North. These views are helping us shape our new combined Climate and Nature Strategy that will consider additional topics such as the food we eat, the resources we use and the impacts we can have on our water and rivers. It is only by working together that we will deliver the needed work to become more resilient, reduce our emissions, adapt to the changing climate and restore nature.

Working with Communities – Community Feedback

Working with our local communities is an important part of delivering action for climate and nature. By encouraging individuals to share their views, take action and connect with local landscapes we can tackle the climate and ecological emergencies together. This section shares some of the highlights of our work with communities.

- In Spring 2025, over 800 residents told us how they felt about the state of climate and nature, what they had been doing and why, as well as what the Council could support more of.
- The most important issues raised were around water, how we restore nature, the energy we use and how we travel. Next was concern about the waste we produce and how we prepare for the impacts of climate change.
- Feedback as to how the Council could play a greater role included improving transport options, enabling more energy efficient housing upgrades, protecting and increasing green spaces as well as pursuing stronger policies, enforcement, leadership, and lobbying higher government.
- This survey complements the Council's annual Voicebox survey that this year was answered by 1072 residents. This survey told us that access to nature and green spaces was the most important to them in making somewhere a good place to live, alongside affordable, decent housing and the level of crime & antisocial behaviour.
- The detailed feedback shared is helping guide us as we update our Climate and Nature Strategy to focus council action, as well as prepare for more community conversations about the roles we all play.

CASE STUDY: Community Conversations

In Autumn 2024, we hosted two Community Conversation events to hear residents' views on climate and nature. Held in Batheaston and Midsomer Norton, the sessions welcomed a total of 58 attendees. Council representatives joined table discussions to help facilitate conversations on key themes of transport, waste & consumption, nature & wildlife, buildings & energy, and food.

Alongside these guided discussions, participants were free to explore the room and connect with local organisations who shared information on their work in the area. Organisations represented included Bath and West Community Energy, the Climate Hub, the Centre for Sustainable Energy, and Grow Batheaston.

The events highlighted a wide range of community-led actions already underway and active groups working across all discussion themes. They also sparked ideas for new initiatives and helped build connections between residents.



**Midsomer Norton
Community Conversation,
November 2024**

Working with Communities - Nature

- One of the key themes of our Bath River Line (BRL) project has been 'working with communities', particularly students and schoolchildren. The 'Life on Water' exhibition showcased powerful photographic stories exploring life along the River Avon created by photography students. Supported by the BRL team from January to June, students received mentoring, networking opportunities, and a behind-the-scenes visit to Avon Fire and Rescue.
- We ran a workshop for Year 5 and Year 6 students at Somerdale School looking at river biodiversity, natural flood management and water quality. The children engaged really well with the session and came away with a better understanding of the natural environment surrounding Somerdale.
- Our Neighbourhood Nature Areas scheme has enabled more local residents to improve the value of areas that we currently manage, such as road verges and small open spaces, for nature. We now have a total of 33 sites where residents are managing sites, with our most recent survey showing positive outcomes for people and nature.
- Our Landscape City Project has been working with local communities and 'friends of' groups to set up new volunteering opportunities, which will help bring more woodlands and species-rich grassland in Bath into positive management for nature. The Project has also engaged with local communities to inform plans to develop a new 'eco-hub' at Entry Hill Golf Course.

Page 21

CASE STUDY: Charlcombe Community Nature Reserve

Volunteers are transforming former grazing land at a Council-owned site in the Charlcombe Valley into a thriving community nature reserve.

Using funding received through our Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Policy, we have entered into a long-term partnership with the recently set-up Friends of Charlcombe Community Nature Reserve to improve the 6.5-hectare site for people and wildlife.

Local volunteers have already spent over 300 hours on making improvements to the site, with the Council's Parks Team cutting areas of the reserve to create conditions for wildflowers to thrive. This is happening alongside the development of a longer-term Land Management Plan for the site.

The Friends of Group have been engaging local 'citizen scientists' to record the wildlife that already calls the site home, including twenty species of butterfly! They have also been asking local residents to share their ideas for improving the site for nature.



**Charlcombe
Community Nature
Reserve**

Working with Communities

CASE STUDY: Developing a New Food Strategy

Bath and North East Somerset is developing a new food strategy with one of the key focuses being on the sustainability of our food and where it comes from.

The first in a series of workshops took place in May 2025, marking a successful start towards our aim of a community driven strategy. More than 60 stakeholders—from food producers and local businesses to representatives from education, health, and the voluntary sector—came together to shape our vision for more inclusive & sustainable food in B&NES.

Guided by the Sustainable Food Places framework, participants explored five core themes and engaged in lively discussions to identify priorities, challenges, and opportunities. With 100% positive feedback and lots of great insights, the workshop has been a great starting point for our community-led strategy.



Workshop 1 developing the new Food Strategy, May 2025

CASE STUDIES: Reducing Food Waste

Tackling food waste is a key objective of the Council's zero waste strategy. In 2025 and into 2026, we are focused on delivering a weekly food waste recycling service to residents in central Bath. This work will make sure all homes in B&NES can regularly recycle food waste. The waste team has also partnered with Curo this Autumn to run targeted engagement to increase awareness and use of the food and wider recycling services.

Electrical waste recycling workshops for schools

In Spring 2025, the Council's waste project team coordinated a programme of educational workshops to 12 local primary schools, reaching around 500 pupils. The workshops were held in the training room at Keynsham Recycling Hub where pupils were able to look out over the public recycling centre and rear operational yard. Sessions were also held within schools to ensure wider reach and accessibility.

The workshops were funded using a social value contribution from Valpak, the Council's electrical compliance contractor. The Council partnered with Sustainable Hive and Bath Share and Repair, to deliver the workshops for Year 5 and 6 pupils. The sessions focused on practical activities on how to identify and appropriately recycle electrical waste and wider learning on the recycling services provided in B&NES.



Climate Emergency

Tackling the Climate Emergency

Our 2019 Climate Emergency Strategy sets our ambition and priorities to tackle the Climate Emergency, with actions targeted across the Bath and North East Somerset area and our own operations. Our four priorities are to:

1. Decarbonise Buildings;
2. Decarbonise Transport;
3. Increase Renewable Energy Generation; and
4. Decarbonise the Council's own operations.

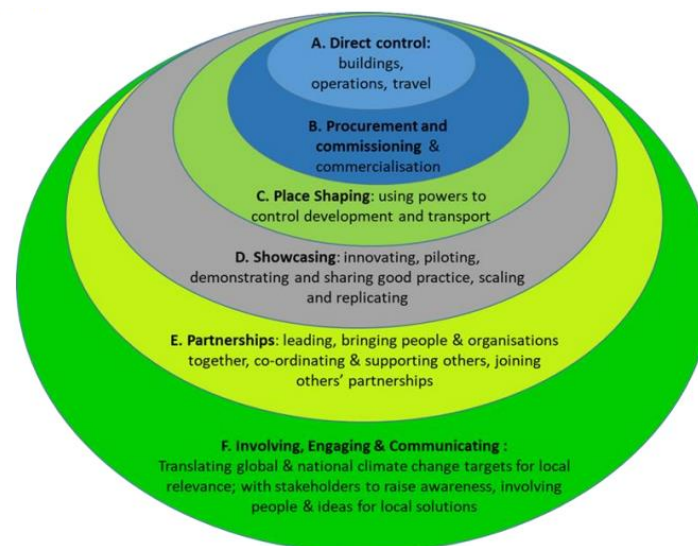
Our principles for delivery of these priorities include working in partnership, providing leadership, including in place shaping, and enabling community action.

In 2025, BANES was ranked 17th of UK local authorities by Climate Scorecards UK, which assesses action across seven categories: buildings & heating, transport, planning & land use, governance & finance, biodiversity, governance & finance, and waste reduction & food. This placed us 4th outside of London boroughs, 2 percentage points behind the cities of Bristol, Edinburgh and Glasgow^[1].

We were delighted to see our overall score increase due to improved action on sustainable transport, collaboration & engagement and waste reduction & food and are a 'top performing council' for planning & land use and buildings & heating. We continue to use the framework to inform our priorities.

In 2024, B&NES were once again awarded a B Score from the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP), for our progress on tackling the climate emergency. Last year, nearly 100 states and regions around the world disclosed their climate data in this way.

How Local Authorities Control and Influence Emissions

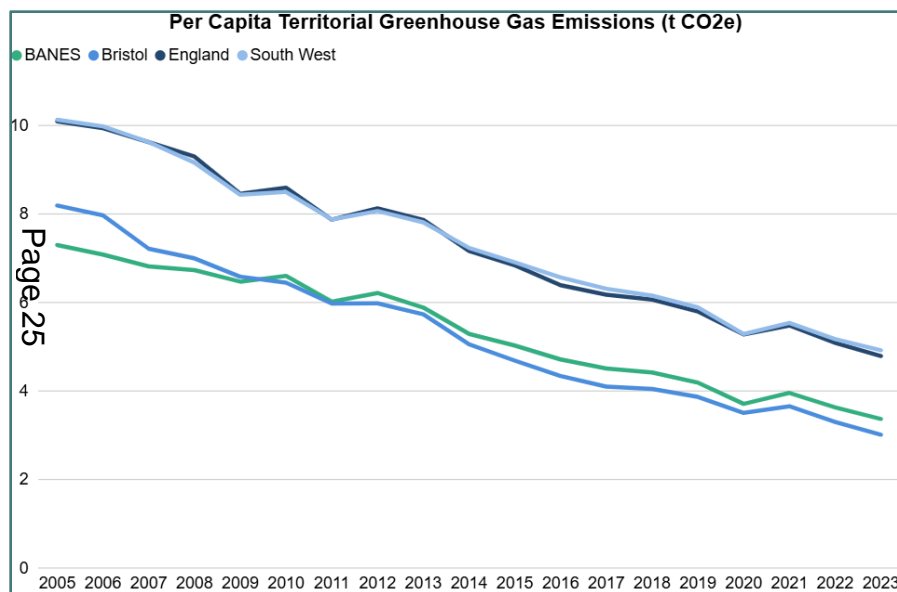


Source: Coxcoo, R. & Roberts, S. (2020) *Climate Action Planning Tool for Local Authorities*, Centre for Sustainable Energy. <https://www.cse.org.uk/news/view/2541>

The Climate Change Committee estimates that local authorities in the UK have power or influence over a third of emissions in their local areas^[2]. We therefore prioritise action where we can have the most impact and deliver for residents.

Tackling the Climate Emergency

The latest territorial emissions data, reported by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ), shows the steady progress that is being made to reduce emissions across BANES. Emissions per capita have decreased by 53% since 2005 to 3.4tCO₂e per person per year, ahead of England and South-West decreases [\[3\]](#).



Progress to reduce emissions sufficiently quickly towards Net Zero is challenging, however. Greenhouse gas emissions across BANES arise from all the services supporting civic life, the approximately 8,535 businesses [\[4\]](#), 79,250 homes [\[5\]](#), and the 3,250,000 km driven each day on our roads [\[6\]](#), as well as from agriculture. They are the result of many thousands of decisions by residents, visitors and businesses as well as national, regional and local government action and policies.

As a council, emissions from our own operations (Scope 1 and 2) account for <1% of the total territorial emissions for the wider BANES area. In alignment with our principles, we see tackling our own operational emissions as important work to provide local leadership on the Climate Emergency.

This year, as set out in this progress update, we have secured investment to significantly reduce emissions in two of the highest emissions areas of our own estate – our fleet and more of our own buildings. However, further progress may be restricted as the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund that we have relied on to fund buildings decarbonisation has now been closed by national government and we wait to hear what might replace it.

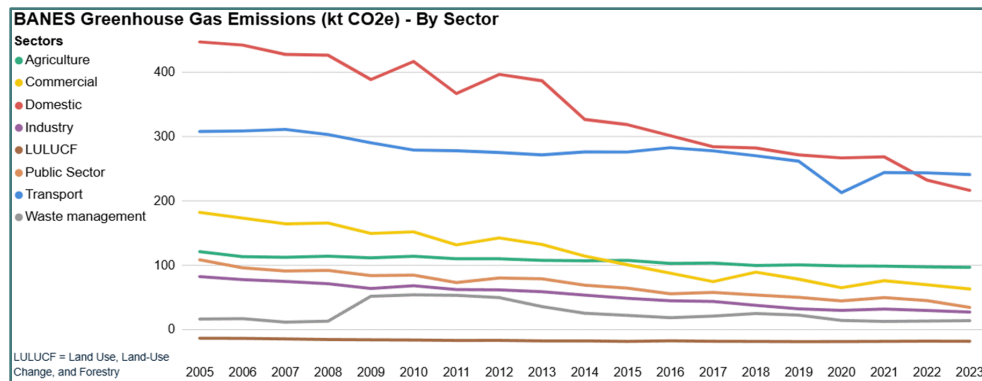
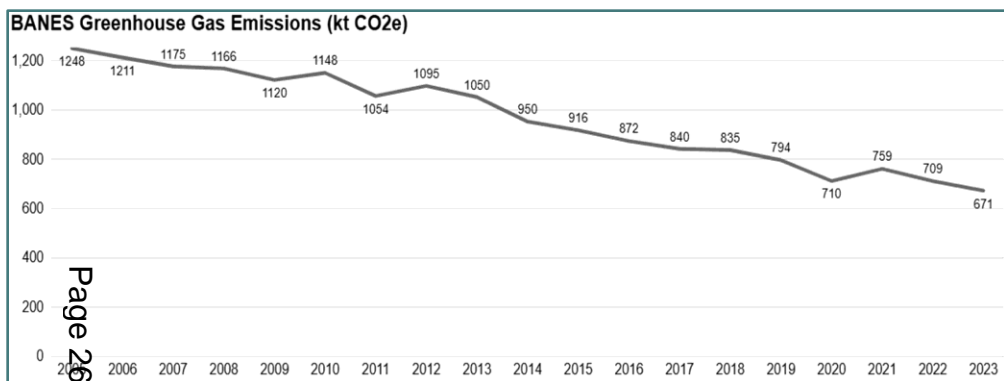
Alongside our own emissions reductions, we also work in partnership to support emissions reductions across the whole of the BANES area. This year we gained agreement from our Future Ambition Board to convene and work with civic partners more closely. We were also successful in a partnership bid from the National Lottery to establish a Community Energy Champions network to advise residents.

At regional level, are part of a new West of England Climate Resilience Working Group and contributed to work to assess risks across the region. At the same time, we progressed our own Green Infrastructure delivery programme, providing benefits for nature, health and climate resilience. We have developed new Green Infrastructure Standards and a revised Local Plan Green Infrastructure policy.

Where We Are Now – Decarbonising Bath and North East Somerset

The graphs below shows the territorial emissions for the Bath and North East Somerset district^[3].

Territorial emissions cover emissions that occur within the UK's borders and are used to track UK-wide progress towards international and domestic targets. Territorial emissions arise from use of gas, petrol and diesel (direct) and electricity (indirect), including from domestic, transport, public sector, commercial, industry, agriculture, land use, land use change and forestry, and waste management sources.



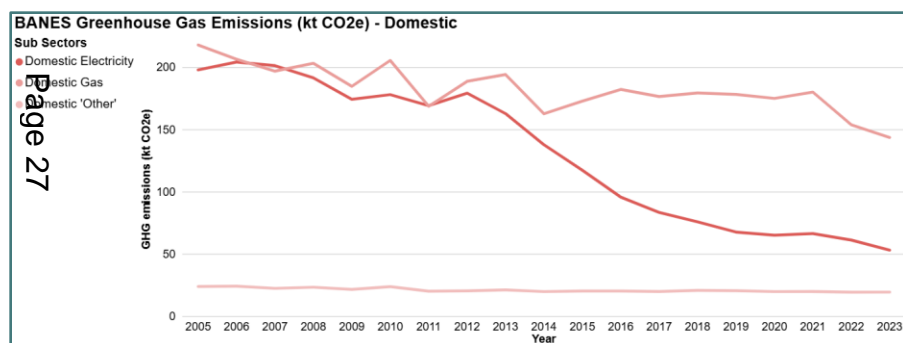
Between 2005 and 2023, greenhouse gas emissions for the district fell by 46%. The 2022 to 2023 drop of 46 ktCO₂e was driven by decreases in domestic emissions, public sector, industry and commercial sector emissions. While this annual decrease continues the downward trend in our area's emissions reduction, the district is not on track to achieve net zero by 2030, in common with other local authorities and the national pathway.

Transport (36%) and domestic (32%) emissions combined make up 68% of BANES territorial emissions. These sectors have been the two key sectors driving emissions since 2005 reporting began and have influenced the focus of the 2019 Climate Strategy reported on in this Progress Report. Commercial (9%), public sector (5%) and industry (4%) together contribute 18% of emissions and a proportion of these emissions will include energy use in buildings. Agriculture contributes 14% of territorial emissions and waste management 2%. Land Use, Land Use Change, and Forestry (LULUCF) contributes a positive 3%.

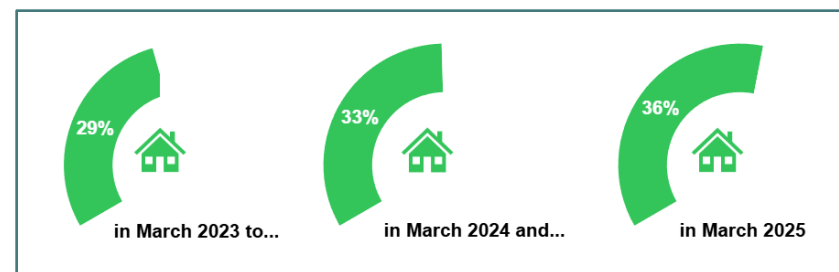
Within the highest emitting sectors are the following Top 5 sub-sectors: domestic gas (21%), travel on minor roads (17%), travel on A roads (16%), agriculture livestock (10%) and domestic electricity (8%). Thereafter, commercial emissions from electricity (5%) and gas (4%), as well as public sector gas (3%) contribute 12% of territorial emissions.

Highlights: Decarbonising Buildings

Approximately one third of emissions in BANES come from electricity and gas used in our domestic buildings. The key domestic emissions challenge as a district is to replace gas. To do so also requires energy efficiency improvements, especially in older buildings, so that heat pumps can operate effectively and affordably. As a result, the B&NES 2019 Climate Strategy set out that 65,000 properties would need some kind of home upgrade. The below chart sets out progress to date^[3].



- There were 162 heat pumps installed for domestic buildings in BANES in the 2024-25 financial year^[4]. In addition, 169 residents have completed a home assessment via Retrofit West, which provides a costed whole-house retrofit plan tailored to each home.
- EPCs are used to give broad efficiency ratings to buildings. The percentage of domestic homes in BANES with an EPC rating of A-C has increased from 29% in March 2023, to 36% in March 2025^[4].



- 22% of BANES privately owned homes have an EPC rating of C and above. 70% of social rented homes have reached that target. Social rented properties are reaching higher levels of energy efficiency as the government has previously set a mandatory target of EPC C by 2030 and has invested in this goal through the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund and the new Warm Homes: Social Grant.
- Residents in BANES remain able to access Retrofit West's services, and we continue to work to encourage uptake of grant funding and free retrofit home upgrade advice to residents and local businesses. Calls from people in BANES to the Warm Homes Helpline make up 24% of total enquiries to CSE's programme across the region.
- The Council is developing a Retrofit Enabling Plan to supplement the current updating of its Climate and Nature Strategy which will help us to target our resources as we strive to increase the installation of energy saving upgrades to homes across the region and across all tenures. The Plan is currently an internal document to support action A1.1 'Develop Council's strategic approach to retrofit'.

Highlights: Decarbonising Buildings Continued

- The Council is also preparing to work in partnership with private landlords and Retrofit West's new Landlord Service to meet the requirements of the incoming Renters Rights Bill and extended Decent Homes Standard.
- We are developing policy options for the Council's Carbon Offset Fund in anticipation of receiving the first developer contributions to enable and support additional retrofit and renewable energy projects. This will benefit homes and communities within BANES, whilst saving emissions and reducing energy use and reliance on fossil fuels.
- The Council is part of a coalition with Bristol City Council, North Somerset and Bristol City Leap to deliver energy efficient upgrades to homeowners via the Warm Homes: Local scheme which launched in September 2025.
- Our Energy Transformation team has been working with colleagues from Housing and the Health and Well Being Board to understand the impact of homes that suffer from excess cold, heat or damp and mould and to direct residents to advice and assistance in making improvements.

CASE STUDY: Community Energy Network – Energy Champions

The Community Energy Network is a partnership project with B&NES Council, Bath & West Community Energy, University of Bath, Centre for Sustainable Energy (CSE) and, through the BANES Community Wellbeing Hub, Age UK and Citizens Advice. It is funded by the National Lottery.

Bath & West Community Energy are recruiting a volunteer team of Energy Champions. They will support residents to save energy at home and improve home energy efficiency, through providing support and signposting to relevant information. Through Energy Essentials training, provided by CSE, the Champions will learn new skills and gain the knowledge to actively engage with the wider community about energy efficiency.

A pilot group of [11 Energy Champions](#) has been recruited, this network will continue to grow.

Highlights: Decarbonising Buildings Continued

CASE STUDY: Green Heritage Homes

Partnership project with Bath & West Community Energy (BWCE), B&NES Council, Bath Preservation Trust, Centre for Sustainable Energy, People Powered Retrofit, and the South West Net Zero Hub.

Bath and North East Somerset is known to have one of the highest concentrations of listed buildings in the country. There are over 5,000 Grade I, II*, and II listed buildings in Bath, and the district has 663 Grade I listed buildings. Homeowners of listed buildings face particular challenges in implementing energy saving upgrades. Green Heritage Homes is providing tailored energy advice through home visits with a conservation officer and retrofit advisor.

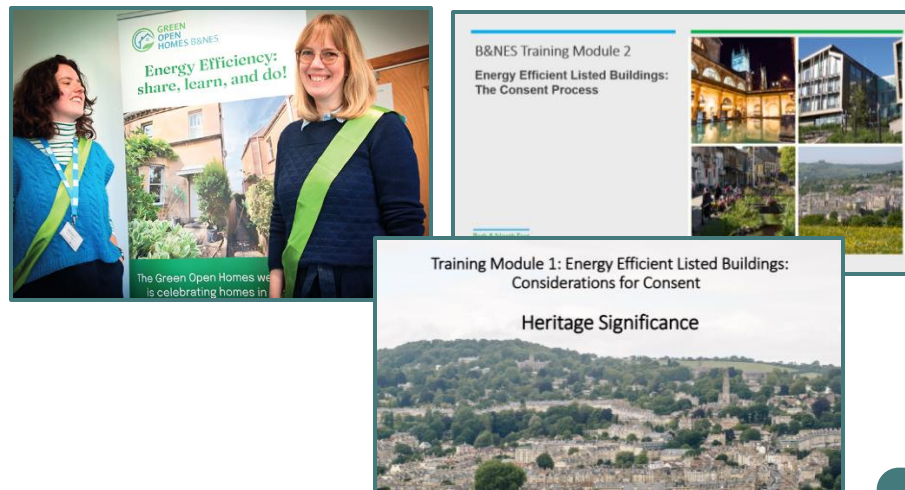
Phase I of the Green Heritage Homes project ended in March 2025, one of 36 Local Energy Advice Demonstrator (LEAD) projects funded by the Department of Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) to promote the sensitive retrofitting of listed buildings.

69x pre-app surveys were completed, offering retrofit advice to listed building homeowners and 46% of homeowners surveyed indicated they are planning to undertake retrofit works following advice. Additional engagement included running 4x listed building surgeries, hosting free online module training, creation of listed building factsheets, creation of 'bitesize' retrofit videos - which have collectively received over 2,000 views - and engagement with other heritage and retrofit professionals through talks, webinars, and seminars.

As of April 2025, Green Heritage Homes has been renewed for 'Phase II' over three years, funded by Historic England, WECA, and Curo Group. B&NES will work with energy experts from BWCE.

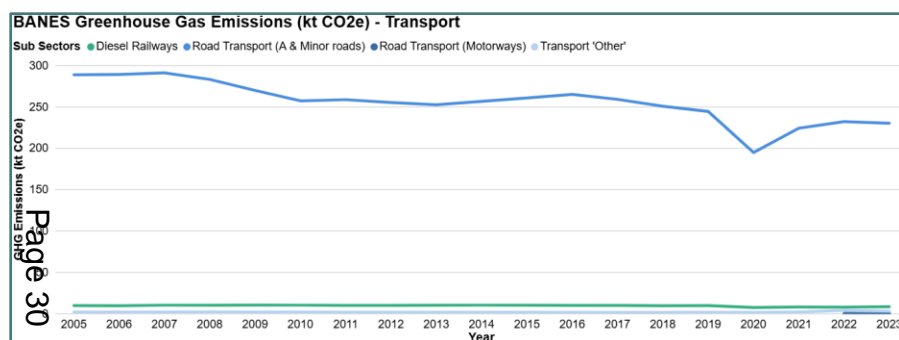
The project will deliver:

- Level 0 pre-app advice for retrofit of listed buildings.
- Joint energy/pre-app surveys with Bath and West Community Energy (BWCE), engaging with social housing suppliers such as Curo.
- Progression of Local Listed Building Consent Order (LLBCO) for solar panels in inner roof valleys within the Bath Conservation Area.
- Dissemination of learnings with other local authorities to motivate similar project work.



Highlights: Decarbonising Transport

Decarbonising transport remains one of our biggest challenges, in part due to the rural-urban nature of our district and the combination of changes needed to policy, behaviour and technology. We focus on creating an environment that makes it easier to travel by public transport or active travel, including walking, wheeling and cycling, as well as enabling the switch to electric vehicles.

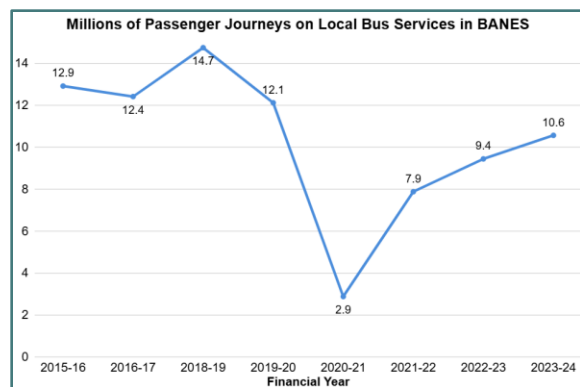


- Emissions from transport in the district is in line with the national picture. The most recent Carbon Budget from the Climate Change Committee noted '*Emissions in surface transport...have shown limited or no reductions overall*' [\[8\]](#).
- This is reflected in the small decrease in the number of kilometres travelled by all vehicles in the district of -3% (-4% for cars and taxis) vs the 2016 data, established as the baseline in the 2019 Climate Strategy [\[9\]](#). In the same period there has been an increase of 3% in kilometres travelled by all vehicles (with no change for cars and taxis) in England.
- In order to decarbonise transport, there needs to be a switch from fossil fuel vehicles to electric cars, vans, HGVs, buses, and motorcycles, supported by measures to reduce traffic growth, improve the efficiency of conventional vehicles, and decarbonise the rail network [\[8\]](#).

- In addition, enabling alternatives to driving, via public transport, walking, wheeling and cycling as well as developing communities that minimise travel demand, reduces emissions and delivers a range of additional benefits such as improving air quality, congestion and for our health & wellbeing [\[8\]](#).
- To date, 3.7% of privately registered vehicles in BANES are classed as Ultra Low Emissions Vehicles (ULEVs), with 2.3% of these battery electric. This is slightly ahead of the national average where ULEVs make up 3.2% of private vehicle registrations in July 2025 [\[10\]](#) [\[11\]](#).
- To enable the transition to electric vehicles, the Council is committed to expanding access to electric vehicle infrastructure, with plans to install an additional 200 chargers (400 charging sockets) by 2030. This is specifically aimed at supporting residents without access to off-street parking.
- BANES currently has 118 public chargers (60 chargers per 100,000 residents, vs the England average of 124) [\[12\]](#). Changes in procurement regulations had impacted rollout progress, but these are now resolved. Between August 2024, and July 2025, a total of 13,629 electric vehicle charging sessions were recorded across the district via the Revive Network.
- The target housing numbers set by national government in 2025 result in the need to increase housing in the district by almost 30,000 homes. As this has been translated into potential sites under the Local Plan during 2025, particular focus has been put on understanding likely emissions that will result for transport, seeking to minimise these as far as possible.

Highlights: Decarbonising Transport – Public Transport

- At the time of report publication, the Council will be consulting on a new Movement Strategy for the Bath area, in line with *Creating Sustainable Communities: Journey to Net Zero*, published in February 2025 and focused on Keynsham and Saltford, Hicks Gate, the Somer Valley, and Whitchurch Village. These strategies seek to create sustainable communities by providing more travel choices whilst investing in a transport network that meets current and future community needs.
- In order to encourage more journeys to be made by public transport, the Council continues to work with WECA to grow bus use and improve service quality. This is through initiatives such as the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP), the Transport for City Regions fund (TCR) and the Enhanced Partnership between WECA, B&NES and bus operators that coordinates delivery and unlocks funding.
- The number of passenger journeys in BANES taking place on local bus services has increased from 9.4 million in 2022-23 to 10.6 million in 2023-24.

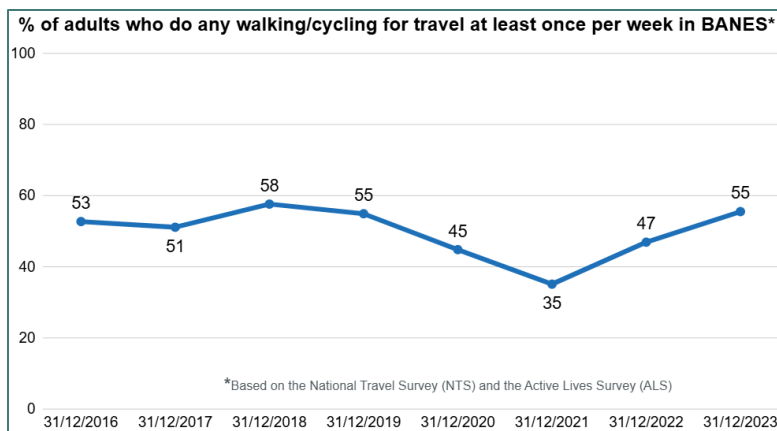


- Activities to increase bus use and improve service quality include fares and access, service support and infrastructure investment:

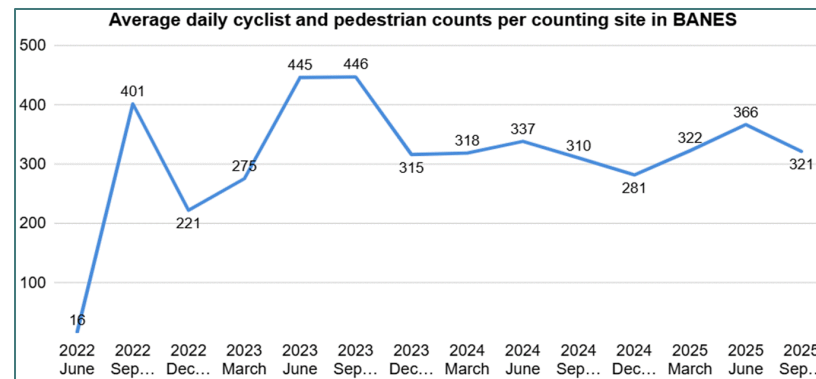
- National £3 adult single fare cap in place until March 2027 and £1 child fare cap for under-16s. WECA, with support from B&NES, is investing to keep most single journeys at £2.40 or less.
- Free travel offers including Birthday Bus, support for care leavers, and 'kids go free' during the summer holidays.
- Enhanced frequency on key routes including Park & Ride hours extension trial in summer 2025.
- WESTlink demand-responsive transport improving access in less well-served areas.
- Electrification of Weston Island depot to support zero-emission buses, one of four depots in the region being transformed. Charging infrastructure is being installed, making it a key hub for Bath's zero-emission fleet.
- CRSTS-funded improvements to Bath City Centre and the Bath to Bristol Strategic Corridor, including bus priority and stop upgrades.
- As part of the regional approach, B&NES is working towards having a fully electric bus fleet by 2030. Electric buses will be in operation in the district during 2026 as part of £90m regional funding throughout the region. Electric buses are planned to operate on 10 routes across Bath.
- Each electric bus saves around 75 tonnes of carbon dioxide annually. This is equivalent to removing 54 cars from the road.
- The numbers of rail passenger entries and exits (rail use) has increased at all BANES train stations between 2022-23 and 2023-24. At Bath Spa station there were an estimated 6,118,136 passenger entries and exits in 2023-24, compared to 5,468,466 in 2022-23.
- A feasibility study commissioned by WECA for reopening Saltford rail station has been completed, with report publication expected by the end of this year. B&NES, WECA, and Network Rail are developing a rail network timetabling study to identify infrastructure upgrades needed for regular services at a new station.

Highlights: Decarbonising Transport – Walking, Wheeling and Cycling

- The Council is committed to increasing walking and wheeling in the district. Activity during 2024/25 has been focused on delivering the Local Active Travel & Safety Programme and starting work on the Scholars Way project funded under the national CRSTS programme for sustainable transport corridors. Liveable Neighbourhoods trials and decisions about their permanent implementation have also been undertaken.
- In February 2025, the Council published an Active travel Masterplan. Currently, over a third of car trips across BANES are less than 5km. There is the need to make walking, wheeling and cycling, or 'active travel', the natural choice for a lot more of these shorter journeys. The Active Travel Masterplan is a comprehensive plan that sets out the existing and future network of active travel infrastructure required to enable and provide for sustainable and healthy forms of transport around the district.
- In 2023, 55% of adults reported walking or cycling for travel at least once per week in BANES, returning to pre-pandemic levels:[Note: update before publication once 2024 released]



- Our 25 active travel count sites have recorded an average of 366 cyclists and pedestrians daily in 2025, including weekends.



- Organisations, businesses and schools can help increase levels of walking, wheeling and cycling through creating travel plans that encourage and enable their employees and communities to try alternative ways of commuting and doing the school run.
- At the end of April 2025, 51% of schools in BANES were registered for the ModeSHIFT Stars scheme to create school travel plans and 15% of schools had an accredited plan ranging from 'approved' to 'outstanding'. Chew Stoke Church School was recognised as the England Primary School of the Year in 2024/25 by the scheme. New guidance from the Department of Education is that all schools should develop a Climate Action Plan during 2025 and ModeSHIFT Stars will be a way to understand and work on sustainable travel as part of this.
- Since TIER/Dott took over the e-Bike/Scooter trials in September 2023, 863,000 kilometres have been clocked in BANES. There's been more than 18,000 trips taking place across BANES. The service runs 24/7 as of October 2025.

Highlights: Decarbonising Transport

CASE STUDY: New Bus Initiatives

Starting in April 2025, BANES introduced new measures to make public transport more affordable and accessible, supporting sustainable travel across the region. Funded by WECA and North Somerset Council, the initiative represented a £1.3 million investment aimed at improving travel choices and reducing reliance on private vehicles.

The package included a cap on most children's bus fares at £1, preventing an increase to £1.30 and saving families up to £60 per child per school year. It also extended free 24/7 bus travel for Disabled Person's travelcard holders, removing previous time restrictions, and continued free bus travel for care leavers for another year. Additionally, the cost of multi-operator day bus tickets was capped at £7, preventing a rise to £8, ensuring affordability across 11 different bus companies. In summer 2025, kids went free on the region's buses.

These improvements have created a more sustainable, accessible, and efficient transport network, encouraging greater use of public transport and reducing carbon emissions. The package runs until March 2026, supporting long-term climate goals through enhanced mobility options.



CASE STUDY: Bath Cycle Hangars

Bath has expanded its cycle hangar programme with the installation of 20 new hangars, supporting the Council's commitment to active travel and sustainable transport. This brings the total to 41 hangars across BANES. Each hangar provides secure, weather-protected storage for up to six bicycles, occupying half the space of a standard car parking bay.

Since their introduction in 2023, cycle hangars have seen high demand, with occupancy reaching 94% in April 2025. In Bath, existing hangars have been at capacity for nearly a year, highlighting the need for additional secure cycle storage. The expansion aims to encourage more people to choose cycling for everyday journeys, improving travel options, health, and wellbeing.

The initiative is funded through the Government's Active Travel Fund and delivered in partnership with WECA, which is investing in over 80 new cycle hangars across the region. Future funding opportunities will be explored to further expand cycle storage and promote sustainable transport.



Highlights: Increasing Renewable Energy Generation

Increasing renewable energy generation across the district helps to decarbonise the electricity grid, improve energy security and reduce the emissions associated with our energy use. We work in close partnership with local energy organisations to identify and develop renewable energy projects that benefit local people. Significant growth in installed capacity is expected but further work is still needed to identify enough suitable sites to meet our 300MW target by 2030.

- The Council continues to work closely with Bath & West Community Energy (BWCE). This year our partnership secured £1.5m lottery funding to develop the BANES Community Energy Network. Please see case study on next page.
- We are supporting Keynsham Community Energy with feasibility assessment for a solar project on Keynsham leisure centre.
- The Council is a partner to the £5m Mission Net Zero project led by Bristol City Council. The project will publish a Regional Climate Investment Plan for the West of England region in 2025.
- We are continuing our work with partners across WECA to identify where we could use heat from the abandoned and flooded mines, working across the region to provide lower cost, low carbon heating to buildings. We will have outputs from these studies later this year.
- We are carrying out a study as part of the Mission Net Zero project, to understand if we can develop a heat network to

supply low carbon heat to the city centre. We are engaging with some of Bath's biggest commercial off takers as well as our own internal stakeholders to understand how this could help to decarbonise buildings within the World Heritage Site and provide a future 'plug-in-and play' low carbon solution to enterprises who want to relocate to Bath.

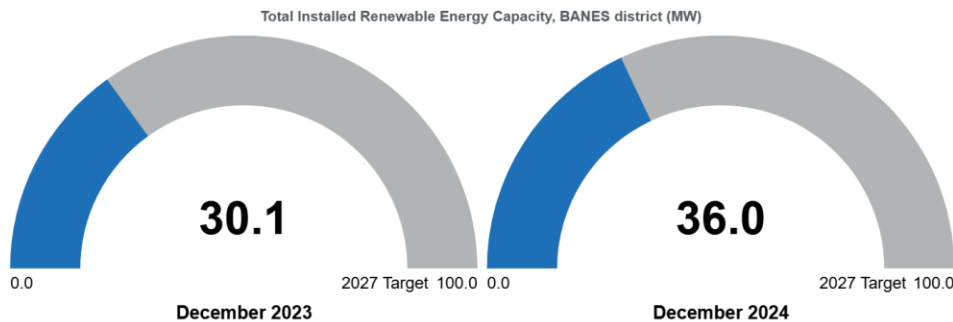
- We are working to ensure that our planning policies align with the potential requirements coming from the implementation of Heat Network Zoning by central government in 2026.



Highlights: Increasing Renewable Energy Generation Continued

- There were 593 domestic solar PV installations in the 2024-25 financial year.
- The district pipeline is growing, which is important towards delivering our interim district target of 100 MW by 2027. The Marksbury Plain commercial solar farm has been constructed, providing 20 megawatts (MW) of capacity. A site has been approved in Paulton for 9 megawatts (MW) of solar and 49.5 MWp battery storage. A 2 MW community-owned solar farm in Compton Dando received planning consent in December 2024. A 9.5MW solar farm near Nempnett Thrubwell was consented in 2022 and there is currently an application pending to extend this by 10 MW. A planning application for 49.5 MW at Stowey Road Solar Farm has been submitted.

Installed renewable energy capacity has increased from 30 MW in 2023, to 36 MW in 2024. This data is from DESNZ and does not yet reflect the Marksbury installation which was completed in 2025:



CASE STUDY: Community Energy Network: Energy in your Community

Through the Lottery funding Community Energy Network, B&NES Council, Bath & West Community Energy and the Centre for Sustainable Energy are working in partnership to empower communities to explore and build their own renewable energy projects.

This means that not only would the communities make decisions collectively on the projects, but they would also receive financial benefits that would go directly back into the community.

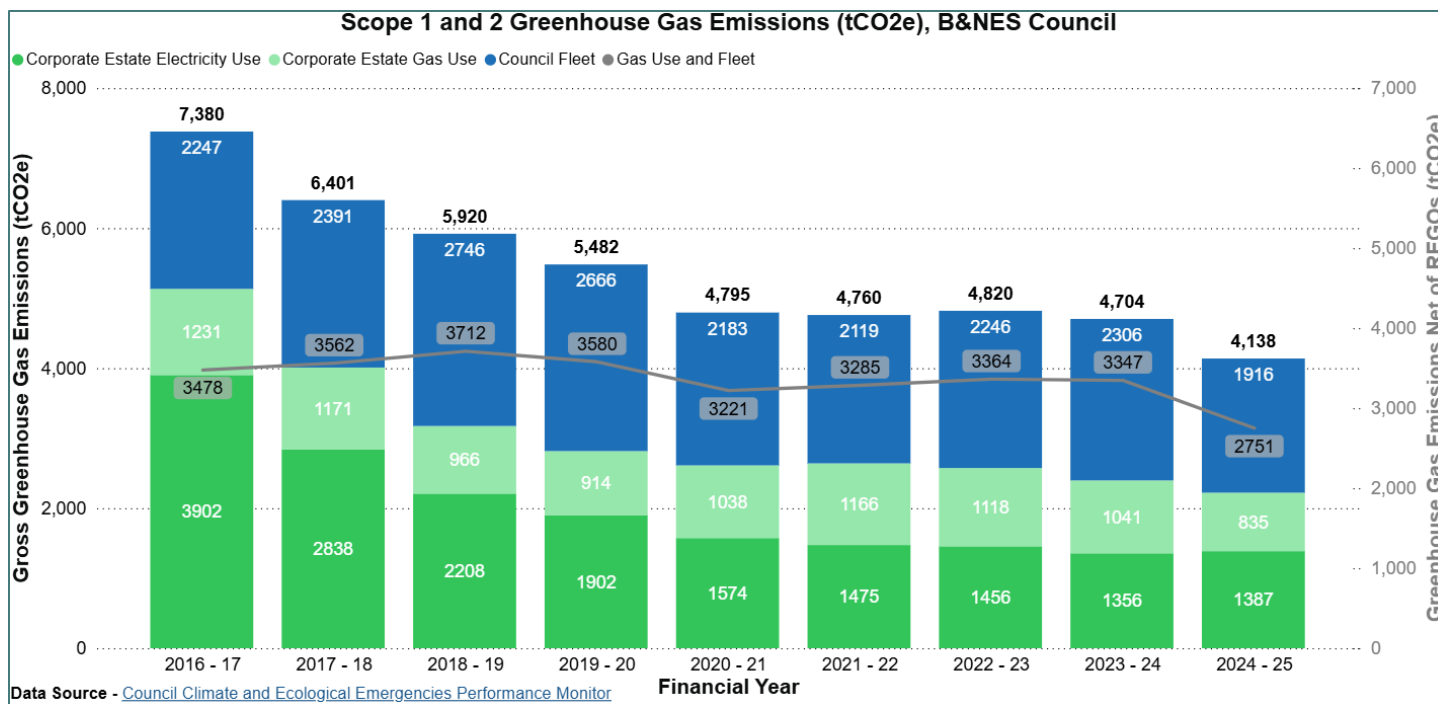
Three areas are being continued from a piloted in 2022; Peasedown and Wellow, Stowey Sutton and East Harptree and West Harptree, Temple Cloud and Hinton Blewett. Three new areas have been selected after registering their interest- St Catherines and Batheaston, Twerton and Whiteway, and Radstock and Westfield.

<https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/energy-your-community>



Where We Are Now: Decarbonising Council Operations

The graph below focuses emissions for the Council's own operations, known as scope 1 and 2 emissions. This includes emissions from gas and electricity used in buildings under our control, and our own vehicle fleet. The Council's emissions make up less than 1% of territorial emissions for the Bath and North East Somerset area.



Between 2016-17 and 2024-25*, we have successfully reduced our emissions by 44%. Fleet emissions decreased by 17% compared with 2023-24 due to ongoing replacement of the fleet with electric alternatives.

As we set out on the next slides, we have progressed our commitment to becoming Net Zero for our own operations by 2030 by securing substantial grant and budget provision. This means we can phase investment to decarbonise our key buildings and waste fleet. We have purchased REGOs** for our electricity on contract until end 2027. We will review the next contract in line with the agreed strategy at this point. Purchasing REGOs guarantees electricity purchased from renewable sources in the UK and therefore we can report our net emissions from electricity as zero, but we continue to report gross emissions for completeness.

Note:** electricity and gas consumption values for the latter half of 2023-24 are based on conservative estimates due to ongoing billing issues. These values may be subject to change in subsequent reporting cycles. *Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin**

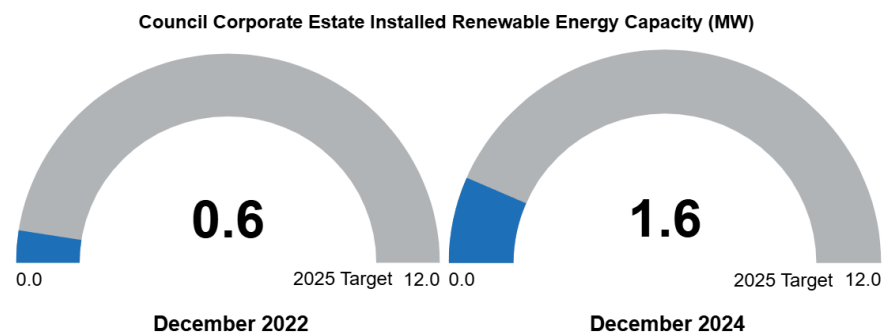
Highlights: Decarbonising Council Operations

Decarbonising our own operations is crucial to lead action on climate change in the region. We are making practical progress on decarbonising our estate.

- Net Zero Council budget provision of £14m has been made, focused on decarbonising our waste fleet and buildings.
- Within this, £4million has been earmarked between 2025/26 and 2029/30 to decarbonise the buildings of the Council's Corporate Estate. This includes feasibility work for a hydroelectric power scheme at Pulteney Gate in central Bath that could provide electricity for heat pumps at Council buildings in the City Centre including the Guildhall, the Roman Baths and Pump Rooms. If found to be feasible, the hydro scheme would reduce carbon dioxide emissions while maintaining river levels; improving fish migration and reducing electricity bills and therefore costs to the Council.
- Both of this year's funding applications for Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme grant for air source heat pumps were successful and will include installation of heat pumps at Carrswood Adult Day Care Centre and Keynsham Civic Centre. Keynsham Civic Centre heat pumps will partially utilise the existing solar PV array and a new solar PV array is planned for Carrswood to do the same. The combined effect of these measures will be to reduce carbon dioxide emissions and operating costs of the two buildings.
- The new PSDS grant funding will result in estimated annual carbon savings of approximately 74 tonnes CO₂, around 3% of the Council's corporate estate emissions.
- This year, we installed solar PV on the Bath Leisure Centre building – please see slide 26 for this as a case study.

B&NES Council owns and leases the leisure centre building, and therefore this building falls under the Council's commercial estate, as opposed to its Corporate Estate for which our renewables target below is set. This is an example of the Council prioritising the securing of grant awards to fund renewables where these are available.

- Renewable energy capacity on the Council's corporate estate remained 1.6 MW to December 2024. Over the past year, business and feasibility work has been undertaken on multiple sites to further increase renewable energy capacity on the corporate estate. Our current identified pipeline achieves 2.5 MW of rooftop solar, leaving a considerable gap in our generation target. If the target cannot be met using existing Council assets, alternative options currently being explored include investment in local community energy projects and power purchase from renewables sites within BANES.



Highlights: Decarbonising Council Operations Continued

CASE STUDY: Electrifying our waste fleet

Decarbonising the fleet will make a significant contribution to reducing emissions from the Council's own operations. The vehicles currently in use account for almost half of the Council's carbon footprint, with Heavy Good Vehicles (HGVs) accounting for 70% of emissions, despite only making up 28% of the fleet. The waste and cleansing operations operated by the local authority are already supported by 12 electric vehicles.

Capital provision has been made to replace 12 refuse collection vehicles and 30 recycling trucks with electric vehicles over the next two years and will also bring savings on maintenance and fuel. Potential replacement vehicles are being trialled with a view to starting replacement between 2026 and 2028.



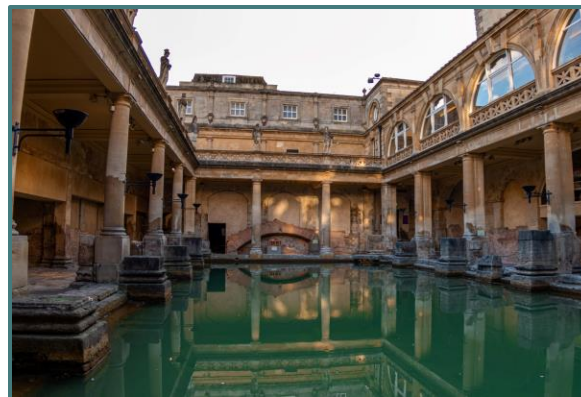
Example electrified waste vehicle

CASE STUDY: Heritage Services

Heritage Services is an essential part of B&NES; responsible for stewarding the public facing heritage assets in the Council's care. The key cultural assets managed are: The Roman Baths, Victoria Art Gallery, The World Heritage Centre, Clore Learning Centre, Bath Record Office and The Fashion Museum which is currently under redevelopment. As an independent business unit, the service is unique amongst UK local authorities in operating at no cost to the local taxpayer but instead returning an agreed profit each year.

Current Impact

Since the baseline year of 2019/20, Heritage Services carbon footprint has reduced from 2,912 tCO₂e to 2,437 tCO₂e in the latest reporting year of 2023/24. Scope 1 & 2 emissions have dropped significantly due to heat pump installation in 2022, and grid decarbonisation. Scope 3 emissions remain high and are largely estimated using spend-based data. Visitor travel emissions, though not formally included within our carbon boundary yet, are continuously monitored and will be included when the data and appointment methodology is more reliable.



Highlights: Decarbonising Council Operations Continued

Heritage Services Environmental Action Plan

In 2024/25 the service created a 3-year environmental action plan which aims to accelerate progress towards becoming Net Zero, whilst also preserving the ancient monuments, listed buildings and world-renowned collections in our care and continuing to deliver a financial return to the Council. The plan is structured around three pillars: People, Place and Heritage.

Place:

- Reduce Scope 1 & 2 emissions by 52%
- Ensure zero waste to landfill and improve visitor led recycling
- Improve Scope 3 emissions data accuracy

People:

- 100% of FTE staff to be certified Carbon Literate
- Engage with suppliers to set their own Net Zero targets
- Improve sustainability communications with visitors

Heritage:

- Lead by example in climate adaptation
- Share best practices and collaborate with sector peers
- Address climate-related risks to historic assets

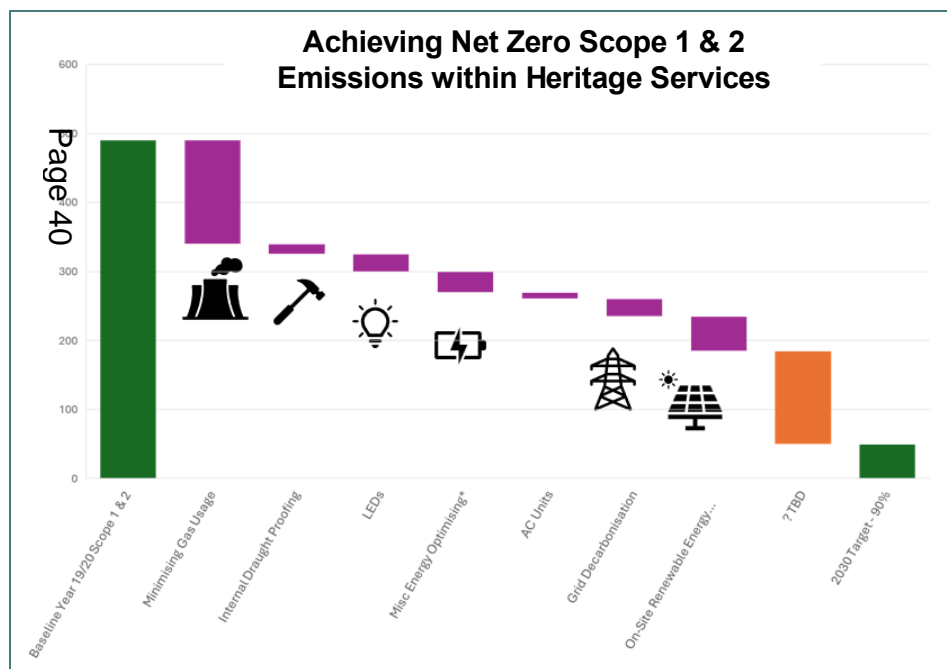
Key Progress in 2024/25

- **Supplier Engagement:** we are engaged with 35 of our top suppliers, providing support through online webinars, workshops, and guidance packs to aid their own carbon footprinting and reduction.
- **Climate Risk & Adaptation Planning:** we have undertaken a climate risk assessment of the Roman Baths identifying 17 risks from the 4 main hazards to the area as identified by the Met Office – Heavy Rainfall & Flooding, Overheating, Drought and Storms & High Winds. An adaptation plan is now underway.
- **Sustainable Sourcing:** our catering supplier Searcys have doubled down on their local supplier base, prioritising provenance and positive environmental impact. Key ingredient suppliers are actively farming regeneratively.
- **Sustainable Tourism:** we co-hosted a sustainable tourism workshop with Visit West and Buro Happold. Over 60 cross-sector attendees explored how tourism can support heritage, climate action, and community well-being—resulting in clear next steps focused on data, partnerships, and authenticity.
- **Reduced Waste:** our operations are now zero waste to landfill, and we have taken steps to improve visitor led recycling on site.
- **Industry Recognition:** the Victoria Art Gallery is now an active member of the Gallery Climate Coalition, demonstrating commitment to environmental sustainability within the visual arts sector.

Highlights: Decarbonising Council Operations Continued

Heritage Services Environmental Action Plan Governance:

Progress against the 3-year action plan is overseen by the Heritage Services Senior Leadership Team and Advisory Board, with alignment to council-wide strategies. Actions, and climate-related risks, are tracked through KPIs and reviewed quarterly. More details on the Heritage Services action plan, KPIs and emission reduction goals can be found in their action plan. [Note: add hyperlink once available].



Scope 3 Emissions

Scope 3 emissions are those that are produced indirectly by activities outside an organisation's own operations. For the Council, this includes emissions associated with our procurement of goods and services, outsourced contracts, the buildings we own but do not occupy, and our corporate travel.

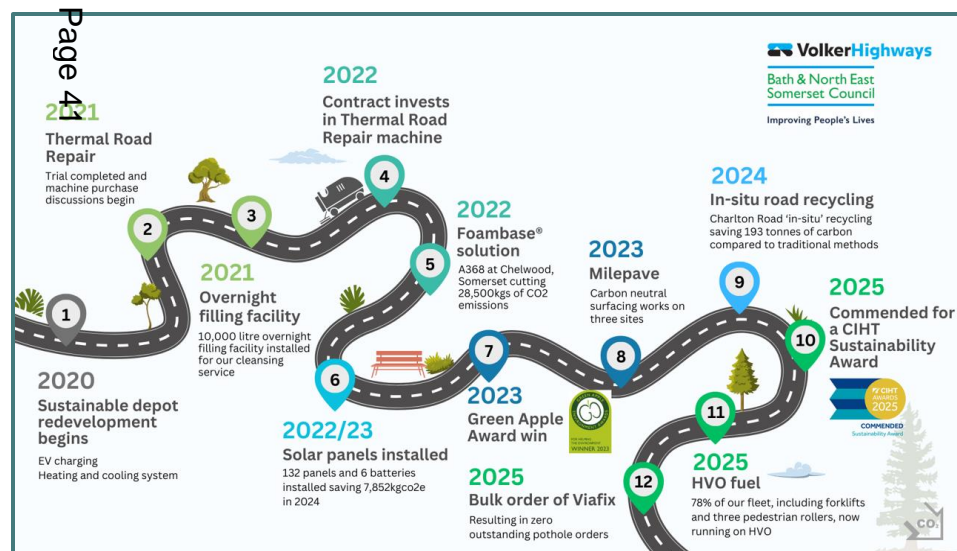
Scope 3 emissions are more difficult to measure and reduce as they fall outside our direct control. As a council we are making progress in identifying our Scope 3 emissions sources and what actions we can take to reduce them.

- The Council recognises that the way in which it purchases goods and services can significantly alter the climate and nature impacts that these have. In November 2024, B&NES published its updated [Procurement Strategy](#) and is now working to implement it. Embedding sustainability and climate action into all procurement activity is one of six priority themes in the strategy.
- The Council outsources a number of its services. In 2025, our Clutton depot, managed as part of the highway maintenance contract with Volker Highways, was named a finalist for a CIHT (Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation) Sustainability Award. The shortlisting highlights Volker Highways' and the Council's commitment to building a future-proofed highway depot that supports greener infrastructure, reduces operational carbon and improves energy efficiency. It is one aspect of a roadmap of sustainability-focused improvements being managed between the Council and Volker Highways.

Highlights: Decarbonising Council Operations – Scope 3 Emissions

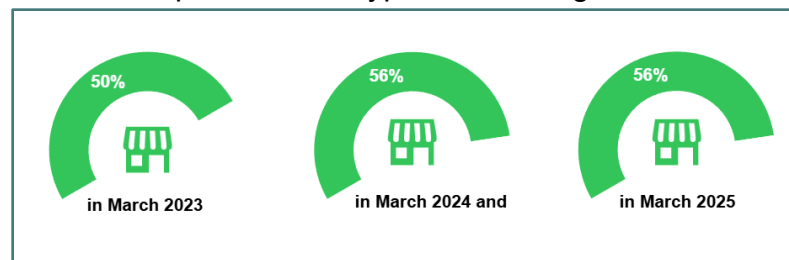


Credit Volker Highways: Clutton Depot pre and post redevelopment



B&NES and Volker Highways Roadmap

- The buildings that the Council owns and leases fall within its Scope 3 emissions. The percentage of council-owned commercial units with an EPC of A-C increased from 50% in March 2023 to 56% in March 2024 but had not changed by the end of March 2025. Higher EPCs mean that buildings that are leased from us will be more energy efficient and have lower emissions associated with them. It remains challenging to finance emissions-focused upgrades to our commercial estate because the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme has not been open to these types of buildings.



- The Council's Commercial Estate team have drafted the following measures for inclusion within the Corporate Estate Strategy that, subject to adoption, will have beneficial impacts on the Council's Net Zero commitment:
 - Continuing the programme to ensure commercial estate assets are Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) compliant*, by assessing properties and where necessary commissioning works to ensure they can achieve an appropriate MEES compliance EPC rating assessment.
 - Engaging with the tenants when considering applications for Landlord's consent to carrying out works and encouraging them to adopt energy efficient options.
 - To work closely with the maintenance teams, especially at the design, scoping and specifying of works associated with the Commercial Capital Planned Programme of void refurbishments and other works of repair and maintenance, to ensure they incorporate sustainable measures.

* Current requirement for an E rated EPC, rising to C by 2030

Highlights: Decarbonising Council Operations – Scope 3 Emissions

CASE STUDY: Bath Sports & Leisure Centre Rooftop Bath Sports & Leisure Centre Rooftop Solar PV

B&NES Council owns the leisure centre building, and it is operated by GLL.

Rooftop solar PV with a maximum generation capacity of 90 kWp was installed in early 2025 using the Swimming Pool Support Fund grant administered by Sport England, that was won in 2024.

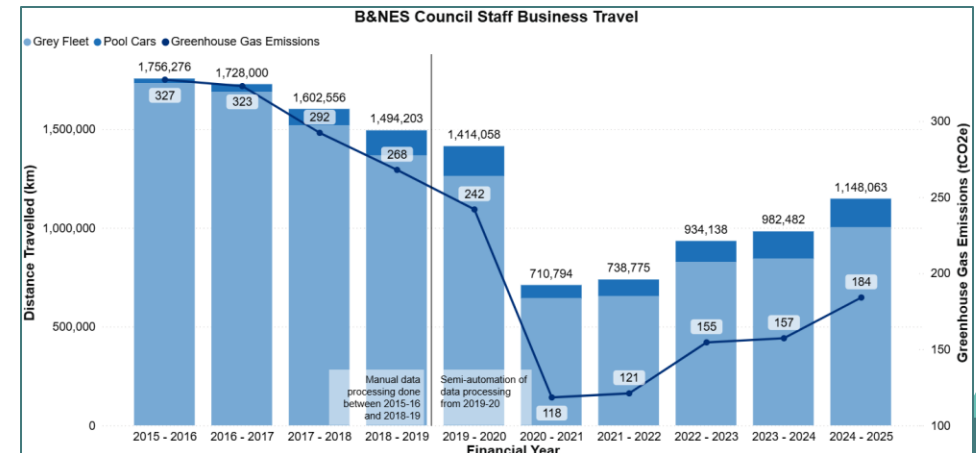
The project was delivered on time and in budget with an immediate effect of reducing electricity bills and carbon dioxide emissions for the sports and leisure centre complex. The solar PV array is laid out in an east and west configuration in order that the generation is spread more evenly across the day to account for electricity use in the morning and afternoon peaks.



Solar panels on the roof of the Bath Sports and Leisure Centre

Corporate Travel

- The majority of the emissions from corporate travel come from our grey fleet, which is when staff use their own vehicles for corporate travel. Remaining emissions come from the use of the Council's pool car fleet, leased through Co-Wheels. B&NES pool car fleet is either non-plug-in hybrid or electric vehicle.
- Though emissions associated with business travel were 44% lower in 2023-24 compared to 2015-16, they increased by 17% between 2023-24 and 2024-25. This is because this year, we report increased mileage visibility, and therefore emissions, associated with in-sourcing adult social-care services.
- The Corporate Travel Policy aims to encourage all employees to plan their journeys in such a way as to limit travelling to the lowest possible level, whilst maintaining the efficient and safe performance of their duties.



Ecological Emergency

Tackling the Ecological Emergency

Our Ecological Emergency Action Plan sets our priorities and the actions we are taking to tackle the ecological emergency. Our three priorities are to:

1. Increase the extent of land and waterways managed positively for nature;
2. Increase the abundance and distribution of key species; and
3. Enable more people to access and engage with nature.

We are not able to tackle the Ecological Emergency alone, but we recognise that we have an important role to play in tackling the Ecological Emergency, both through our own delivery and policy-making, and through supporting others to take action.

Much of our work on nature recovery so far is being delivered through our Strategic Green Infrastructure Projects, which have led place-based partnerships to benefit nature and people. We are now looking to step up our ambition by better integrating nature recovery across the Council, in areas such as planning, regeneration, management of our estate, and day-to-day operations. We recognise the importance of nature based solutions to adapting and building resilience to climate change.

This report provides an update on our progress in tackling the ecological emergency and summarises the work we have done as a council so far.

We look forward to continuing our work to help restore nature across the district and to bring people closer to the natural environment.



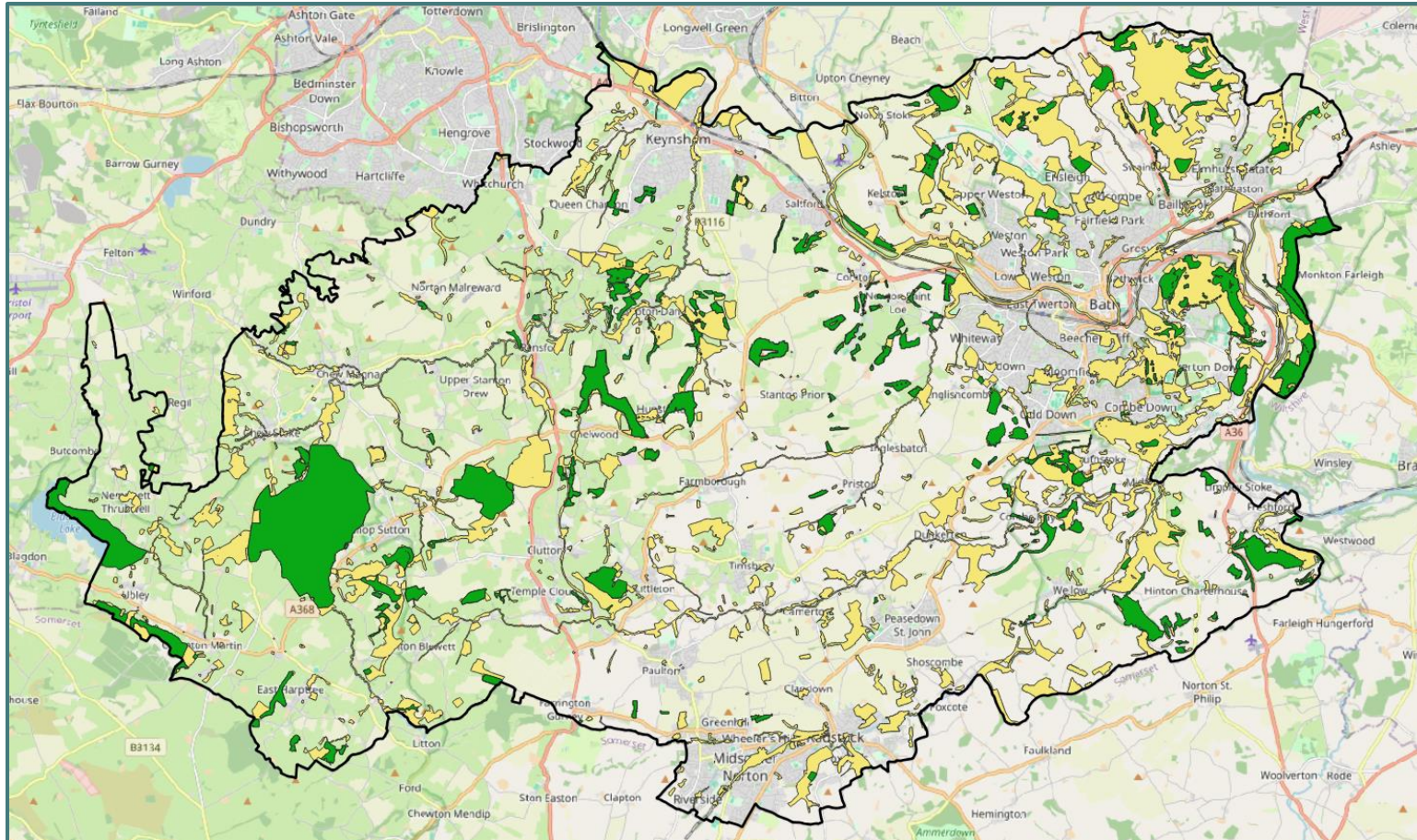
Councillor David Harding, Councillor Anna Box, Deputy Leader Sarah Warren, Green Infrastructure Project Manager Meg Collin, and Chew Valley Reconnected Partnership Chair Phil Heath visiting Chew Valley Lake.



A volunteer helping to lay a footpath through the wildflower meadow in Midsomer Norton Town park

Ecological Emergency: Where We Are Now – Bath & North East Somerset Council

This section of the Annual Report looks at the amount of land managed for nature across the district.



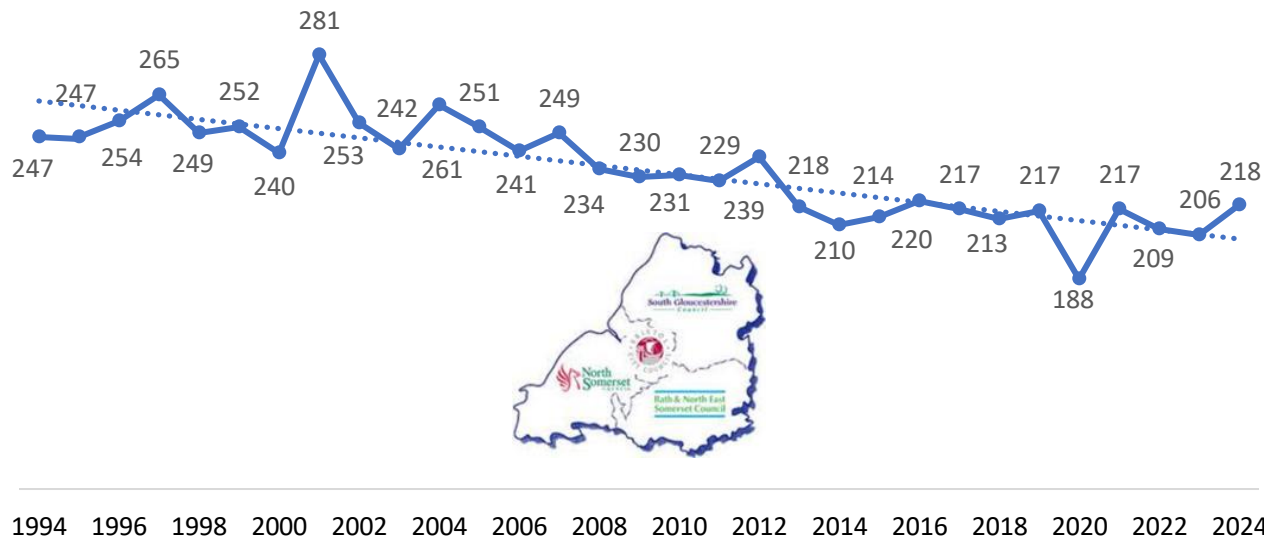
The West of England Nature Partnership has mapped the land managed for nature across the region. The map above shows the land that we are confident is already managed for nature in BANES in green, and land that may be being managed for nature in yellow. We are confident that 6.17% of land in BANES is currently managed for nature, with an additional 14.15% of land potentially being managed for nature. This compares with the ambition to have 30% of land managed for nature by 2030.

Ecological Emergency: Where We Are Now – Bath and North East Somerset District

Biodiversity - Increase the abundance and distribution of key species

The best data we have on wildlife populations is derived from the British Trust for Ornithology's annual Breeding Bird Survey. This data is only currently available for the whole of the West of England, but we expect the declines in BANES will mirror these changes.

Total bird records per km² square surveyed in the West of England



Page 46

Between 1994 and 2024, bird populations across the West of England (Avon) fell by approximately 12%. Although these records only go back to 1994, from UK records we can be confident that populations would have fallen significantly before the mid-1990s. The overall decline also masks more drastic decline in certain species, particularly 'specialist' species and insect-eating birds. For example, the swift count in the region fell by 87%, and the cuckoo count by 95%.

As the decline in wildlife is associated with land use change, agricultural intensification, and pollution across the district (as well as climate change), B&NES council does not have direct control over the majority of actions that are needed to reverse the decline in wildlife. That is why we are committed to showing leadership and working in partnership to enable action across the district.

Highlights: Leadership and Evidence

Having declared an Ecological Emergency in 2020, it is crucial that B&NES council shows leadership in responding to the crisis facing nature. This year, we played a key part in developing the country's first Local Nature Recovery Strategy, and we have made good progress on monitoring the state of nature locally.

- Our leading approach to Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) (B&NES was one of the first councils in England to adopt a BNG Policy) has enabled the ongoing establishment of seven offsite habitat banks in BANES, which will result in the creation of over two hundred hectares of habitats including species-rich grassland across the district. It has also meant we have seen early delivery of BNG by developments.
- The approach to the Local Plan has been reset due to updates to national Planning Policy, and we are still ensuring it will be our most ambitious for nature recovery. We are exploring the option of requiring 20% BNG, rather than the mandatory 10%, and planned policies include a requirement for sustainable drainage systems including 'SuDS', requirements for developments to have more and better 'green infrastructure', and local targets for tree cover.
- We have developed new Green Infrastructure(GI) Standards, aligning with national standards, to ensure new developments include required GI to ensure healthy places to live that are climate resilient and support nature recovery. The Standards will support increase in tree canopy cover, Local Nature Reserves, permeable surfaces, provision of local food growing space and play space.

- We have made significant progress on our ability to monitor the state of nature across the district. We have calculated the land being managed for nature across our own estate, and we have worked with WECA and neighbouring local authorities to establish a baseline for land managed for nature in BANES and to develop a regional 'wildlife index'.

CASE STUDY: Local Nature Recovery Strategy

Our Nature Recovery Manager led the development of the West of England Local Nature Recovery Strategy, which was the first in the country to be published in November 2024.

The LNRS sets priorities and 'focus areas' for nature recovery across the region, enabling us to better target our resources and ensuring planning decisions take account of opportunities for nature recovery.



The LNRS is launched at the West of England Nature Partnership (WENP) Conference

Highlights: Land and Investment

Managing more of our land for nature is one of the key ways the Council can directly contribute to nature recovery. This year, we have been diversifying the funding we use to manage more of our land for nature.

- Our Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Pathfinder project is enabling us to fund nature recovery on council-owned sites through the sale of BNG 'Units'. At Charlcombe Meadows, we are working with the Friends of Charlcombe Community Nature Reserve to enhance the 6.5 hectare site for biodiversity, and we are now developing similar plans for other sites.
- Our Landscape City project is developing plans to improve the management of Council-owned sites in Bath for nature and people. This includes a masterplan for the former golf course at Entry Hill, improving the management of our woodlands, and developing proposals for an 'Ecology Hub' in the City.
- We are working on securing long-term Countryside Stewardship funding to further enhance the value of our parks and green spaces for nature by, for example, improving the species-richness of grass we are managing for wildlife.
- We are developing management plans for Council-owned land at Fox Hill and Nelson Ward Drive in Radstock to enhance their value for nature and have secured £250k of funding to deliver improvements.
- The [Bathscape Landscape Partnership](#) has continued its work improving the value of the landscape surrounding Bath

for nature. This year, work on enhancing Carr's Wood and Pennyquick Park has neared completion (see case study), and we have recruited a land management advisor to increase our capacity to survey nature-rich sites and to advise landowners on managing land for nature.

CASE STUDY: Enhancing Carr's Wood and Pennyquick Park

We are coming to the end of our works enhancing Carr's Wood and Pennyquick Park in Twerton for nature. Through Network Rail funding, our partners and teams of volunteers have spent the last few years planting trees, sowing wildflowers, running events and generally making the site more wildlife friendly.

The last of the works are now underway with our contractors to improve the condition of Carr's wood for wildlife, including replanting trees and shrubs where ash has been felled.

Almost 1000 trees have been planted, and grassland seeding should see wildflowers steadily increasing in the coming years.



Tree planting at Pennyquick Park

Highlights: Access and Engagement

Alongside restoring nature, one of our key commitments is increasing residents' access to and engagement with nature. We have a variety of projects that are engaging and empowering people to take action for nature locally, especially where this helps to tackle inequalities in access to greenspaces.

- The Bath River Line project has begun work to create a 10km linear park alongside the River Avon in Bath. This year we have delivered new seating, improved access to the river path and pollinator-friendly planting along the river path, as well as lots of engagement with residents and visitors (see case study).
- The Somer Valley Rediscovered Greenspaces project has continued to engage thousands of local people through a variety of events including forest bathing, park yoga, and nature walks. It has achieved over 3,000 volunteering hours to help deliver nature recovery and access improvements at 5 public parks in Radstock and Midsomer Norton. This year has also seen the creation of a wild meadow footpath at Midsomer Norton Town park, accompanied by a new audio trail.
- Bathscape continues to engage thousands of people in and around Bath in the city's landscape through hundreds of wellbeing and tree walks, the September Walking Festival, bug hunting with local children, our monthly Footprints podcast, and much more. This year, we have also published a Wildlife Safari Bath guidebook and have run training sessions for volunteers on site surveying and tree care.

CASE STUDY: Festival of Nature

As part of the 2025 Festival of Nature, the Bath River Line project hosted a vibrant programme of events and activities designed to connect people with the River Avon and its surrounding green spaces.

Activities included an outdoor film screening, creative exhibitions, paddleboarding taster sessions, family-friendly craft day, and interactive displays. These events reached a diverse audience, offering accessible, engaging ways to experience nature in the heart of the city.

Each event encouraged reflection on river health, wildlife, and conservation, while promoting enjoyment and stewardship of the river.

Highlights included the “River in the Sky” installation at SouthGate (estimated to have been experienced by 9 million visitors) willow fish workshops with local schools, and the “Life on Water” photography exhibition.



Outdoor film screening as part of the Festival of Nature

Highlights: Working in Partnership

We are not able to reverse nature's decline alone, and we are fortunate to have lots of ambitious organisations taking action for nature in the district.

This year has seen more ambitious projects being developed, funded and delivered that we have either led or supported in partnership, including nationally significant programmes for trees and woodlands, and for calcareous grassland habitats.

- Together with the Forest of Avon Trust, we led a successful bid for the Western Forest to be chosen as England's second National Forest, with £7.5 million of funding for more trees and woodland across the West of England, Wiltshire and Gloucestershire (see case study).
- Last year, we supported Bristol Avon Rivers Trust in a successful bid to the West of England Green Recovery Fund to develop a farm cluster covering the Chew Valley and Cam & Wellow catchments. The cluster is now active and grants are being distributed to farmers and landowners to deliver interventions that enhance nature and improve water quality; we are represented on the Steering Group that oversees distribution of these grants.
- The West of England Nature Partnership (WENP), of which we are a funding member, has published nine '[Priority Programmes](#)' that represent partners' shared priorities (informed by the Local Nature Recovery Strategy) and show how we plan to target investment to bring nature back across the West of England. The Programmes were launched at the WENP Conference in November 2024, with speakers including politicians, environmental leaders, and prominent funders and investors such as Triodos Bank.

- The Big Chalk Partnership, on whose Board we sit, comprises more than 150 organisations with a common and ambitious vision of creating thriving chalk and limestone landscapes across southern England. Having only been established in 2023, the Partnership has gone from strength to strength in the past year, recently securing core funding for project staff and £750k for a new capital grants fund. Work is ongoing to develop a much more ambitious funding proposal.
- We have again supported the [Bristol Avon Catchment Partnership Fund](#), which provides seed-funding and small grants to enable partnership projects to carry out vital scoping, feasibility and community engagement work, as well as funding smaller community projects. The funding can be used for activities that improve the health of rivers and waterways across the catchment, and that improve people's enjoyment of and connection with the water environment.
- We have continued to take a leading role in the WaterSpace Partnership (covering the Avon corridor between Bristol and Bath), the Somer Valley Rediscovered Partnership, the Bathscape Partnership, and the Chew Valley Reconnected Partnership. The Chew Valley Reconnected Partnership has recently appointed its first independent Chair and is now developing partnership proposals to deliver nature recovery and climate resilient benefits across the catchment.
- We have contributed funding to Your Park Bristol & Bath to restore 15.6 hectares of habitats across 19 parks in Bristol and Bath, including meadows, ponds and woodland edges.

Highlights: Working in Partnership Continued

CASE STUDY: Western Forest

We have been successfully working in partnership towards our ambition to double woodland cover across BANES, and this year we have gone a huge step further by helping to secure £7.5 million of funding for a new National Forest.

We played a key role in the development of the successful bid to establish the 'Western Forest' as only the second National Forest in the country, together with partners including the Forest of Avon Trust and the Natural History Consortium.

The Western Forest covers the West of England, Gloucestershire and parts of Wiltshire, and will result in the creation of at least 2,500 hectares of new woodland and other tree habitats (such as agroforestry and orchards) in the first five years.

As well as creating new woodland habitat, The £7.5 million of funding will be used to enable farmers to integrate trees into their farm businesses in a way that is profitable, sustainable and benefits food production. A people and nature programme will include cutting-edge communications and will pilot innovative programmes around volunteering, health, education and access.

The Western Forest will accelerate the increase in tree and woodland cover across Bath and North East Somerset, building on successful projects including the 100-acre Great Avon Wood and the 422-acre Lower Chew Forest at Wick Farm.



Sources

- [1] **Council Climate Action Score Cards**. (2025). 2025 Action Scorecards. Available at: <https://councilclimatescorecards.uk/>
- [2] **The Climate Change Committee. (2020). Local Authorities and the Sixth Carbon Budget**. Available at: <https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/local-authorities-and-the-sixth-carbon-budget/>
- [3] Department for Energy Security and Net Zero. (2025). **UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions statistics**, 2005 to 2023. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/uk-local-authority-and-regional-greenhouse-gas-emissions-statistics>
- [4] Bath and North East Somerset Council. (2023). **Business Demography: Number of Enterprises, Economy, Strategic Evidence Base**. Available at: <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/strategic-evidence-base-summary-and-topic-reports>
- [5] Bath and North East Somerset Council. (2025). **Housing Summary 1, Housing, Strategic Evidence Base**. Available at: <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/strategic-evidence-base-summary-and-topic-reports>
- [6] Department for Transport. (2025). **Road traffic estimates (TRA), TRA8905: Motor vehicle traffic (vehicle kilometres) by local authority and selected vehicle type in Great Britain**. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/road-traffic-statistics-tra>
- [7] B&NES Climate & Ecological Emergency Performance Monitor (2025) **Strategic Climate Emergency Buildings and Renewable Energy Indicators**
- [8] Climate Change Committee. (2025). **The Seventh Carbon Budget**. Available at: <https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/the-seventh-carbon-budget/>
- [9] Bath and North East Somerset Council. (2021). **Bath & North East Somerset Climate Emergency Strategy 2019-2030**. Available at: <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/policy-and-documents-library/bath-north-east-somerset-climate-emergency-strategy>
- [10] Department for Transport. (2025) **VEH0132: Licensed ultra low emission vehicles (ULEVs) at the end of the quarter by fuel type, keepership (private and company) and upper and lower tier local authority: United Kingdom**. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/vehicle-licensing-statistics-data-tables>
- [11] Department for Transport. (2025). **VEH0105 Licensed vehicles at the end of the quarter by body type, fuel type, keepership (private and company) and upper and lower tier local authority: Great Britain and United Kingdom**. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/vehicle-licensing-statistics-data-tables>
- [12] Department for Transport. (2025) **Electric Vehicles Public Charging Infrastructure Statistics: July 2025**. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/electric-vehicle-public-charging-infrastructure-statistics-july-2025>

Abbreviations

ABBE	Awarding Body of the Built Environment	CVRP	Chew Valley Reconnected Partnership
B&NES	Bath and North East Somerset Council	DESNZ	Department of Energy Security and Net Zero
BANES	Bath and North East Somerset District/Area	DFES	Distribution Future Energy Scenarios
BART	Bath Avon River Trust	DNO/DSO	Distribution Network Operator/ Distribution System Operator
BE	Battery Electric	EOI	Expression of Interest
BEV	Battery Electric Vehicle	EPC	Energy Performance Certificate
BNG	Biodiversity Net Gain	EVI	Electric Vehicle Infrastructure
BR	Bath River Line	FTE	Full time equivalent
BSIP	Bus Service Improvement Plan	FWAG SW	Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group South West
BWCE	Bath & West Community Energy	FWD	Future Work and Design
CDP	Carbon Disclosure Project	GHH	Green Heritage Homes
CIHT	Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation	GI	Green Infrastructure
CMPs	Carbon Management Plans	GLL	Greenwich Leisure Limited
CPD	Continuing Professional Development	GRF	Green Recovery Fund
CRSTS	City Region Sustainable Transport Settlements	HE/FE	Higher Education/Further Education
CSE	Centre for Sustainable Energy	HGV	Heavy Goods Vehicles

Abbreviations - Continued

HUG	Home Upgrade Grant	OZEV	Office for Zero Emission Vehicles
ICEV	Internal Combustion Engine Vehicles	PID	Project Initiation Document
KPI	Key Performance Indicators	RCV	Refuse Collection Vehicles
KRV	Kerbside Recycling Vehicles	REGO	Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin
kWp	Kilowatt peak	RERAS	Renewable Energy Resource Assessment
LAEP+	Local Area Energy Plan	RESP	Regional Energy System Plans
LEAD	Local Energy Advice Demonstrator	SME	Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise
LEVI	Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure	SNCI	Sites of Nature Conservation Interest
LGA	Local Government Association	SuDS	Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems
LLBCO	Local Listed Building Consent Order	SVR	Somer Valley Rediscovered
LNRS	Local Nature Recovery Strategy	TCR	Transport for City Regions
MEES	Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards	TIER	TIER Mobility Company
MW	Megawatts	UKSPF	UK Shared Prosperity Fund
NAP	Nature Action Plan	ULEV	Ultra Low Emissions Vehicle
NGED	National Grid Electricity Distribution	WECA	West of England Combined Authority (also known as the MCA)
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework	WENP	West of England Nature Partnership

Glossary of Climate Emissions Terms

Scope 1 – Emissions are released as a direct result of an activity. For a local authority this will largely comprise combustible fuel for heating boilers and fuel burned in owned fleet vehicles.

Scope 2 – Emissions released as an indirect consumption of an energy commodity. For a local authority this will be the purchased grid electricity used in its operations (buildings, street lighting and for charging Electric Vehicles (EV)).

Scope 3 – Scope 3 emissions are all other indirect emissions produced by activities outside an organisation's own operations. For the Council, this includes emissions associated with our procurement of goods and services, outsourced contracts, the buildings we own but do not occupy, and our corporate travel. The Local Government Association (LGA) estimated that scope 3 emissions usually represent 70-80% of a local authority's total emissions.

CO₂e – Carbon Dioxide Equivalent is a standard unit for measuring carbon footprints. CO₂e expresses the impact of seven different greenhouse gas in terms of the amount of CO₂ that would create the same amount of warming.

Territorial Emissions - Territorial emissions cover emissions that occur within the UK's borders and are used to track UK-wide progress towards international and domestic targets. Territorial emissions arise from the direct (gas, petrol, diesel) and indirect (electricity) use of energy, including domestic, transport, public sector, commercial, industry, agriculture, land use, land use change and forestry and waste management. These are broken down by local authority boundary in Department of Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) data.

Consumption Emissions - This accounts for all GHG emissions through the supply chain of goods and services consumed in the UK, wherever they are produced in the world. This includes emissions from UK imports of goods and services and excludes emissions arising from UK-produced goods that are exported.

Annex A: Progress on Actions

Progress on Actions – Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plans

Annex A provides an update on our key actions contained within both our Climate Action Plan and Ecological Emergency Action Plan. Alongside each action, progress update and next steps, there is a numbered progress rating. The ratings correspond to the below:

- 1 = Action/strategy still in formation
- 2 = Action/strategy in place, but with no current outputs
- 3 = Action/strategy well underway with current outputs
- 4 = Action/strategy mature, with plans for redevelopment or additions
- 5 = Bespoke action/strategy now complete and considered finished

The Ecological Emergency Action Plan reporting remains the same for the 2024-25 year, but an updated Climate Action Plan has been included because new actions were added last year to those set in the Climate Strategy.

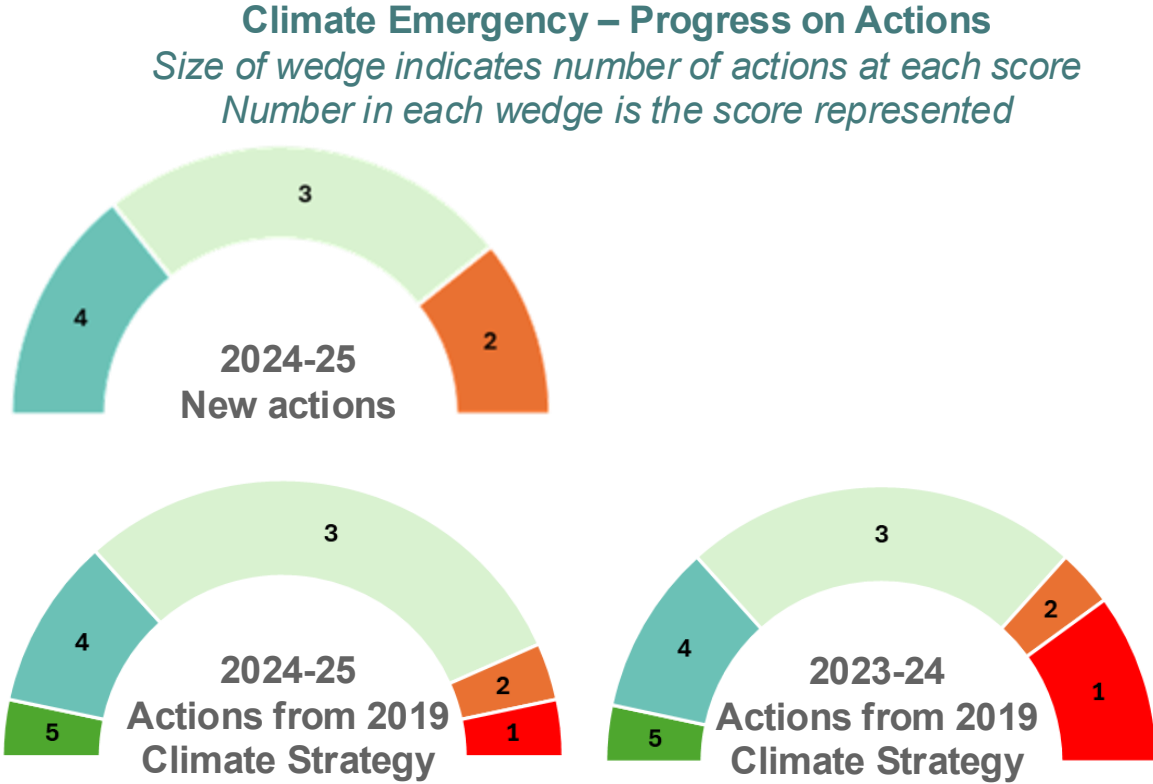
In this main report we provide a high-level overview of progress. Please see full Annex A for further detail of individual actions.

Progress on Actions – Summary of Progress – Climate Emergency

Summary:

- 29 actions are tracked, split between the 2019 Strategy (15 actions) and new actions set in 2023-24 (14 actions). The 14 new actions set in 2023-24, are reported on for first time in 2024-25.
- 26 actions have either progressed their score or remained as ongoing work since 2023-24.
- Of the original 2019 Strategy actions, 10 actions score 3 and 4 and are ongoing works this year where progression to the next score is not yet expected.

Page 58



Key to scores

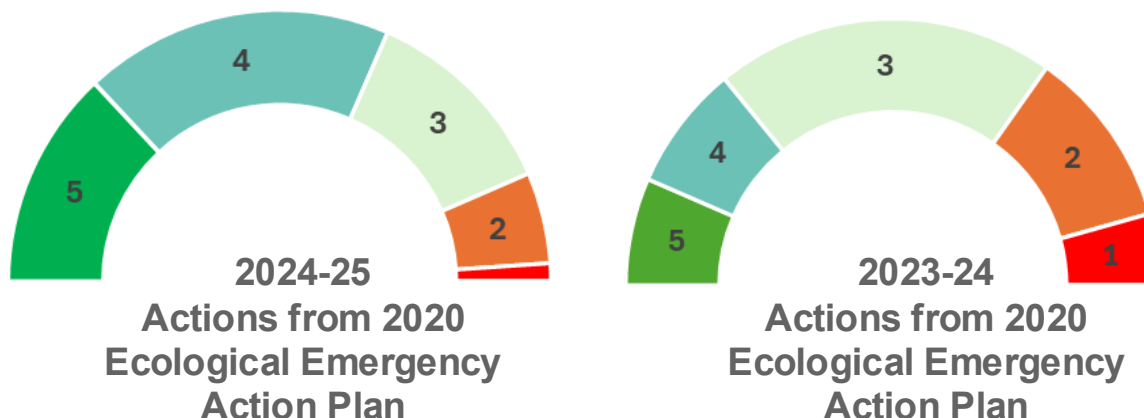
- 1** = Action/strategy still in formation
- 2** = Action/strategy in place, but with no current outputs
- 3** = Action/strategy well underway with current outputs
- 4** = Action/strategy mature, with plans for redevelopment or additions
- 5** = Bespoke action/strategy now complete and considered finished

Progress on Actions – Summary of Progress – Ecological Emergency

Summary

- 46 actions tracked
- Progress made on 26 actions since 2023-24
- 6 actions completed since 2023-24 update
- 87% of total actions in 2024-25 are well underway ('3') or more

Ecological Emergency – Progress on Actions
Size of wedge indicates number of actions at each score
Number in each wedge is the score represented



Key to scores

- 1** = Action/strategy still in formation
- 2** = Action/strategy in place, but with no current outputs
- 3** = Action/strategy well underway with current outputs
- 4** = Action/strategy mature, with plans for redevelopment or additions
- 5** = Bespoke action/strategy now complete and considered finished

This page is intentionally left blank



Bath & North East
Somerset Council

Improving People's Lives

Bath & North East Somerset
Annual Climate and Nature Progress Report 2024-2025
Annex A: Progress on Actions



TACKLING THE CLIMATE &
ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCY

Progress on Actions – Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plans

The following pages provide an update on our key actions contained within both our Climate Action Plan and Ecological Emergency Action Plan. Alongside each action, progress update and next steps, there is a numbered progress rating. The ratings correspond to the below:

- 1 = Action/strategy still in formation
- 2 = Action/strategy in place, but with no current outputs
- 3 = Action/strategy well underway with current outputs
- 4 = Action/strategy mature, with plans for redevelopment or additions
- 5 = Bespoke action/strategy now complete and considered finished

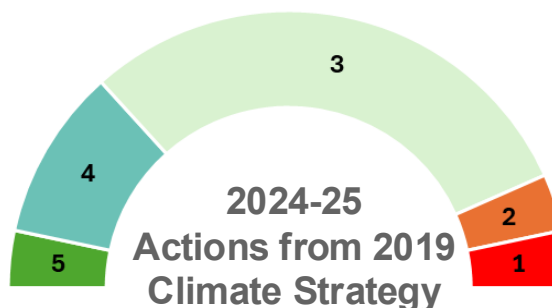
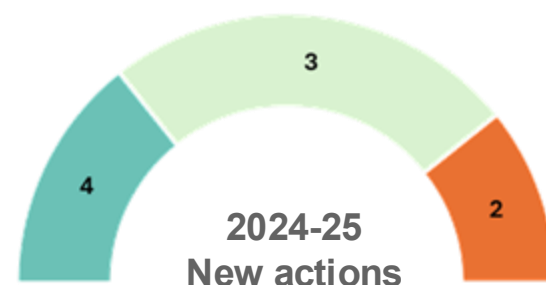
The Ecological Emergency Action Plan will remain the same for the 2024-25 year, but an updated Climate Action Plan has been included because new actions were added last year to those in the 2019 Climate Strategy.

Progress on Actions – Summary of Progress – Climate Emergency

Summary:

- 29 actions are tracked, split between the 2019 Strategy (15 actions) and new actions set in 2023-24 (14 actions). The 14 new actions set in 2023-24, are reported on for first time in 2024-25.
- 26 actions have either progressed their score or remained as ongoing work since 2023-24.
- Of the original 2019 Strategy actions, 10 actions score 3 and 4 and are ongoing works this year where progression to the next score is not yet expected.

Climate Emergency – Progress on Actions
Size of wedge indicates number of actions at each score
Number in each wedge is the score represented



Key to scores

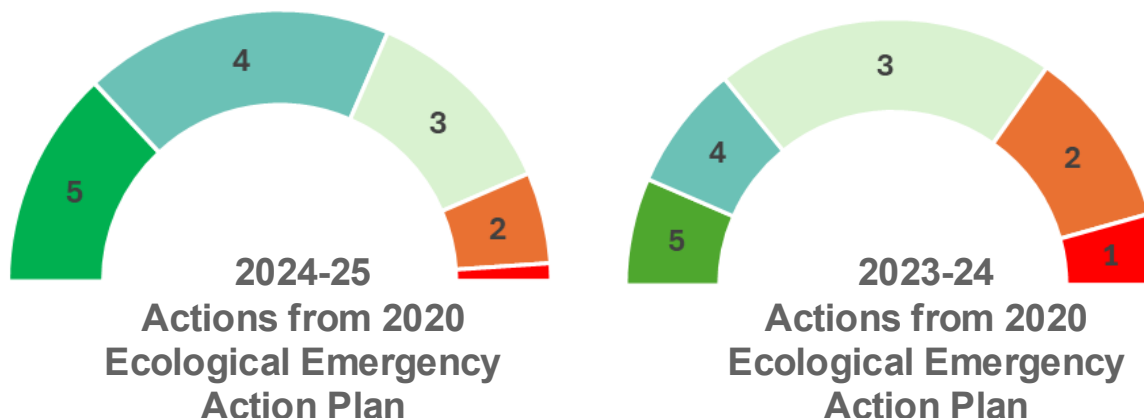
- 1** = Action/strategy still in formation
- 2** = Action/strategy in place, but with no current outputs
- 3** = Action/strategy well underway with current outputs
- 4** = Action/strategy mature, with plans for redevelopment or additions
- 5** = Bespoke action/strategy now complete and considered finished

Progress on Actions – Summary of Progress – Ecological Emergency

Summary

- 46 actions tracked
- Progress made on 26 actions since 2023-24
- 6 actions completed since 2023-24 update
- 87% of total actions in 2024-25 are well underway ('3') or more

Ecological Emergency – Progress on Actions
Size of wedge indicates number of actions at each score
Number in each wedge is the score represented



Key to scores

- 1** = Action/strategy still in formation
- 2** = Action/strategy in place, but with no current outputs
- 3** = Action/strategy well underway with current outputs
- 4** = Action/strategy mature, with plans for redevelopment or additions
- 5** = Bespoke action/strategy now complete and considered finished

Progress on Actions – Climate Emergency – Decarbonising Buildings

No.	Action	Progress Update	Next Steps	Progress Rating
A1.1	Development of strategic approach to home energy efficiency retrofit and decarbonisation of heat.	<p>A cross organisation retrofit working group has been established which brings together partners and providers across Bath and North East Somerset to understand, promote and support local advice and delivery services.</p> <p>Preliminary outputs which identify above and below ground opportunities for using waste heat from the abandoned coal mines are being explored with a working group from WECA.</p> <p>Working group convened to discuss wider heat network opportunities with Future Ambition Board Anchor Institutions to understand how B&NES can support wide development.</p>	<p>Finalising Council's Retrofit Enabling Plan for domestic properties, to supplement the new Climate and Ecological Emergency Strategy. This will be an ongoing group which will help us to understand where there may be local gaps in knowledge, understanding and delivery and identify ways in which we can offer further support.</p> <p>Pin-point single location for drilling exploratory boreholes to compare real world results with desktop studies. Final selection of site to take forward to this stage will be made from 5 sites identified across Bristol, South Glos, and BANES, with 2 of those five sites being in BANES.</p> <p>Work is due to start on a shortlist of homes from August 2025 onwards, based on those who had signed up for HUGS funding.</p>	3
		Completed		5

Progress on Actions – Climate Emergency – Decarbonising Buildings 2

No.	Action	Progress Update	Next Steps	Progress Rating
A1.3	Promote government grant schemes including for low-income households, to maximise uptake locally. Explore options to increase direct support for low-income households.	As part of a consortium with Bristol and North Somerset, BANES will be benefitting from a share of £11m in Warm Homes: Local Grant.	<p>Work is due to start on a shortlist of homes from August 2025 onwards, based on those who had signed up for HUGS funding.</p> <p>Continue to raise awareness and use of current support offers, for example, through the Energy at Home website.</p>	3
A1.4	Develop communication strategies to drive public interest and access to information about retrofit and domestic renewables.	<p>Funding received for specialist communications skills to help tailor messages, amplify the work of partner organisations and improve customer journeys to encourage uptake of retrofit advice.</p> <p>Communications are ongoing across the Combined Authority area to raise the profile of the Retrofit West Programme.</p>	<p>Promote uptake of retrofit and domestic renewables with trained volunteers working as part of the Community Energy Network.</p> <p>Further develop communications approach to amplify support available for retrofit and renewables, e.g. via Green Heritage Homes, Green Open Homes and Solar Together projects.</p> <p>Take part in activities with local community energy groups, including with civic partners to understand retrofit needs.</p>	3

Progress on Actions – Climate Emergency – Decarbonising Buildings 3

No.	Action	Progress Update	Next Steps	Progress Rating
A1.5	Develop planning policies and guidance to enable energy efficiency improvement of buildings.	<p>B&NES has the following policies in place which support the energy efficiency improvement of buildings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy SCR6: New Build Residential Development • Policy SCR7: New Build Non-residential Development • Policy SCR8: Embodied Carbon • Policy SCR5: Water Efficiency <p>As a result of changes to National Planning Policy and the government's proposed revised housing figure, the Local Plan is being reset. This doesn't mean starting again – the work done already to consult on these policies is still very relevant, as are the responses we received to our consultation in 2024, which we have been considering carefully.</p>	A second options document will be going to public consultation in the autumn, consulting only on new policy areas or policy options where required as a result of changes in circumstances, including a climate adaptation and resilience policy and a retrofit-first policy.	3

Progress on Actions – Climate Emergency – Decarbonising Buildings 4

No.	Action	Progress Update	Next Steps	Progress Rating
A1.6	Maximise benefits to BANES residents from WECA Retrofit Accelerator Hub.	<p>Continue to identify opportunities to maximise benefits to BANES residents from Accelerator as a whole, including ongoing engagement with the Combined Authority retrofit steering group.</p> <p>Funding received from WECA for 2 days/week of comms professional to help tailor messaging and promote the Retrofit West service to more BANES residents.</p> <p>Work with partners including Bath College to provide business support and skills training to grow the retrofit supply chain locally.</p>	<p>Continue to attend regular activity and events with Retrofit West to ensure all messaging, updates offers etc are reflected to homeowners and businesses across the region.</p> <p>Carry out audit of existing comms channels and Energy @ Home website to make sure the customer journey is simplified and rewarding.</p> <p>Continue collaborations with retrofit projects and business and skills to share knowledge and collaborate effectively..</p> <p>Look for opportunities to collaborate with community groups to work with sectors which require encouragement to carry out more retrofit work (e.g. Private Sector landlords)</p>	3

Progress on Actions – Climate Emergency – Decarbonising Transport

No.	Action	Progress Update (2023-4 activity)	Next Steps (planned 2024-5 activity to Autumn 2025)	Progress Rating
A2.1	Development of a suite of capital programmes to contribute to a reduction in car use by 25% in BANES.	<p>Progression of design development and delivery of the following CRSTS projects that enable a shift towards more sustainable modes of transport and lower transport emissions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bristol to Bath Strategic Corridor • Somer Valley Links • Bath City Centre • Liveable Neighbourhoods • Bath Walking, Wheeling & Cycling Links • Bath Quays Links • Scholars Way 	<p>Bath Quays Links and Scholars Way - commence construction</p> <p>Bristol to Bath Strategic Corridor – undertake the final stage of public consultation</p> <p>Remainder of projects – continue to develop the business cases</p>	3
A2.2	Increasing ability to estimate whole-life carbon emissions of transport impact from development projects.	We produced Carbon Management Plans (CMPs) and carried out Greenhouse Gas assessments as part of the economic appraisal for CRSTS projects.	Continue to produce CMPs and quantify carbon reduction as part of business case development of CRSTS projects.	3

Progress on Actions – Climate Emergency – Decarbonising Transport 2

No.	Action	Progress Update	Next Steps	Progress Rating
A2.3	Work with NGED as DNO/DSO to increase grid capacity in BANES to allow for faster rollout of EV fast chargers.	Delivery of EVI is being discussed frequently with NGED at a high level and in more detail with local Network Planners. Required connections for OZEV LEVI EV chargers are likely to have a small capacity requirement and NGED do not envisage any issues with providing connections.	Continue DNO operational meetings, focusing on supporting significant EVI work packages of WECA Green Recovery Fund (GRF) and OZEV Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) fund. Once the operator for the LEVI fund has been appointed, they will be introduced to NGED as they will be responsible for connections.	3

Progress on Actions – Climate Emergency – Increasing Local Renewable Energy Generation

No.	Action	Progress Update	Next Steps	Progress Rating
A3.1	Develop an evidence base to inform new Local Plan and future workstreams regarding potential deployment of renewable energy in BANES.	<p>The evidence base, the Renewable Energy Resource Assessment (RERAS, technical resource assessment) was published in 2022.</p> <p>A project funded via Bristol City Council, Mission Net Zero, has given the Council access to a new Local Area Energy Planning tool that can inform spatial planning and identification of new projects.</p> <p>The Options consultation for the new Local Plan includes potential safeguarding of renewables sites identified in the RERAS</p>	Complete new Local Plan, reviewing consultation response and updating policies accordingly	4
A3.2	Develop communication and engagement strategies to drive public interest / access to information and expertise about renewable energy.	[Action combined with #1.4]		n/a

Progress on Actions – Climate Emergency – Increasing Local Renewable Energy Generation

No.	Action	Progress Update	Next Steps	Progress Rating
A3.3	Development of Energy Strategy to provide strategic framework and outline of short and longer-term actions.	Energy actions for the Council will be captured in Climate & Ecological Emergency Strategy due 2026, rather than publishing a standalone Energy Strategy. More detail will be set out in a Net Zero Council action plan (for Council's own estate and assets); a Retrofit Enabling Plan; and the outputs of the Mission Net Zero Regional Climate Investment Plan	Working with external stakeholders to translate the outputs from the Mission Net Zero Regional Climate Investment Plan into an action plan for the district	1

Progress on Actions – Climate Emergency – Decarbonising Council Operations

No.	Action	Progress Update	Next Steps	Progress Rating
A4.1	Develop pipeline of Council renewables projects in line with 2030 target for 12MW installed capacity.	[Replaced with action 4.3 in new actions for 2025]		3
A4.2	Put in place the framework and policies for measuring and reducing the council's Scope 3 emissions.	Limited progress on Scope 3 emissions. Analysis is available on where our Scope 3 emissions are coming from and we have continued to learn from partners about best practice in this area. We seek understanding of other neighbouring authority and regional approaches. Specific work continues for our heritage estate scope 3.	Support the implementation of the Council's November 2024 Procurement Strategy. Develop and pilot approaches to measurement with key teams and suppliers. Set out approach as part of updated Climate Emergency Strategy.	2
A4.3	Waste Services action to reduce operational carbon emissions.	The Keynsham Recycling Hub site is completed and opened to the public. The site includes a 780 KWP solar array, EV charging, waste-water recycling for vehicle washing and >10% biodiversity net gain. The Council is progressing its plans to relocate its Bath Recycling Centre. This places the Climate and Ecological Emergency policy at the fore. It aims to reuse existing infrastructure wherever possible so that the overall carbon footprint of the development is minimised.	Continue planning and testing for the electrification of waste fleet, more detail under action 4.5. The Bath Recycling Centre is due to open in 2026.	4
A4.4	Property Services projects to reduce carbon emissions from the Council's corporate estate.	[Action combined with #4.1]		n/a

Progress on Actions – Climate Emergency – Decarbonising Council Operations 2

No.	Action	Progress Update 2024/25	Next Steps 2025/26	Progress Rating
A4.5	<p>Decarbonising Council fleet programme.</p> <p>With most of the fleet due for renewal in the short term, B&NES has the opportunity to decarbonise a significant proportion of it, ahead of the 2030 net zero target.</p> <p>Based on assessment of the fleet, and available zero-emission technologies, battery electric (BE) will be the most suitable alternative in most cases to replace current internal combustion engine vehicles (ICEVs).</p> <p>Of those ICEVs which will be replaced, 65% (112) of the fleet are directly suited for replacement with BEVs. 33% (57) would need more clarification.</p>	<p>Budget provision has been secured to replace recycling and refuse trucks as they become due for replacement.</p> <p>Identification, feasibility and trialling of both kerbside recycling vehicles (KRVs) (April 2025) and refuse collection vehicles (RCVs) (June 2025).</p> <p>RCV trials concluded that Mercedes eEconic demonstrated and was technically suitable but questions about size as they do not build a narrow chassis. Proposed to purchase 6 eEconic's of the 12 vehicles required to ensure they are suitable for all routes. Consideration will then be made at a later date between the new Dennis eCollect (when available) and the eEconic for the remaining 6 vehicles.</p> <p>Romaquip (KRV) trials were positive and proved it was fit for purpose for replacing the 30 end of life vehicles. Further trials are arranged for December 2025 to test the vehicle in colder weather.</p>	<p>Progressing mid size replacements with EV for vehicles in Community Equipment, Waste, refuse collection, at Haycombe Crematorium and Parks. 2024/25 Purchases include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3x Electric Motorcycles (Parking Services) 6x Electric Vans (Various Council Teams) 3x Electric Carts (City Centre Cleaning) 2x Electric Ride on mowers (Haycombe Crematorium) 1x Electric utility vehicle (Cleansing) <p>Work through costings where trials and assessments are demonstrating EVs are suitable. Confirm purchase of 6 RCV eEconic's for 2025/26.</p> <p>Carry out December 2025 testing of Romaquip KRVs. KRV purchase would be in 2027/28.</p> <p>Fleet Transition Plan is being developed for review by Council, alongside buildings decarbonisation plans.</p>	3

Progress on Actions – Climate Emergency – Decarbonising Council Operations 3

No.	Action	Progress Update	Next Steps	Progress Rating
A4.6	Aligning council policies and plans.	<p>Climate and Nature Strategy update work started to bring together Climate and Ecological strategy and plans at the mid-point to 2030, to evidence how the Council will deliver the Corporate Strategy Core Priority of Tackling the Climate and Ecological Emergencies</p> <p>Local Plan development continues to support strong environmental policies. Please see action 1.5</p> <p>Work started to define and build the business case for managing more of our land for nature</p>	<p>Work with the BANES community through a variety of ways to test and develop strategy areas. This will include working with civic partners through the Future Ambition Board to start transition planning respective contributions.</p> <p>Continued consultation for Local Plan reset. Please see action 1.5</p> <p>Gain agreement for the principles that underpin being a Nature Positive Council</p>	4

Progress on Actions – Climate Emergency new actions for 2024-25 - Buildings

No.	Action	Progress Update	Next Steps	Progress Rating
Buildings				
B1.1	<p>a) Deliver 30x Level 0 pre-apps and sign up 50x Listed Building Energy Champions</p> <p>b) Progress 10x retrofit planning applications/full pre-apps</p> <p>c) Develop online guidance pages for Green Heritage Homes project</p> <p>d) Delivery of homeowner engagement via webinars, surgeries, and wider promotion of services</p> <p>e) Engage planners in GHH training modules to enable more planning approvals for retrofit of listed buildings</p>	<p>a) Total 26x Level 0 pre-apps and 43x Listed Building Energy Champions completed</p> <p>b) 83x planning applications/pre-apps completed and monitoring process set up for retrofit apps/pre-apps issued</p> <p>c) Creation of resources including listed building factsheets and bitesize retrofit videos, made available on B&NES website</p> <p>d) Hosting 4x listed building surgeries, 2x online webinar modules on heritage significance and the consent process and presentation of project at external meetings, webinars, and seminars</p> <p>e) Funding of ABBE Level 3 qualification for project officers and CPD sessions for officers, including Green Register training and vacuum glazing CPD session (also attended by Historic England)</p>	<p>Progress and deliver Green Heritage Homes Phase II from April 2025 for a three-year fixed term period.</p> <p>Key actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue delivery of Level 0 pre-app and retrofit casework - Progress LLBCO for solar panels in the conservation area - Ongoing enablement of retrofit – working with social housing provider - Addressing the supply chain 	4

Progress on Actions – Climate Emergency new actions for 2024-25 – Buildings 2 and Transport

No.	Action	Progress Update	Next Steps	Progress Rating
Buildings				
B1.2	Support the programme of Green Open Homes events with Bath and West Community Energy	Held a Green Open Homes weekend in Autumn 2024, delivered in partnership with BWCE, Bath Preservation Trust, Buro Happold and Transition Bath.	Work with partners to agree next steps for the Open Homes Programme, including Green Heritage Homes Champions.	4
B1.3 Page 77	Work with West of England Mayoral Combined Authority and local delivery partners to promote Retrofit West advice and support to B&NES residents ensuring uptake is proportional to other Unitary Authority areas	Regular working with Retrofit West and WECA. All comms officers involved to evaluate progress and agree next steps.	Carry out audit of retrofit comms and update digital and print materials in order to maximise impact.	3
B1.4	Support town and parish Councils and community groups to access funding and expertise to retrofit Community Buildings	Convened a retrofit working group	Understand whole picture of community retrofit activity in the area and identify any gaps	2

Progress on Actions – Climate Emergency new actions for 2024-25 – Buildings 2 and Transport

No.	Action	Progress Update	Next Steps	Progress Rating
Buildings				
B1.5	Promote WECA Green Business Grants to support rollout of rooftop solar and heat pumps to commercial buildings	<p>This year to date the council has helped the following with carbon-reduction installations: clothing (Westfield Industrial Estate), food and drink (High Street, Keynsham), food and drink (The Maltings, Bath), tourism (High Street, Bath).</p> <p>Monthly outreach is undertaken by the council's Business Engagement Officer, with team colleagues from the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority. Both B2B and B2C are approached. All major B&NES industrial estates have been visited.</p> <p>The West of England Mayoral Combined Authority is running a LinkedIn Lead generation campaign from July – September 2025</p>	There are ongoing expressions of interest (EOI) raised at businesses such as: environmental (Brassmill Enterprise Centre, Bath), precision engineering (The Maltings, Bath), precision engineering (Midsomer Norton), food and drink (High Street, Midsomer Norton) and hospitality (High Street, Bath).	3
2. Transport - Detailed plans for transport are set out in the Journey to Net Zero plans for Bath and for North East Somerset				

Progress on Actions – Climate Emergency new actions for 2024-25 - Renewables

No.	Action	Progress Update	Next Steps	Progress Rating
Renewables				
B3.1	Ensure the Local Plan provides a supportive policy environment to reach the target of 300MW of in-district generation by 2030 with updated policy re enabling wind development in line with new central government policy.	Local Plan policy on wind generation is being reviewed as part of Local Plan Update, in line with revised NPPF	Complete Local plan options consultation and policy review	3
B3.2 page 79	Develop a Local Area Energy Plan for Bath & North East Somerset through the regional Mission Net Zero project (completion date November 2025).	The Mission Net Zero project was funded by Bristol City Council via an Innovate UK grant. One project within the programme was creation of a Regional Climate Investment Plan and Pipeline. The project has given all councils in the region access to the LAEP+ tool, an energy planning tool that supports spatial planning. The project is at a regional level and therefore the outputs do not include a detailed Local Area Energy Plan for BANES. The LAEP+ tool can be used to inform local energy planning within the Council, with stakeholders, and to feed data into Regional Energy System Plans (transitional plans due 2026, full RESP due 2027) that will inform the next period of network investment in 2028-2033.	Secure additional resource beyond November 2025 to enable the use of the LAEP+ tool to be embedded in Council processes, and to engage local stakeholders in energy planning. Continue to support the development of Regional Energy System Plans via the new RESP South West office.	3

Progress on Actions – Climate Emergency new actions for 2024-25 – Renewables 2

No.	Action	Progress Update	Next Steps	Progress Rating
Page 80	B3.3 Develop a business case for Council to co-invest in renewables sites for local Community Energy projects via a Joint Venture	Council is reviewing options for investment in local projects based on updated modelling provided by consultants. This includes a variety of options including loans, power purchase agreements, and a Joint Venture. The government's Local Power Plan is intended to provide support for Local Authority and Community Energy partnerships and could unlock opportunities to co-develop projects; detail of the support available is due to be published by the end of 2025.	Finalise options for investment once details of Local Power Plan published (2025) and take a strategic decision on options to pursue	3
	B3.4 Support development of local Community Energy groups through Cooperation Agreements, exploring opportunities for joint projects to accelerate delivery (including solar project with Keynsham Community Energy on Keynsham Leisure Centre)	<p>The Council has continued throughout 2025 to pursue the rooftop solar project with Keynsham Community Energy for Keynsham Leisure Centre. Significant officer time has been contributed to the project in-kind and it is hoped installation can take place in 2025.</p> <p>A grant of £71k capital funding was awarded by Bath and West Community Energy to the Fairy Hill solar farm in Compton Dando, via the UKSPF Rural fund.</p>	<p>Complete Keynsham solar project</p> <p>Continue to support development of new Community Energy projects via Cooperation Agreements</p>	4

Progress on Actions – Climate Emergency new actions for 2024-25 – Renewables 3

No.	Action	Progress Update	Next Steps	Progress Rating
B3.5	Work with Distribution Systems Operator and new Regional Energy System Planner to understand grid opportunities and constraints locally, and unlock new investment to meet future demand	The Council responded to information requests from NGED and the newly formed Regional Energy System Planner (RESP) to inform network planning for the new price control period 2028-2033. Quarterly strategic meetings take place with NGED stakeholder manager and local grid engineers	<p>Continue to engage in RESP process as new regional governance is implemented</p> <p>Secure additional resource to implement use of the LAEP+ tool within the Council to inform spatial energy planning in collaboration with the WECA.</p>	4

Progress on Actions – Climate Emergency new actions for 2024-25 – Council Operations

No.	Action	Progress Update	Next Steps	Progress Rating
Council Operations				
B4.1	Develop an implementation plan for decarbonisation of the council's own vehicle fleet	[See 4.5 above for update]		
B4.2	Develop a full plan for heat decarbonisation of Corporate Estate by 2030 including costed Heat Decarbonisation Plans for each significant building	Following a budget allocation of £4m over 5 years, a £250k decarbonisation programme has been approved for 25/26 that includes feasibility studies, technical support, Pulteney Hydro Scheme feasibility and building intelligence data project.	Completion of Stage 2 of Hydro feasibility work; commencement of 2 heat decarbonisation projects using PSDS award; further Energy Assessments and Heat Decarbonisation Plans for the corporate estate.	3
B4.3	Develop pipeline and costing for 12MW Council owned renewable generation by 2030 (including a minimum 2MW of wind), and deliver an additional 230KW installed capacity in 2024-25	Completion of the Bath Sports and Leisure Centre rooftop solar project (90kWp) and approval for rooftop solar projects including Carrswood Day Centre; Pump Room; and Odd Down Sports Ground. Business case and PIDs in progress for other sites.	Completion of Carrswood; Odd Down Sports Ground and Pump Room rooftop solar PV. Completion of business cases for solar canopies at car parks. PID approval for Parkside solar and St Keyna grant funded rooftop solar.	3
B4.4	Develop and pilot approaches to measure and reduce Council Scope 3 emissions. Set out approach as part of updated Climate & Nature Strategy.	Used LGA tools to set Scope 3 boundary Reviewed sustainable procurement models at West of England local authorities and at West of England Mayoral Combined Authority to seek common approach Heritage Services pilot work with Roman Baths shop suppliers	Review spend based analysis Scope 3 work from 2021 vs LGA boundary to report more fully in 2026 Agree resource to manage development of approach to Sustainable Procurement to support implementation of the 2024 Procurement Strategy Set Scope 3 target	2

Progress on Actions – Climate Emergency new actions for 2024-25

No.	Action	Progress Update	Next Steps	Progress Rating
Other				
B5.1	As part of the development of the new Climate & Nature Strategy, set out our approach to climate change adaptation and resilience, including identifying priority actions.	Our new Strategy for Climate & Nature adds climate resilience to the overarching outcomes we are working towards: Net Zero, Nature Positive and Climate Resilient. As a result, climate adaptation and resilience is being embedded as a cross-cutting theme in the Strategy, with new priority actions being identified alongside recognising existing actions that deliver for nature recovery and net zero and help our communities and places prepare and build resilience to the impacts of climate change.	<p>Development of a programme of work to mitigate risk to delivery of council Services.</p> <p>More specific place-based climate risk assessments and adaptation action planning with partners, to be planned and delivered and feed into the Climate and Nature Strategy</p>	2

Progress on Actions – Ecological Emergency – Leadership and Evidence

No.	Action	Progress Update	Next Steps	Progress Rating
C1.1	Integrate the ecological emergency into the strategic framework that will be set out in the next Corporate Strategy (2024-)	Corporate Strategy published in 2023, including references to the Ecological Emergency. Action Completed.		5
C1.2	Roll-out and embed a Council-wide decision support tool to ensure potential impacts on nature inform all major decisions and projects across the Council, mitigating impacts where necessary.	The decision support wheel has been used to evaluate the impact of projects on biodiversity, land, water, soil (among other things).	Use learnings from the initial rollout of the wheel to ensure it is being used in a way that properly captures the impact of projects on the environment and, where necessary, balances these against social impacts.	4
C1.3	Ensure the Council's Commercial Strategy supports the vision of being Nature Positive by 2030 and helps tackle the ecological emergency. This should include a framework for using the West of England Nature Recovery Network and, when published, the West of England Local Nature Recovery Strategy, to inform land acquisition, management and disposal.	We have informed decisions on potential asset disposal and management this year and will continue to be involved in these decisions.	Identify options for improved management for nature for sites that we have requested are retained for their value to nature, and how this can be funded.	4

Progress on Actions – Ecological Emergency – Leadership and Evidence 2

No.	Action	Progress Update	Next Steps	Progress Rating
C1.4	Produce and deliver an ecological emergency literacy training programme for Council employees and members.	<p>The West of England Mayoral Combined Authority is working on a nature literacy package, which we will support and utilise.</p> <p>We updated our internal online training on climate and nature in 2024.</p>	Support the Combined Authority in the development of a nature literacy package.	3
C1.5 Page 85	Produce a guidance note for renewable energy projects, including solar and wind developments, to embed management for nature into their schemes.	We have identified an existing guidance note that has been included in the pre-application process for solar developments.	Monitor how the guidance note is being used in the pre-application process	5
C1.6	Ensure policies and guidance in the new Local Plan address the ecological emergency and improve access to nature, and consider adopting Building with Nature standards.	<p>The previous Local Plan Options Document included a number of options that would help address the ecological emergency.</p> <p>We are in the process of revising the Options Document as part of the Local Plan Reset, and it will be published later this year.</p>	We will finalise the revised Local Plan Options Document, which will again include options for a number of policies that will help tackle the ecological emergency and improve people's access to nature.	4

Progress on Actions – Ecological Emergency – Leadership and Evidence 3

No.	Action	Progress Update	Next Steps	Progress Rating
C1.7	Evaluate the feasibility of setting a higher requirement for biodiversity net gain, above the mandatory figure of 10%.	Mandatory biodiversity net gain (BNG) has been in force since January 2023, over a year ahead of the national deadline.	Evaluate responses to the Options Document to inform next steps regarding a 20% BNG Policy.	3
		The previous Local Plan Options Document included options to require 20% biodiversity net gain, which will be included in the revised Options document.	Ascertain the BNG requirements for the site allocations in the Local Plan and consider how these will be delivered.	
		We have drafted a paper setting out the need for 20% Net Gain to support this Option.		
C1.8	Review and update the Council's approach to food to integrate opportunities to reduce the impact of food production on nature.	The Food Strategy is currently in development, with drafting expected to be completed by the end of 2025.	Continue work to develop the Food Strategy in partnership.	4
C1.9	Incorporate standards related to nature recovery in the council's minimum standards for procurement.	The B&NES Procurement Strategy was published in 2024, with an ambition to 'embed sustainability and climate action in to all procurement activity'.	Seek resource to implement a model for sustainable procurement with suppliers (for both climate and nature).	3

Progress on Actions – Ecological Emergency – Land and Water Management

No.	Action	Progress Update	Next Steps	Progress Rating
C2.1	Identify and deliver opportunities for nature recovery and biodiversity net gain on the following sites as a priority: Entry Hill, Odd Down Sports Ground, The Approach Golf Course and Lansdown, and then on B&NES Council's wider estate.	<p>We have completed a biodiversity net gain (BNG) assessment for Entry Hill, identifying the potential to generate 62 Biodiversity Units from improvements to the Site. The possibility of an Ecology Centre is being explored through the Landscape City project.</p> <p>Two options for landscape improvements at Odd Down are being consulted on as part of plans to refurbish facilities there; both will improve the site's value to nature, although one is more focused on biodiversity. A planning application will be submitted later this year.</p> <p>A BNG assessment has been completed for Approach Golf Course to identify potential future opportunities for habitat creation.</p> <p>We have also produced plans for habitat creation at Primrose Hill as part of our BNG Pathfinder project, following the success of this approach at Charlcombe Way.</p>	<p>Develop a collaborative masterplan for Entry Hill with partners and identify funding to deliver the Masterplan, including potential sale of BNG units. Explore the possibility of partners managing Entry Hill to deliver agreed aspirations.</p> <p>Complete consultation on Odd Down and submit planning application.</p> <p>Continue to identify opportunities to sell biodiversity units generated through BNG Pathfinder Project.</p> <p>Continue to generate opportunities for nature recovery on other Council sites across our estate.</p>	4

Progress on Actions – Ecological Emergency – Land and Water Management 2

No.	Action	Progress Update	Next Steps	Progress Rating
Page 88	C2.2 Package together and fund already-identified opportunities for improving the management of our parks and green spaces for nature.	<p>We are working on an application for Countryside Stewardship funding for managing areas of grassland within our parks and green spaces for nature, which will provide a regular income source and enable us to do more for nature.</p> <p>We are also exploring options to secure internal or external funding for equipment needed to manage more of our grassland as species-rich meadows.</p>	<p>We will finalise our plans for grassland management and submit an application when the window for applications opens later this year.</p> <p>Through Landscape City we are developing management plans for woodlands in Bath, which we plan to progress to stewardship applications.</p>	4
	C2.3 Design, fund and deliver a training programme for operational staff on how to better manage parks and green spaces for nature.	Parks and Green Spaces staff have completed training on managing grassland for nature. The CPRE Hedgerow Heroes project has also provided training on hedgerow laying and management	Continue to monitor potential funding sources that could enable us to deliver any additional training.	5
	C2.4 Adjust cutting regimes of highways verges where there is scope for improved management for nature.	Initial discussions on equipment needed to enable more urban verges to be better managed for nature.	<p>Progress funding applications for equipment that would enable more urban verges to be managed for nature.</p> <p>Explore innovative solutions to manage more rural verges for nature.</p>	2

Progress on Actions – Ecological Emergency – Land and Water Management 3

No.	Action	Progress Update	Next Steps	Progress Rating
C2.5	Produce a B&NES Tree and Woodland Strategy for 2023-30, including plans for increasing tree and woodland cover, and improving woodland management on our own estate.	A first draft of an Action Plan for council-owned woodlands was produced in early 2024, which we are working to. We have recruited a Tree and Woodland Manager to produce a district-wide Strategy	Produce Tree and Woodland Strategy for the district, and formally publish our Action Plan for Council-owned woodlands	4
C2.6	Create an improved 45-hectare nature park at Somerdale, Keynsham as part of WaterSpace Connected and in partnership with Taylor Wimpey.	We've continued to explore options to deliver the nature park, but a lack of funding has slowed progress.	Continue to explore options for funding for the nature park.	3
C2.7	Extend the Bathscape Partnership Scheme to 2025 and develop the project through to 2030.	The project was successfully extended through to 2026, and funding was secured for the Landscape City Project, which focuses on improving management of Council-owned sites within the Bathscape.	Identify a source of funding and develop a proposal for the next phase of Bathscape.	3

Progress on Actions – Ecological Emergency – Land and Water Management 4

No.	Action	Progress Update	Next Steps	Progress Rating
C2.8	Deliver 34 hectares of improved, nature-rich green space in and around Midsomer Norton, Westfield and Radstock as part of Somer Valley Rediscovered.	This is being delivered through Somer Valley Rediscovered. See the Somer Valley Rediscovered website for further detail.	Continued delivery through Somer Valley Rediscovered; completion planned for early 2026.	4
C2.9	Establish the Chew Valley Reconnected Partnership (CVRP) to coordinate activity among stakeholders and communities to enhance the natural environment of the Chew Valley.	<p>Partnership established in 2023, and is ongoing through the Chew Valley Reconnected project.</p> <p>The Partnership is looking to develop joint project and funding proposals to deliver coordinated nature recovery across the catchment.</p>	Continue to support and coordinate the Chew Valley Reconnected Partnership (CVRP).	5

Progress on Actions – Ecological Emergency – Nature-Based Solutions

No.	Action	Progress Update	Next Steps	Progress Rating
C3.1 C3.2 Policy	Identify priority areas for nature-based solutions to localised flooding and runoff of pollutants from the road network and developments; and facilitate partners, including Bristol Avon Rivers Trust and FWAG SW, delivering targeted solutions with landowners.	Further progress has not yet been possible.	Evaluate learnings from the South Gloucestershire Council and BART Green Recovery Fund-funded project on this subject and ascertain how they can be applied to BANES.	1
	As part of the development of the Local Plan 2025, require developments to deliver Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) that meet adoptable standards and benefit wildlife.	Included as an Option in the previous Local Plan Consultation; planned to be included as an Option in the revised Options document.	Consult on this Option and review responses. This will inform the policy approach taken forward in the Draft Plan, which is due to be completed by Summer 2026. Ensure any policy reflects best practice and opportunities, and links with Green Infrastructure policy and standards.	4

Progress on Actions – Ecological Emergency – Nature-Based Solutions 2

No.	Action	Progress Update	Next Steps	Progress Rating
C3.3	Work with Bristol Avon Rivers Trust to restore the River Chew. This will involve identifying, costing and evaluating options for removal or retrofitting of weirs and other barriers to fish passage within the Chew catchment, river habitat restoration, and accessing funding for priority projects.	We have continued our work with BART and other partners to explore options for the future of Keynsham Memorial Park weir to improve the river for wildlife in line with national and regional nature recovery strategies.	Secure funding to enable the Council to lead a partnership project focussing on River and Weir Improvements in the Park, starting with feasibility and development work.	3
		The Chew, Cam and Wellow farmer cluster is providing funding for projects that restore the health of the catchment and improve biodiversity.	Continue to engage with BART and farm cluster on delivery of the Action Plan.	
C3.4	Pilot bat-friendly lighting to reduce the impact on light pollution on wildlife along the Avon River corridor (as part of WaterSpace) and use this to inform our approach to street lighting.	No progress made this year.	Review the suggested partnership approach with the University to developing bat-friendly lighting solutions on the Bristol Bath Railway Path, along the River Avon corridor, and other active travel routes.	2

Progress on Actions – Ecological Emergency – Nature-Based Solutions 3

No.	Action	Progress Update	Next Steps	Progress Rating
C3.5	Produce a toolkit of ecological interventions for highways, infrastructure and regeneration projects that are easy to deliver at low cost and that can contribute to delivery of biodiversity net gain.	<p>We have produced a guidance note for integrating nature positive design into transport infrastructure and are producing a guidance note for wildlife-friendly building design.</p> <p>The GI Strategy also includes standards for Green Infrastructure in development.</p>	<p>Finalise guidance note for wildlife-friendly building design.</p> <p>Finalise and publish GI Strategy.</p>	4
Page 33 C3.6	Scope out opportunities for the use of nature-based solutions for climate change mitigation (carbon sequestration) and adaptation across the district, and options for funding/financing these.	B&NES is part of a West of England Climate Resilience Working Group set up to progress work to adapt to climate change at the regional level, including the potential for nature-based solutions.	<p>Continue to work with the West of England Working Group, including to co-develop a regional adaptation strategy, identifying opportunities for nature-based solutions and how these might be funded.</p> <p>Work with / support carbon off-setting policy requirements.</p>	3
C3.7	Use the Invest in B&NES website, as well as other established channels of communication, to better communicate the opportunities to invest in nature for businesses.	We have continued to support regional nature business engagement through the Combined Authority, including the launch of a nature business toolkit in 2024.	Update of regional toolkit planned for November 2025. Additional engagement and resources planned to coincide with Wild Summit (September) and Social Value Regional Plan (January).	4

Progress on Actions – Ecological Emergency – Access and Engagement

No.	Action	Progress Update	Next Steps	Progress Rating
C4.1	Seek funding for a dedicated post (or posts) for the Neighbourhood Nature Areas scheme, supporting communities in active management of their local green and blue spaces for nature.	<p>The UK SPF for a 'Nextdoor Nature' project in the Somer Valley has now been completed, which delivered these objectives in that area and was run by Avon Wildlife Trust.</p> <p>We have continued to run the Neighbourhood Nature Areas scheme.</p>	<p>Explore opportunities to fund an extension of the 'Nextdoor Nature' project in the Somer Valley.</p> <p>Monitor opportunities for funding posts in other areas or across the whole of BANES.</p>	3
C4.2	Create a dedicated Council webpage on the ecological emergency, and use this as a hub to communicate the work we are doing to address the ecological emergency and how residents can contribute towards nature recovery.	<p>Action completed.</p> <p>A number of webpages were published in 2023, providing residents with more accessible information on the ecological emergency.</p>	<p>Maintain and add to webpages as required to ensure information on how we are tackling the ecological emergency is kept up-to-date.</p>	5
C4.3	Embed tackling the ecological emergency within the Bath World Heritage Site Management Plan, explore opportunities for celebrating our natural environment as heritage, and better integrate the ecological emergency within communications related to heritage.	<p>The Bath World Heritage Site Management Plan was published in June 2025, with nature recovery recognised as a key priority and having accompanying actions.</p>	<p>Progress actions for nature recovery included in the Management Plan.</p>	5

Progress on Actions – Ecological Emergency – Access and Engagement 2

No.	Action	Progress Update	Next Steps	Progress Rating
C4.4	Work with partners to establish a social prescribing network within B&NES and make available grants for providers of nature-based activities to build their capacity.	<p>A BANES Social Prescribing Framework is being drafted, which will inform an Action Plan and investment case to support delivery of the shared vision and approach.</p> <p>The Somer Valley Rediscovered (SVR) wellbeing offer has provided a programme of green social prescribing activities in the Somer Valley.</p>	<p>Publish BANES Social Prescribing Framework, and progress identified actions.</p> <p>Identify funding to continue and expand the green social prescribing offer in the Somer Valley.</p>	4
C4.5	Incorporate actions to improve people's access to nature within the developing Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Bath and North East Somerset.	Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy published in 2023.	Explore opportunities resulting from the Strategy to improve people's access to nature.	5
C4.6	Create apprenticeships, work placements and/or other opportunities for work within the GI & Nature Recovery team, land management and/or ecologists within B&NES.	We explored a number of opportunities to create apprenticeships this year, but a lack of resources has meant this has not been possible.	Explore opportunities with universities for student placements or projects, which would be less resource intensive.	2

Progress on Actions – Ecological Emergency – Evidence and Monitoring

No.	Action	Progress Update	Next Steps	Progress Rating
C5.1	Produce a ‘State of Nature’ framework for B&NES, including an ‘ecological baseline’ and wildlife index for B&NES to measure progress against, and targets for nature recovery.	<p>We have baselined land managed for nature both across the district and on our Estate.</p> <p>We are working in partnership through the West of England Environmental Data Group to develop a regional wildlife index, which could be refined for B&NES, and to develop a regional monitoring framework for nature recovery.</p>	<p>Continue to update our monitoring with new data as it becomes available.</p> <p>Continue to work with the West of England Environmental Data Group to create a Wildlife Index by the end of this year.</p>	4
C5.2	Trial repeatable techniques for monitoring wildlife populations (such as insect traps or standardised bird counts) on sites owned or managed by B&NES Council, to help evaluate of the effectiveness of interventions for nature.	No progress in this year.	Explore opportunities for trialling novel monitoring solution such as acoustic monitors, perhaps through the council's pathfinder sites in conjunction with community groups.	2

Progress on Actions – Ecological Emergency – Evidence and Monitoring 2

No.	Action	Progress Update	Next Steps	Progress Rating
C5.3	Continue to monitor change in tree canopy cover across BANES, updating the figure at least every three years based on a baseline of 16.5% in 2020.	Baseline for BANES district established and published.	Continue to use agreed West of England approach to monitor tree cover in BANES.	5
C5.4	Survey the condition of Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCIs) within BANES to identify those that lack management plans or are in unfavourable condition and use this evidence to prioritise improvements in management, with an initial focus on SNCIs under B&NES Council ownership.	<p>Woodland and grassland surveys are being done through Landscape City project. Further surveys of Council-owned SNCIs managed by tenants are being done by Land Management Advisor.</p> <p>Funding being secured at the West of England level for surveys of priority SNCIs (i.e. not just council-owned).</p>	<p>Complete remaining surveys of B&NES Council-owned SNCIs and bring them into good management.</p> <p>Work with Combined Authority to survey priority SNCIs within BANES</p>	4
C5.5	Combine access to green space mapping with data on multiple deprivation to identify priority areas for improving access to green space.	The developing Greener Places Strategy has mapped access to green space across the district and using this information alongside data on multiple deprivation to identify priority areas.	Publication of Greener Places Strategy, which is expected later this year.	5

Progress on Actions – Ecological Emergency – Evidence and Monitoring 3

No.	Action	Progress Update	Next Steps	Progress Rating
C5.6	Include questions in the Council's Voicebox survey from 2023 onwards that monitor people's interest in and engagement with nature.	Questions regarding people's engagement with nature and green spaces include (Question 5) and concerns about the ecological emergency (Question 33) included in Voicebox 2024. The findings from this report can be found online.	Voicebox being discontinued in 2025. Planned to use a dedicated climate and nature survey in its place.	5
C5.7	Develop and implement a single corporate reporting approach that aligns reporting to government on the implementation of the enhanced NERC duty on Local Authorities with internal reporting on delivery of the Ecological Emergency Action Plan.	Working with neighbouring local authorities to develop templates for reporting and ensure comprehensive reports.	Complete report for the first reporting period by April 2026.	3

Progress on Actions – Ecological Emergency – Working in Partnership

No.	Action	Progress Update	Next Steps	Progress Rating
C6.1	Produce guidance and a template to support parish and town councils in producing Local Nature Action Plans, and ensure these are linked with Avon Wildlife Trust's Wildlife Champion Network.	<p>A number of Parish and Town Councils are working on Nature Action Plans (NAPs).</p> <p>Bristol Climate and Nature Partnership has secured funding to extend a model for Community Climate and Nature action into BANES, which we are supporting.</p>	<p>Continue to support Parish and Town Councils in producing NAPs as required.</p> <p>Support identification of communities and development of approach for Community Climate and Nature action.</p>	5
C6.2	Support the Forest of Avon Trust and Avon Needs Trees in delivering the 'Great Avon Wood' within BANES, providing a new woodland for nature and people, and in their work to establish more trees and woodlands across BANES.	<p>Planting at Great Avon Wood completed.</p> <p>Work on the nearby, larger 'Lower Chew Forest' at Wick Farm is ongoing, led by Avon Needs Trees.</p>	<p>Provide support to Forest of Avon Trust and Avon Needs Trees as required.</p>	5
C6.3	Engage with the Beaver Management Group to identify opportunities for restoring biodiversity, re-naturalising waterways and delivering nature-based solutions to flooding, as well as potential challenges, related to the beaver population in BANES.	<p>Avon Wildlife Trust has now secured funding to reestablish the Beaver Management and Advisory Group, which we will be represented on, and to offer on-the-ground advice to farmers, landowners & communities. We have also joined the National Beaver Infrastructure Group to share best practice and learning etc in terms of risks and opportunities for infrastructure.</p>	<p>Relevant members of staff to Receive training from Avon Wildlife Trust on beaver-related subjects.</p>	3

Progress on Actions – Ecological Emergency – Working in Partnership 2

No.	Action	Progress Update	Next Steps	Progress Rating
C6.4 C6.5 C6.6 Page 300	With partners, agree and implement robust measures to sustain and enhance the bat populations of our European-designated sites, including securing a long-term plan for Combe Down Stone Mine and finalising the bat SAC guidance for B&NES.	No progress made this year.	Secure funding to update and publish guidance as part of the emerging Local Plan	2
	Work with National Trust and local residents to establish a nature-rich, accessible wildlife corridor from Bath to Bathampton Meadows.	National Trust has conducted community engagement to develop plans for the site, including creating wildflower meadows and wetland habitats. Some habitat improvements have begun, including hedge laying.	Continue to support and engage with National Trust in improving management for nature and improving access to Bathampton Meadows for residents.	4
	With partners, ascertain the need and capacity for a sustainable strategy for long-term restoration and management of key grassland sites across BANES or the wider West of England region.	<p>The West of England Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) has identified priority areas for grassland restoration.</p> <p>We are now working with other Local Authorities to develop sustainable approaches for managing grasslands for nature.</p>	<p>Continue work with Local Authorities and trial new/improved approaches, potentially including grazing and cut and collect.</p> <p>Work with WENP to develop the Grassland Connections Priority Programme and secure investment.</p>	3

Progress on Actions – Ecological Emergency – Working in Partnership 3

No.	Action	Progress Update	Next Steps	Progress Rating
C6.7	Enable and support partners in engaging farmers and landholders on managing land for nature in strategic locations and directing them to funding to do so, focusing initially on the Somer Valley and the River Avon corridor.	The West of England Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) has now been published, which provides farmers and landholders with a tool to ascertain how they can best help nature in strategic locations, and links to funding and guidance.	Continue to develop and improve LNRS resources for farmers and landowners.	4
		Avon Wildlife Trust's pollinator pathway projects is engaging farmers in the Somer Valley (and elsewhere) on grassland creation and management.	Scope out engagement in Avon Corridor with BART and Natural England through Waterspace Connected. Develop funding case for next phase of Somer Valley Rediscovered, which could include working with farmers and landowners.	
C6.8	Support farmers in creating farmer clusters within BANES, enabling us to engage with farmers and landholders at a landscape scale; and work with the Duchy of Cornwall, FWAG SW and other partners to spread good practice from exemplar farms.	The Chew, Cam and Wellow Farmer Cluster has been set up, with 56 farmers already signed up. Grants are being awarded for projects to improve the water environment and biodiversity. We have recruited a land management advisor, which will provide us with internal capacity to engage with farmers and landowners on land management for nature.	Continue engagement with Chew, Cam and Wellow Farmer Cluster; and support creation of any other clusters in the district. Secure longer-term funding for land management advisor.	4

Progress on Actions – Economic Strategy – Greener Economy

No.	Action	Progress Update	Next Steps	Progress Rating
Build local energy generation capacity and demand for energy saving measures.				
D1.1	Promote the Energy@Home service to residents on low incomes to increase take up of grant support and advice.	Carried out an audit of existing website with a view to simplify and improve the user journey and co-ordinate with the Community Energy Network project	Go live with new Community Energy Network offer and materials	2
D1.2	Work with Bath and West Community Energy to increase awareness of their renewable energy projects and support.	The new Community Energy Network is a grant funded partnership between the Council and Bath and West Community Energy alongside other partners, and is exploring opportunities for new generation projects working with communities in BANES who would like to host and receive benefits from renewables.	Identify 3-6 sites to take forward as part of Community Energy Network project with a target total capacity of 5MW by 2030.	3
D1.3	Scope community green bonds to help local residents to invest in local projects across our city, town and rural centres.	<p>Scoping exercise undertaken to confirm other Local Authority use of community green bonds and its suitability in BANES.</p> <p>Good examples of engaging with communities to raise funds for renewable energy projects, however in BANES, we have well-established community energy organisations and a commitment to support these via co-operation agreements.</p>	Via Climate and Nature Strategy development, identify different opportunities to develop a community green bond scheme.	4

Progress on Actions – Economic Strategy – Greener Economy 2

No.	Action	Progress Update	Next Steps	Progress Rating
Build local energy generation capacity and demand for energy saving measures.				
D1.4	Explore the development of a Local Area Energy Plan, working with sector and regional partners, to ensure our electricity grid supports electrification and decarbonisation	As a partner to the Mission Net Zero project led by Bristol City Council, we have participated in the creation of a Regional Climate Investment Plan and Pipeline which fulfils some elements of Local Area Energy Planning at a regional level. Have collated and submitted information to the DFES process and the newly formed Regional Energy System Planner to inform strategic investment in networks.	Translate the outputs for the Regional Climate Investment Plan and pipeline into an actionable plan for BANES to accelerate the clean energy transition. Secure additional resource to embed LAEP+ tool into Council processes and engage stakeholders to inform local energy planning	3

Progress on Actions – Economic Strategy – Greener Economy 3

No.	Action	Progress Update	Next Steps	Progress Rating
Support businesses to deliver net zero and nature positive in Bath and North East Somerset.				
D2.1	Promote WECA's free carbon surveys for SMEs and Green Business grants to help businesses invest in improving the energy efficiency of their premises.	In 2025 council officers have supported 5 additional local SMEs to access Green Business Grants, with a further 7 outstanding enquiries prior to the grant programme closing in October. Over £2m has been funded since the programme commenced in 2019.	While Green Business Grants are set to finish in October 2025, Low Carbon Surveys will continue. B&NES Council's Carbon Reduction Accelerator scheme remains live, and officers will work with WECA on new green grant schemes for businesses.	4
Page 104 D2.2	Develop and promote BANES as a location for leading sustainable businesses (e.g. with B Corp status).	<p>Two funded bootcamps supported B&NES SME's on their journey to achieve BCorp accreditation, with 5 in a position to apply following the programme.</p> <p>A separate series of workshops were funded to support pre-start and early stage social enterprises in B&NES.</p>	<p>Continuation of social enterprise support programme.</p> <p>Re-evaluation of BCorp bootcamps to identify demand for further cohorts in 2026.</p>	3

Progress on Actions – Economic Strategy – Greener Economy 3

No.	Action	Progress Update	Next Steps	Progress Rating
Create opportunities for residents to train and upskill for future green economy jobs.				
D3.1	Work with WECA's Retrofit Academy to help local people access training for careers in retrofit.	<p>WECA hold trainer days locally that we have helped to promote for local tradespeople.</p> <p>Business and Skills Engage and Support form an employability point, connecting through our We Work for Everyone team as part of our Skills Connect Project</p>	<p>Continue to promote quality training for installers.</p> <p>Wider and more consistent engagement with WECA Green Skills Lead, looking at pathways from existing and upcoming construction/green skills projects into retrofit, promoting and supporting the academy</p>	2
D3.2	Develop an apprenticeship programme for routes into nature and environment jobs	<p>Action intention is to develop an internal B&NES Council pathway into Green Jobs within the Council.</p> <p>Working group established and options developed. Review included broader options than apprenticeships.</p>	Identify budget and preferred pathways for delivery.	2

Progress on Actions – Economic Strategy – Greener Economy

No.	Action	Progress Update	Next Steps	Progress Rating
Create opportunities for residents to train and upskill for future green economy jobs cont.				
D3.3	Work with our education providers – including schools, Bath College, independent training Providers and universities’ - to promote awareness of green jobs and green skills to the current and future workforce (such as through the FWD project).	<p>FWD delivered activities focused on planned development and delivery of modules where sustainability and net zero are fundamentally integrated into teaching, short course/skills offerings, innovation schemes and business/employer-led projects.</p> <p>FWD delivered sustainability short course modules and integrated sustainability themes into Innovation and Research business support programmes.</p> <p>As well as this a Makerspace Lab was created at the University of Bath Innovation Centre, providing access to 3D printing and prototyping for sustainable product development.</p>	<p>Utilising learnings from FWD to continue to develop Green Skills Provision over 25/26 including:</p> <p>Utilise Hubs and Community Outreach, as well as partnerships to build awareness of Green Skills in B&NES including employment pathways</p> <p>Identify opportunities for entry level green skills training to support residents to access the higher technical qualifications/modules offered by HE/FE (a barrier identified from FWD)</p> <p>Build opportunities to get Innovation and Talent into the same space, with a focus on green skills, sustainability and innovative green technologies</p> <p>Greater engagement with WECA Green Skills Lead</p>	2

Progress on Actions – Economic Strategy – Greener Economy

No.	Action	Progress Update	Next Steps	Progress Rating
Develop Bath and North East Somerset to be a broad green economy.				
D4.1	Continue the role out of the council's climate literacy training, and develop ecological literacy modules, to increase understanding of climate and nature issues.	<p>All new employees continue to undertake a climate literacy module as a part of their initial induction training.</p> <p>A half day climate and nature training course is available for all teams to access.</p> <p>Development of ecological literacy modules being taken forward at regional level</p>	Support the Combined Authority in the development of a nature literacy package and roll this out within the Council.	2
D4.2	Work with WECA and regional partners to capitalise on the opportunities of the regional green economy.	B&NES Council is working in partnership with the WECA to develop a Local Growth Plan. This plan will develop sectoral and geographical areas of focus. One of the sectors of focus for this strategy will be Clean Energy Industries.	Development of the Strategy with the WECA. One published promote internally and externally. Work with the WECA on the detailed implementation plan.	2
D4.3	Support the work of Retrofit West in developing the business supply chain for retrofit within the district.	Retrofit West are being promoted through Invest in B&NES team via website and engagement.	Support the market for retrofit by encouraging uptake of retrofit and access of retrofit west support as is available.	2

This page is intentionally left blank

Climate & Nature Survey Report

Bath & North East Somerset Council

Summer 2025

Bath & North East
Somerset Council

Improving People's Lives

Executive Summary

The Climate & Environment Team at B&NES council conducted a survey to understand residents' views on climate and nature. Here's what residents told us:

- ▶ **Top Priorities:** Water and rivers, restoring nature, the way we travel and the energy we use.
- ▶ **Most common actions taken:** Carrying reusable items, planting pollinator-friendly plants, and repairing broken goods.
- ▶ **Strongest motivation:** To help nature.
- ▶ **Actions residents want to take but can't or don't:** Making energy efficiency improvements at home, installing water-saving measures, and taking no action
- ▶ **Biggest barrier:** It's too expensive
- ▶ **Most common perception of the council's climate and nature efforts:** Residents don't know what B&NES council is doing or think B&NES council is doing too little.
- ▶ **Top suggestions for council action:** Improving public transport, protecting and enhancing green spaces, and supporting renewable energy and energy efficiency.
- ▶ **Observed local changes:** Experiencing hotter, drier days and fewer insects.
- ▶ **Trusted sources of information:** Environmental charities and groups were most trusted, while social media influencers were the least trusted.
- ▶ **Key themes from free text comments at the end of the survey:** The way we travel, how the council works, and how we restore nature.
- ▶ **Next steps:** The council needs to engage those not represented in the survey responses. There is also a need to improve communication around existing council work relating to climate and nature and to help our communities take action.

Introduction

Background and objectives

Tackling the Climate and Ecological Emergencies is a core priority for Bath & North East Somerset (B&NES) Council. We are at the mid-point of our 10-year plans for climate and nature and are currently reviewing them to bring them together into a single strategy and action plan.

From May to June 2025, B&NES council ran a survey open to all residents in Bath and North East Somerset (BANES). The purpose of the survey was to better understand public views on climate change and nature-related issues, and to use these insights to help inform current work.

Approach

The survey was made available online via the council's consultation webpage. Paper copies were also distributed at all three B&NES libraries and the Climate Hub.

To ensure broad participation, the survey was promoted through multiple channels:

- ▶ The council's social media platforms
- ▶ The e-connect newsletter
- ▶ Direct outreach to community groups for wider dissemination
- ▶ Email communications
- ▶ Promoted within Libraries with paper copies available to complete
- ▶ Flyers at events and various locations

As an incentive, all participants were offered the opportunity to enter a prize draw for a £50 voucher, for a supermarket or local vendor of their choice. The draw took place on 18 June 2025, and winners were contacted via email to arrange their prize.

Survey Design

Page 112

This survey was designed and run by members of the Climate & Environment team at B&NES council. Input and guidance were provided by several other teams, including Equalities, Communications, Web, Community Engagement, and Business Intelligence.

The survey used simple language and kept the responses broad to be accessible for all. We are not calculating emissions based on these responses.

As the survey aims to help shape the new climate & nature strategy many of the questions were based off the emerging themes of the strategy. The aim of the 'individual action' questions were to understand what actions people are taking, what motivates them and what the barriers are to individual action.

In addition to questions focused on individual action, the survey asks for residents' views on what the council is or should be doing to address climate change & nature loss. The aim of these questions is to gauge public perception of the work the council is doing and identify gaps where the public would like to see more action.

Who We Heard From: Age

- ▶ Overall, we heard from 833 respondents.
- ▶ Over half of respondents (56%) were aged 55 and over (see Figure 1). In contrast, we heard relatively little from residents aged under 25, despite this being the largest age group in B&NES¹.

Page 113

¹[ONS Estimates of the population for England and Wales](#)
[Strategic Evidence Base for Bath and North East Somerset](#): The large population of residents under 25 is largely driven by the high number of university students attending the two campus-based universities in the area.

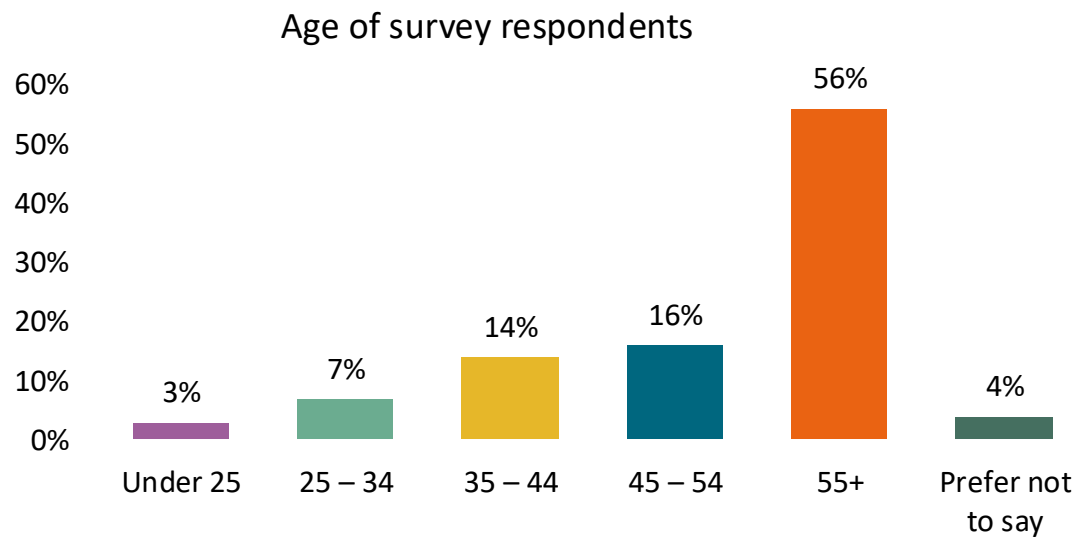


Figure 1 – Table showing the age of respondents to the Climate and Nature survey 2025

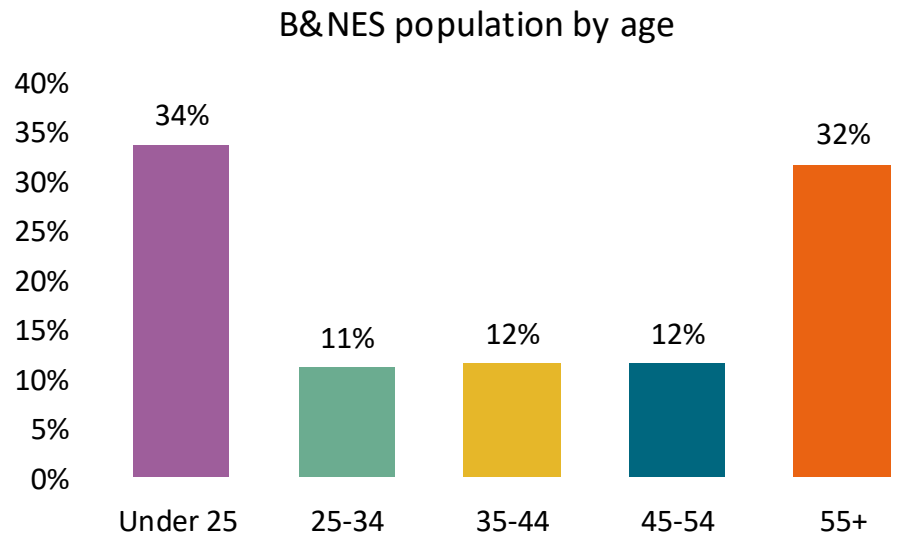


Figure 2 – Bar chart of BANES population by age from 2019 census data

Who we heard from: Living Situation

- ▶ A significant majority of respondents (86%) identified as homeowners (see Figure 2). ONS data shows that 65% of households in BANES own their house meaning that while they make up a large proportion of the population, they are overrepresented in this survey ².
- ▶ In contrast, private and student renters accounted for just 7% of responses, despite making up 19.3% of B&NES households². Social housing tenants were similarly underrepresented, comprising only 2% of survey participants compared to 14.3% of the population².
- ▶ These differences will guide our next steps to speak to groups underrepresented in responses.

Page 114

² [ONS Data. Household characteristics by tenure, England and Wales: Census 2021.](#)

Which of these best describes your living situation?

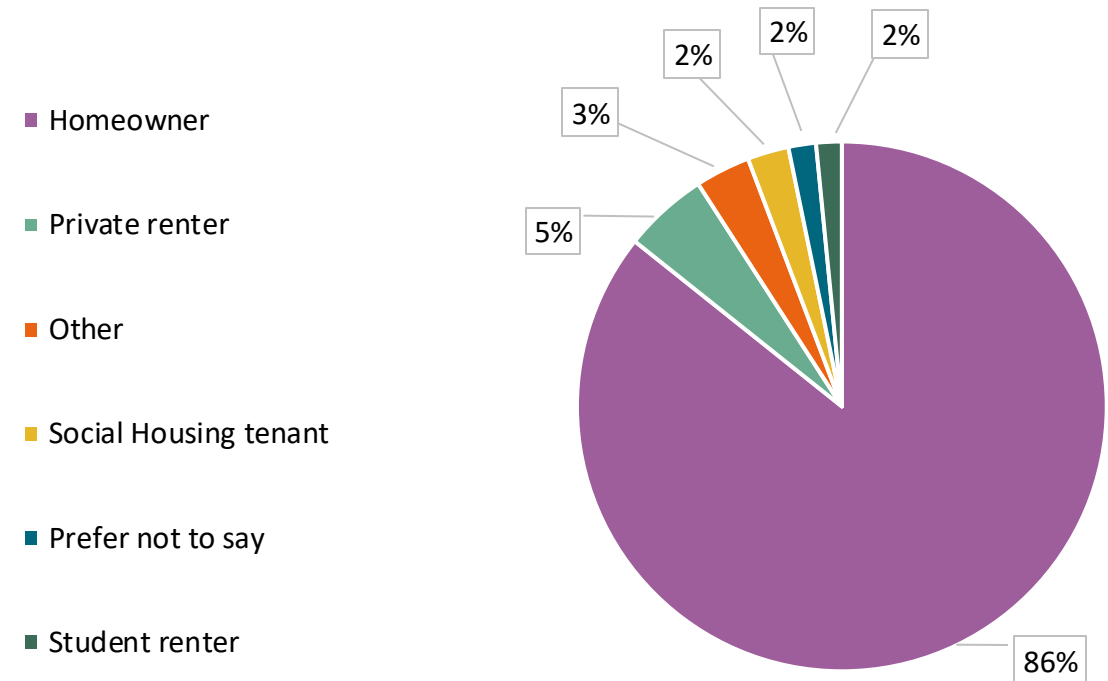
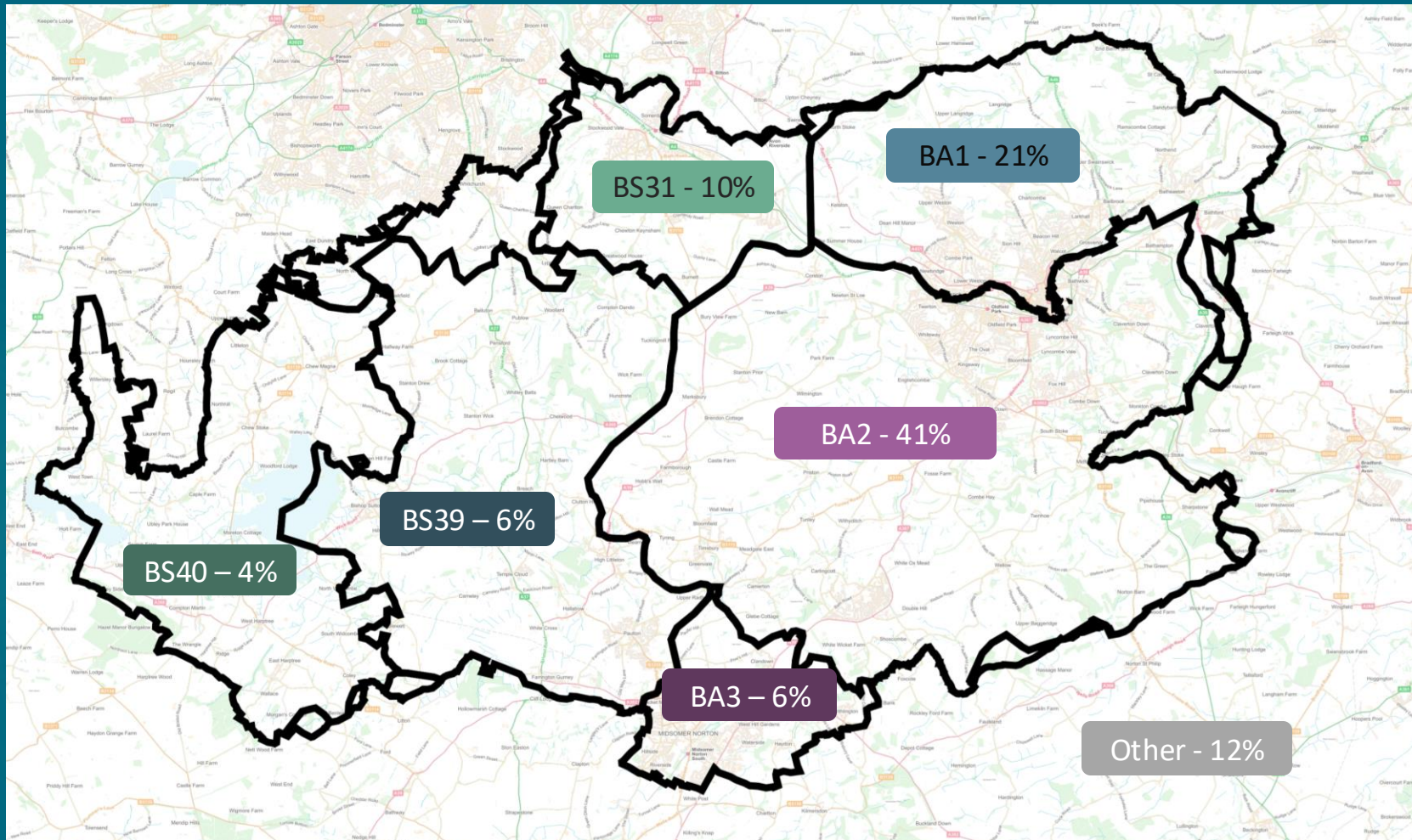


Figure 3 – Pie chart of living situations for respondents to the Climate and Nature survey 2025

Map of Respondents by Postcode



- ▶ Geographic Spread: While responses were received from across B&NES, the majority (62%) came from the BA1 and BA2 postcodes, which cover Bath and its surrounding areas. This is expected given that 56% of residents live in Bath and Bathavon ³.
- ▶ 12% of responses consist of those who selected 'prefer not to say', responses with typographical errors and postcodes outside the B&NES area. While these responses are excluded from the map, all answers to other questions have been included in the overall analysis.

³ B&NES Strategic Evidence Base

Figure 4 – Map of B&NES postcodes and percentages of respondents to the survey

Key Priorities

- ▶ The first question of the survey asked respondents to select up to three themes they considered most important from a list aligned with the key areas of the Climate and Nature Strategy. Figure 5 shows the percentage of respondents who selected each option [\[Footnote 1\]](#).
- ▶ 'Water and rivers' and 'how we restore nature' were the most popular responses demonstrating the importance of nature to people in B&NES. This was followed by 'the way we travel' and 'the energy we use' which are two of the highest sources of carbon in B&NES. 'The right jobs and skills' was the lowest scoring.
- ▶ Respondents had the opportunity to answer 'Other' to this question. Themes emerging from this included transport, specifying the need for low carbon alternatives and more access for cycling, local planning, and biodiversity.
- ▶ Several responses in 'Other' also highlighted the interconnectedness of all these options, while others shared frustration at the council spending time on Climate Change.

Page 116

Thinking about climate change and nature loss, which of the following are most important. Select up to 3.

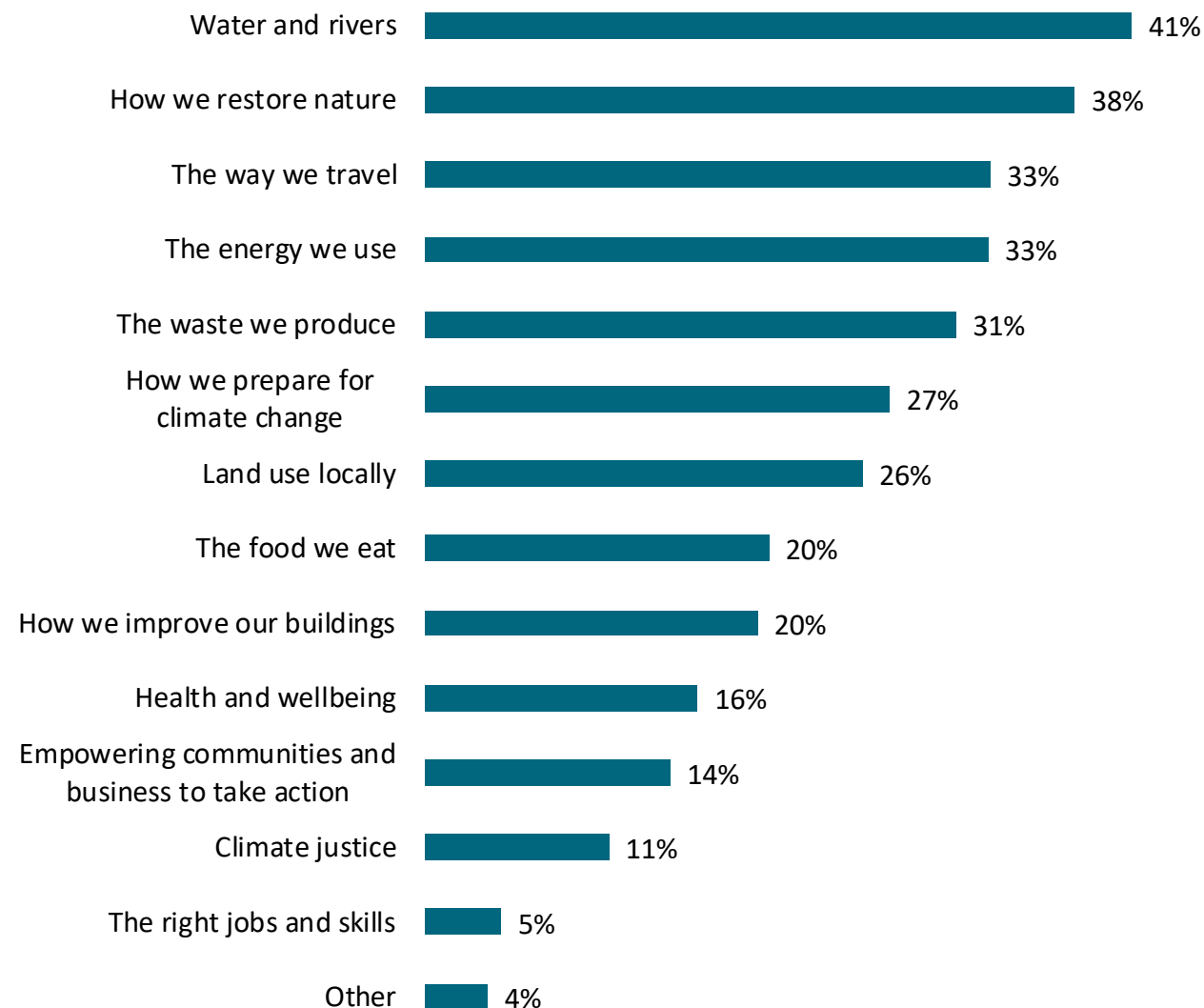


Figure 5 – Bar chart showing respondents priorities relating to key themes

Resident Actions by Theme

- ▶ The survey asked residents about actions they have taken in the past 5 years, their motivations and barriers. The next five slides set out these responses.
- ▶ Figure 6 on this slide shows the actions grouped into themes.
- ▶ The data shows that residents are most engaged in actions related to nature and waste & resource management. In contrast, there is less activity around water use, personal finance and resilience.

Page 117

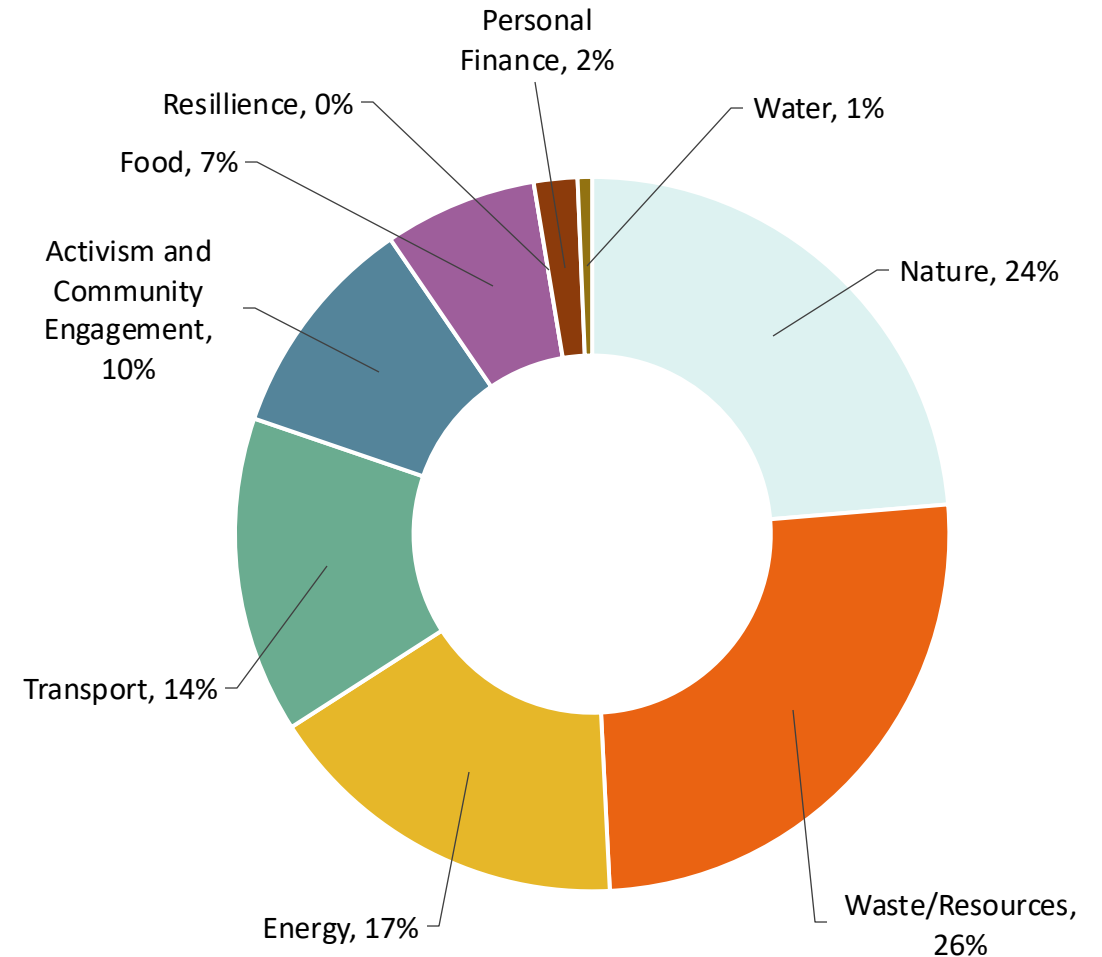


Figure 6 – Pie Chart showing residents actions that have been done in the last 5 years by theme in percentages

Actions Residents Have Taken

► The survey asked BANES residents to select from a list the actions they had taken over the last 5 years. The most popular responses were linked to reducing waste, for example carrying reusables, repairing broken items and shopping second hand as well as nature-related such as planting pollinator friendly plants and making space for nature (see figure 7).

Page 118

► Of the 8% of responses under “Other” the most common themes were practical sustainability actions such as switching to an EV, community engagement, and advocacy.

Top 10 actions done in the last 5 years

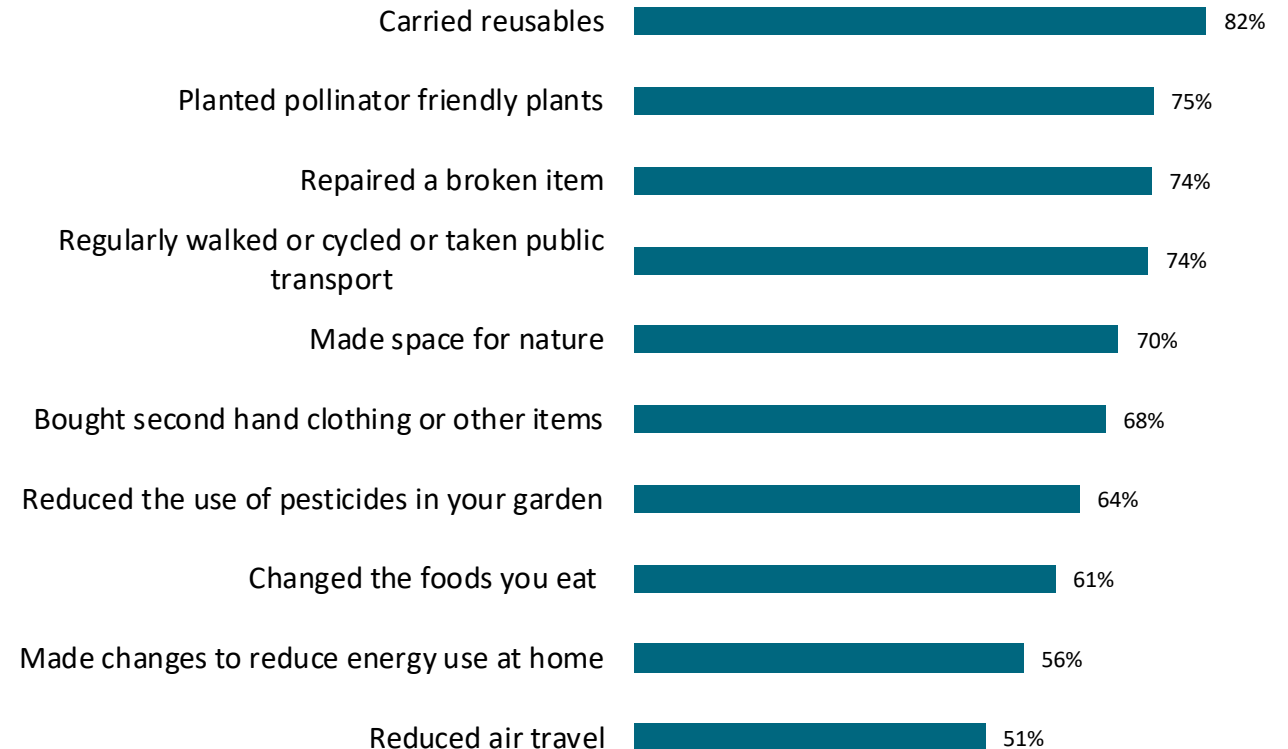


Figure 7 – Graph showing top 10 actions residents have taken relating to climate and nature in the last 5 years

Motivations for Action

- ▶ We analysed the links between actions taken and motivations selected. The most common motivation across many actions is to help nature, with actions like planting pollinator-friendly plants, reducing pesticide use, and making space for nature identified.
- ▶ Health and wellbeing is a strong motivator, especially for actions like walking or cycling and changing food habits.
- ▶ Actions like making energy efficiency improvements and switching to renewable electricity are frequently linked to saving money and reducing emissions.
- ▶ Many actions are driven by both concern ('I am worried about climate change and nature loss') and optimism ('I am hopeful and want to contribute to positive change'). Air quality is a less common but still notable motivator in relation to reducing air travel and walking/cycling.
- ▶ Responses under 'other' highlight personal values, habit, or a sense of responsibility as a motivation to take action. Several participants also mentioned a desire to act in the interest of future generations.

What motivated you to take the actions in the previous question?

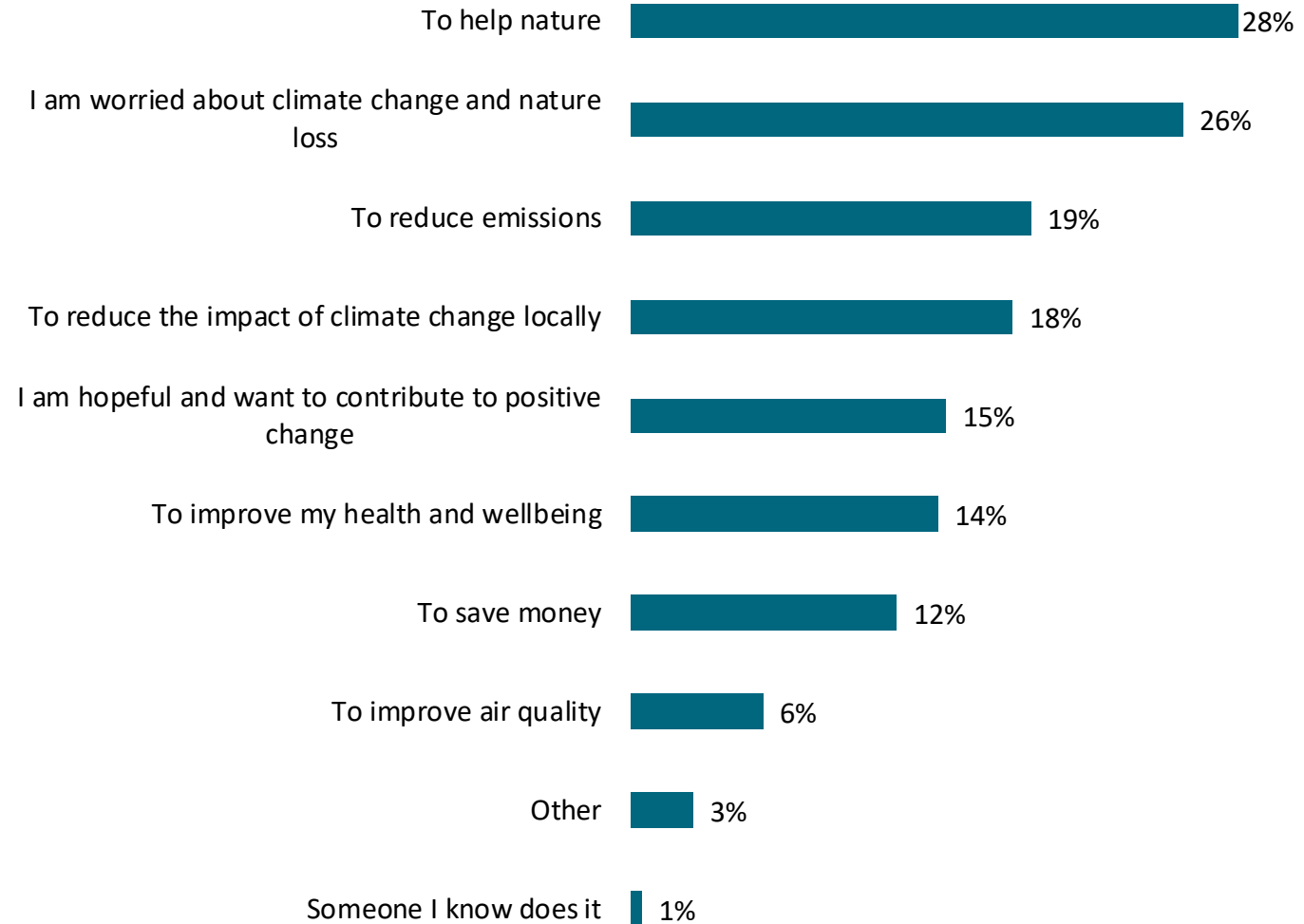


Figure 8 – Graph showing which motivations were the main drivers for actions taken relating to climate and nature in the last 5 years

Actions Residents Would Like To Do

- ▶ The survey then asked residents whether there were any actions they would like to take but currently cannot or do not. The most common responses related to making improvements around the home, such as installing energy and water efficiency measures, fitting shutters or reflective blinds, and making changes to reduce energy consumption. A significant number of respondents responded 'none' to this question.
- ▶ Of the 6% of respondents who answered 'other', the most frequent responses focused on specific energy-related actions, such as installing solar panels and heat pumps.

Top 10 actions residents would like to take but currently cannot or do not

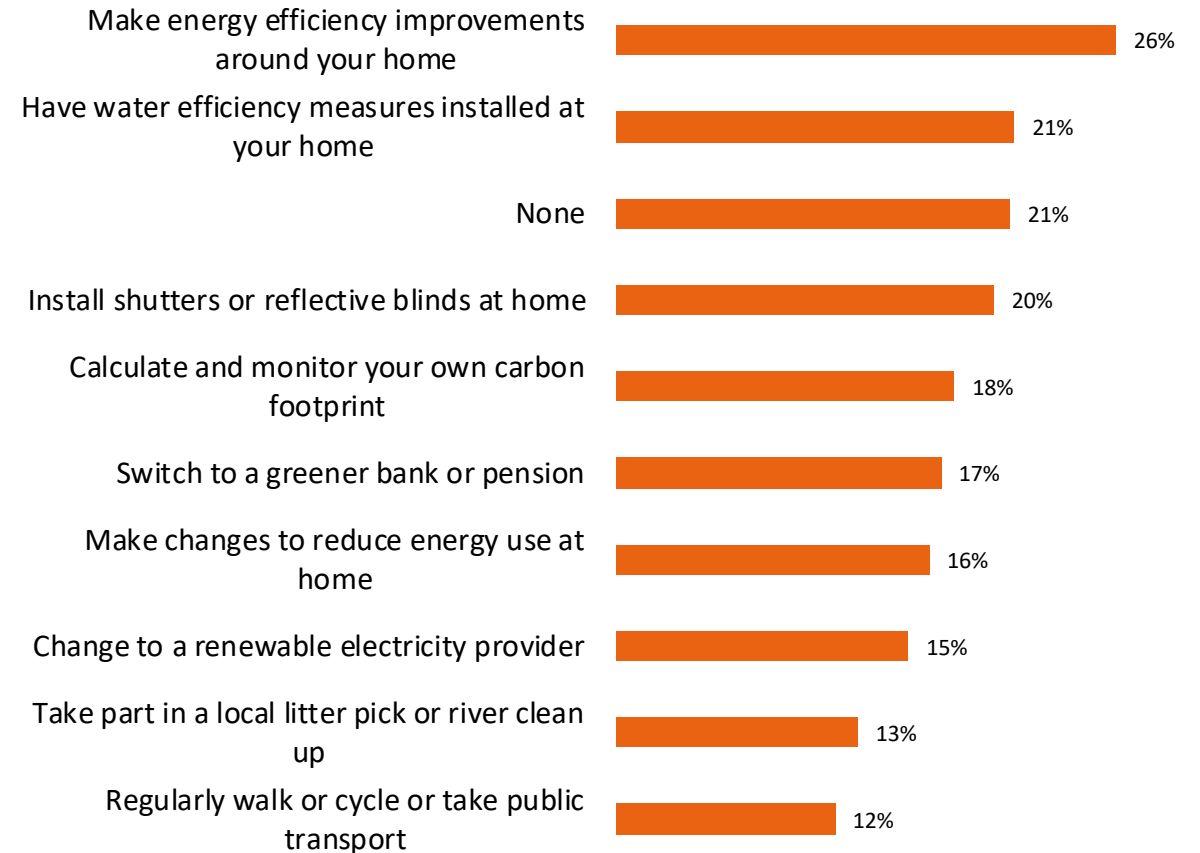


Figure 9 – Bar chart showing top 10 actions residents would like to take but currently can't do

Barriers to Action

- ▶ The most common barriers to all actions were 'It's too expensive' followed by, 'I don't have the right information'. These barriers were most strongly associated with making changes at home such and improving energy and water efficiency, and installing shutters or reflective blinds. This highlights an opportunity for the council to better communicate relevant information and to better promote available funding.
 - ▶ Responses under 'Other' frequently highlighted planning restrictions, especially in relation to listed buildings, as a significant barrier.
- Another recurring theme was the lack of adequate public transport and active travel infrastructure, which make sustainable travel options unsafe, time-consuming, or not possible. A smaller number of respondents cited health conditions and disabilities as limiting factors, while a few indicated a lack of interest or willingness to take action.

What has stopped you taking the actions that you would like to?

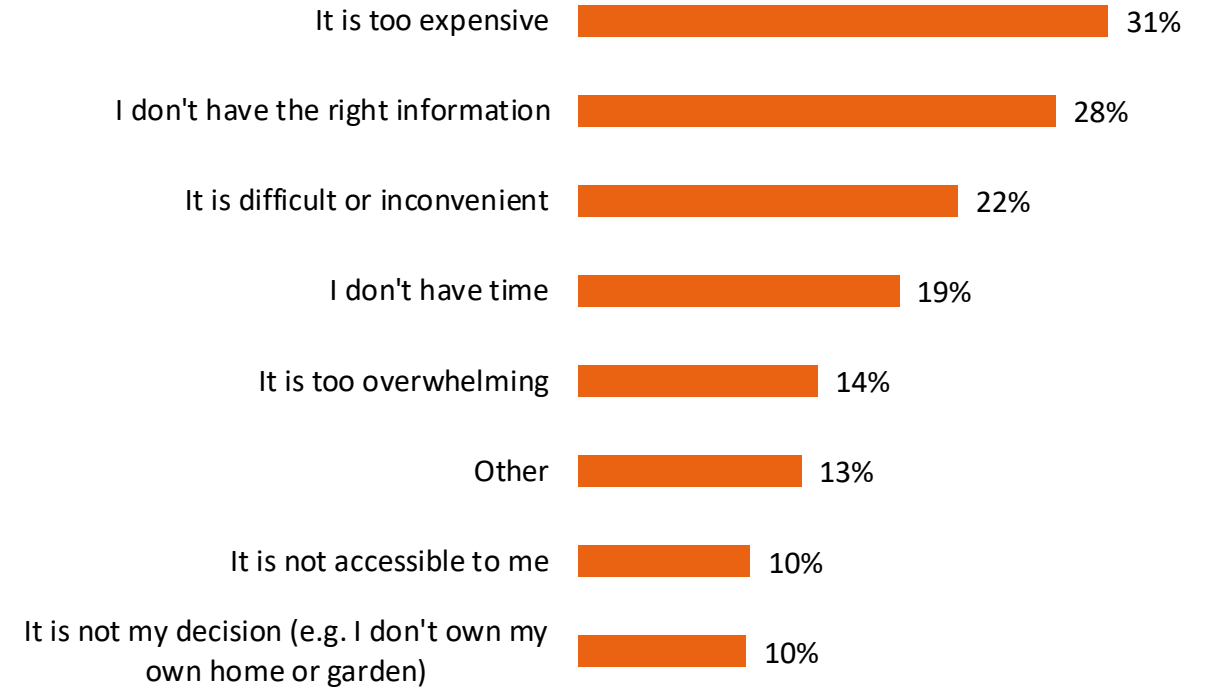


Figure 10 – Bar chart showing which barriers stopped respondents from taking the actions that they would like to take for climate and nature

Comparison of Actions

- ▶ Figure 11 shows a comparison of the percentage of respondents who have taken specific actions in the past five years, alongside those they have not taken but would like to.
- ▶ There is a link between some of the actions least done in the past 5 years and ones that people would like to do such as installing shutters. Understanding and addressing gaps and barriers is essential for the council to enable more residents to take action.

Page 122

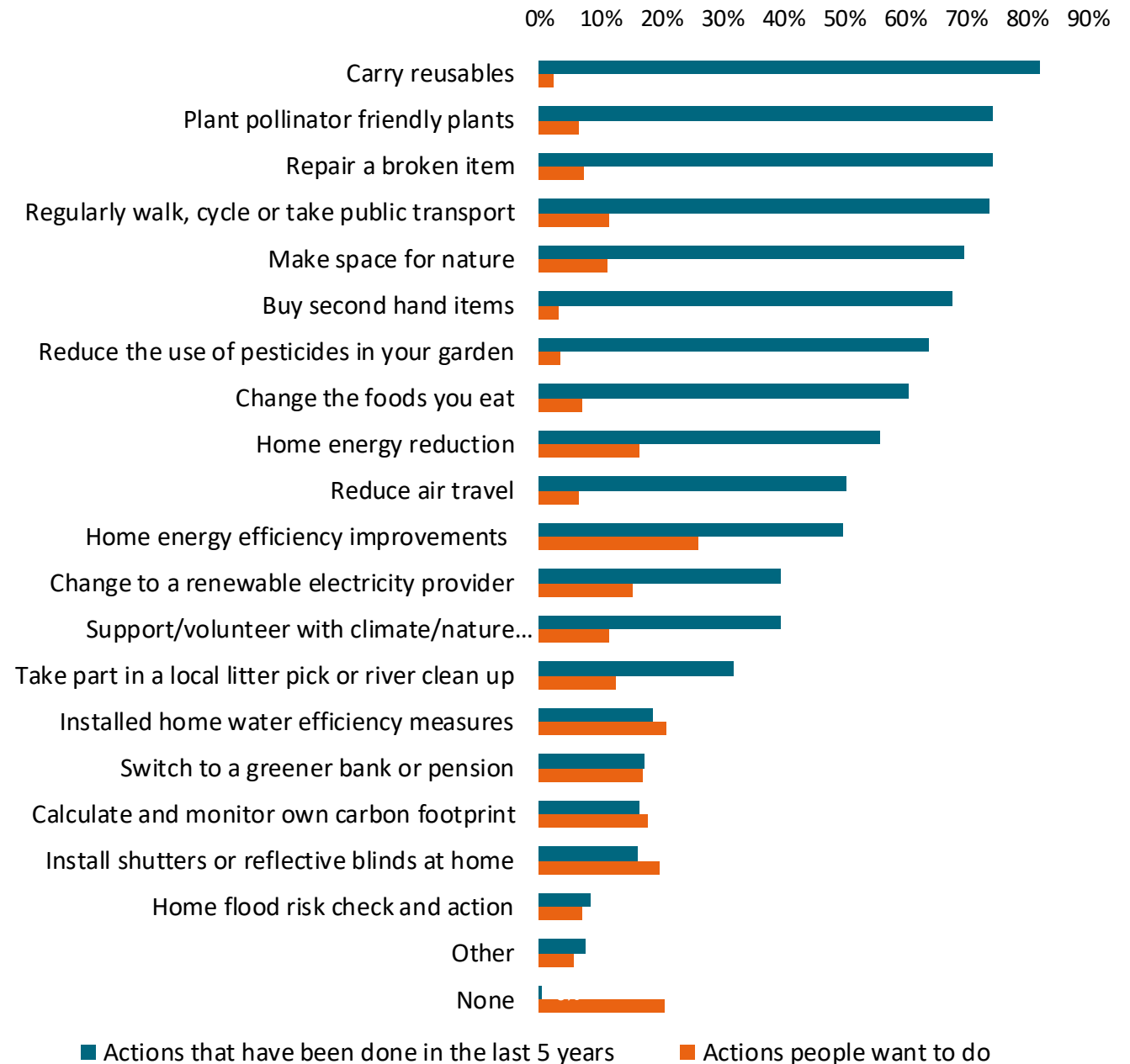


Figure 11 – Bar chart comparing actions taken in the last 5 years and the actions people would like to do.

Local Changes

- ▶ When asked about changes in their local area related to climate change or nature loss, 73% of residents reported experiencing 'Hotter, drier days', while 65% reported seeing 'Fewer insects'. These responses highlight the visible local impacts of climate change on both weather patterns and biodiversity.
- ▶ Common themes emerging from the text responses provided under 'Other' included concerns about environmental degradation due to property development, a decline in local wildlife and biodiversity, deteriorating river health caused by pollution and sewage, unpredictable weather patterns, and the emotional impact of these changes, such as increased stress and anxiety among residents.

What changes, if any, have you seen in your local area relating to climate change or nature loss

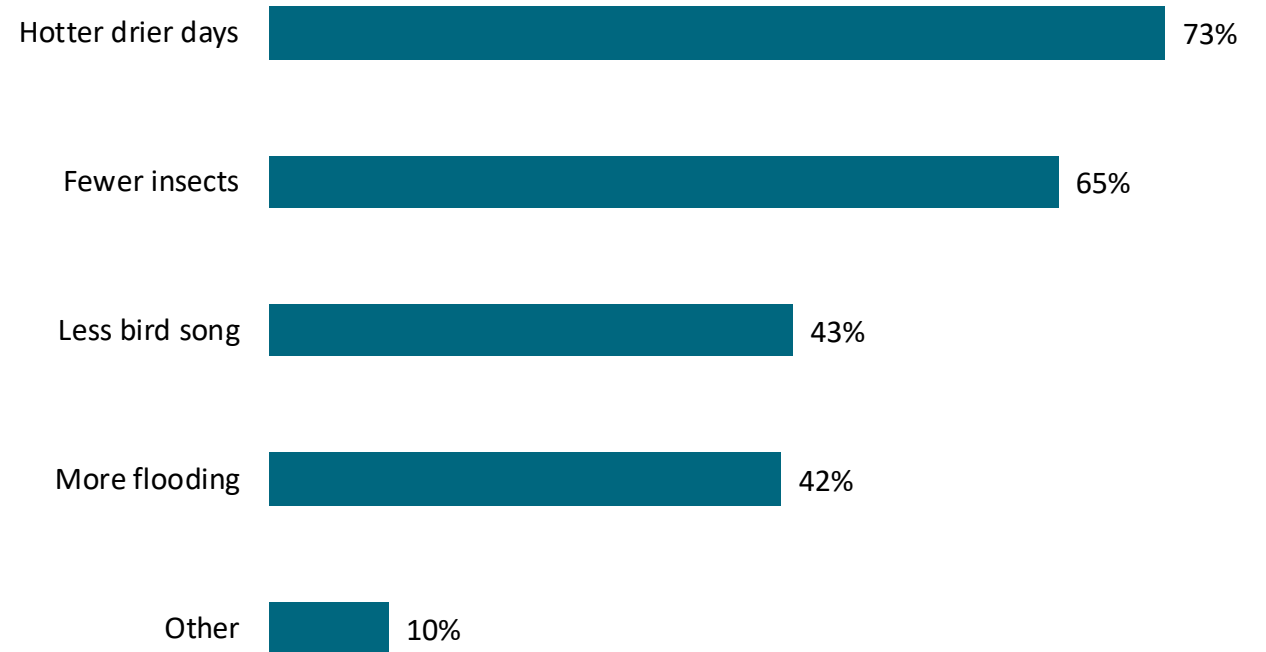


Figure 12 – Graph showing responses to what local changes to nature and climate they had noticed locally.

Views on B&NES Council's Action

- ▶ When asked their views on how much B&NES council is doing to combat climate change and nature loss the most common response was 'I don't know what B&NES is doing' (41%), followed by 'Too little' (38%). This presents an opportunity for the council to promote its work on climate and nature and engage more with residents on this topic to deliver and enable action.

Page 124

In your opinion, how much is B&NES Council doing to combat climate change and nature loss?

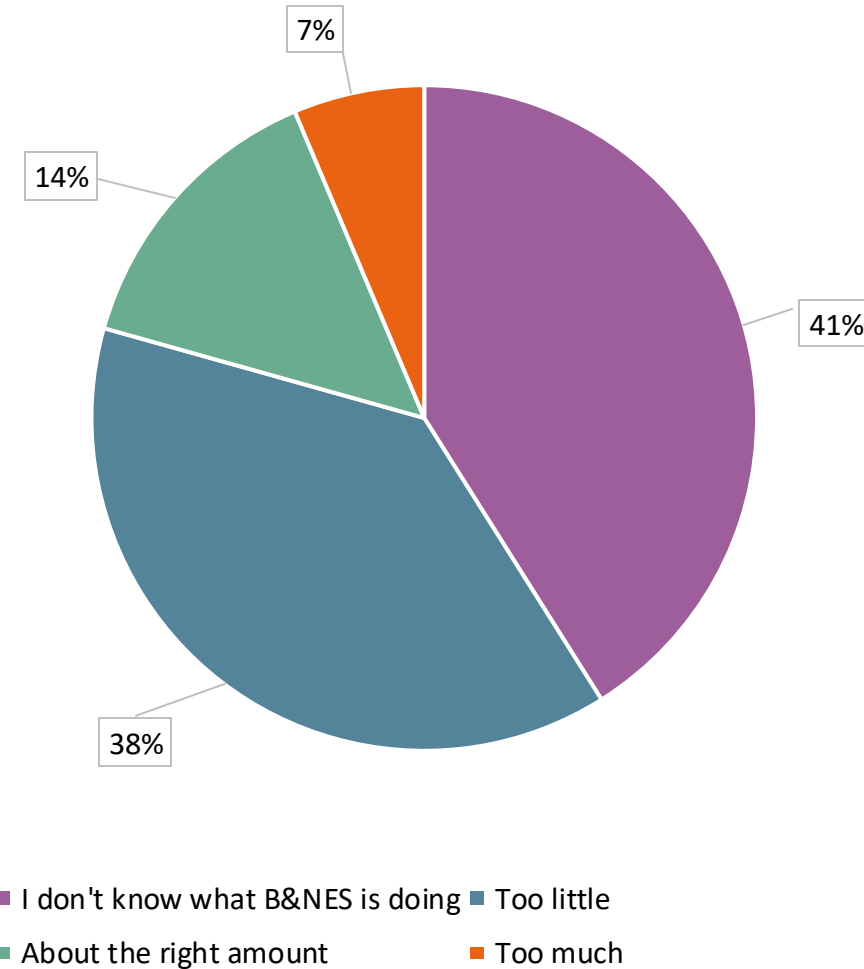


Figure 13 – Pie chart showing respondents views on B&NES council's actions on climate change and nature loss

What More Could B&NES Council Do?

When asked what more B&NES Council should do overall respondents want the council to be more ambitious, visible, and practical in its actions. In order of most frequently mentioned, key themes highlighted were :

- ▶ **The way we travel** - requests for better public transport, promoting more active travel including safer walking and cycling routes as well as measures to reduce car use and congestion.
- ▶ **How to improve our buildings** - Requests for sustainable housing, restrictions on building on greenfield/greenbelt, better planning policies including faster decision making, and energy-efficient homes.
- ▶ **How we restore nature** - Emphasis on protecting and increasing green spaces, tree planting, restoring habitats, and wildlife corridors.
- ▶ **Policy and governance** - Suggestions for stronger policies, enforcement, leadership, and lobbying higher government.
- ▶ **The energy we use** - Support for solar panels in particular on public buildings, heat pumps, energy efficiency, and local renewable projects.
- ▶ **Water and rivers** - Concerns about river pollution, flood prevention, and water management.
- ▶ **Empowering Communities** - More public education, awareness campaigns, engagement with residents and support for local initiatives
- ▶ **The waste we produce** - Improvements to recycling, composting, and reducing waste.

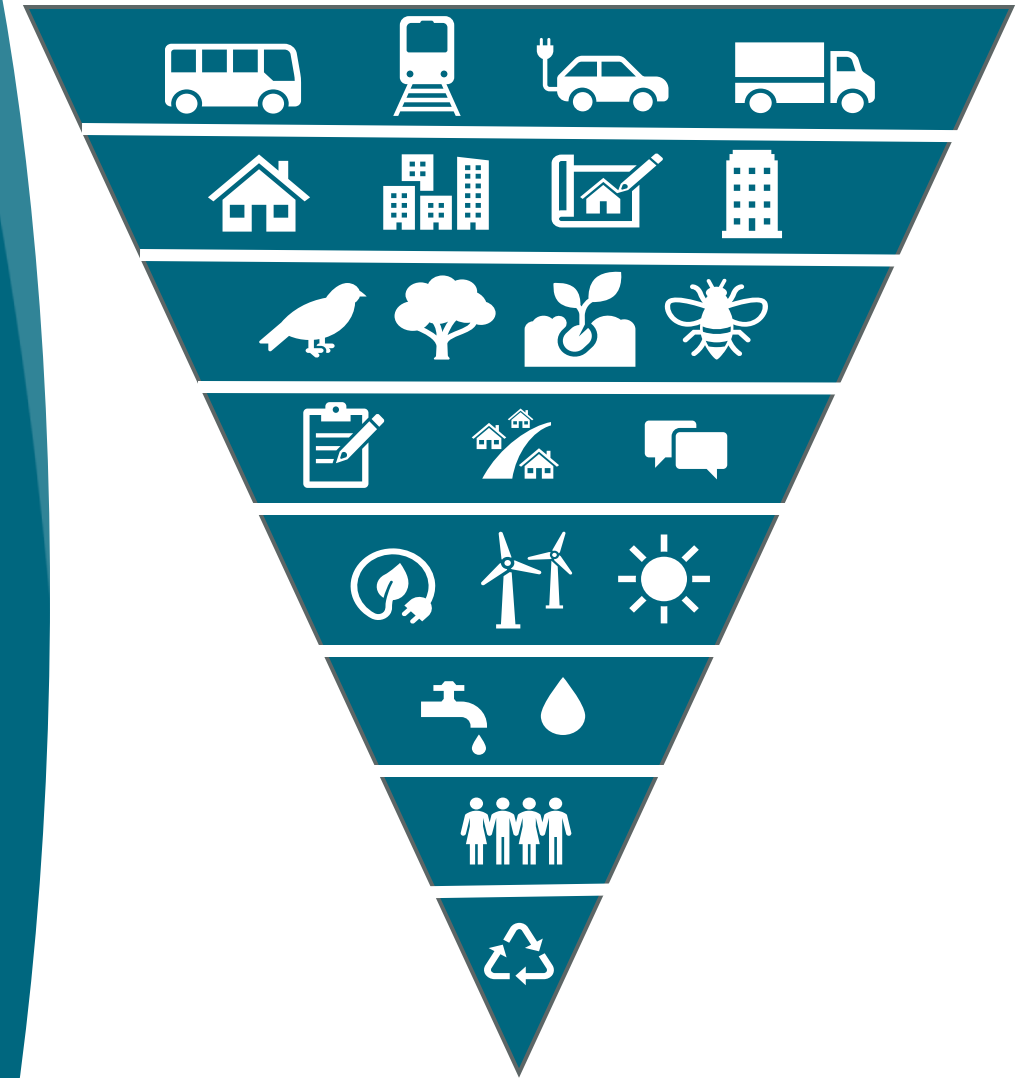


Figure 14 – Infographic showing the frequency of which different themes were mentioned in the responses to 'what more could the council do?'

[illegible]

- Page 126

Figure 15 – Word cloud depicting common words used in responses to the question 'What more could the council do?'

Trusted Sources

- ▶ The most trusted sources that were noted were 'Environmental charities' at 66% and 'Environmental groups' at 64%, followed by 'Universities or colleges' at 53%. This suggests that the council could explore opportunities to collaborate with the most trusted sources when communicating with residents on climate & nature.
- ▶ Social Media Influencers' are the least trusted at 4%, which in part could be due to the age range of respondents. A next step for the council is to engage further with younger audiences.
- ▶ For those who responded 'Other' themes included academic journals, personal and professional networks.
- ▶ Several responses in 'Other' also demonstrated scepticism or mistrust of many sources for example "I use all sources - carefully" and "I don't trust any, they all just give facts that suit their agendas."

Page 127

Which of these sources do you trust to provide information and advice about climate change & nature loss?

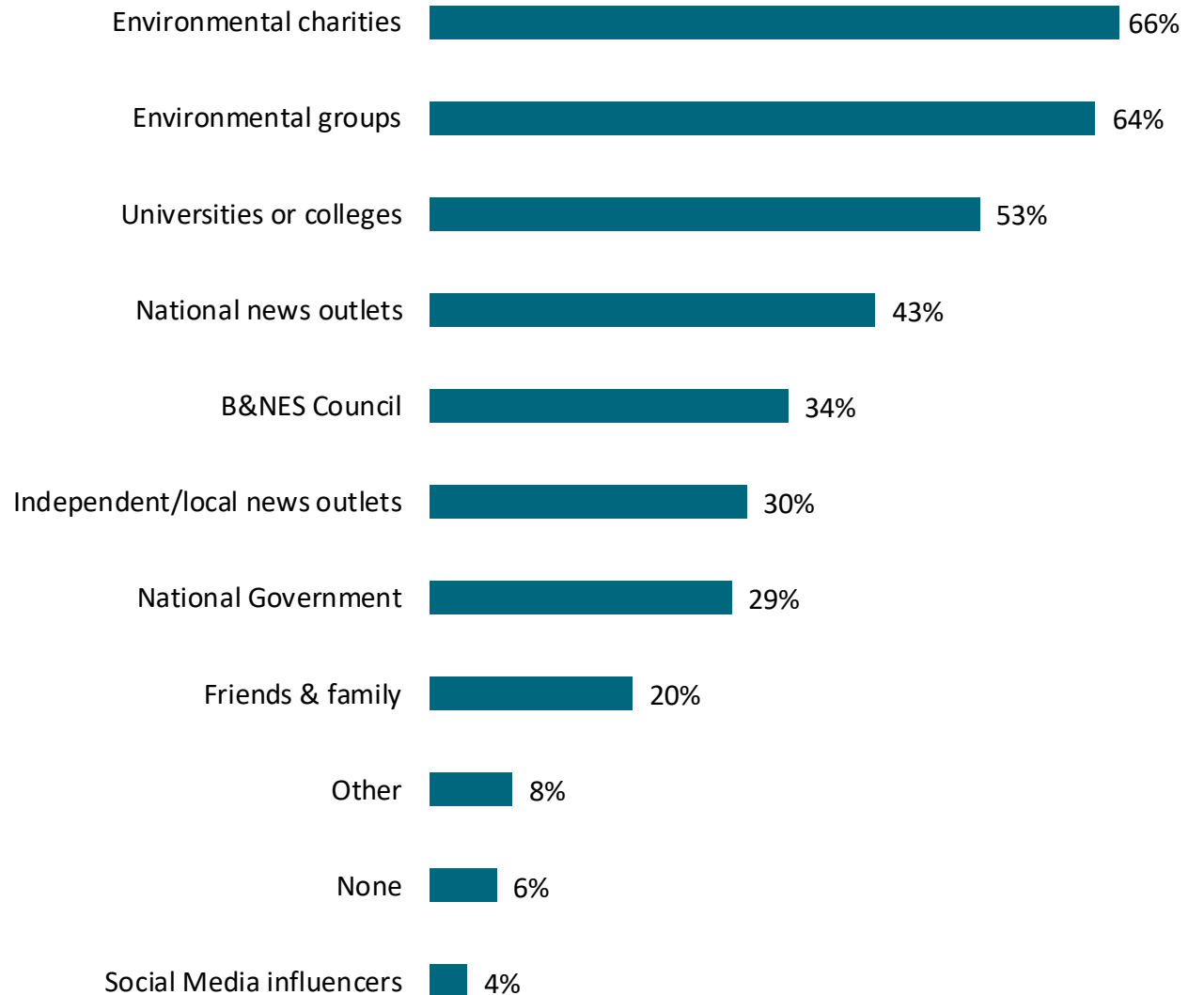


Figure 16 – Bar chart to show which were respondents preferred trusted sources

Additional Comments Provided by Respondents: Key Themes

The final survey question gave the opportunity to provide any additional feedback or comments. Here is a summary of the key themes which emerged from the 343 responses we received, listed in order based on how frequently they were mentioned:

The way we travel - Many respondents highlight the need for better public transport, safer cycling and walking routes, reduced car use, and concerns about congestion and road safety.

How the council works - Calls for stronger leadership, clearer policies, more effective consultation, and greater transparency from the council. Some express frustration with perceived lack of action or follow-through.

How we restore nature - Emphasis on protecting and enhancing green spaces, planting more trees, supporting wildlife, and maintaining biodiversity. Concerns about loss of green areas due to development.

How to improve our buildings - Requests for sustainable housing, better planning to avoid building on greenbelt land, and more support for energy-efficient homes. Some mention issues with listed buildings and planning restrictions.

The waste we produce - Suggestions for improving recycling, reducing litter, and providing better waste services. Some want more education on waste reduction and tackling consumerism.

Water and rivers - Concerns about river pollution, sewage, and the need for better flood prevention and water management.

Empowering Communities - There's a desire for the council to enable and support local groups and residents to take action themselves. Calls for more public education, awareness campaigns, and community involvement, especially in schools and local groups.

The energy we use - Support for solar panels, heat pumps, insulation, and other renewable energy initiatives. Some want more council support for home energy improvements.

Additional Comments Provided by Respondents: Feedback to the Council

Many respondents want to see more tangible action and less consultation. There are also calls for more integrated approaches across departments. Several responses also expressed that local action is limited without stronger national policy, but still want the council to lead by example.

Some respondents express distrust in the council or call for more openness about decisions and actions, while some show pride in local leadership but warn against complacency.

In addition to comments relating to recommendations or suggestions for the Council, a significant portion are personal reflections or responses or general views on the topics of climate and nature, in particular comments reflecting broader anxieties or existential concerns (e.g., about global threats).

There were also positive mentions of specific services and community groups and action including:

- ▶ “Just to give praise where due—I think B&NES does a brilliant job with its kerb side recycling collections.”
- ▶ “I think Somer valley rediscovered is doing a good job.”
- ▶ “I think the Climate Hub is great and hope it thrives.”

Final Note and Next Steps

Thank you to everyone who responded to our Climate & Nature Survey. The purpose of the survey was to better understand residents' views on climate change and nature-related issues, and to use these insights to inform our current work. We are grateful to the 833 people who took part.

The survey has provided valuable insights that will help shape the upcoming refresh of our Climate and Nature Strategy and Action Plan. Residents identified travel, buildings, and nature as key areas where they would like to see more action from the Council and these priorities will be built in.

The results also highlighted a need for clearer communication from the council, both about what we're doing, and about the actions residents can take themselves, along with the support available to help make those changes easier. One example is planning restrictions, especially for listed buildings, which were frequently mentioned as a barrier to action. This underlines the importance of promoting our Green Heritage Homes project, which supports the retrofit of listed buildings.

A next step is the need to engage those we did not hear from in this survey. In

particular, young adults and non-homeowners.

Finally thank you to those who have taken action to tackle climate change & nature loss, however big or small that may be. The council has a big role to play but our collective response alongside communities and businesses will have greater impact when tackling these issues. There's so much great work happening already across the district which we hope continues to grow. If you have anything you would like to share with us, please do get in touch.

Thank You and Contact Information

- ▶ If you would like to keep in touch about our Climate and Nature work you can get in touch via email at Sustainability@bathnes.gov.uk and follow us on social media via:
 - ▶ Instagram: [@Greenbathnes](https://www.instagram.com/Greenbathnes)
 - ▶ Twitter [@Greenbathnes](https://twitter.com/Greenbathnes)
- ▶ If you would like to stay up to date with weekly news & information from B&NES Council, sign up to the newsletter here: [B&NES Council E-Connect](#)

References & Footnotes

References

Page 132

¹ ONS Data. Estimates of the population for England and Wales:
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/estimatesofthepopulationforenglandandwales>

² ONS Data. Household characteristics by tenure, England and Wales: Census 2021:
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/datasets/householdcharacteristicsbytenureenglandandwalescensus2021>

³ B&NES Strategic Evidence Base: <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/strategic-evidence/document-library/population>

Footnotes

[1] The first 85 responses for this question were removed in order to account for the fact that 'The way we travel' and 'How we restore nature' were added after the launch of the survey due to them being missed off the list due to human error.

These were added as they are important themes, that had not been intended to be missed off.

Note on branding guidelines

Within corporate guidelines, BANES is used to refer to the district and B&NES council is used for the council as an organisation.

Bath & North East Somerset Council		
MEETING:	Council	
MEETING DATE:	20 th November 2025	
TITLE:	West of England Combined Authority – West of England Growth Strategy	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report:		
West of England Growth Strategy- https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/about-us/our-strategy/west-of-england-growth-plan/		

THE ISSUE

The West of England Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) has developed the West of England Growth Strategy. It sets out the action the MCA will take over the coming decade – contributing to the Government’s growth mission and the wider missions that have been set for the country. This will be achieved by looking at sectors, at enabling activities and also focusing on growth zones – two of which are within B&NES. This strategy has been developed in partnership with the MCA, B&NES Council, South Gloucestershire Council and Bristol Council.

1 RECOMMENDATION

The Council is asked to;

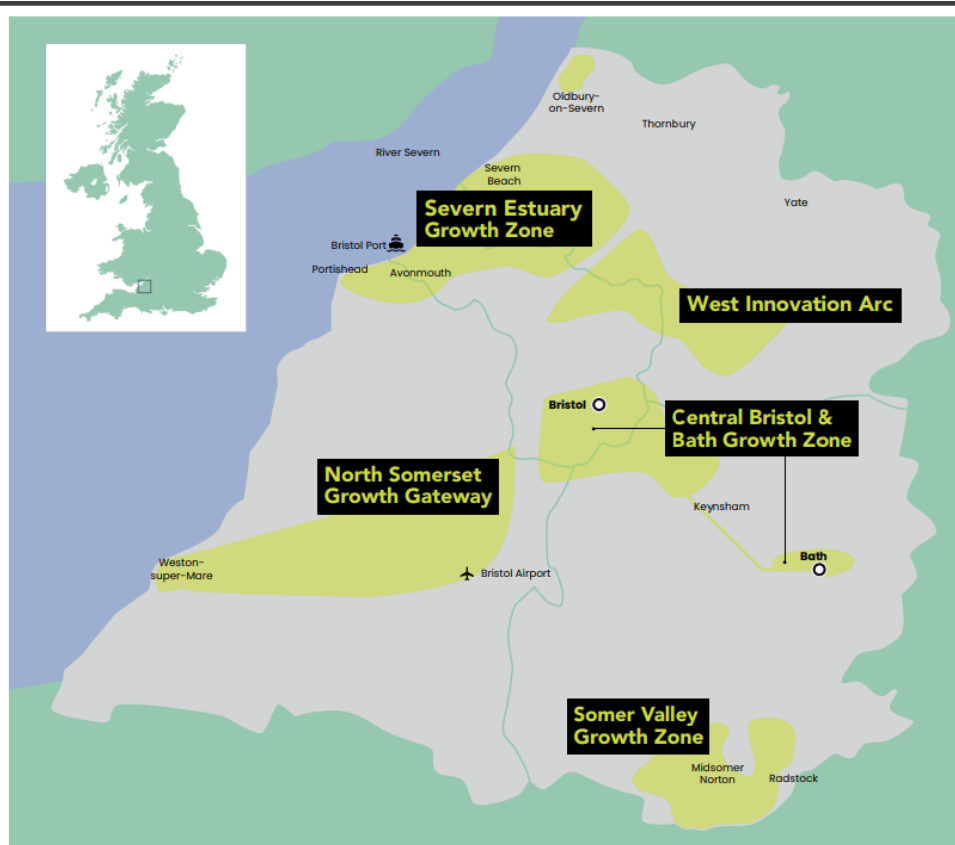
- 1.1 Endorse the West of England Growth Strategy as a Bath & North East Somerset Council document.**
- 1.2 Support the Mayoral Combined Authority in promoting the West of England Growth Strategy and the West of England as a destination for inward investment.**

2 THE REPORT

- 2.1 The West of England Growth Strategy sets out the ambitions and a plan of how growth can be achieved for the benefit of all in an inclusive and sustainable way.**

- 2.2 The development of the West of England Growth Strategy took a partnership approach in its creation. The MCA, B&NES Council, Bristol City Council and South Gloucestershire Council worked together to develop the strategy to reflect both the individual partners' economic strategies and also the combined goals and ambitions of the region.
- 2.3 The Growth Strategy marks a change in the approach for the region as the document states 'Productivity growth is important and will drive tangible change, but we are not pursuing economic growth for its own sake. This Growth Strategy is about securing investment for our part of the world: new jobs for local people; better transport to cut congestion and boost productivity; and cleaner, cheaper energy.' This reflects the approach of the B&NES Economic Strategy, with its focus on inclusive and sustainable growth.
- 2.4 The Growth Strategy reflects the high-level ambitions of the council: both the overall approach to growth – that it is developed in an inclusive and sustainable way; and also that it focuses on the key aims and areas of development in the Growth Zones – Bath City Centre, the Bristol to Bath Corridor and Somer Valley.

Network of regional growth zones



- 2.5 The Growth Strategy recognises both the Bristol-Bath corridor and the Somer Valley as regionally significant Growth Zones, reflecting our key commercial and employment areas within the Bath Riverside Innovation District, and in the Somer Valley alongside the Bristol to Bath corridor. This will strengthen our case for future infrastructure funding and inward investment in these key employment sites.

2.6 Council Strategies

- 2.7 Our Economic Strategy, published in 2024, has influenced the regional strategy, informing priority sectors and areas for local growth, and there is strong alignment around principles of sustainable and inclusive growth. The Growth Strategy sets out the broad regional context, the B&NES Economic Strategy details our strategic ambitions and the B&NES Local Plan is the spatial expression of this, setting out the locations and policies shaping future development.
- 2.8 There is a dovetailing with the Economic Strategy, the B&NES Local Plan and the West of England Growth Strategy. They operate in parallel with each other and contain the same goals and ambitions which we have set out as a council. The Economic Strategy is our core document setting out our ambitions and activities as a council. The Growth Strategy sets out the overarching ambitions and activities with which they are enabled.
- 2.9 The Local Plan Options document references the Growth Strategy as one of the B&NES Strategies and Delivery Plans. The Growth Strategy is also included within the Key Requirements section as providing important context for the Local Plan, especially in reference to site opportunities.

2.10 Key components of the Growth Strategy

- 2.11 The West of England Growth Strategy is based around three groupings of activities – investment opportunities, regional growth zones and prospects for growth. The West of England Growth Strategy sets out the ambitions and a plan of how growth can be achieved for the benefit of all in an inclusive and sustainable way. The activities set out within the Growth Strategy are grouped around six key actions.
1. Contributing to national economic growth helping our businesses succeed & creating jobs
 2. Connecting the region through better public transport & active travel
 3. Creating and building homes and communities that are affordable, attractive and sustainable
 4. Empowering residents with the skills to access the jobs that will shape our future
 5. Making the West of England the home for green jobs and green growth
 6. Lifting children and families out of poverty in the West of England
- 2.12 There is also a focus on investment opportunities, setting out our regionally significant investable projects under eight 'prospects for growth', alongside geographically focused investment opportunities within the growth zones. This element of the strategy will be further developed by the MCA through the upcoming Investment Prospectus.
- 2.13 Thus there is a holistic approach to growth with the investment opportunities grouped geographically and within sectors strengths of the region. This reflects the ambitions, sectoral strengths, geographical areas of focus and enabling

activities necessary for inclusive and sustainable economic growth within B&NES.

2.14 Endorsement

2.15 The endorsement of the West of England Growth Strategy will enable the council to take forward the ambitions and aspirations of the strategy. This will also enable the council to work across the region to activate any funding streams which are released by central government. This will develop both our own individual key projects and also cross regional infrastructure projects.

2.16 The development of the West of England as a key inward investment location will boost jobs and wider opportunities for B&NES as a whole. Increased inward investment has the potential to improve productivity and increase the development of commercial space and skills. This development of inward investment will be targeted around our areas of sector strength. The focus on both sectoral and geographic areas of investment allow for us to focus on our key areas of delivery.

3 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 No statutory considerations

4 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

4.1 There are no resource implications connected to this strategy.

5 RISK MANAGEMENT

5.1 The MCA completed all necessary risk management assessment for the Strategy's development.

6 EQUALITIES

6.1 The MCA have completed all necessary equalities assessments for the strategy's development. No additional EqIA required.

7 CLIMATE CHANGE

7.1 One of the key actions to unlock growth within the strategy is the focus on 'Making the West of England the home for green jobs and green growth'. This element contains thirteen key actions that will be focused on to develop green jobs and green growth.

7.2 These actions will support the climate goals of the council and the focus on the 'Greener Economy' in the B&NES Economic Strategy. This is one of the six pillars of the B&NES Economic Strategy and a central area of focus.

7.3 The focus on enabling activities includes public transport improvements, especially through connecting the Growth Zones; alternative energy provision; green industries; and support for nature and the landscape.

7.4 Within the Growth Strategy there is a commitment to increasing the clean energy capacity in the region. We as a council remain committed to more ambitious actions on renewables. As our own Climate Strategy includes the ambition to

achieve 300MW of locally generated renewable energy in Bath and North East Somerset.

- 7.5 By working at the regional level with the MCA and the other unitary authorities this will enable larger funding bids to be made and economies of scale in support of our climate goals.

8 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 8.1 None

9 CONSULTATION

- 9.1 Monitoring Officer approval given.

- 9.2 Section 151 Officer approval given.

Contact person	Bea Symington
Background papers	<p>West of England Growth Strategy- https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/about-us/our-strategy/west-of-england-growth-plan/</p> <p>West of England Growth Strategy Executive Summary - https://www.westofengland-ca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/WE4915-Growth-Strategy-exec-summary_aw_web_v1.pdf</p> <p>Economic Strategy - https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/B%26NES-Economic-Strategy-2024-2034.pdf</p> <p>Economic Strategy Evidence Base - https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/policy-and-documents-library/economic-strategy-evidence-base</p>
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	

This page is intentionally left blank

Bath & North East Somerset Council	
MEETING	Council
MEETING DATE:	20th November 2025
TITLE:	Treasury Management Performance Report to 30th September 2025
WARD:	All
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM	
<p>List of attachments to this report:</p> <p>Appendix 1 – Performance Against Prudential Indicators</p> <p>Appendix 2 – The Council's Investment Position at 30th September 2025</p> <p>Appendix 3 – Average monthly rate of return for the first six months of 2025/26</p> <p>Appendix 4 – The Council's External Borrowing Position at 30th September 2025</p> <p>Appendix 5 – Arlingclose's Economic & Market Review Q2 of 2025/26</p> <p>Appendix 6 – Interest & Capital Financing Budget Monitoring 2025/26</p> <p>Appendix 7 – Summary Guide to Credit Ratings</p> <p>Appendix 8 – Extract from Treasury Management Risk Register</p>	

1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 Treasury risk management at the Authority is conducted within the framework of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice 2021 Edition (the CIPFA Code), which requires the Council to approve a Treasury Management Strategy before the start of each financial year, review performance during the year, and approve an annual report within six months after the end of each financial year.
- 1.2 This report gives details of performance against the Council's Treasury Management Strategy for the first six months of 2025/26.

2 RECOMMENDATION

The Council is asked to note;

- 2.1 The Treasury Management Report to 30th September 2025, prepared in accordance with the CIPFA Treasury Code of Practice; and
- 2.2 The Treasury Management Indicators to 30th September 2025.

3 THE REPORT

Summary

- 3.1 The Council's Treasury Management Indicators for 2025/26 were agreed by Council in February 2025 and performance against the key indicators is shown in **Appendix 1**. All indicators are within target levels.
- 3.2 The estimated average rate of return on operational investments for the period 1st April 2025 – 30th September 2025 is 4.19%, which is 0.04% above the 7 Day SONIA benchmark rate of 4.15%. For the same period, it is estimated that strategic investments earned 4.22% which is 0.03% below the budgeted return of 4.25%.
- 3.3 The Council's revenue budget for interest & capital financing costs for 2025/26 is currently forecast to be £0.837m under budget. This is due to a combination of lower rates achieved on new borrowing when compared to budgeted rates, higher rates earned on investments than budgeted and a lower Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) charge, reflecting the rephasing of capital projects reported in the 2024/25 capital outturn report. The breakdown of the 2025/26 revenue budget for interest and capital financing, and the forecast year-end position, is included in **Appendix 6**.

Economic Overview

- 3.4 The Council's Treasury Management Advisor's economic and market review for 2025/26 is included in **Appendix 5**. The main headlines are as follows:
- Interest Rates were cut by 0.25% to 4.00% on 7th of August and have been decreasing at 0.25% each quarter for the last year. While the market has priced in another 0.25% before April 2026, there is now increased uncertainty as to exactly when this might occur.
 - UK Inflation has increased from 2.6% in March to 3.8% in August.
 - The UK Economy expanded by 0.3% in the second quarter of 2025, down from 0.7% in the first quarter of 2025.
 - Gilt yields continued to be volatile with the 10-year UK benchmark gilt ranging from 4.45% to 4.82% in the quarter ending it at 4.70%.
 - The 7-day average SONIA (Sterling Overnight rate) for the first half of 2025/26 is 4.15%. This is the benchmark rate used by the council for operational investments.

Borrowing

- 3.5 The Council's external borrowing as at 30th September 2025 totalled £278.01m and is detailed in **Appendix 4**. This includes £10m in new short-term loans taken out in April 2025, to cover the annual pension contribution prepayment, and allow us to maintain our liquidity indicator above £15m, as well as £40m of borrowing to replace maturing loans. The summary of the movement in borrowing during the quarter and for the full financial year is shown in the following table:

Borrowing Portfolio Movements	Financial Year 2025/26 £m
Balance as at 1st April 2025	275.713
New Loans Taken	50.000
Maturity Loan Repayments	(45.000)
PWLB Annuity Loan principal repayments	(2.703)
Balance as at 30th September 2025	278.010

- 3.6 The Council's Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) is forecasted to be £441.8m on 31st March 2026 based on the Capital Programme agreed in February 2025, including both fully and provisionally approved schemes. The Actual CFR on 31st March 2025 was £373m. This represents the Council's underlying need to borrow to finance capital expenditure and demonstrates that the borrowing taken to date relates to funding historical capital spend.
- 3.7 The difference between the CFR and the current borrowing of £278m represents re-investment of the internal balances including reserves, reducing the in-year borrowing costs in excess of the potential investment returns.
- 3.8 The Liability Benchmark in **Appendix 1** illustrates the current borrowing and current and projected CFR and liability benchmark. The benchmark is lower than the CFR as it recognises the Council's ability to internally borrow to fund capital and therefore shows the optimum level of borrowing for the council that minimises risks and costs of borrowing. This gap is a useful guide to the optimal amount and duration of borrowing to minimise interest and credit risk. This is currently £43.59m and circa 28 years.
- 3.9 Following Local Government Reorganisation in 1996, Avon County Council's residual debt is administered by Bristol City Council. All successor Unitary Authorities make an annual contribution to principal and interest repayment, for which there is a provision in the Council's revenue budget. The amount of residual debt outstanding as of 31st March 2025 apportioned to Bath & North East Somerset Council is £9.277m. Since this borrowing is managed by an external body and treated in the Council's Statement of Accounts as a deferred liability, it is not included in the borrowing figures referred to in paragraph 3.5.

Investments

- 3.10 As demonstrated by the liability benchmark in **Appendix 1**, the Council expects to be a long-term borrower and new treasury investments are therefore primarily made to manage day to day cash flows using short-term low risk instruments. The existing portfolio of strategic pooled funds will be maintained to diversify risk into different asset classes and maintain stable investment income over the medium to long term.
- 3.11 At 30th September 2025, the Council had £51.8m in investments, with £41.8m in short term liquid investments and £10m in externally managed strategic funds. The balance of deposits is set out in the charts in **Appendix 2**, along with the equivalent for the previous quarter and year for comparison.

3.12 **Appendix 3** details the investment performance, showing the average rate of interest earned over this period, which are made up as follows:

Investment Type	Average Investment Return
Money Market Funds (MMF)	4.26%
Call Accounts	3.54%
Fixed Deposits	4.23%
Operational Investments Total	4.19%
CCLA Local Authorities Property Fund	3.87%
FP Foresight UK Infrastructure Income Fund	4.96%
VT Gravis Clean Energy Income Fund	4.00%
Strategic Investments Total (Est.)	4.22%

3.13 At 30th September 2025, the Council has earned 4.19% from Operational investments, which is 0.04% above the 7-day SONIA benchmark Rate of 4.15% and 0.19% above the budgeted rate of 4.00%. Strategic funds earned an estimated return of 4.22% which is 0.03% below the budgeted rate of 4.25%.

3.14 The Council hold £10m invested in externally managed strategic pooled funds, where the objectives are regular revenue income and long-term price stability. These investments were made with the knowledge that there is a risk that capital value could move both up and down on a frequent basis and are intended to be held over a long period of time.

This investment includes £5m in Environmental Social and Governance (ESG) focused funds, and £5m in a property fund, as listed below.

- £5m CCLA Local Authorities Property Fund.
- £3m FP Foresight UK Infrastructure Income Fund.
- £2m VT Gravis Clean Energy Income Fund.

In the current economic environment of high inflation and interest rates, the value of equity, bonds and property have fallen significantly. However, in the last six months we have seen a small increase in the value of our strategic investments of £176k to £7.729m, up from £7.553m on 31 March 2025. This is shown in the table below:

	CCLA Local Authorities Property Fund	FP Foresight UK Infrastructure Income Fund	VT Gravis Clean Energy Income Fund	Total
Historic Cost	5,000,000	3,000,000	2,000,000	10,000,000
Fair Value as at:				
30/09/2025	4,269,278	2,162,156	1,297,843	7,729,276
30/06/2025	4,260,249	2,246,128	1,336,119	7,842,497
31/03/2025	4,253,634	2,072,300	1,227,138	7,553,072
31/03/2024	4,177,465	2,173,120	1,346,161	7,696,746

This change in valuation does not currently have an impact on the revenue account or usable reserves due to a statutory override, and gains/losses will instead go to an unusable reserve. With the extension of the statutory override until 31st March 2029 for investments existing before 1st April 2024, these will only be charged to revenue if/when the Council's holding in the pooled funds are sold, or in 2029/30. The Council has in place a Capital Financing Reserve which can be used to mitigate any future revenue impacts should the statutory override be removed.

Budget Implications

- 3.15 The breakdown of the 2025/26 revenue budget and the forecast year end position for interest and capital financing, based on the period April to September 2025, is included in **Appendix 6**. An overall underspend of £837k is reported towards the Council's net revenue outturn. This is due to lower borrowing rates achieved on year to date borrowing when compared to budgeted rates, higher interest rates than budgeted earned on investments and a lower than budgeted MRP charge.

4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 This report is for information only.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

- 5.1 The financial implications are contained within the body of the report.

6 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 The Council's lending & borrowing list is regularly reviewed during the financial year and credit ratings are monitored throughout the year. All lending/borrowing transactions are within approved limits and with approved institutions. Investment and borrowing advice is provided by our Treasury Management consultants, Arlingclose.
- 6.2 The CIPFA Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice requires the Council to nominate a committee to be responsible for ensuring effective scrutiny of the Treasury Management Strategy and policies. The Audit Committee carries out this scrutiny.
- 6.3 In addition, the Council maintain a risk register for Treasury Management activities, which is regularly reviewed and updated where applicable during the year. An extract from the risk register, detailing how the top 5 risks are managed, is included as **Appendix 8**.

7 EQUALITIES

- 7.1 As this report contains performance information for noting only, an Equality Impact Assessment is not considered necessary.

8 CLIMATE CHANGE

- 8.1 The Council will continue to avoid any direct treasury management investments in fossil fuel related companies and will engage with its advisors to explore and assess the potential for any future investment opportunities in funds with a Renewable Energy & Sustainability focus, as and when these products continue to be developed by the market in response to the Climate & Nature Emergency agenda.

8.2 An ESG section has been included the Treasury Management Strategy document for 2025/26, with the treasury team monitoring investment options permitted under the new guidelines.

8.3 The Council holds £5m in longer term investments, split across two ESG focussed Strategic Funds, as detailed under 3.14.

9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

9.1 None

10 CONSULTATION

10.1 Consultation has been carried out with the Cabinet Member for Resources, Director of Financial Services, Assurance & Pensions (s151 Officer) and Monitoring Officer.

Contact person	<i>Claire Read - 01225 477109; Jamie Whittard - 01225 477213</i> Claire_Read@BATHNES.GOV.UK ; Jamie_Whittard@BATHNES.GOV.UK
Background papers	<i>2025/26 Treasury Management & Investment Strategy</i>
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	

APPENDIX 1

Performance against Treasury Management Indicators agreed in Treasury Management Strategy Statement

1. Treasury Borrowing limits

These limits include current commitments and proposals in the budget report for capital expenditure, plus additional headroom over & above the operational limit for unusual cash movements.

The Authorised limits for external debt include current commitments and proposals in the budget report for capital expenditure, plus additional headroom over and above the operational limit for unusual cash movements.

The Operational boundary for external debt is based on the same estimates as the authorised limit but without the additional headroom for unusual cash movements. This level also factors in the proposed approach to use internal cash-flow and future capital receipts as the preferred financing method for the capital programme.

	2025/26 Prudential Indicator	Actual as at 30 th September 2025
Operational boundary – borrowing.	£414m	£278.01m
Operational boundary – other long-term liabilities	£9m	£0m
Operational boundary – TOTAL	£423m	£278.01m
Authorised limit – borrowing.	£442m	£278.01m
Authorised limit – other long-term liabilities.	£9m	£0m
Authorised limit – TOTAL	£451m	£278.01m

2. Security: Average Credit Rating*

The Council has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to credit risk by monitoring the value-weighted average credit rating of its investment portfolio. A summary guide to credit ratings is set out at **Appendix 7**.

	2025/26 Prudential Indicator	Actual as at 30 th September 2025
	Rating	Rating
Minimum Portfolio Average Credit Rating	A-	AA

* The calculation excludes the strategic investment in the CCLA Local Authority Property Fund and ESG focussed Investment Funds, which are unrated.

3. Liquidity

The Authority has adopted a voluntary measure of its exposure to liquidity risk by monitoring the amount of cash available to meet unexpected payments within a rolling three-month period, without additional borrowing.

Liquidity risk indicator	2025/26 Prudential Indicator	Minimum During year	Date of minimum
Minimum total Cash Available within 3 months	£15m	£18.8m	30-Apr-25

4. Interest rate exposures

This indicator is set to control the Council's exposure to interest rate risk. The upper limit represents the maximum one-year revenue impact of a 1% rise or fall in interest rates.

	2025/26 Prudential Indicator	Actual as at 30 th September 2025
Upper limit on one-year revenue impact of a 1% rise in interest rates	+/- £0.80m	-£0.06m
Upper limit on one-year revenue impact of a 1% fall in interest rates	+/- £0.80m	£0.06m

The impact of this limit is that the Council should never be holding a maturity adjusted net debt / investment position on variable rates of more than £80m.

The impact of a change in interest rates is calculated on the assumption that maturing loans and investments will be replaced at new market rates, which includes amounts which are maturing each year in PWLB annuity loans.

5. Maturity Structure of borrowing

This indicator is set to control the Council's exposure to refinancing risk.

	Upper Limit	Lower Limit	Actual as at 30 th September 2025
	%	%	%
Under 12 months	30	Nil	17.98
12 months and within 24 months	30	Nil	0.00
24 months and within 5 years	50	Nil	7.19
5 years and within 10 years	75	Nil	12.70
10 years and within 25 years	100	25	37.24
Over 25 years	100		24.89

Time periods start on the first day of each financial year. The maturity date of borrowing is the earliest date that the lender can demand repayment. For LOBO's, this is shown at the date of maturity as the council would only consider repaying these loans if the lenders exercised their option to alter the interest rate.

6. Upper limit for total principal sums invested for over 364 days

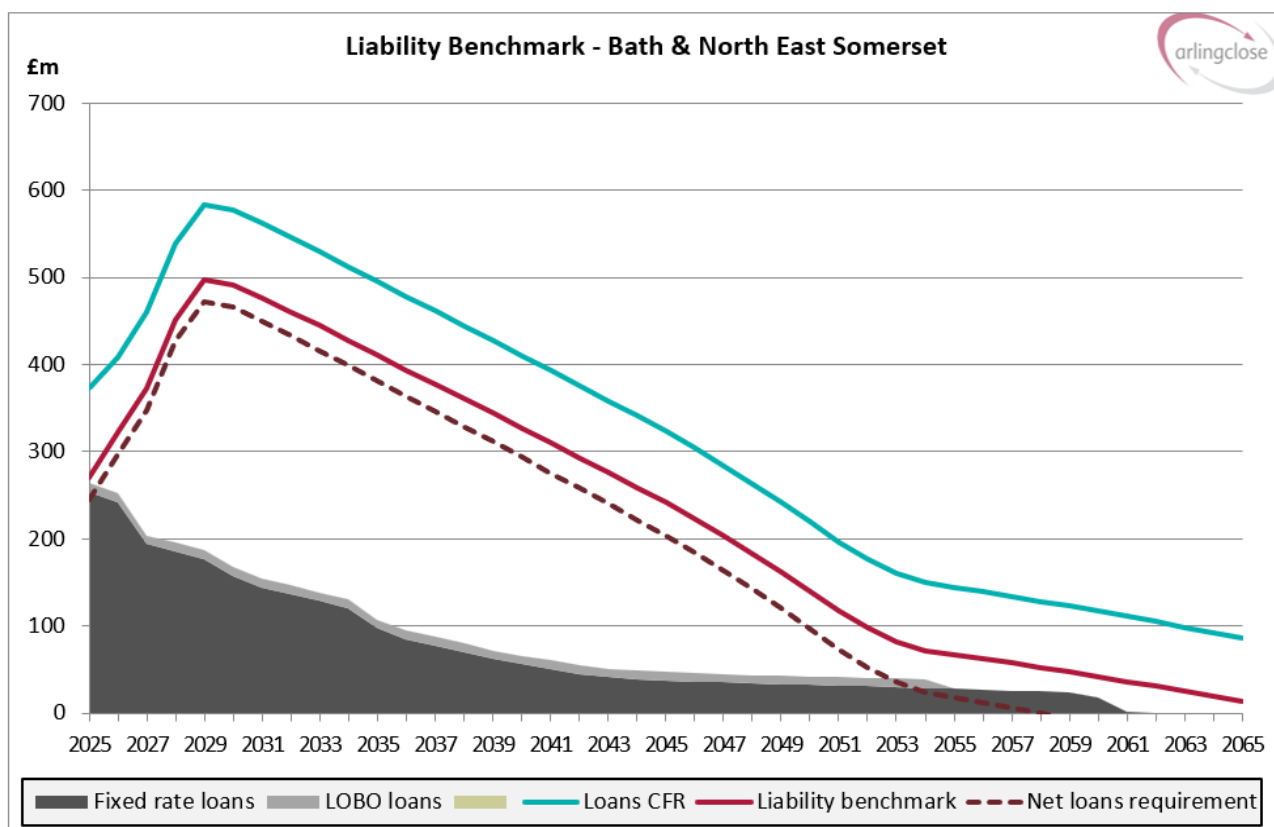
The purpose of this indicator is to control the Authority's exposure to the risk of incurring losses by seeking early repayment of its investments. The limits on the long-term principal sum invested to final maturities beyond the period end will be:

Price risk indicator	2025/26 Prudential Indicator	Actual as at 30 th September 2025
Limit on principal invested beyond 31 st March 2025	£50m	£10m*
Limit on principal invested beyond 31 st March 2026	£20m	£10m*
Limit on principal invested beyond 31 st March 2027	£10m	£10m*

*The Council includes the CCLA LA Property Fund & two long term ESG focussed Investment Funds against this indicator as they are both held as Long-Term Strategic Investments.

7. Liability Benchmark

The liability benchmark is an important tool to help establish whether the Council is likely to be a long-term borrower or long-term investor in the future, and so shape its strategic focus and decision making. The liability benchmark itself represents an estimate of the cumulative amount of external borrowing the Council must hold to fund its current capital and revenue plans while keeping treasury investments at the minimum level required to manage day-to-day cash flow.



The difference between the actual borrowing (the grey slopes) and the liability benchmark (the solid red line) shows that the council is under borrowed by around £43.59m in 2025/26. When it comes to new borrowing this funding gap can be used as a guide to the optimal amount and length of borrowing required to minimise interest rate and credit risk.

APPENDIX 2

The Council's Investment position at 30th September 2025

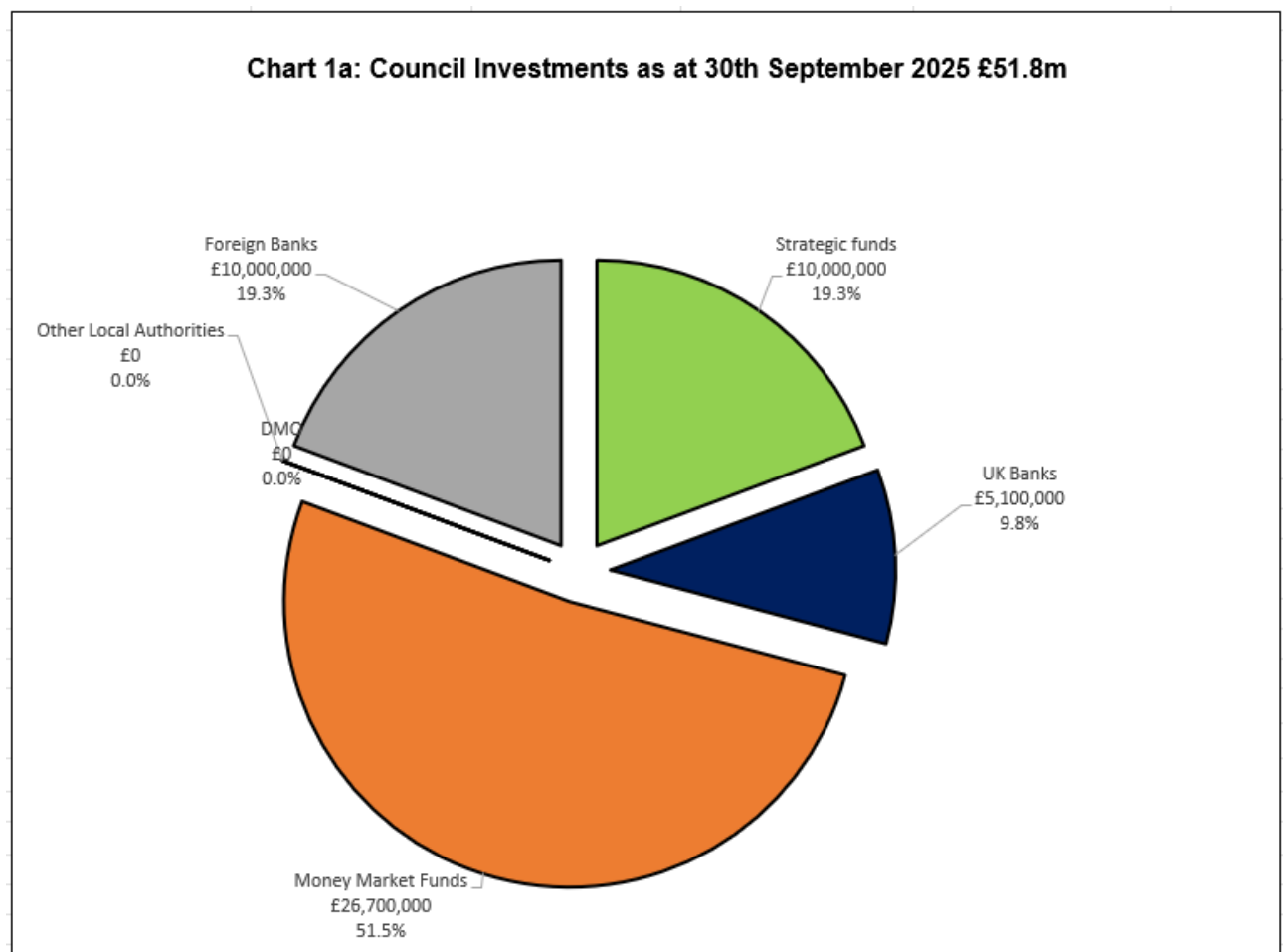
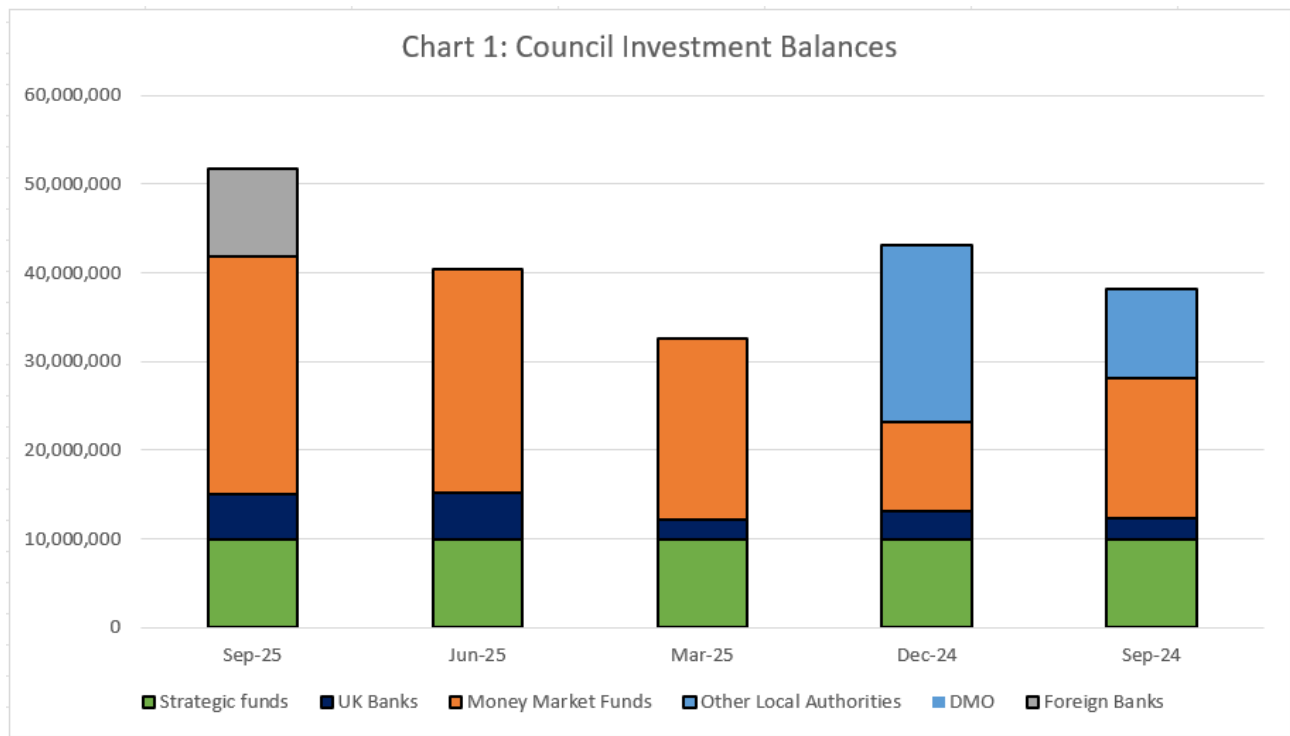
The term of investments is as follows:

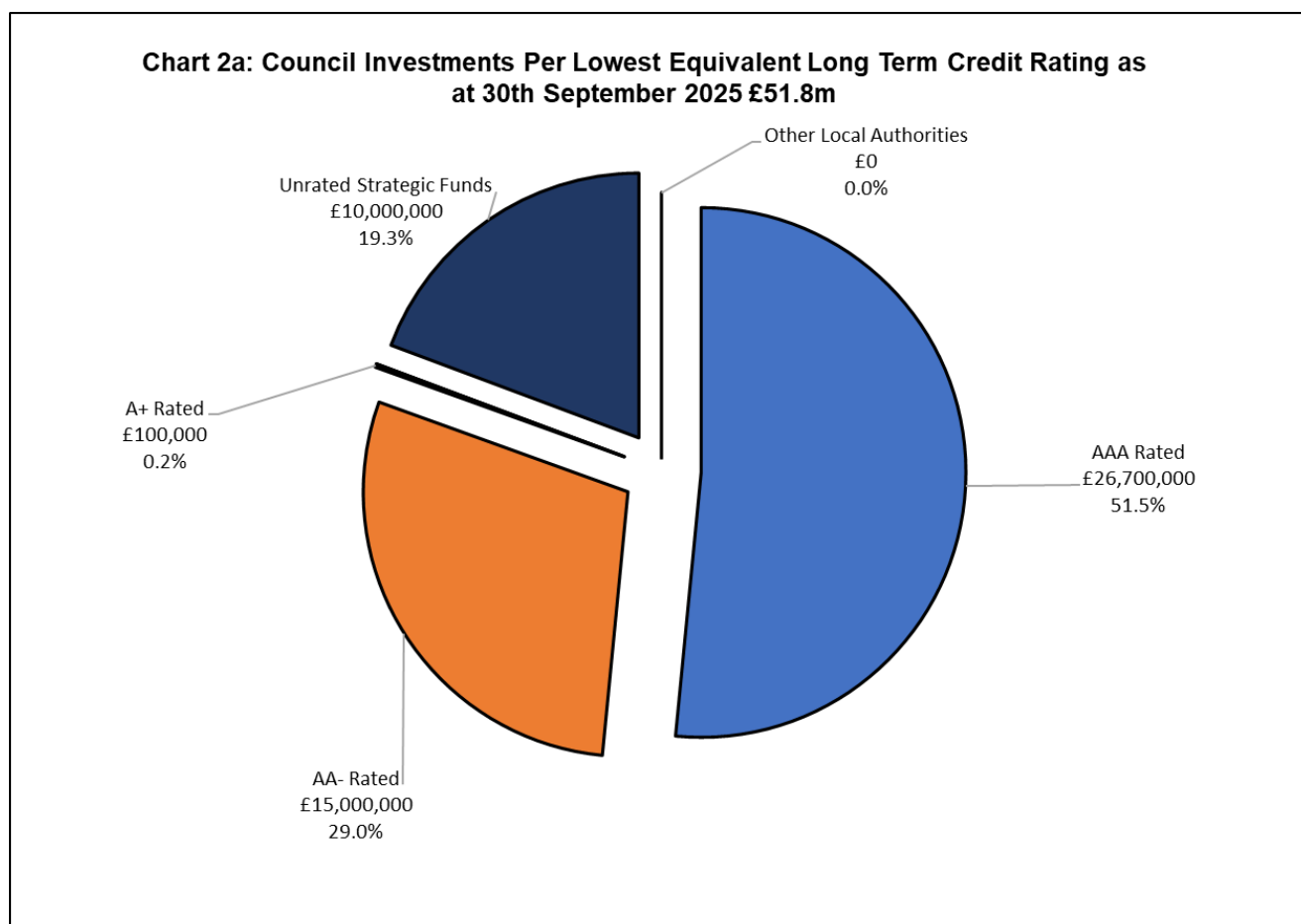
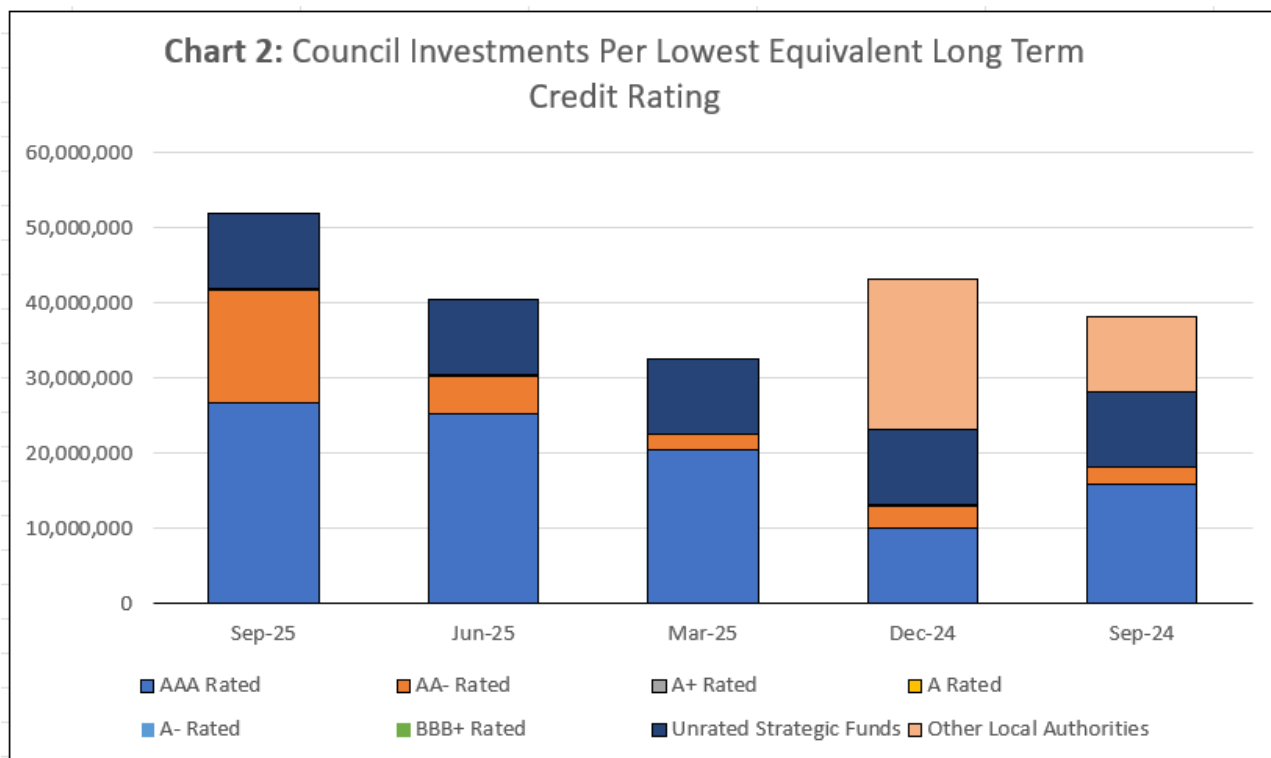
Term Remaining	Balance at 30 th September 2025	Comparator	
		Balance at 30 th June 2025	Balance at 31 st March 2025
	£m	£m	£m
Notice (instant access funds)	31.80	30.40	22.60
Up to 1 month	0.00	0.00	0.00
1 month to 3 months	10.00	0.00	0.00
3 months to 6 months	0.00	0.00	0.00
6 months to 12 months	0.00	0.00	0.00
Strategic Funds	10.00	10.00	10.00
Total	51.80	40.40	32.60

The investment figure is made up as follows:

	Balance at 30 th September 2025	Comparator	
		Balance at 30 th June 2025	Balance at 31 st March 2025
	£m	£m	£m
B&NES Council	48.59	36.93	29.77
Schools	3.21	3.47	2.83
Total	51.80	40.40	32.60

The Council had a total average net positive balance of £55.5m during the period April 2025 to September 2025.





APPENDIX 3

Operational investment return

	Average rate of interest earned	Benchmark = Average 7 Day SONIA rate	Performance against Benchmark
April 2025	4.33%	4.41%	-0.08%
May 2025	4.32%	4.18%	0.14%
June 2025	4.22%	4.19%	0.03%
July 2025	4.18%	4.21%	-0.03%
August 2025	4.08%	3.95%	0.13%
September 2025	4.02%	3.94%	0.08%
Average	4.19%	4.15%	0.04%

For comparison, the average rate of return on investments in 2024/25 was as follows:

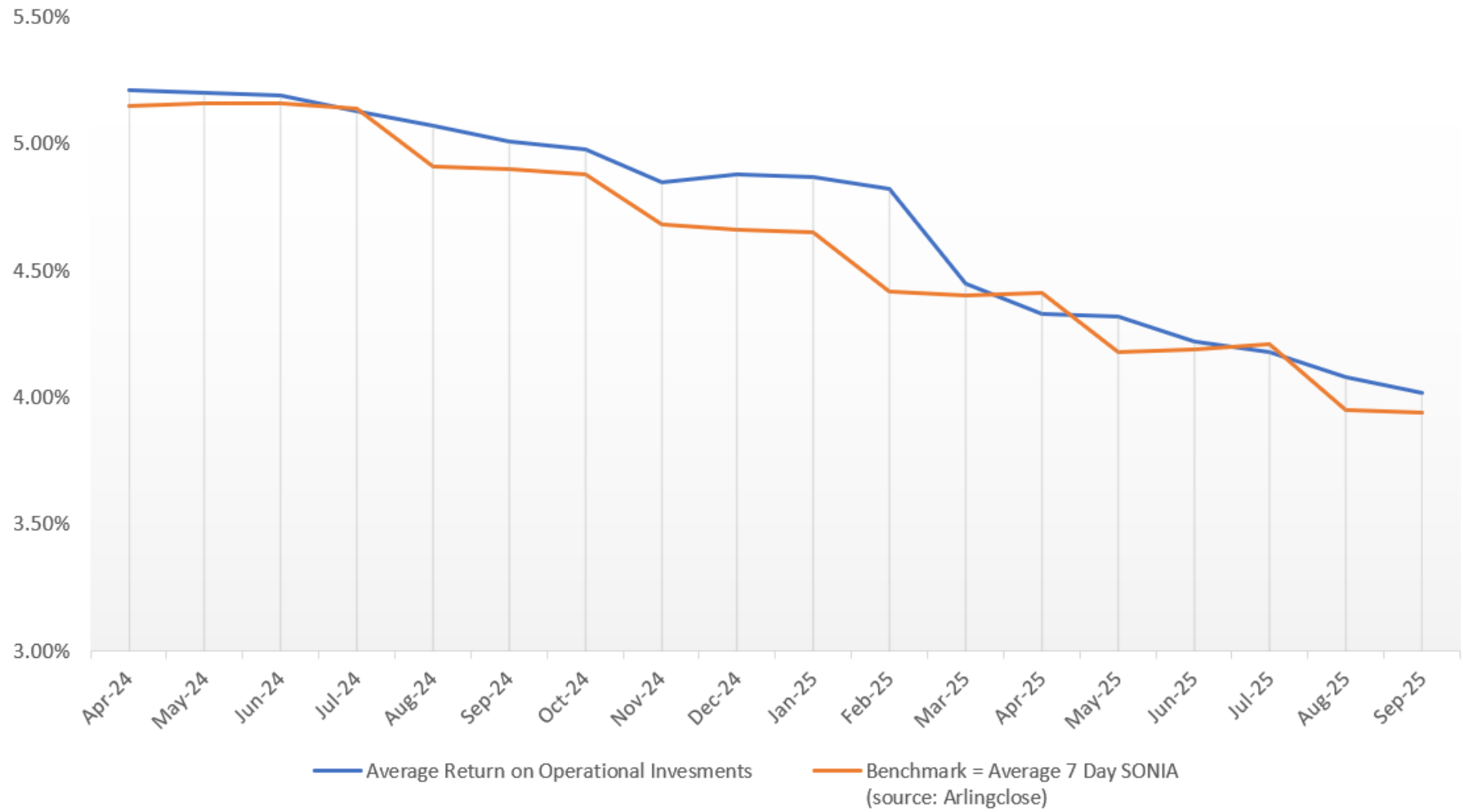
	Average rate of interest earned	Benchmark = Average 7 Day SONIA rate	Performance against Benchmark
April 2024	5.21%	5.15%	0.06%
May 2024	5.20%	5.16%	0.04%
June 2024	5.19%	5.16%	0.03%
July 2024	5.13%	5.14%	-0.01%
August 2024	5.07%	4.91%	0.16%
September 2024	5.01%	4.90%	0.11%
October 2024	4.98%	4.88%	0.10%
November 2024	4.85%	4.68%	0.17%
December 2024	4.88%	4.66%	0.22%
January 2025	4.87%	4.65%	0.22%
February 2025	4.82%	4.42%	0.40%
March 2025	4.45%	4.40%	0.05%
Average	4.97%	4.84%	0.13%

Strategic investment return

Estimated average return for strategic investments was 4.22% against a budgeted return of 4.25%. In 2024/25 the average return was 4.25%

Average Return on Operational Investments 2024/25 & 2025/26 compared to Benchmark

Page 152



APPENDIX 4

Council's External Borrowing at 30th September 2025

Lender	Amount outstanding @ 30 th June 2025 £	Change in Quarter £	Amount outstanding @ 30 th September 2025 £	Start date	End date	Interest rate
Long term						
PWLB489142	10,000,000	-	10,000,000	15/10/2004	15/10/2034	4.75%
PWLB497233	5,000,000	-	5,000,000	12/05/2010	15/08/2035	4.55%
PWLB497234	5,000,000	-	5,000,000	12/05/2010	15/02/2060	4.53%
PWLB498834	5,000,000	-	5,000,000	05/08/2011	15/02/2031	4.86%
PWLB498835	10,000,000	-	10,000,000	05/08/2011	15/08/2029	4.80%
PWLB498836	15,000,000	-	15,000,000	05/08/2011	15/02/2061	4.96%
PWLB503684	5,300,000	-	5,300,000	29/01/2015	08/04/2034	2.62%
PWLB503685	5,000,000	-	5,000,000	29/01/2015	08/10/2064	2.92%
PWLB505122	14,105,914	-	14,105,914	20/06/2016	20/06/2041	2.36%
PWLB508126	7,767,122	-	7,767,122	06/12/2018	20/06/2043	2.38%
PWLB508202	9,246,861	-	9,246,861	12/12/2018	20/06/2068	2.59%
PWLB508224	3,868,978	-	3,868,978	13/12/2018	20/06/2043	2.25%
PWLB505744	7,011,719	(205,378)	6,806,341	24/02/2017	15/08/2039	2.28%
PWLB505966	7,387,372	(179,414)	7,207,958	04/04/2017	15/02/2042	2.26%
PWLB506052	6,277,170	(152,583)	6,124,587	08/05/2017	15/02/2042	2.25%
PWLB506255	6,397,257	-	6,397,257	10/08/2017	10/04/2067	2.64%
PWLB506729	7,585,986	-	7,585,986	13/12/2017	10/10/2042	2.35%
PWLB506995	7,625,752	-	7,625,752	06/03/2018	10/10/2042	2.52%
PWLB506996	8,178,315	-	8,178,315	06/03/2018	10/10/2047	2.62%
PWLB507749	7,947,620	(171,569)	7,776,051	10/09/2018	20/07/2043	2.42%
PWLB508485	18,678,776	(119,326)	18,559,450	11/02/2019	20/07/2068	2.52%
PWLB509840	8,089,023	(181,106)	7,907,916	04/09/2019	20/07/2044	1.40%
PWLB677322	4,646,572	-	4,646,572	22/11/2023	22/11/2038	4.88%
PWLB687799	4,630,494	-	4,630,494	29/12/2023	29/12/2038	4.28%
PWLB700594	9,522,146	(247,093)	9,275,053	09/02/2024	09/02/2039	4.54%

Lender	Amount outstanding @ 30 th June 2025 £	Change in Quarter £	Amount outstanding @ 30 th September 2025 £	Start date	End date	Interest rate
PWLB815779	10,000,000	-	10,000,000	10/04/2025	09/04/2030	4.45%
PWLB816767	10,000,000	-	10,000,000	14/04/2025	13/04/2035	4.50%
KBC Bank N.V *	5,000,000	-	5,000,000	08/10/2004	08/10/2054	4.50%
KBC Bank N.V *	5,000,000	-	5,000,000	08/10/2004	08/10/2054	4.50%
Medium term		-	5,000,000			
Tunbridge Wells B.C.	5,000,000	-	10,000,000	14/11/2024	14/11/2025	4.85%
PWLB781146	10,000,000	-	5,000,000	09/12/2024	09/12/2025	5.09%
North Yorkshire Council	5,000,000	-	5,000,000	26/03/2025	25/03/2026	4.75%
Halton Borough Council	-	-	5,000,000	21/03/2025	20/06/2025	6.00%
West of England Combined Authority	5,000,000	-	5,000,000	25/04/2025	27/10/2025	4.50%
South Oxfordshire District Council	5,000,000	-	10,000,000	25/04/2025	24/04/2026	4.50%
West of England Combined Authority	5,000,000	-	5,000,000	29/04/2025	28/04/2026	4.50%
West Midlands Combined Authority	10,000,000	-	10,000,000	30/04/2025	29/04/2026	4.45%
Portsmouth City Council	5,000,000	-	5,000,000	07/05/2025	06/05/2026	4.50%
Total Borrowing	279,267,077	(1,256,469)	278,010,608			

*All LOBO's (Lender Option / Borrower Option) have reached the end of their fixed interest period and have reverted to the variable rate of 4.50%. The lender has the option to change the interest rate at 6 monthly intervals. Should the lender use the option to change the rate, then at this point the borrower has the option to repay the loan without penalty.

The "Change in Quarter" movement on some of the PWLB loans reflects that these loans have an annuity repayment profile, so repayments of principal are made on a 6 monthly basis throughout the life of the loans.

APPENDIX 5: Arlingclose Economic & Market Review

Economic background: The first quarter was dominated by the fallout from the US trade tariffs and their impact on equity and bond markets. The second quarter, still rife with uncertainty, saw equity markets making gains and a divergence in US and UK government bond yields, which had been moving relatively closely together.

From late June, amid a UK backdrop of economic uncertainty, concerns around the government's fiscal position and speculation around the autumn Budget, yields on medium and longer term gilts pushed higher, including the 30-year which hit its highest level for almost 30 years.

UK headline annual consumer price inflation (CPI) increased over the period, rising from 2.6% in March to 3.8% in August, still well above the Bank of England's 2% target. Core inflation also rose, from 3.4% to 3.6% over the same period, albeit the August reading was down % from 3.8% the previous month. Services inflation also fell from July to August, to 4.7% from 5.0%.

The UK economy expanded by 0.7% in the first quarter of the calendar year and by 0.3% in the second quarter. In the final version of the Q2 2025 GDP report, annual growth was revised upwards to 1.4% y/y. However, monthly figures showed zero growth in July, in line with expectations, indicating a sluggish start to Q3.

Labour market data continued to soften throughout the period, with the unemployment rate rising and earnings growth easing, but probably not to an extent that would make the more hawkish MPC members comfortable with further rate cuts. In addition, the employment rate rose while the economic inactivity rate and number of vacancies fell.

The BoE's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) cut Bank Rate from 4.5% to 4.25% in May and to 4.0% in August after an unprecedented second round of voting. The final 5-4 vote was for a 25bps cut, with the minority wanting no change. In September, seven MPC members voted to hold rates while two preferred a 25bps cut. The Committee's views still differ on whether the upside risks from inflation expectations and wage setting outweigh downside risks from weaker demand and growth.

The August BoE Monetary Policy Report highlighted that after peaking in Q3 2025, inflation is projected to fall back to target by mid-2027, helped by increasing spare capacity in the economy and the ongoing effects from past tighter policy rates. GDP is expected to remain weak in the near-term while over the medium term outlook will be influenced by domestic and global developments.

Arlingclose, the authority's treasury adviser, maintained its central view that Bank Rate would be cut further as the BoE focused on weak GDP growth more than higher inflation. One more cut is currently expected during 2025/26, taking Bank Rate to 3.75%. The risks to the forecast are balanced in the near-term but weighted to the downside further out as weak consumer sentiment and business confidence and investment continue to constrain growth. There is also considerable uncertainty around the autumn Budget and the impact this will have on the outlook.

Against a backdrop of uncertain US trade policy and pressure from President Trump, the US Federal Reserve held interest rates steady for most of the period, before cutting the Fed Funds Rate to 4.00%-4.25% in September. Fed policymakers also published their new economic projections at the same time. These pointed to a 0.50% lower Fed Funds Rate by the end of 2025 and 0.25% lower in 2026, alongside GDP growth of 1.6% in 2025, inflation of 3%, and an unemployment rate of 4.5%.

The European Central Bank cut rates in June, reducing its main refinancing rate from 2.25% to 2.0%, before keeping it on hold through to the end of the period. New ECB projections predicted inflation averaging 2.1% in 2025, before falling below target in 2026, alongside improving GDP growth, for which the risks are deemed more balanced and the disinflationary process over.

Financial markets: After the sharp declines seen early in the period, sentiment in financial markets improved, but risky assets have generally remained volatile. Early in the period bond yields fell, but ongoing uncertainty, particularly in the UK, has seen medium and longer yields rise with bond investors requiring an increasingly higher return against the perceived elevated risk of UK plc. Since the sell-off in April, equity markets have gained back the previous declines, with investors continuing to remain bullish in the face of ongoing uncertainty.

Over the period, the 10-year UK benchmark gilt yield started at 4.65% and ended at 4.70%. However, these six months saw significant volatility with the 10-year yield hitting a low of 4.45% and a high of 4.82%. It was a broadly similar picture for the 20-year gilt which started at 5.18% and ended at 5.39% with a low and high of 5.10% and 5.55% respectively. The Sterling Overnight Rate (SONIA) averaged 4.19% over the six months to 30th September.

Credit review: Arlingclose maintained its recommended maximum unsecured duration limit on the majority of the banks on its counterparty list at 6 months. The other banks remain on 100 days.

Early in the period, Fitch upgraded NatWest Group and related entities to AA- from A+ and placed Clydesdale Bank's long-term A- rating on Rating Watch Positive. While Moody's downgraded the long term rating on the United States sovereign to Aa1 in May and also affirmed OP Corporate's rating at Aa3.

Then in the second quarter, Fitch upgraded Clydesdale Bank and also HSBC, downgraded Lancashire CC and Close Brothers while Moody's upgraded Transport for London, Allied Irish Banks, Bank of Ireland and Toronto-Dominion Bank.

After spiking in early April following the US trade tariff announcements, UK credit default swap prices have since generally trended downwards and ended the period at levels broadly in line with those in the first quarter of the calendar year and throughout most of 2024.

European banks' CDS prices has followed a fairly similar pattern to the UK, as have Singaporean and Australian lenders while Canadian bank CDS prices remain modestly elevated compared to earlier in 2025 and in 2024.

Overall, at the end of the period CDS prices for all banks on Arlingclose's counterparty list remained within limits deemed satisfactory for maintaining credit advice at current durations.

Financial market volatility is expected to remain a feature, at least in the near term and, credit default swap levels will be monitored for signs of ongoing credit stress. As ever, the institutions and durations on the Authority's counterparty list recommended by Arlingclose remain under constant review.

APPENDIX 6

Interest & Capital Financing Costs – Budget Monitoring 2025/26

April 2025 to March 2026	YEAR END POSITION			ADV/FAV
	Budgeted Spend or (Income) £'000	Published Forecast (Income) £'000	Forecast Over or (Under) spend £'000	
Interest & Capital Financing				
- Debt Costs	11,932	11,532	(400)	FAV
- Internal Repayment of Loan Charges	(17,372)	(17,372)	0	-
- Ex Avon Debt Costs	860	860	0	-
- Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)	11,417	11,230	(187)	FAV
- Interest on Balances	(1,361)	(1,611)	(250)	FAV
Total	5,476	4,639	(837)	FAV

APPENDIX 7

Summary Guide to Credit Ratings

Rating	Details
AAA	Highest credit quality – lowest expectation of default, which is unlikely to be adversely affected by foreseeable events.
AA	Very high credit quality - expectation of very low default risk, which is not likely to be significantly vulnerable to foreseeable events.
A	High credit quality - expectations of low default risk which may be more vulnerable to adverse business or economic conditions than is the case for higher ratings.
BBB	Good credit quality - expectations of default risk are currently low but adverse business or economic conditions are more likely to impair this capacity.
BB	Speculative - indicates an elevated vulnerability to default risk, particularly in the event of adverse changes in business or economic conditions over time.
B	Highly speculative - indicates that material default risk is present, but a limited margin of safety remains. Capacity for continued payment is vulnerable to deterioration in the business and economic environment.
CCC	Substantial credit risk - default is a real possibility.
CC	Very high levels of credit risk - default of some kind appears probable.
C	Exceptionally high levels of credit risk - default is imminent or inevitable.
RD	Restricted default - indicates an issuer that has experienced payment default on a bond, loan, or other material financial obligation but which has not entered into bankruptcy filings, administration, receivership, liquidation, or other formal winding-up procedure, and which has not otherwise ceased operating.
D	Default - indicates an issuer that has entered into bankruptcy filings, administration, receivership, liquidation, or other formal winding-up procedure, or which has otherwise ceased business.

APPENDIX 8

Extract from Treasury Management Risk Register – Top 5 Risks

Page 160

			Current Risk Score											Trend			
	Risk Nr	Description	Likelihood					Impact					This Period	Periods Ago			Management Action
			1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	
			L	M	H			L	M	H							
1	R06	Inflation Risk The risk that prevailing levels of inflation cause an unexpected or unbudgeted burden on the organisation's finances, against which the organisation has failed to protect itself adequately.			3						4		12	12	12	12	Liaise with Chief Finance Officer to ensure Inflation both current and projected forms part of the medium term financial planning framework.
2	R09	Legal & Regulatory Risk - Changes Risk that regulatory changes are not planned for and adversely impact the Council's budget and or ability to borrow			3					3			9	9	12	12	Read, respond and calculate the impact of Local Government accounting, investment and capital financing / borrowing consultations have on treasury management. Plan for the implementation of new regulations, conditions and accounting treatment
3	R04	Interest Rate Risk The risk that fluctuations in the levels of interest rates create an unexpected or unbudgeted burden on the organisation's finances, against which the organisation has failed to protect itself adequately			3					3			9	9	9	9	Monitor interest rates on a monthly basis and compare with budget to determine impact on Council finances and report through monthly Treasury Dashboard. Report implication of interest rate changes to Cabinet as part of quarterly Treasury Management Performance Report. Explore alternative potential investment products following new freedoms - including corporate bonds, gilts, Certificate of Deposits etc. Discussion with our treasury advisors on any new borrowing in terms of duration and timing given the current volatility in the gilt market and PWLB interest rates.
4	R07	Refinancing Risk The risk that maturing borrowings, capital, project or partnership financings cannot be refinanced on terms that reflect the provisions made by the organisation for those refinancings, both capital and current (revenue), and/or that the terms are inconsistent with prevailing market conditions at the time.			3					3			9	9	9	6	When deciding on the duration of new borrowing consider existing debt maturity profile before submitting an approval to Chief Finance Officer on the new borrowing. Consult with treasury Advisor Arlingclose with regards to risks in the lending market and consider their guidance when making refinancing decisions Complete Annual PWLB certainty rate return and any other returns that provide a discounted lending rate. Maintain a relationship with at least 2 brokers in order to ensure that the council avoids the risk of accepting terms which are not in line with prevailing market conditions.
5	R08	Legal & Regulatory Risk - Acting Outside Powers The risk that the organisation itself, or a third party with which it is dealing in its treasury management activities, fails to act in accordance with its legal powers or regulatory requirements, and that the organisation suffers losses accordingly.		2							4		8	8	8	8	Obtain independent review of the council's strategy and policies to ensure compliance with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) Regulations, Local Government Act and any other regulation or guidance as specified by the Secretary of State.. Stay on top of Government and CIPFA consultations on Treasury and Capital Financing regulations.

Bath & North East Somerset Council		
MEETING:	Council	
MEETING DATE:	20 November 2025	
TITLE:	Avon Pension Fund Annual Report to Council	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report: Appendix 1 – The Avon Pension Fund Committee’s Annual Report to Council 2024/25 Appendix 2 – Local Pension Board – Annual Report 2024/25 Appendix 3 – Terms of Reference for Committee & Investment Panel		

1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 The Avon Pension Fund Committee discharges the responsibilities of the Council in its role as the administering authority of the Avon Pension Fund in accordance with the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 (as amended).
- 1.2 The Committee reports annually to Council on the work it has undertaken in the previous twelve months and reference is also made in the report to the future work programme. This report is for the 12 months to 31 March 2025.
- 1.3 As background to this report members should be aware that Bath & North East Somerset Council has a dual interest in the Avon Pension Fund, firstly as administering authority and secondly as one of the employing bodies. This report focuses entirely on the Council’s role as administering authority.

2 RECOMMENDATION

The Council is asked;

- 2.1 To note the Committee’s Annual Report to Council
- 2.2 To note the Pension Board’s Annual Report

3 THE REPORT

- 3.1 The Annual Report for 2024/25 is attached as Appendix 1 to this report. The document is primarily for the Council's purposes. However, it will be circulated to the employing bodies within the Fund to improve transparency about the Committee's activities and the decisions taken.
- 3.2 The Public Service Pensions Act 2013 required the Council to establish a local pension board to assist the administering authority with the effective and efficient management and administration of the scheme. The Avon Pension Fund's Pension Board has published its annual report for 2024/25 which is included as Appendix 2.

4 FUTURE ACTIVITIES

- 4.1 Brunel Pension Partnership now manages over 90% of the Fund's assets (including all listed securities) in line with government guidance for pooling. However, in April the government rejected Brunel's proposal for the future of pooling. It directed the Fund, along with the other LGPS funds in the Brunel pool, to join another pool. There were then extensive discussions with other possible pools but due to government guidance only one option emerged as available. Therefore the Fund has now informed MHCLG that it is in discussions with Local Pension Partnership Investments (LPPI). This pool currently comprises the London Pensions Fund Authority (LPFA) and the Lancashire & Berkshire funds.
- 4.2 The Committee has been challenged by a number of stakeholders about its investment policies, in relation to the conflicts in the Levant. In March the Committee agreed to maintain its existing policy of not investing in firms which fail to comply with Principle 2 of the UN Global Compact (this excludes makers of cluster & anti-personnel munitions) but not to disinvest further.
- 4.3 It also agreed to undertake a survey of its members; this took place in September 2025. The survey results showed that 47% of members surveyed were in favour of remaining invested with 42% preferring to divest. The committee will discuss the survey results and other factors such as legal advice and make its final decision at the next formal meeting on 12th December.

5 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 The Council is required to put in place arrangements for the effective discharge of its business

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

- 6.1 The costs of administering the Avon Pension Fund are recharged to the employing bodies through the employer contribution rates which are set by the actuary every three years as part of the valuation.

7 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 As set out in the annual report, there are regular reviews of the Fund's risk register.

8 EQUALITIES

- 8.1 A proportionate equalities impact assessment has been carried out using corporate guidelines and no significant issues have been identified.

9 CLIMATE CHANGE

- 9.1 The Fund is implementing a digital strategy across all its operations and communications with stakeholders to reduce its internal carbon footprint in line with the Council's Climate Strategy. The Fund acknowledges the financial risk to its assets from climate change and is addressing this through its strategic asset allocation to Paris Aligned Global Equities, Sustainable Equities and renewable energy opportunities. The strategy is monitored and reviewed by the Committee.

10 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 10.1 None

11 CONSULTATION

- 11.1 The Pension Fund Committee delegated the drafting of the Annual Report to Council to Officers and the Chair (subject to informal consultation with Committee members prior to the Chair approving the report).

Contact person	Carolyn Morgan, Governance & Risk Advisor, 01225 395240
Background papers	<i>Pension Fund Committee papers</i>
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	

This page is intentionally left blank

Avon Pension Fund Committee Annual Report to Council (April 2024 – March 2025)

Foreword

I am very pleased to present the Annual Report of the Avon Pension Fund Committee for 2024/25. While the year itself was one of strong performance in our business as usual, the Committee's work has become much more challenging since the year end.

Brunel Pension Partnership now manage over 90% of our assets (including all listed securities) in line with government guidance for pooling. However, in April the government rejected Brunel's proposal for the future of pooling. It directed us, along with the other LGPS funds in the Brunel pool, to join another pool.

The Committee is also taking major decisions arising from the triennial valuation which is effective from 31 March 2025. This includes decisions about contribution rates and about investment strategy.

The Committee has been challenged by a number of stakeholders about its investment policies, in relation to the conflicts in the Levant. In March the Committee agreed to maintain its existing policy of not investing in firms which fail to comply with Principle 2 of the UN Global Compact (this excludes makers of cluster & anti-personnel munitions) but not to disinvest further, and committed to surveying members to better understand their views

Finally, I would like to thank all staff of Avon Pension Fund for continuing to provide a good service in the face of difficult challenges, and to the Pensions Committee and Board for their wholehearted support for the Fund's officers. I also want to thank Paul Crossley and Shaun Stevenson McGall for their leadership of the committee over the past two years.

Councillor Toby Simon
Chair, Avon Pension Fund Committee

Introduction

This is the annual report to Council detailing the work carried out by the Avon Pension Fund (“Fund”) Committee for the period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.

B&NES is the Fund’s administering authority and delegates its responsibility for the Fund to the Avon Pension Fund Committee (“Committee”) which is the formal decision-making body. The Committee makes strategic choices, sets policy objectives, and monitors implementation and compliance with the stated strategy and objectives.

Due to the wide scope of the Committee’s remit, it is supported by the Investment Panel (“Panel”) which sets investment strategy and assesses performance and risk metrics in greater depth. The Committee has delegated authority to the Panel for specific investment decisions.

The Committee and administering authority are scrutinised by the Local Pension Board, ensuring that governance of the scheme is robust and fit for purpose and aligned with relevant regulations.

The scheme is regulated and overseen by The Pensions Regulator. Other bodies and agencies undertake key roles, particularly the Local Government Pension Scheme Advisory Board, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy), which sets accounting standards.

Brunel Pension Partnership Ltd (Brunel), regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority, manages over 90% of the assets in the Avon Pension Fund.

The Fund is a statutory scheme regulated by the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 and the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations (Management and Investment of Funds) Regulations 2016.

The Fund serves over 140,000 members and 487 employing bodies across 4 unitary authorities – B&NES, Bristol, North Somerset, South Gloucestershire. The value of the Fund on 31 March 2025 was £5.8 billion. In 2024-25 the Fund received £251m in pension contributions and paid out £250m in pension payments and other benefits.

Full details can be found in the Fund’s annual report

<https://www.avonpensionfund.org.uk/about-fund/how-avon-pension-fund-works>

Governance

Structure and Attendance – Committee

	Committee Structure
14 voting members	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5 elected members from B&NES• 1 elected member from Bristol City Council• 1 elected member from North Somerset Council• 1 elected member from South Gloucestershire Council• 3 independent members• 1 nominated member from higher/further education bodies• 1 nominated member from the academy bodies• 1 nominated member from the trade unions
3 non-voting members	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 nominated member from town and parish councils• 2 nominated members from the trade unions

Attendance at the quarterly Committee meetings was 84% for the voting members and 75% for the non-voting members.

Structure and Attendance – Investment Panel

The Panel consists of up to six voting members from the Committee and meets at least quarterly ahead of Committee meetings. The Panel met formally four times during the year with attendance at 75%.

Training

The Fund provides training to Committee members to ensure they have appropriate levels of knowledge, skill and understanding to discharge their fiduciary duties.

A training framework is in place, which is based on CIPFA's (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accounting) Knowledge and Skills Framework for LGPS funds.

The Fund has adopted the LGPS Online Learning Academy provided by Hyman's Robertson, which forms part of the Committee's training plan. Members have committed to studying the modules within one year of joining and triennially after that. The modules are as follows:

Module 1 – Committee Role and Pensions Legislation
Module 2 – Pensions Governance
Module 3 – Pensions Administration
Module 4 – Pensions Accounting and Audit Standards
Module 5 – Procurement and Relationship Management
Module 6 – Investment Performance and Risk Management
Module 7 – Financial Markets and Product Knowledge
Module 8 – Actuarial Methods, Standards and Practices
At 31 March 2025, 80% of members had completed all eight modules.

In addition, workshops are arranged as necessary, reflecting the Committee's meeting agendas and feedback from members. During the last twelve months, two workshops were held to discuss the release and implementation of The Pension Regulator's General Code of Practice and the Fund's interim valuation.

Workplans

Separate workplans are prepared for the Committee and Panel detailing areas of work relating to the investment strategy, funding, and administration of benefits. Such workplans give the Committee and officers the opportunity to review workload and plan Committee agendas and workshops.

Internal Audit

During the year, Internal Audit completed six audits which were finalised as per the below summary:

- Pensions Payroll – Level 4, Substantial Assurance
- Scheme of Delegation – Level 3, Reasonable Assurance
- Year End Processes – Level 3, Reasonable Assurance
- Annual Benefit Statements – Level 3, Reasonable Assurance
- Governance of Local Impact Investments – Level 4, Substantial Assurance
- Pensions Increases – Level 3, Reasonable Assurance

Review of Governance Arrangements and Policies

The Committee reviewed the minutes of the Pension Board quarterly. The Board is on course with the work and training plans and all quarterly meetings have been held as planned.

Fund officers have reviewed the governance arrangements including the Committee's Terms of Reference, Governance Compliance Statement and the Fund's Treasury Management Policy.

B&NES Council annually reviews the Committee's Terms of Reference and the Treasury Management Policy.

The Committee reviews the Fund risk register at each meeting.

Committee's Activities and Review of the Year

Global markets were broadly favourable during 2024. Equities increased in value by 15% driven by US equities, while UK government bonds recovered as interest rate expectations declined. We enter 2025 in a robust financial position.

Following a review of our investment strategy in 2023 and subsequent investments with local impact, the Fund has appointed new asset managers focused on renewable infrastructure, affordable housing, and small business funding. The Fund also continues to exceed its climate targets including progress towards Net Zero.

The year has seen significant improvement in service quality. As part of our support for employers, we launched a new employer website in December 2024 with an online portal and e-forms to simplify data submissions and change requests.

Administration

Increasing complexity and growth in employer numbers has made service delivery challenging. As a result, the administration function restructured in August 2024 to improve service through greater digitalisation.

The fund has agreed a new administration software package to ensure digital delivery of services including connection to the Pensions Dashboard, a new member portal, improved data cleansing, and cloud-based hosting.

A new project to review process controls across the administration kicked off in 2025 to ensure key operations are governed by secure systems.

Members' service experience was below the Fund's targets during 2023/24. A project to focus on service backlogs has led to a material reduction in backlogs during 2024/25, which has led to improved service experience for members. 90% of members' service requests are now addressed within required timeframes.

The project to implement the McCloud age-discrimination remedy is on track to be completed by the August 2025 deadline.

The Pension Regulator's Standards of Data Requirements

The Fund regularly tests its data vs The Pension Regulator's (TPR) requirements. In the TPR Scheme Return submitted in September 2024 the Fund reported a data score of 96% for common data and 97% for scheme specific data.

Service Plan, Budget and Cash Flow Monitoring

Each year the Committee approves the Service Plan which sets out the Pension Fund's objectives for the next three years together with a three-year budget to deliver the plan. This included the organisational restructure, digital improvements, staff levels, and training which will drive required improvements in administration.

During the year to 31 March 2025, total Fund costs were under budget.

	Budget £'000	Actual £'000	Difference £'000
Administration	5,660	4,542	1,118
Investments	19,603	19,089	514
Governance	3,105	3,046	59
Total	28,368	26,677	1,691

Funding Strategy Statement (FSS)

Falling liability values due to higher bond yields was the main driver in the increase in the funding level to 102%. The next triennial valuation struck as at 31st March 2025 is in progress and will set employer contribution rates for the 3 years from April 2026.

The funding strategy is prudent, with the aim of keeping employer contribution rates stable over time. The average employer contribution rate is 18.6% of salaries and we anticipate that this will be lower for most employers following the 2025 valuation.

Investment Management

The value of the Fund's assets was £5.8 billion at 31st March.

During the year we continued our investments in our Local Impact Portfolio and by the end of the year, we had invested £41m of the target £175m.

Responsible Investing and Climate Emergency

We continue to make progress towards achieving the net zero targets set in 2023/24 with the overriding objective of delivering real world impact on the level of emissions and enabling transition to a low carbon economy. Over the last 5 years, the Carbon Footprint of the listed equity portfolio has decreased by 71% relative to the baseline year of 2019/20, and the corporate bond portfolio footprint has decreased by 65%. This is due to several factors including a decrease in carbon emissions from the companies we invest in.

Future Activity

Following the government's decision to reject Brunel's proposal for the future of pooling, work will now begin to join another pool. A decision on a new pool and the work to transition to that pool will continue throughout the year and beyond.

The committee made its initial decision to remain invested in arms and defence companies but committed to surveying members for their views. The survey took place in September 2025 and a final decision will be made by committee at the end of the year.

A government-led project to allow everybody to find their pensions more easily, called Pensions Dashboards, will be implemented this year. The Fund is due to meet its requirement to 'connect' with the Dashboard in October 2025. Data quality, risk assessment and evidence-based work is being carried out in readiness for implementation.

Recruitment to fill all vacant posts within the Fund's structure remains a priority for officers as work continues to improve service experience for members and digital transformation. An upgrade to the member self-service portal (My Pension Online) will support digital transformation ambitions at the end of 2025.

An initial review of The Pensions Regulator's General Code of Practice, which was released in March 2024, demonstrated that the Fund is near to full compliance. Following the review, an action plan was implemented to ensure areas outstanding are addressed to bring the Fund to full compliance. Officers will be ensuring that all agreed actions are carried out by March 2026.

Finally, the Scheme Advisory Board's Good Governance Review for the Local Government Pension Scheme is transitioning from recommendation to implementation. The Fund expects more progress, clarity and guidance in the coming months.

This page is intentionally left blank

Chairman's Summary

Welcome to the Annual Report of the Local Pension Board (The Board) of Avon Pension Fund.

The purpose of the Board is to assist the administering authority (Bath and North East Somerset Council or "BANES") of the Avon Pension Fund (The Fund or "APF") ensure compliance with LGPS regulations and the requirements of The Pensions Regulator (TPR) and to ensure effective governance and administration of the Fund.

This report covers the period 1st August 2024 to 31st July 2025 in which time the Board held four formal meetings. It has been a busy year with the Board participating in various workshops along with the Pension Committee. During the Valuation Workshop in June, the scheme actuary Mercer presented the Fund's valuation results and members had the opportunity to join the debate about how the Fund's surplus funding level should be used.

During the year, Hymans Robertson presented a very interesting training session covering the introduction of The Pension Regulator's new General Code of Practice and how it will impact fund governance and administration going forward. Officers have completed their initial review of the Code and the Board was pleased to see that the Fund is over 70% compliant. The Board will continue to monitor progress of the Fund's action plan, with the aim of reaching full compliance during 2026.

The Board continues to monitor service performance at each meeting and was pleased to see better than expected progress has been made in reducing backlogs. Board members felt this was a key priority to ensure the Fund is ready for the implementation of the Pensions Dashboards Project later this year.

I am pleased to say that with the support of the officers of the Fund, the Board has continued to fulfil its Terms of Reference and support the administering authority in its statutory duties. During this period, members of the Board have continued to develop their knowledge and understanding of LGPS governance arrangements as required by law. All members have studied the modules on the Hymans Robertson LGPS Online Learning Academy and as Chair I have asked all Board members to refresh their knowledge of the modules on an annual basis.

I am pleased to welcome Jon Evans to the Board, who has joined as an employer representative. Two existing members have stood down from their positions and I would like to thank both Steve Harman and Stuart Anstead for their valued contributions. Steve Harman has been a Board member since its inception in 2015 so his valuable knowledge and experience will be greatly missed. Recruitment for two employer representatives and one member representative is under way.

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow Board members for their commitment to their roles on the Local Pension Board and I commend this report to you.

Nick Weaver
Independent Chair

Local Pension Board Members

The requirement for an Independent Chair and Board Membership of three employer representatives and three member representatives was outlined in the terms of reference to the Board which were agreed by full BANES Council on the 15 January 2015.

During the year, two employer representatives have left and one new employer representative joined. Recruitment is ongoing for the vacant positions.

Member Type	Active/Retired	Member Name	Date of Appointment	Date of Term End	Extensions This Year
Chairman		Nick Weaver	01/11/19	31/10/27	
Employer Representative	Active	Steve Harman	01/07/15	30/06/25	
Employer Representative	Active	Stuart Anstead	01/12/21	01/05/25	
Employer Representative	Active	Jon Evans	01/10/24	30/09/28	
Member Representative	Retired	Helen Ball	01/03/20	28/02/28	
Member Representative	Retired	Alison Wyatt	01/05/22	30/04/26	
Member Representative	Vacant				

During the year, the Board met four times. Attendance is shown below.

Role	Board Member	Number of Meetings Attended
Independent Chairman	Nick Weaver	4
Employer Representative	Steve Harman	3
Employer Representative	Stuart Anstead	0
Employer Representative	Jon Evans	2
Member Representative	Helen Ball	3
Member Representative	Alison Wyatt	3
Member Representative	Vacant	

Training

Background

In accordance with the Pension Regulator (TPR) guidance, every individual member of the Board must be conversant with the rules of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) and have knowledge and understanding of the law relating to pensions.

Degree of Knowledge and Understanding

The legal requirement is that members of the Board must be conversant with the rules of the LGPS and any document recording policy about the administration of the fund. This is implied as working knowledge so that members are aware of which legislation/policies to refer to when carrying out their role.

Areas of Knowledge and Understanding

Board Members should be conversant with, but not limited to the following areas:

- a) Scheme approved policies
- b) Risk assessment/management
- c) Scheme booklets/members communications
- d) Role of Board Members and the scheme manager
- e) Policies in relation to discretions
- f) Communications with scheme members and employers
- g) Key policy documents on administration, funding and investment

Training Undertaken

During the year on-going technical training was provided to Board members by officers from or advisors to the Fund on a full range of topics covering the LGPS framework and TPR requirements.

Members have been studying the Hymans LGPS Online Learning Academy modules to improve knowledge and understanding as recommended as part of the Scheme Advisory Board (SAB) Good governance review and in line with upcoming agenda items.

Throughout the year some members attended The Local Government Association's Governance Conference and several workshops to discuss the Fund's valuation results, the Investment Strategy and The Pension Regulator's new General Code of Practice. These events help to broaden understanding of topics of relevance to the LGPS and the role of a pension board member.

The Board's training plan is a topic at each board meeting and a training log is maintained to assist in the identification of on-going training needs.

Review of Areas Covered in 2024/25 and Recommendations

Over the last year of operation, the Board focussed on key administration and governance themes of KPIs, legal compliance, risk management, and best practice. A summary of the areas covered is as follows:

Review of Local Pension Board Arrangements

- Terms of Reference, Code of Conduct, Conflicts of Interest and Breaches
- Training requirements
- Workplan

Review of Pension Fund Activities

- Avon Pension Fund Committee and Investment Panel minutes
- Governance arrangements including TPR General Code of Practice
- Audit plan and reports
- Funding Strategy Statement meets regulatory compliance requirements
- Investment Strategy Statement meets regulatory compliance requirements
- Scheme employers and admitted bodies
- Business continuity

Review of Pension Fund Administration

- Compliance reports and legal timeframes at all meetings
- Risk register reviewed at all meetings
- Service Plan reviewed annually
- Statutory annual requirements (Annual Benefit Statement, Pensions Savings Statement)
- Regulatory projects (McCloud remedy, dashboard implementation)
- Annual Report

Independent Assurance

- TPR, SAB and Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy
- SF3 benchmarking exercise
- External audit plan and reports
- Internal audit plan and reports

Areas of Review Covered at Pension Board Meetings

4th September 2024

At September's meeting, the Board received an update on the procurement process for its administration software and a presentation on the latest position with the Pension Dashboard Project. The Board also approved the 2024 annual report and noted the annual review of governance arrangements.

For more information, you can see the [full September meeting minutes on the BANES website](#).

5th December 2024

The Head of Audit & Assurance presented its audit findings for the year. The Board also received its annual benchmarking report comparing administration costs across all Funds. As part of the administration update the board received a final update on the Pensions Increase Project and were asked for comments regarding the Fund's recommendations to complete the GMP reconciliation exercise.

For more information, you can see the [full December meeting minutes on the BANES website](#).

4th March 2025

The Board received the results of the review of The Pension Regulator's General Code of Practice together with Fund's action plan to reach full compliance. Officers also presented the Fund's Change Programme and projects for the year ahead.

For more information, you can see the [full March meeting minutes on the BANES website](#).

3rd June 2025

The Board received a presentation showing the Fund's plan for digital improvements following the completion of its procurement exercise. The latest recruitment position was shared with most positions in the new structure, implemented in August 2024, now being filled. As part of the service update, the Board were presented with a plan to reduce the number of cases the Fund holds at undecided status.

For more information, you can see the [full June meetings minutes on the BANES website](#).

Forward Plan for 2025/26

The workplan for the next 12 months is detailed as follows and will be kept under regular review.

To be reviewed at all meetings:

- Workplan & Training Plan
- Risk register review
- TPR General Code of Practice compliance updates
- Administration review
- Fund and employers' compliance/TPR reporting

Other items to be reviewed at specified meetings:

Board Governance

- Terms of Reference (Governance) review – September
- Code of Conduct/Conflicts of Interest Policy – September
- Annual budget setting and monitoring – June
- Annual Report to Pensions Committee and Council approval – September

Scheme and Fund Governance

- Legal, policy and regulatory developments – December and June
- Annual Service Plan & Change Programme – June
- Fund Governance review – September
- Internal Audit plan/reports on APF - December
- External Audit Governance Report and Accounts – December

Funding/Investments

- Investment and Funding update – verbal update each meeting
- Update on Pooling changes - verbal update each meeting

Benefits, Administration and Communications

- Regulatory Breaches & breaches policy - December
- Data Breaches - December
- Annual Benefit Statement process (annual review) - December
- Administration performance benchmarking – December

Training Plan 2025/26

Training	Type of Training	Date
Local Government Association Fundamentals (for new members)	Seminar	Autumn 2025
Administration Strategy Review	Workshop	August 2025
Fit for Future & Good Governance Review	Workshop	Spring 2026
Cyber Security	Workshop	Spring 2026
Governance Conference	Conference	January 2026
Hymans Robertson LGPS Online Learning Academy	Online modules	2025/26

Costs and Budget

In meeting the requirements of the Public Sector Pension Act (2013) and establishing a Local Pensions Board, Bath and North East Somerset Council approved terms of reference and necessary supporting arrangements at its meeting of its full Council on the 15th January 2015.

The LPB agrees a budget on an annual basis to enable the Board to perform its duties and a summary of the costs is included below:

Budget Area	2024/25 Budget (£)	2024/25 Actual Spend (£)
Members allowances and expenses	8,102	8,895
Training	6,000	1,596
Recruitment	5,000	0
Meeting and Democratic Services costs	4,000	2,500
Total:	23,102	12,991

As with all elements of the public sector there is exceptional pressure to ensure value for money can be demonstrated and the Board will continue to consider this in its future operations.

Appendix 1 – Legal Basis of Local Pension Board

Specific Role and Purpose

The Public Sector Pension Act 2013 sets out the requirements for the establishment of a Local Pension Board with the responsibility for assisting the LGPS local scheme manager (BANES) in relation to the following:

- a) Securing compliance with the regulations, any other legislation relating to the governance and administration of the Scheme, and requirements imposed by the Pensions Regulator in relation and:
- b) To ensure the effective and efficient governance and administration of the Scheme.

The Board assists the ‘scheme manager’ by monitoring and advising on compliance with the pension scheme regulations, along with all other legislation and the requirements imposed by the Pensions Regulator to ensure the effective and efficient governance and administration of the scheme.

The role of the Board can be likened to that of a “critical friend” but is not a decision making body. It has an important advisory role for the APF and works with the Pensions Committee to scrutinise its decision making processes and to ensure the Fund’s compliance with all its legislative requirements.

The Pensions Regulator (TPR)

The Pension Regulator has responsibility for the LGPS. Therefore, one focus for the Board is ensuring the fund’s compliance with TPR Codes of Practice. This is split into several areas which covers governance, risk management and resolving issues.

The Board as part of their work plan has needed to consider these areas, to ensure the Fund is compliant and if not to make recommendations to the APF Committee to address these requirements.

Code of Conduct & Conflicts of Interest

All Board members have signed up to BANES Council’s Code of Conduct Policy, which emphasises that as a holder of public office there is an expectation that Board members will comply with the ‘seven principles of public life’, also known as the ‘Nolan Principles’.

All Board members have also signed up to the Fund’s Conflicts of Interest Policy. This requires all members to notify the Fund of any potential conflict of interest arising as a result of their position on the Board.

All meetings of the Board include a standing item titled ‘Declaration of Interests’ at the start of the meeting where any declaration in relation to the items on the agenda should be made.

All Board members have formally completed their declaration of interest forms. More information on conflicts of interest and declarations at each meeting can be found on the [BANES website](#).

Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference for the Pension Board can be found on the [BANES website](#).

Appendix 2 – Risk Management

Risk management processes for the Fund follow the framework laid down by the LGPS administering authority (BANES) as well as CIPFA guidance. The Fund's Risk Register identifies the significant risks that could have a material impact in terms of value, reputation, compliance or provision of service and sets out the mitigating action taken to manage down each risk.

The Register is reviewed regularly, and the key risks fall into one of the following categories:

- Failures in the fund administration and control of operational processes and strategic governance processes and TPR compliance
- Service delivery partners not delivering in line with their contracts or SLAs
- Financial loss due to payments in error, loss of assets due to investment strategy and/or managers failing to deliver required return, fraud or negligence of investment managers or custodian
- Changes to the LGPS nationally and increasing political pressure to reform the scheme structure, governance frameworks and to centrally direct investment decisions

The Pension Board's ongoing review of the risk register concurred with the Pension Committee that the top risks facing the fund revolve around:

- Service levels
- Loss of IT including Cyber security
- Move to a new asset pool
- Failure to manage personal data
- Failure to achieve decarbonisation targets
- Delivering the future funding and investment strategies
- Employers unable to meet financial obligations to the Fund

The Fund continues to invest significantly in systems and resources to ensure the risks are managed effectively and resilience is built into the service and the arrangements in place are supported by external and internal audit reviews.

The Board has actively engaged on the key risks facing the Fund and supports increases in resources to mitigate some of these risks as well as discussing issues around capacity, skills gaps and recruitment and retention.

The Board will continue to ensure that a review of the Fund's Risk Register will remain a regular agenda item at each meeting.

This page is intentionally left blank

Avon Pension Fund Committee Terms of Reference 2025

Appendix 1

(1) AVON PENSION FUND COMMITTEE	2
(2) INVESTMENT PANEL	4
(3) BRUNEL OVERSIGHT BOARD REPRESENTATIVE	5
(4) BRUNEL PENSION PARTNERSHIP WORKING GROUP	6
(5) OFFICER DELEGATIONS.....	7
(6) FUNDING AND RISK MANAGEMENT GROUP	9

(1) AVON PENSION FUND COMMITTEE

Committee Scope

Bath and North East Somerset Council, in its role as administering authority, has executive responsibility for the Avon Pension Fund. The Council delegates its responsibility for administering the Fund to the Avon Pension Fund Committee which is the formal decision-making body for the Fund.

The Avon Pension Fund is a member of the Brunel Pension Partnership (Brunel). Brunel Pension Partnership Ltd (BPP Ltd) who will be responsible for implementing the Fund's Investment Strategy. Most of the Fund's assets have transferred to portfolios offered by Brunel with only less liquid legacy assets remaining under direct management of the Fund. Once Avon's assets are held within a Brunel portfolio, the appointment, monitoring and deselection of managers will be the responsibility of BPP Ltd.

Functions and Duties

To discharge the responsibilities of Bath and North East Somerset Council in its role as lead authority for the administration of the Avon Pension Fund. These include determination of all Fund specific policies concerning the administration of the Fund, the investment strategy and the investing of Fund monies and the management of the Fund's solvency level. In addition, the Committee is responsible for all financial and regulatory aspects of the Fund. At all times, the Committee must discharge its responsibility in the best interest of the Avon Pension Fund.

The key duties in discharging this role are:

1. Having taken appropriate advice determining the following:
 - a. the investment strategy and strategic asset allocation
 - b. the administration strategy
 - c. the funding strategy.
2. Monitoring the performance of the investment strategy, scheme administration, and external advisors.
3. Ensuring that the investment strategy can be delivered by the portfolios offered by BPP Ltd. If not, agree alternative arrangements. In relation to Brunel Pension Partnership:
 - a. Monitoring the performance of BPP Ltd in delivering investment services to the Fund. Make representations to the Brunel Oversight Board on matters of concern regarding the service provided by BPP Ltd and the performance of its portfolios.
 - b. Monitoring the governance of Brunel Pension Partnership and making recommendations to the Brunel Oversight Board. Terminating the Service Agreement with BPP Ltd.
4. Approving and monitoring compliance of statutory statements and policies required under the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations.

5. Approving the annual budget and 3-year Service Plan and resource requirements to deliver the work plan.
6. Approving variances to budget within a financial year.
7. Approving the annual budget for the Pension Board subject to the approval of Pension Board's work plan.
8. Commissioning actuarial valuations in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations.
9. Making representations to government and responding to consultations as appropriate concerning any proposed changes to the Local Government Pension Scheme.
10. Nominating a representative (and named substitute) from the Committee to represent the Committee on the Oversight Board for Brunel Pension Partnership.

Delegations

In discharging its role, the Committee can delegate any of the above or implementation thereof to the Sub-Committee (referred to as the Investment Panel) or Officers. The current delegations are set out below.

Composition

Voting members (14)

- 5 elected members from B&NES (subject to the rules of political proportionality of the Council)
- 3 independent members
- 1 elected member nominated from each of Bristol City Council, North Somerset Council and South Gloucestershire Council
- 1 nominated from the Higher and Further education bodies
- 1 nominated from the Academy bodies
- 1 nominated by the trades unions

Non-voting members (3)

- 1 nominated from the Parish Councils
- Up to 2 nominated from different Trades Unions

The Council will nominate the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee. The Vice Chair will be the Chair of Investment Panel.

Meetings

Meetings will be held at least quarterly. Meetings will be held in public, though the public may be excluded from individual items of business in accordance with the usual exemption procedures.

Quorum

The quorum of the Committee shall be 5 voting members who shall include at least 1 member not from Bath and North East Somerset Council.

Substitution

Named substitutes to the Committee are allowed.

(2) INVESTMENT PANEL

Committee Scope

The role of the Avon Pension Fund Committee Investment Panel shall be to consider, in detail matters relating to the investment of the assets within the strategic investment framework and performance of investment managers in achieving the Fund's investment objectives.

Functions

The Investment Panel will:

1. Review strategic and emerging opportunities outside the strategic asset allocation and make recommendations to the Committee.
2. Review the performance of the investment and risk management strategies
3. Report matters of strategic importance to the Committee.

And have delegated authority for:

4. Monitoring the transition of assets to the Brunel portfolios and allocate assets to the relevant portfolio offered by Brunel
5. Approve and monitor tactical positions within strategic allocation ranges.
6. Approve allocations to emerging opportunities within the strategic allocations.
7. Approve commitments to Brunel's private market portfolios at each commitment cycle to maintain strategic allocations.
8. For the Risk Management Strategies monitor the outcome versus strategic objectives and consider whether any strategic changes are required to manage emerging risks.
9. For assets held outside Brunel:
 - a) Implement investment management arrangements in line with strategic policy.
 - b) Monitor investment managers' investment performance and make decision to terminate mandates on performance grounds.
10. Monitor the investment performance of the portfolios managed by BPP Ltd and report to Committee on investment matters with specific reference to strategy delivery.
11. Delegate specific decisions to Officers as appropriate.

Composition

The Panel shall comprise a maximum of 6 voting Members of the Avon Pension Fund Committee, of which 3 shall be Bath and North East Somerset Councillors (including the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee) and 3 will be the Independent Members.

Note: The appointment of Bath and North East Somerset Councillors to the Panel is subject to the rules of political proportionality of the Council.

Members shall be appointed to the Panel for a full 4-year Committee term.

The Council will nominate the Chair of the Panel.

Panel Meetings

Though called a “Panel”, it is an ordinary sub-committee of the Committee. Accordingly, meetings must be held in public, though the public may be excluded from individual items of business in accordance with the usual exemption procedures.

The Panel shall meet at least quarterly ahead of the Committee meeting on dates agreed by Members of the Panel.

Quorum

The quorum of the Panel shall comprise 3 Members, who shall include at least one Member who is not a Bath & North East Somerset Councillor.

Substitution

Substitutes for the Panel must be members of Committee or their named Committee substitute.

Minutes

Minutes of Panel meetings (whether or not approved by the Panel) shall appear as an item on the next agenda of the meeting of the Committee that follows a meeting of the Panel.

(3) BRUNEL OVERSIGHT BOARD REPRESENTATIVE

Committee Scope

Brunel Oversight Board (the Board) is the primary governance body within the Brunel Pension Partnership. Each Fund within the partnership has a representative on the Board and this representative represents the Committee when discharging its duties. The Fund’s representative will be the Committee Chairperson.

Functions

Acting for the administering authorities in their capacity as shareholders in BPP Ltd., the Board has responsibility for ensuring that BPP Ltd delivers the services required to achieve investment pooling across the Brunel Pension Partnership.

Subject to the terms of reference for the Board and the applicable shareholder documentation, the Board's role is to consider and address relevant matters on behalf of the administering authorities. These include the monitoring and strategic oversight functions necessary to its role, as well as acting as a conduit and focus of shareholder requirements and views.

Consistent with this role, the Board's duties include reviewing and discussing any matter which it considers appropriate in relation to BPP Ltd including BPP Ltd.'s services, performance, operations, governance, strategy, financing and management.

The main duties of the Board Representative are:

1. To represent the Committee and Shareholder on the Brunel Oversight Board.
2. To ensure that the Committee's views are communicated to the Board and BPP Ltd.
3. To ensure the Fund's and shareholder's interests are protected within Brunel in line with the legal framework within which Brunel operates.
4. To report back to the Committee and Shareholder all relevant issues discussed by the Board and recommendations to the Brunel Client Group and/or the Shareholders.
5. To seek the consensus view of the Committee for Shareholder and Board matters where necessary.
6. To raise issues with the Board at the request of Committee members, the shareholder representative or Head of Pensions.

(4) BRUNEL PENSION PARTNERSHIP WORKING GROUP

Committee Scope

This is a group of Committee members whose role is to consider in greater detail any issues arising from Brunel Pension Partnership with Officers, for example Reserve Matters, papers to be discussed at BOB. This will not include routine investment matters which are monitored by the Investment Panel.

Functions

With regard to any matters arising from Brunel Pension Partnership where the Avon Pension Fund have an interest:

- a) to consider each matter that will be brought to the Pension Committee and/or Shareholder representative for decisions in due course

- b) to provide guidance to the Pension Committee and/or Shareholder Representative in relation to each matter when they are being considered
- c) to provide guidance to the BOB representative as required
- d) to make recommendations to the Pension Committee regarding general oversight of the pool, as considered appropriate.

Composition

This group will consist of:

- a) the BOB Representative,
- b) named BOB substitute
- c) the Chair and/or Vice Chair if not the BOB representative /substitute
- d) an independent committee member.
- e) Head of Pensions
- f) Group Manager, Funding, Investments and Risk

Quorum

The Working Group shall be quorate if three members are in attendance, with at least 2 that are not fund officers. The Head of Pensions shall chair the Working Group.

Meeting Arrangements

The Working Group shall meet as and when required as determined by the Head of Pensions. Meetings may be via telephone conference.

Key discussions and action points from the Working Group will be recorded and the committee will be updated at the next committee meeting.

(5) OFFICER DELEGATIONS

In addition to the responsibilities listed in the Council's scheme of delegation, some additional responsibilities for functions specifically related to pension fund activities and the authorisation of transactions have been delegated to officers by the Pension Fund Committee. These are set out in the Fund's Scheme of Delegation and include the following:

1. Implementation and day to day monitoring of the administration, investment and funding strategies and related policies.
2. Implementing investments in emerging opportunities within strategic allocations, either to be managed outside Brunel or instruct allocation to Brunel portfolio.
3. Implementing investment management arrangements in line with the strategic policy as follows:

- a. For assets managed outside Brunel, this includes the setting of mandate parameters and the appointment of managers, in consultation with the Investment Panel.
 - b. For assets managed within Brunel, deciding and instructing the allocation to each Brunel portfolio.
4. Implement the strategic risk management objectives of the Fund and take necessary action to ensure delivery of strategic outcomes. Ongoing consideration of these issues will be undertaken by the Funding and Risk Management Group (see section 6) who will report decisions and ongoing considerations to the Investment Panel.
5. Rebalancing the investment assets to target strategic allocations, when deemed prudent to do so, taking account of tactical allocations approved by the Investment Panel.
6. Representing the Fund on the Brunel Client Group to develop Brunel investment strategies and policies which effectively support the interests of the Fund.
7. Commissioning Elective Services from BPP Ltd and issuing instructions as permitted by the Brunel Service Agreement to BPP Ltd.
8. The appointment of specialist advisors to support the Committee and Officers in discharging their functions.
9. Determining policies that support the investment and funding strategies having taken expert advice.
10. In consultation with the Chair of the Committee, the Head of Pensions will approve the draft Statement of Accounts and Annual Report for audit.
11. Authorising expenditure from the Fund in accordance with the annual budget.
12. Admitting new admitted bodies into the Fund subject to them meeting Fund policy.
13. The Director of Financial Services, Assurance and Pensions has authority to dismiss investment managers, advisors and 3rd party providers if urgent action is required (does not refer to performance failures but to their inability to fulfil their contractual obligations or a material failing of the company).
14. The Director of Financial Services, Assurance and Pensions has authority to suspend policy (in consultation with the Chairs of Committee and Panel) in times of extreme market volatility where protection of capital is paramount.
15. Under its wider delegated powers, the Director of Financial Services, Assurance and Pensions has delegated authority to effectively manage the liabilities of the Fund including the recovery of debt.
16. Exercising the discretions specified in the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations in connection with deciding entitlement to pension benefits or the award or distribution thereof.
17. Decisions regarding the Local Impact Portfolio Framework are delegated to The Head of Pensions in conjunction with the working group. The Working Group will consist of at least 3 Panel members including the Chair of the Panel and 1 independent member, plus the Head of Pensions, Group

Manager Investments and the Investments Manager. The formal decision is taken by the Head of Pensions as an Officer Decision Report via the democratic reporting processes within Bath and North East Somerset Council.

(6) FUNDING AND RISK MANAGEMENT GROUP

Committee Scope

The Funding and Risk Management Group (FRMG) is a group of Avon Pension Fund officers and specialist advisors whose role is to consider in greater detail all strategic and operational aspects of the Risk Management Strategies.

Functions

In addition, it has specific delegated authority as follows:

1. Agree the operational structures to meet the strategic objectives determined by the Avon Pension Committee
2. Make changes to the structures as needed to ensure strategic outcomes continue to be achieved or to manage emerging risk
3. Implement the strategies including
 - a. Counterparty selection
 - b. Trigger frameworks
 - c. Collateral arrangements
 - d. Setting benchmarks
4. Determine the framework for monitoring the strategies and reporting to Panel & Committee

Composition

The Group will consist of the following:

From the Avon Pension Fund:

- Head of Pensions
- Group Manager, Funding, Investments and Risk
- Investment Manager
- Senior Investments Officer
- Other Fund Officers as required (for example Funding Manager, Governance & Risk Advisor)

Advisors

- Investment Consultant or deputy
- Risk Consultant or deputy
- Scheme Actuary or deputy
- Investment Manager as required

Quorum

FRMG shall be quorate if the following are in attendance:

- 2 Pension Fund Officers one of which must be the Head of Pensions or Group Manager, Funding, Investments and Risk
- Risk Consultant or deputy
- Investment Consultant or Scheme Actuary

Meeting Arrangements

FRMG will meet as and when required as determined by the Head of Pensions/Group Manager, Funding, Investments and Risk, but at a minimum quarterly. Meetings will be virtual.

Meetings will be chaired by the Head of Pensions or Group Manager, Funding, Investments and Risk. Key discussion and action points will be recorded, and minutes will be circulated to the Investment Panel. The group will also update the Panel at the following meeting.

DRAFT to be Approved by Committee 27 June 2025

Bath & North East Somerset Council		
MEETING:	Council	
MEETING DATE:	20 th November 2025	AGENDA ITEM NUMBER
TITLE:	2024/25 Annual Report – Audit Committee	
WARD:	ALL	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report:		
Appendix 1 – Audit Committee Annual Report 2024/25		

1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 The Audit Committee has specific delegated powers given to it from Full Council and as such is required to report back annually on its work to Council under its existing Terms of Reference.
- 1.2 The Audit Committee 2024/25 Annual Report (Appendix 1) details the work carried out by the Committee for the period April 2023 to May 2024.

2 RECOMMENDATION

Council is asked to agree that:

- 2.1 The Annual Report of the Audit Committee is noted, and Council confirm that it has received ‘assurance’ that the Committee are fulfilling the responsibilities as stated in the Committee’s Terms of Reference.

3 THE REPORT

- 3.1 Appendix 1 details the report of the Audit Committee recording: the work carried out by the Committee over the period April 2024 to May 2025; the Committee’s future work plan and membership of the Committee.
- 3.2 The Committee meeting agendas have focussed on its core role and responsibilities as per the Committee’s existing Terms of Reference which can be found in the background papers.
- 3.3 The Chair of the Committee will present the key issues within the report at full Council.

4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 There are no specific statutory considerations related to this report. As stated in the issue section of this report the Audit Committee is required to report back to Council annually.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

5.1 There are no direct resource implications relevant to this report.

6 RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1 A proportionate risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision-making risk management guidance.

6.2 The Audit Committee has specific responsibility for ensuring the Council's Risk Management and Governance framework is robust and effective.

7 EQUALITIES

7.1 A proportionate equalities impact assessment has been carried out using corporate guidelines and no significant issues have been identified.

8 CLIMATE CHANGE

8.1 There are no direct climate change implications related to this report.

9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

9.1 This was a review against existing terms of reference of the Committee and CIPFA best practice there are no other practical options to consider related to this report.

10 CONSULTATION

10.1 The report was distributed to the Council's S151 Officer and Chair of the Audit Committee for consultation.

Contact person	<i>Jeff Wring – Director – Financial Services, Assurance & Pensions – jeff_wring@bathnes.gov.uk</i>
Background papers	<i>2024/25 Corporate Audit Committee Annual Report to Council – November 2024</i>
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	

Appendix 1

Audit Committee Annual Report to Council – 2024/25

1. Introduction

This report covers the work undertaken from May 2024 to end of April 2025. The purpose of this report is to comply with the Constitution that requires the Full Council to receive a report from the Audit Committee, detailing its activities and effectiveness for the year and the proposed work programme for the following year. The Committee's annual report is one of the means by which Council is assured that the Committee is carrying out its role effectively.

2. General Approach

The Audit Committee is committed to the principles of openness, effectiveness, and collaboration. The Committee is a key component of the Council's governance framework. Its function is to provide an independent and high-level resource to support good governance and strong public financial management. The purpose of the Committee is to provide to those charged with governance, independent assurance on the adequacy of the risk management framework, the internal control environment and the integrity of the financial reporting and governance processes. By overseeing both internal and external audit activity it makes an important contribution to ensuring that effective assurance arrangements are in place.

3. Review of Work Carried Out – May 2024 to end of April 2025

a. Financial Governance – Annual Accounts (Council & Pension Fund)

- i) At the Committee meeting on the 27th November 2024, the Group Accountant Financial Accounting & Corporate Finance gave a presentation on the revised draft accounts for 2023/24.
- ii) At the meeting on the 27th November 2024, representatives from Grant Thornton presented the Audit Findings Reports for the Council and the Avon Pension Fund. The high-level summary was an unqualified opinion. It was not possible to give certification as there had been an objection, although this would not have any material impact on the accounts. There were a small number of recommendations and adjustments. It was resolved:
 - 1) To note the issues contained within the Audit Findings Reports and addendum to the Auditor's Annual Report for the Council; and
 - 2) To approve the audited Statement of Accounts, including the Letters of Representation for both Bath & North East Somerset Council and the Avon Pension Fund (including revised opinion) for 2023/24.

b. Financial Governance - Annual Accounts (Council Owned Companies)

- i. In line with the Committee's Terms of Reference at the 27th November 2024 meeting the final approved and signed Aequus Developments Ltd (ADL), Aequus Construction Ltd (ACL) and Aequus Group Holding Limited (AGHL) Accounts for 2023/24 were reviewed. The meeting was attended by the Aequus Financial Controller and they presented the accounts and answered questions raised by Committee Members. It was resolved that that the audited accounts of ADL, ACL and AGHL had been reviewed in line with the Committee's Terms of Reference and the audited accounts of ADL, ACL & AGHL (Council wholly owned companies) be noted.

c. Financial Governance – Treasury Management

- i. The Committee acts as a scrutiny function for the Council's Treasury Management arrangements as recommended by CIPFA.
- ii. The Committee formally received reports on the outturn of performance for the year 2023/24 and a mid-year update on performance for 2024/25, plus the strategy statement for the year 2025/26.
- iii. The Treasury Management Performance Report 2023/24 was presented to the 25th September 2024 meeting of the Committee. The Committee noted the report.
- iv. A Treasury Management Performance Report to 30th September 2024 was presented to the meeting on the 27th November 2024.
- v. Committee Members reviewed the Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2025/26 on the 5th February 2025. This set out the external context, borrowing strategy, treasury investment strategy, treasury management prudential indicators, current position, borrowing requirement and interest rates forecasts. It was resolved to recommend the proposed actions within the Treasury Management Strategy Statement to the 25th February Council meeting; and to note the Treasury Management Indicators (detailed in the Appendix 1 of the Statement).

d. Financial Governance - External Audit

The External Auditors were in attendance at all four committee meetings during the period of this report and presented information as follows:

- i At the Committee meeting in September 2024, the External Auditors presented three reports. The External Audit Update reported on progress with the external audit and stated that by the November Corporate Audit Committee all work would be complete, and the final report would be submitted to that committee. Members were informed that there were currently no major findings.

The Audit Findings for the Avon Pension Fund and the Annual Audit Report were also presented. The Annual Audit Report was an interim report as the audit of the accounts had not yet been finalised and the report focussed on the Value for Money.

- ii. At the Committee meeting in November 2024, the External Auditors presented the Audit Findings Reports for Bath and North East Somerset Council and Audited Statement of Accounts for Council and Avon Pension Fund 2023/24.
- iii. The External Auditor also presented an Audit Progress Report and Sector Update in February 2025.
- iv. Finally, the External Audit plan for 2024/25 was presented to the Committee for information and endorsement in April 2025. The Committee endorsed the 2024/25 External Audit Plan for the Council & External Audit Plan for the Avon Pension Fund.

e. Corporate Governance (Including Risk Management) –

- i. The Accounts and Audit Regulations require the Council to carry out an annual review of its governance arrangements, and to produce an annual statement detailing the results of that review.
- ii. The results of the annual governance review for 2023/24 were included in the Council's Statement of Accounts presentation to the Committee on 27th November 2024. The Committee was advised of the inclusion of two 'significant issues':
 - 1) Financial Challenge – Service Demand and Cost Pressures
 - 2) Children's Services - Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) deficit and the Safety Valve Agreement
- iii. Also linked to the Annual Governance Statement, in May 2024, an updated Local Code of Corporate Governance that contained minor revisions was considered and adopted by the Committee.
- iv. During the year the Committee received updates on the Council's key risks from the Director of Financial Services, Assurance and Pensions (Interim Section 151 officer). The Committee also received the Risk Management Annual Update Report on 30th April 2025, which provided a summary of the risk management process and gave assurance on the risk management framework.
- v. The Committee received a risk management update covering the SEND Collaboration for B&NES (Safety Valve) from the Director of Children's Services & Education and the Executive Director for Operations in February 2025. This included an update on the Council's plans to manage the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) deficit position and progress being made in relation to the Safety Valve.
- vi. The Committee were provided with a presentation and update report on the Section 106 audit findings from the Council's Head of Planning and Building Control in April 2025. This included commentary on the progress since July 2024 on mitigating high-risk areas and delivering the remaining opportunity. The Head of Planning and Building Control was invited to provide an update to the November Committee and also a report to the May 2026 meeting in order for members to be able to track progress.

f. Corporate Assurance -

Internal Audit & Counter Fraud

- i. The Internal Audit Plan for 2024/25 was approved by Committee in May 2024. In-year Internal Audit updates covering the 2024/25 plan were then presented at the September 2024 and February 2025 meetings, which included updates on any internal audit reports that had a 'Level 2' opinion, i.e. any audit areas where controls where internal were considered to be weak. These updates also reported on Fraud Prevention activity and investigations/ unplanned work that had taken place.
- ii. The Audit and Assurance Annual Report 2024/25 was presented at the 30th April 2025 Committee meeting. The annual report included:
 - a) A conclusion that reasonable assurance could be provided over the council's systems of internal control, helping to ensure corporate priorities can be achieved.
 - b) A summary of the work that supported the annual opinion, including a description of audits that had a 'Level 2' opinion and a summary of position of work as at 31 March 2025.
 - c) Commentary on the progress of implementing recommendations made during the year.
 - d) A statement on conformance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.
- iii. A separate annual report on Counter Fraud activity was also presented. This report outlined the main counter fraud work that took place during the 2024/25 financial year, including updates on the National Fraud Initiative exercise. In addition, related Counter Fraud strategy and policies were also updated and approved by the Committee.
- iv. At the February meeting, members were also consulted on the Internal Audit Plan for 2025/26 and specifically asked for their input on any activity areas or themes that they would like considered for inclusion in the list of audit reviews to form the core work of the internal audit function. A draft Internal Audit Plan for 2025/26 was subsequently presented to the Committee in April 2025 for approval.
- v. In order to support members in their role of monitoring the effectiveness of the Council's system of internal control, including managing the authority's exposure to the risks of fraud and corruption, a Counter Fraud training workshop was delivered at the 1st May 2024 Audit Committee meeting. A report explaining Local Government fraud risks and the work that is carried out at B&NES to mitigate risks was provided to the committee and a presentation titled 'An introduction to Fraud and the role of Internal Audit' was delivered.

g. Awareness & Briefings

- i. Updates and briefings continue to be a part of the Committee's approach to raising awareness of key governance issues with members and several briefings were

given this year through the normal meeting cycle, as reported under the relevant headings in section 3a to 3e of this report.

- ii. In addition, during the year, a review of the effectiveness of the Audit Committee also took place. This was in line with CIPFA best practice and was led by the Head of Audit. The exercise resulted in proposed revisions to the terms of reference of the Committee, which were updated based on CIPFA requirements. The amended terms of reference was presented at the September 2024 committee meeting, with onward approval by Council in November 2024.

4. Audit Committee Work Plan for 2025/26

A work plan is prepared and presented at each meeting; this plans out the work of the Committee and links it to its terms of reference. Committee Members have the opportunity to comment and refine the workplan at each meeting

5. Membership and Support

- i. Councillor David Biddleston is the Chairperson of the Committee. The Vice Chair is Councillor Sam Ross, and the other members are Councillors Malcolm Treby, Toby Simon and George Tomlin. There is also one independent co-opted member, being John Barker.
- ii. The Committee is supported by a range of officers, notably the Director of Financial Services, Assurance & Pensions (S151 Officer), the Head of Financial Management and the Head of Audit and Assurance.
- iii. The external auditors are currently represented by an Engagement Lead and Audit Manager from Grant Thornton.

Appendix 2 – Audit Committee Draft Workplan 2025/26

Date of meeting	Report title	Requirement & Purpose (TOR)
<i>5th February 2025</i>	External Audit Progress Update	To Note – Oversight of work of External Audit
	Treasury Management Strategy - 2025/26 Consultation	To Recommend to Council/Cabinet – Oversight of Treasury Management (Financial Governance)
	Internal Audit Plan - 2025/26 Consultation	To Note – Oversight of work of Internal Audit
	Risk Management Update - DSG/Safety Valve	To Note – Update on Significant Issues & Risk Management Arrangements
	Annual Governance Statement	To Note – Update on Significant Issues
<i>30th April 2025</i>	External Audit Plan for Council & Avon Pension Fund - Y/E 2024/25	To Approve – Oversight of work of External Audit
	Accounting Policies Update – IFRS 16	To Review & Approve – Overview of Financial Management Governance
	Internal Audit - Annual Report – Y/E 2024/25	To Note – Oversight of work of Internal Audit
	Internal Audit - Annual Plan – Y/E 2025/26	To Approve – Oversight of work of Internal Audit
	Counter Fraud – Annual Report	To Note – Oversight of Counter-Fraud & Corruption arrangements
	S106 Update - Risk Management Update Report	To Note – Oversight of Risk Management arrangements
	Risk Management – Annual Update Report	To Note – Oversight of Risk Management arrangements
<i>24th September 2025</i>	External Audit – Update Report	To Note – Oversight of work of External Audit
	Y/E 2024/25 External Audit Annual Report (Including VFM Assessment Report)	To Note – Oversight of work of External Audit
	Audit Committee Annual Report & Review of Effectiveness 2024/25	To Approve & Recommend to Council – Report back to Council on delegation of responsibility
	Treasury Management Outturn Report – Y/E/ 2024/25	To Note – Oversight of Treasury Management (Financial Governance)
	Internal Audit Update Report - 2025/26	To Note – Oversight of work of Internal Audit
	Risk Management Update Report – Corporate Risk	To Note – Oversight of Risk Management Arrangements

<p><i>26th November 2025</i></p>	<p>Annual Accounts 2024/25 – Informal Briefing</p> <p>Y/E 2024/25 External Audit Findings & Accounts & Annual Governance Statement Approval</p> <p>ADL Accounts Y/E 2024/25 - Accounts Update</p> <p>Treasury Management 6 month update - 2025/26</p>	<p>To Note – Oversight of Financial Governance</p> <p>To Approve Accounts – Approve Accounts on behalf of Council</p> <p>To Note – Oversight of work of External Audit</p> <p>To Note – Financial Oversight of Council Owned Companies</p> <p>To Note – Oversight of Treasury Management (Financial Governance)</p>
<p><i>11th February 2026</i></p>	<p>External Audit Progress Update</p> <p>Treasury Management Strategy - 2026/27 Consultation</p> <p>Internal Audit Plan - 2026/27 Consultation</p> <p>Risk Management Update - DSG/Safety Valve</p> <p>Annual Governance Statement Update</p>	<p>To Note – Oversight of work of External Audit</p> <p>To Recommend to Council/Cabinet – Oversight of Treasury Management (Financial Governance)</p> <p>To Note – Oversight of work of Internal Audit</p> <p>To Note – Update on Significant Issues & Risk Management Arrangements</p> <p>To Note – Update on Significant Issues</p>

AUDIT COMMITTEE

1. Committee Scope

The Audit Committee is responsible for the Council's powers and duties relating to the annual accounts, audit plans, the Annual Governance Statement, risk management arrangements and the other key financial governance procedures.

2. Functions

1. To approve on behalf of the Council its Annual Accounts, as prepared in accordance with the statutory requirements and guidance.
2. To scrutinise the Treasury Management Strategy and policies, monitor proposed changes and receive treasury management update/ outturn reports to monitor compliance.
3. To review and note on behalf of the Council the audited accounts of Council owned companies, in accordance with Council company governance arrangements, statutory requirements and guidance.
4. To monitor the effectiveness of the Council's system of internal control, including arrangements for financial management, ensuring value for money, supporting standards and ethics and managing the authority's exposure to the risks of fraud and corruption. This includes periodically reviewing key financial governance rules / procedures including Financial Regulations, Contract Standing Orders, Anti-Fraud & Corruption Strategy and related policies.
5. To note the External Auditors' Audit Plan, monitor its delivery and effectiveness during the year, and support effective relationship with the external auditor and other review agencies.
6. To approve the Internal Audit Plan within the budget agreed by the Council and to monitor its delivery and effectiveness (including the implementation of audit recommendations).
7. To consider, prior to signature by the Leader of the Council and Chief Executive, the Annual Governance Statement (including the list of significant issues for action in the ensuing year), as prepared in accordance with the statutory requirements and guidance; and to monitor progress on the significant issues and actions identified in the Statement.
8. To review periodically the Council's risk management arrangements, make recommendations and monitor progress on improvements.
9. To consider the Auditor's Annual Report from the External Auditor and to monitor progress on accepted recommendations.
10. To monitor and promote good corporate governance within the Council and in its dealings with partner bodies and contractors, including review of the Council's Local Code of Corporate Governance and in any such other ways as the Committee may consider expedient (within the budget agreed by the Council).

11. To consider and make recommendations of any other matters relating to corporate governance which are properly referred to the Committee or which come to its attention, e.g. the procurement of External Audit Services, monitoring the governance of Council owned companies.
12. To discharge its responsibilities, the Committee and individual members of the Committee can meet privately and separately with the external auditor and / or Chief Audit Executive and have the right to call on any other officer.
13. To make an annual report to Council on the work [and findings] of the Committee, including (if necessary) any measures necessary to improve the effectiveness of the Committee.

In all the above, the Committee will, as appropriate, wish to develop effective liaison with the following:

- a) the Standards Committee of the Council with regard to matters of ethical governance.
- b) the relevant Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel(s) - to complement but not to duplicate the exercise of their legitimate role in checking compliance with Council processes and policies and in reviewing policies and practice.
- c) relevant Cabinet Members, in particular the Leader and the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Resources, whose portfolios include executive functions related to the matters covered by these terms of reference.
- d) the Council when developing the Council's Code of Corporate Governance.

3. Composition

The size of the Panel will be determined by Council. Appointments will be made having regard to rules on political proportionality – as set out in the [proportionality table](#). There will also be a minimum of one independent non-voting co-opted member.

4. Quorum

One quarter of the membership or 3 Councillor/ voting Members of the Committee whichever is greater.

5. Substitution

Substitute Members are permitted in line with [Council Procedure Rule 3.1.4](#).

This page is intentionally left blank

Bath and North East Somerset Council

Full Council meeting 20th November 2025

Green party group Motion on AI

To be proposed by Cllr Joanna Wright

This Council Notes that:

1. The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is increasing rapidly, bringing both benefits and risks.
2. Data farm capacity is expanding rapidly, partly due to the growing use of AI in the UK and worldwide.
 - a. The UK is already the third-largest host for data centres, behind the US and Germany.¹
3. The government has designated data centres as critical national infrastructure, recognising their importance to the UK's economic future. However, there are concerns about their impact, including the potential knock-on effect on household energy bills.²
4. There are growing concerns about the environmental impact of these large facilities. Many data centres require substantial water usage for cooling, yet most operators do not disclose their water consumption data.³
5. There are concerns that the use of AI may erode human cognition over time.⁴
6. Local councils across the UK are trialling AI tools aimed at streamlining tasks in the planning process and social care, including note-taking.⁵
7. The Department for Science, Innovation and Technology stated the technology could accelerate post committee meeting tasks, allowing officers to focus on the task at hand rather than paperwork. Early trials in central government show that officials saved on average, one hour of admin per one-hour meeting.⁶
8. Bath and North East Somerset has introduced the following AI:⁷

¹ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/clyr9nx0jrzo>

² Ibid

³ Ibid

⁴ <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC12255134/>

⁵ <https://www.localgovernmentlawyer.co.uk/governance/396-governance-news/61064-councils-to-use-ai-for-preparing-meeting-minutes-as-part-of-government-trial>

⁶ <https://www.localgovernmentlawyer.co.uk/governance/396-governance-news/61064-councils-to-use-ai-for-preparing-meeting-minutes-as-part-of-government-trial>

- Unless where specifically set out in the statute, motions approved at Council do not bind the Executive (Cabinet) but may influence their future decisions.
- Councillors are reminded of their public sector equality duty which requires the Council to consider or think about how their policies or decisions may affect people who are protected under the Equality Act.

- a. Microsoft Copilot: To assist in various administrative functions, speeding up repetitive or time-consuming manual tasks.
 - b. Magicnotes: Utilised specifically within social care, Magicnotes aids in transcribing and then producing high-quality summaries of a wide range of meeting types.
 - c. Zoom: Used for telephony and supporting our contact centre teams. It includes call transcription capabilities that use AI to help summarise calls for staff.
9. Bath and North East Somerset allocated £65,000 in the 2025/2026 budget for Artificial Intelligence (AI) investment aimed at improving resident facing services.⁸
10. The Digital Strategy 2023 states that the council will use data and intelligence to inform transparent decision making, including a defined and applied framework for the ethical and secure use of data, including leveraging new data technologies such as AI.⁹
11. Bath and North East Somerset assures that no personal data is used solely by the AI technology provider to improve their AI products and all data is stored and processed in either the UK or EU;¹⁰
12. AI tools are not employed in the decision-making process and all decision making is made by Council officers;¹¹
13. AI-produced content undergoes review by a Council officer before being used further.¹²

This Council Resolves to:

1. To consult on and develop an AI Ethics Policy and request Cabinet to agree to resource this with a view to subsequent Council approval of the Policy and its publication.
2. The Policy to include as a minimum the following:
 - a) Recognition that AI is already being used by Bath and North East Somerset in various ways and its use is increasing which brings both benefits and risks; and

⁷ <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/use-ai-technologies>

⁸ <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/budget-consultation-2025-2026>

⁹ <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/digital-strategy>

¹⁰ <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/use-ai-technologies>

¹¹ Ibid

¹² Ibid

- *Unless where specifically set out in the statute, motions approved at Council do not bind the Executive (Cabinet) but may influence their future decisions.*
- *Councillors are reminded of their public sector equality duty which requires the Council to consider or think about how their policies or decisions may affect people who are protected under the Equality Act.*

- b) Note there are concerns about the data accessed by AI, and how it affects interaction with residents.
- c) Acknowledgement of the energy use and wider environmental footprint associated with AI is significant, and increasing; and
- d) Consideration and assessment of the energy use and environmental impact associated with the use of AI as part of any future deployment or procurement process.
- e) Transparency about when AI is used; and
- f) To publish guidelines on where use of AI might be limited.
- g) Consideration the impact of AI on job satisfaction and cognitive skills, with regular reviews.

- *Unless where specifically set out in the statute, motions approved at Council do not bind the Executive (Cabinet) but may influence their future decisions.*
- *Councillors are reminded of their public sector equality duty which requires the Council to consider or think about how their policies or decisions may affect people who are protected under the Equality Act.*

This page is intentionally left blank

Bath and North East Somerset Council

Full Council meeting 20 November 2025

Motion from Independents for B&NES Group: Sustaining and Supporting Community Libraries in Bath & North East Somerset

Proposer: Cllr Karen Walker

Seconded:

This Council notes:

- Bath & North East Somerset currently has **eleven community-run libraries** which provide vital access to books, information, digital services, and provide safe, inclusive spaces for residents. Providing warm spaces, the libraries serve a dual purpose, building on a previous Council commitment. ⁽¹⁾
- These community libraries are primarily managed by volunteers and local organisations, with limited funding and resources.
- Initial “invest to save” support was provided by B&NES to establish community libraries, but **no long-term dedicated funding stream** is in place for their sustainability. ⁽²⁾
- Community libraries align with the Council’s corporate priorities and ethical values by reducing inequalities, improving wellbeing, enhancing climate action (by promoting local hubs and reducing travel), and giving residents a stronger voice.
- Comparable councils across the country have provided small annual grants or partnership funds to sustain community library networks. ⁽³⁾

This Council recognises:

- Community libraries are a vital part of the universal library service in B&NES and should be supported as partners, not left at risk of closure due to unstable funding.
- Modest, ongoing investment from the Council can safeguard these libraries’ future, protect volunteer efforts, and ensure equal access to library services across the district.
- Providing a putative **£6,000 to each of the eleven community libraries (a total of £66,000)** would represent a small cost when contrasted with the **£2.885 million Customer Services (including central libraries) budget** but would deliver significant value in protecting and sustaining local services. ⁽⁴⁾
- Securing the sustainability of community libraries strengthens neighbourhood resilience, supports learning, reduces digital exclusion, and provides preventative health and wellbeing benefits.

- *Unless where specifically set out in the statute, motions approved at Council do not bind the Executive (Cabinet) but may influence their future decisions.*
- *Councillors are reminded of their public sector equality duty which requires the Council to consider or think about how their policies or decisions may affect people who are protected under the Equality Act.*

This Council therefore agrees:

1. To recognise community libraries as a valued and integral part of the Bath & North East Somerset library network.
2. To commit to exploring options for **future dedicated financial support**, including (but not limited to):
 - a. a suggested annual grant of £6,000 per community library.
 - b. a shared “Community Library Sustainability Fund” accessible through fair criteria.
 - c. using a proportion of local grant streams to support community libraries’ core functions, *whilst ensuring that the existing provision for the three central libraries is maintained.*
3. To ask that Cabinet brings forward proposals in the **2026/27 budget** for sustainable financial support to the network of eleven community libraries.
4. To ask officers to work with community library groups to identify additional external funding sources (for example the Arts Council Libraries Improvement Fund, Library On, and the National Lottery Community Fund) and provide coordination and support to maximise the opportunities.
5. To receive an annual report on the health and sustainability of community libraries across B&NES, ensuring transparency and accountability.

References.

- (1) <https://democracy.bathnes.gov.uk/documents/b17597/Updated%20Motion%20and%20Amendment%2017th-Nov-2022%2018.30%20Council.pdf?T=9>
- (2) <http://vm-civ-mgov/documents/s48420/Minutes%20of%20Previous%20Meeting.pdf>
- (3) <https://www.devon.gov.uk/communities/community-library-support-fund/>
<https://www.gov.uk/government/case-studies/community-libraries-in-buckinghamshire#>
- (4) <https://intranet.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Budget%20Book%2025-26%20by%20Portfolio.xlsx>

- *Unless where specifically set out in the statute, motions approved at Council do not bind the Executive (Cabinet) but may influence their future decisions.*
- *Councillors are reminded of their public sector equality duty which requires the Council to consider or think about how their policies or decisions may affect people who are protected under the Equality Act.*

Bath and North East Somerset Council

Full Council meeting 20 November 2025

Liberal Democrat Motion on Stop Profiteering from Service Provision for Children

To be proposed by Councillor Paul May

Council notes:

1. In December 2024 the Government introduced the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill, with an overall aim to better protect children and raise standards in education.
 2. The Government also announced £740 million in new funding to support pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and those needing alternative education within mainstream schools. Inclusion remains their overarching policy, so that our children and young people are educated together with their peers in their own community, where appropriate.
 3. The SEND system is under severe strain, with some families struggling to secure vital support for their children which is compounded by some schools and councils struggling to provide the necessary support. Council recognises the role of campaigning organisations, including SEND Sanctuary UK and Let Us Learn Too, to highlight the impact of inadequate funding on staffing and delays to provision.
 4. The Council's budget for children's service provision, particularly for those children in the care of the local authority, is under considerable strain. Residential provision and foster care services are increasingly costly due to for-profit operators.
 5. Children with SEND and those who are in care deserve the same opportunities as every child, including access to the support they need to thrive both in school and in later life.
 6. Research commissioned by the Liberal Democratsⁱ has revealed that private equity-backed SEND providers are making combined profits of over £100m a year, with some achieving margins of over 20%.
 7. Many of these companies are backed by firms registered in tax havens or foreign sovereign wealth funds.
 8. The Government has taken some action to curb profiteering, but more is needed. Through the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill, government has introduced powers to cap the profits of providers of illegal or exploitative children's homes, alongside enhancing financial transparency and greater enforcement by Ofsted.
- *Unless where specifically set out in the statute, motions approved at Council do not bind the Executive (Cabinet) but may influence their future decisions.*
 - *Councillors are reminded of their public sector equality duty which requires the Council to consider or think about how their policies or decisions may affect people who are protected under the Equality Act.*

9. The forthcoming Government review of the SEND and Alternative Provision system, which has been delayed until next year, would be an opportunity to propose action against excessive profits by SEND providers.
10. The proactive work of hard-working officers in Bath and North East Somerset Council to improve our SEND and social care services, which is commended.

Council believes that:

11. Making excessive profits from the needs of children is unacceptable and must end. Children are not commodities for profit and should never be treated as such. In principle, Council believes that social enterprises are the ideal model for SEND and children's social care service providers.
12. Resources must be directed into improving provision, staffing and outcomes for children, not into shareholder dividends or inflated executive pay.
13. Local authorities and schools should be supported to provide sustainable, high-quality, inclusive educational and residential provision within both their mainstream and specialist settings, including by establishing more cost-effective local provision.

Council resolves to:

14. Call on the Government to take action to cap the profits of private providers of services for vulnerable children, including sanctions against providers who breach this, with any profits returned to local authorities.
15. Support further reforms to boost the SEND and social care system, including strong financial oversight of providers, transparency, and new powers and funding for councils to build and manage local mainstream and specialist provision directly and to prioritise non-profit-making organisations in commissioning.
16. Endorse the principle that Government reforms must put children and their families first.
17. Request the Leader of the Council to write to the Secretary of State for Education on this matter.

ⁱ House of Commons Library research provided to Liberal Democrat MPs and published here:

<https://www.libdems.org.uk/press/release/lib-dems-demand-cap-on-send-providers-profits-as-top-firms-rake-in-pound100m>

- *Unless where specifically set out in the statute, motions approved at Council do not bind the Executive (Cabinet) but may influence their future decisions.*
- *Councillors are reminded of their public sector equality duty which requires the Council to consider or think about how their policies or decisions may affect people who are protected under the Equality Act.*