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

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

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.

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.

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.

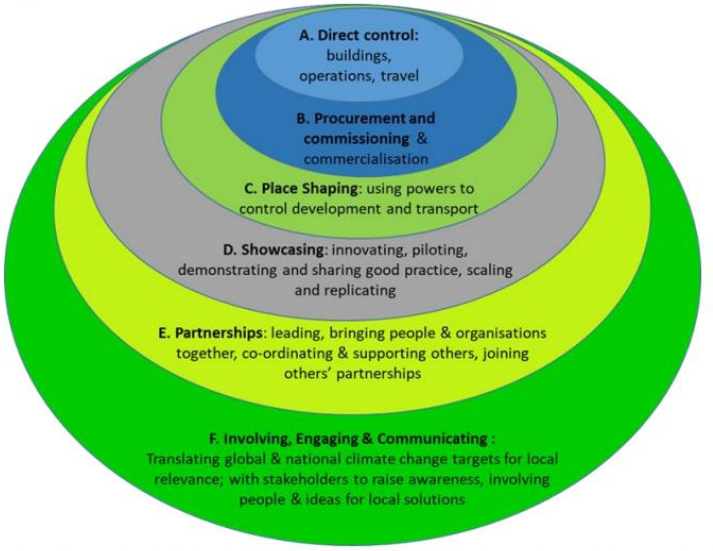
Our principles for delivery of these priorities include working in partnership, providing leadership, including in place shaping, and enabling community action.

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

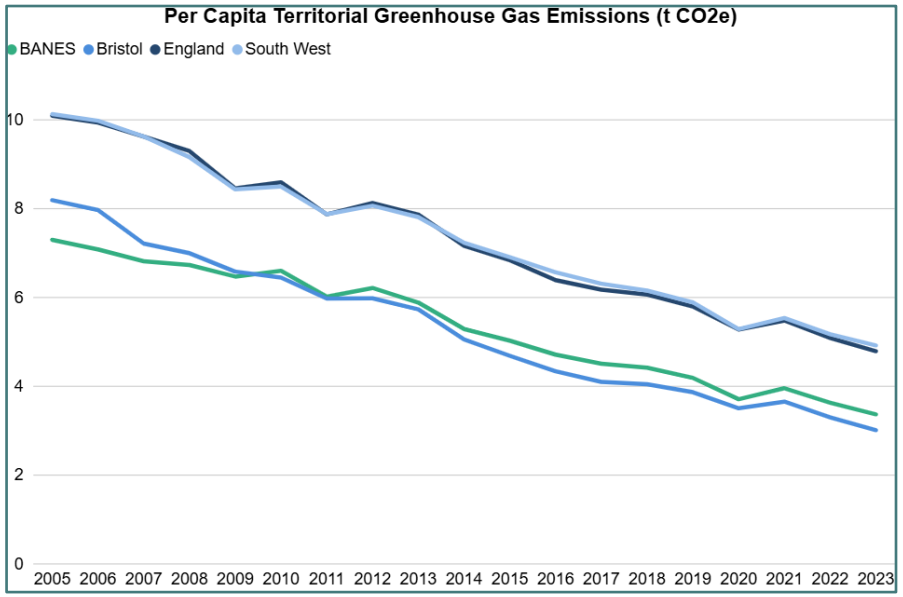


Source: Coxcoon, R. & Roberts, S. (2020) *Climate Action Planning Tool for Local Authorities, Centre for Sustainable Energy. https://www.cse.org.uk/news/view/2541*

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 3.4tC02e 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.

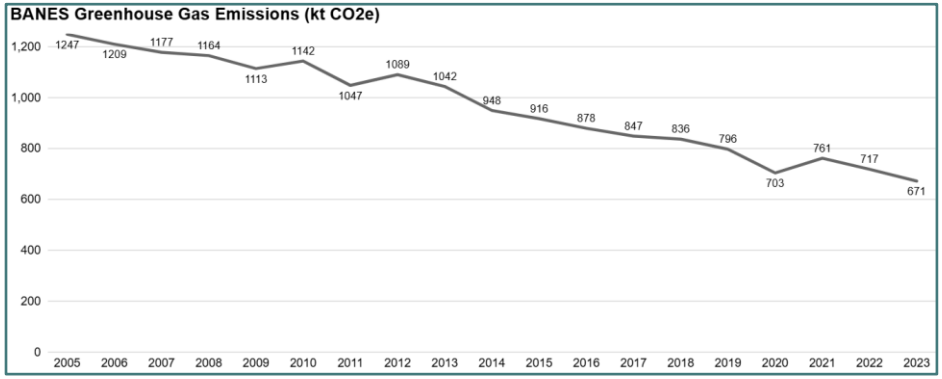
This year, as set out in this progress update, we have secured investment to significantly reduce emissions in two of the highest emissions areas of our own estate – our fleet and more of our own buildings. However, further progress may be restricted as the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund that we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

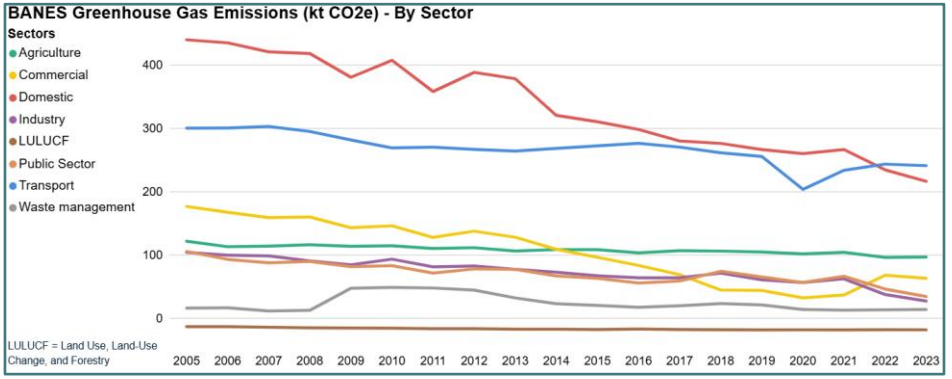
Alongside our own emissions reductions, we also work in partnership to support emissions reductions across the whole of the BANES area. This year we gained agreement from our Future Ambition Board to convene and work with civic partners more closely. We were also successful in a partnership bid from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





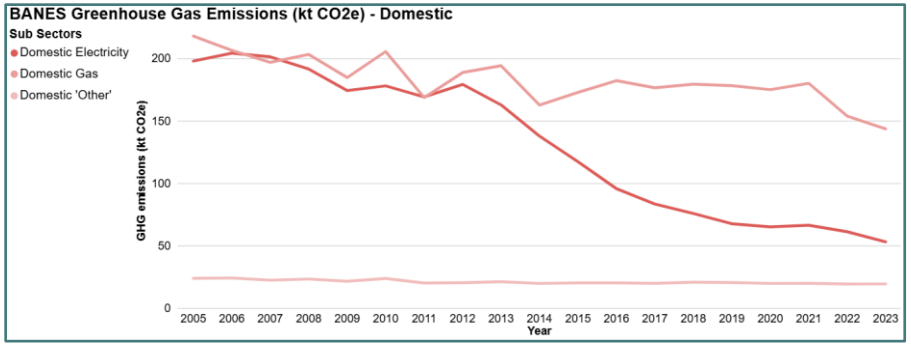
Between 2005 and 2023, greenhouse gas emissions for the district fell by 46%. The 2022 to 2023 drop of 46 ktCO2e was driven by decreases in domestic emissions, public sector, industry and commercial sector emissions. While this annual decrease continues the downward trend in our area's emissions reduction, 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.

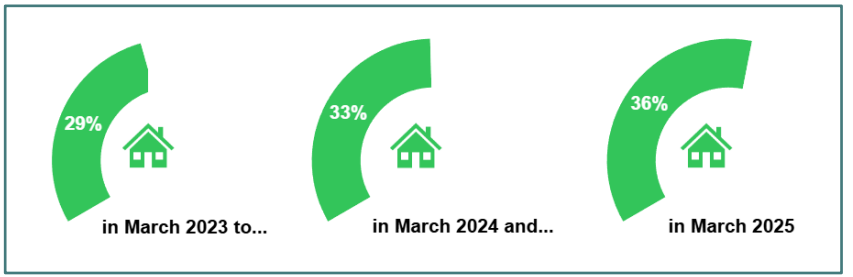
Highlights: Decarbonising Buildings

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[7]. 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[7].



- 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 though 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.

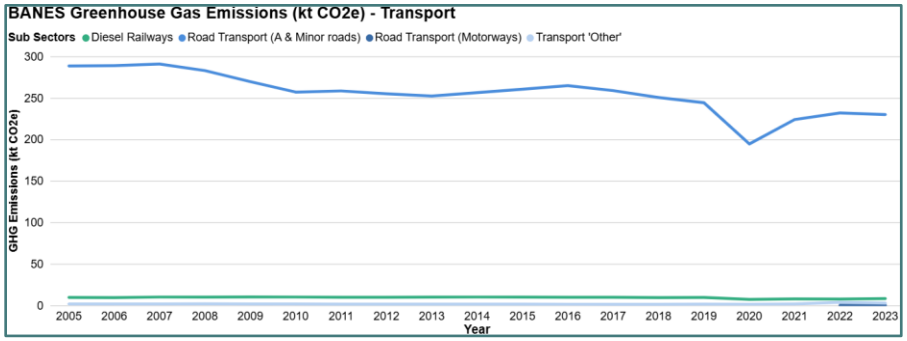
As of April 2025, Green Heritage Homes has been renewed for 'Phase II' over three years, funded by Historic England, WECA, and Curo Group. B&NES will work with energy experts from BWCE.

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

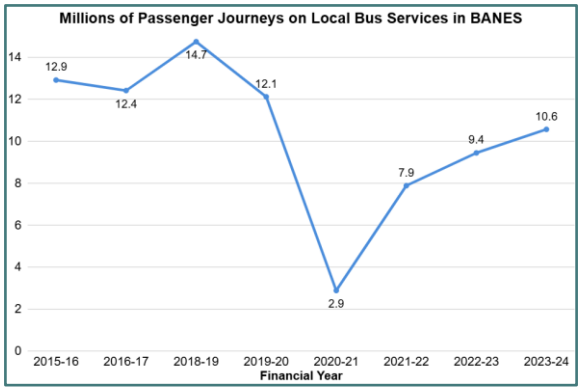
Decarbonising transport remains one of our biggest challenges, in part due to the rural-urban nature of our district and the combination of changes needed to policy, behaviour and technology. We focus on creating an environment that makes it easier to travel by public transport or active travel, including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

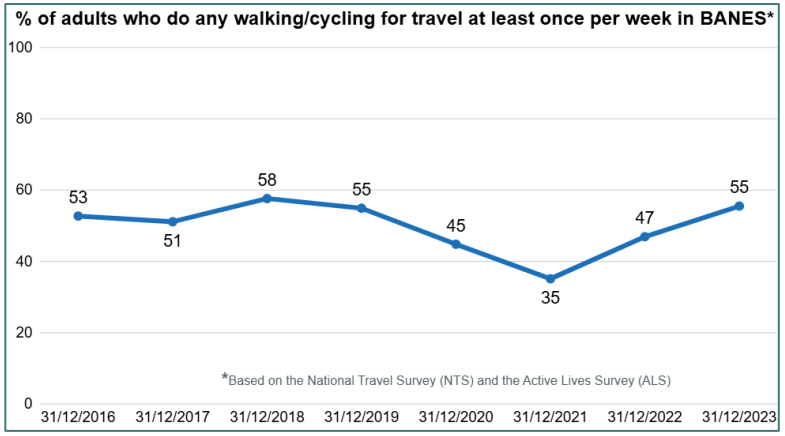
- At the time of report publication, the Council will be consulting on a new Movement Strategy for the Bath area, in line with *Creating Sustainable Communities: Journey to Net Zero*, published in in February 2025 and focused on Keynsham and Saltford, Hicks Gate, the Somer Valley, and Whitchurch Village. 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.



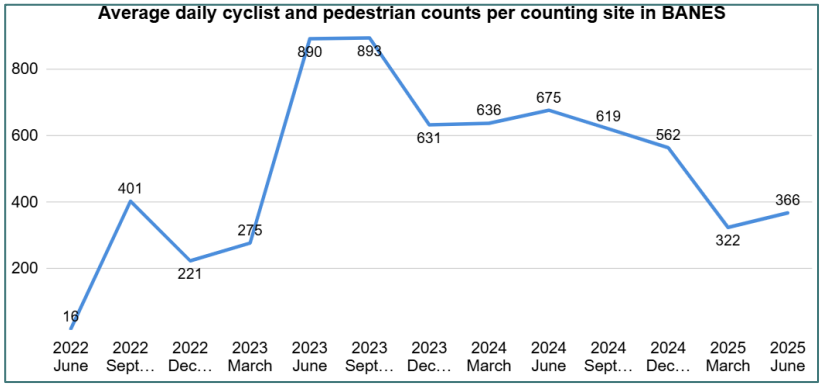
- Activities to increase bus use and improve service quality include fares and access, service support and infrastructure investment:
  - National £3 adult single fare cap in place until March 2027 and £1 child fare cap for under-16s. WECA, with support from B&NES, is investing to keep most single journeys 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.

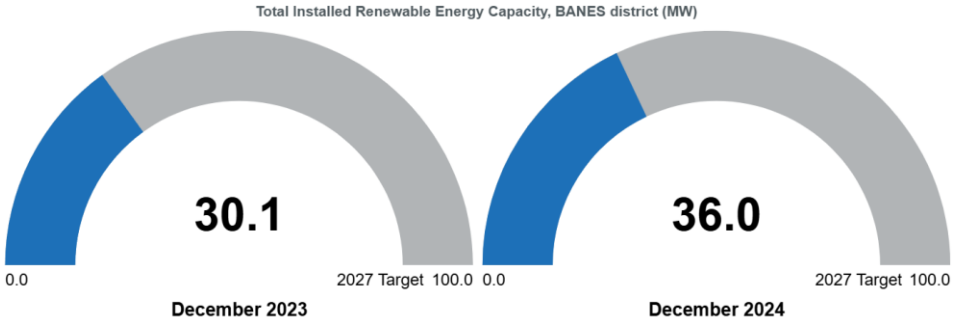
Highlights: Increasing Renewable Energy Generation

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.

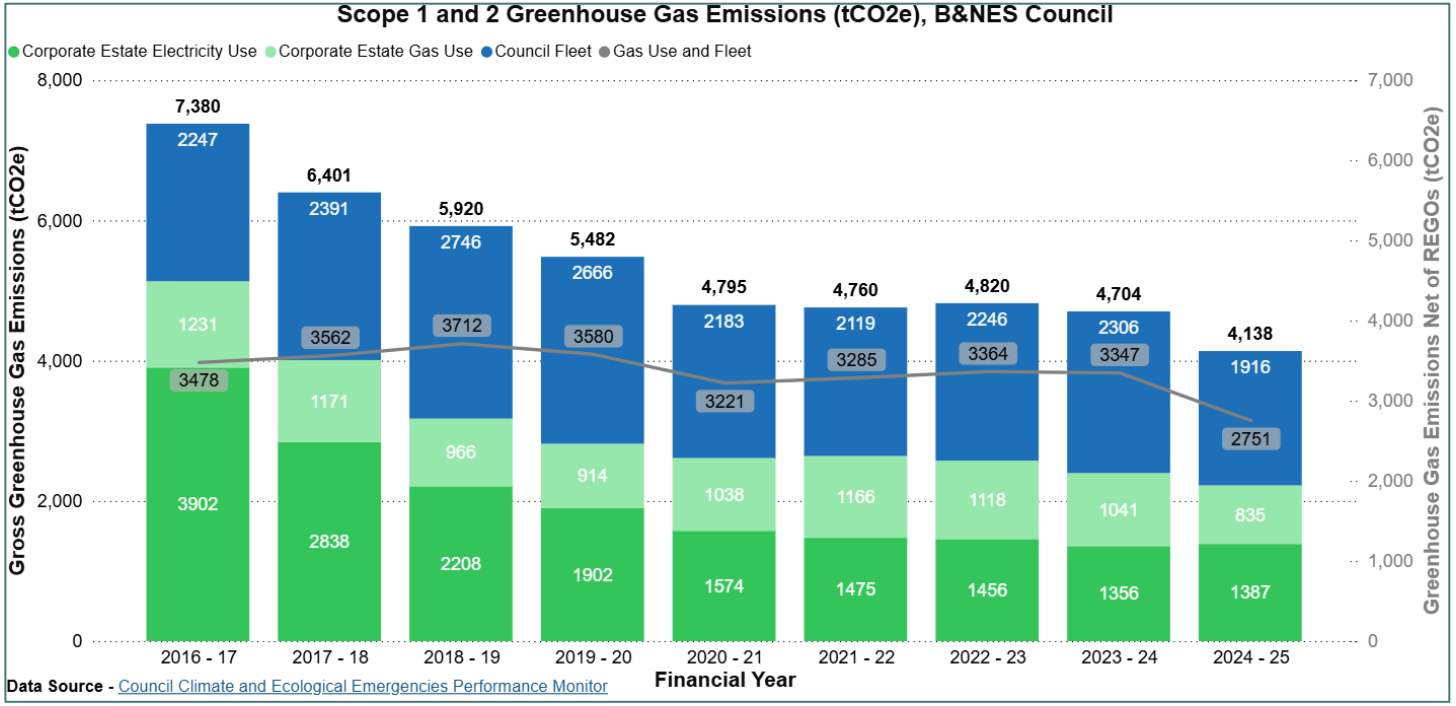
This means that not only would the communities make decisions collectively on the projects, but they would also receive financial benefits that would go directly back into the community.

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

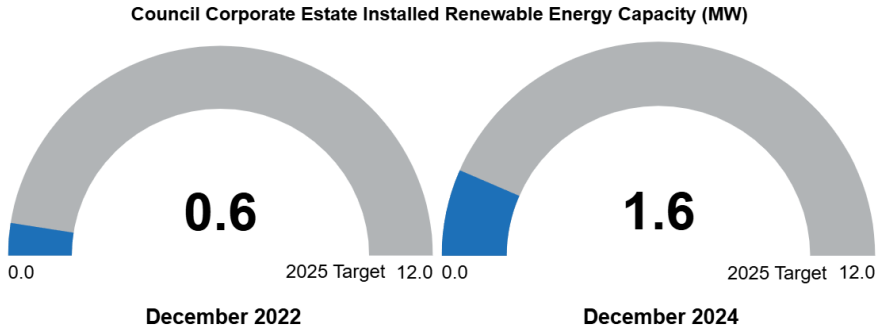
Highlights: Decarbonising Council Operations

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 CO_2, 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

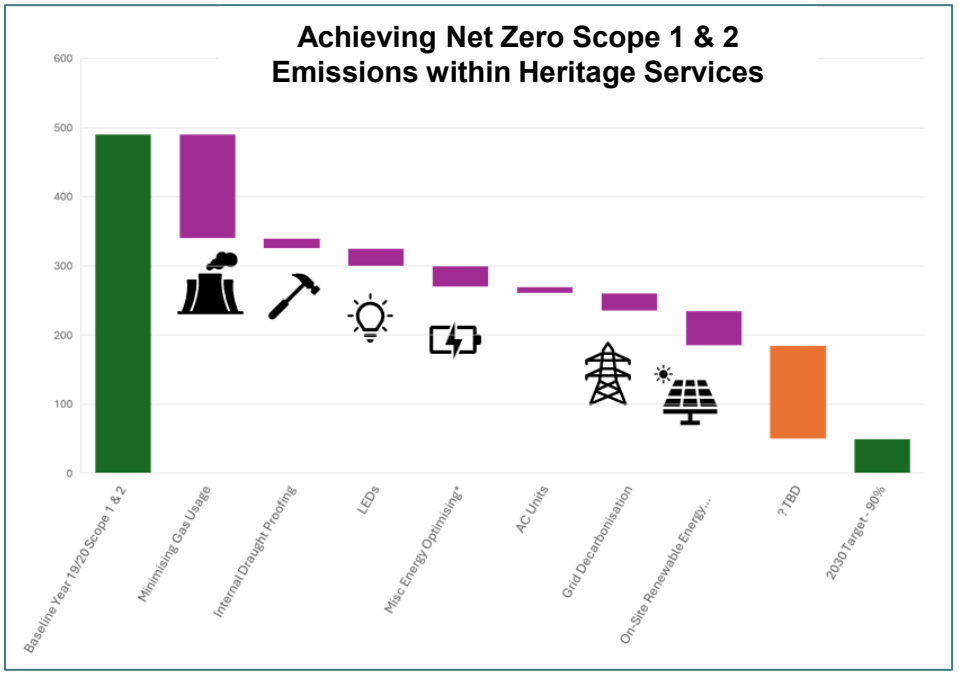
Key Progress in 2024/25

- 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

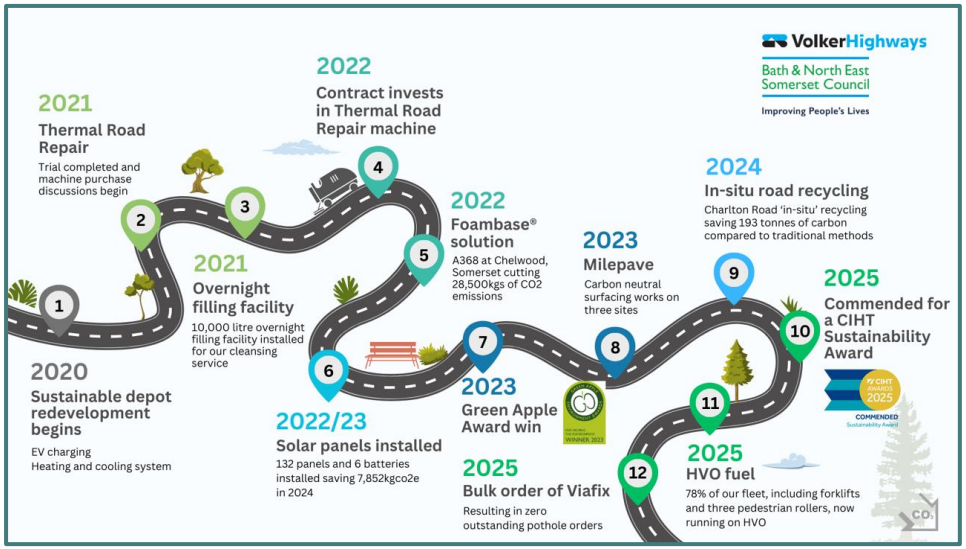
Scope 3 emissions are those that are produced indirectly by activities outside an organisation's own operations. For the Council, this includes emissions associated with our procurement of goods and services, outsourced contracts, the buildings we own but do not occupy, and our corporate travel.

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.

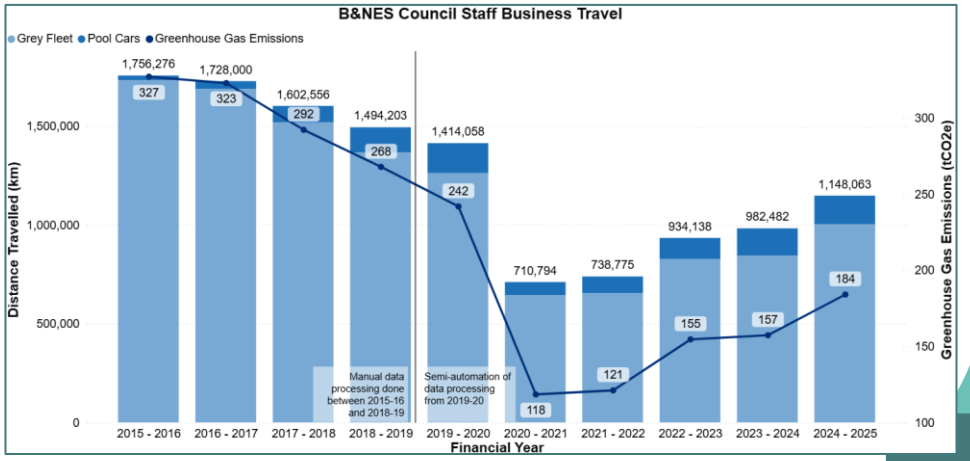
Rooftop solar PV with a maximum generation capacity of 90 kWp was installed in early 2025 using the Swimming Pool Support Fund grant administered by Sport England, that was won in 2024.

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.

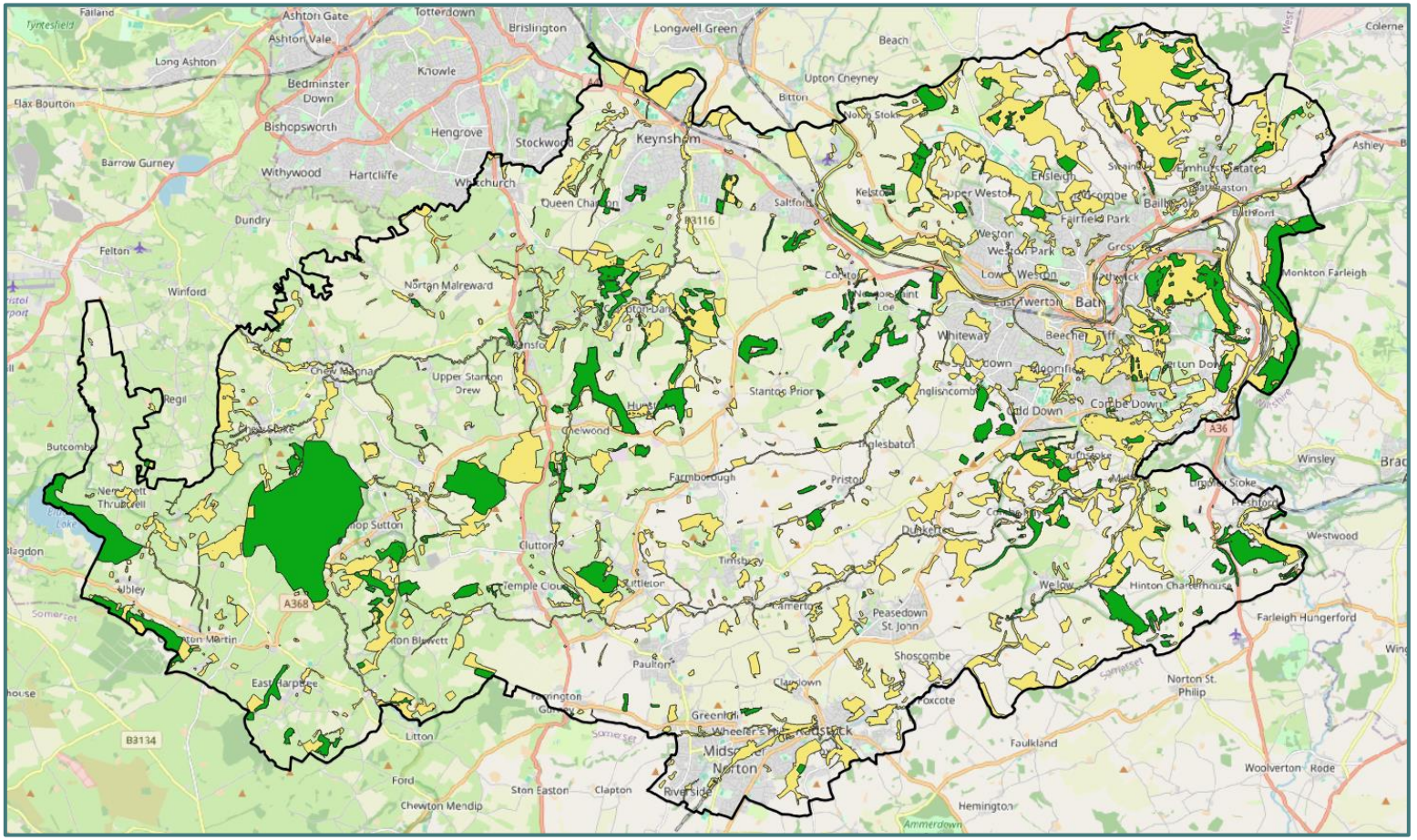
We look forward to continuing our work to help restore nature across the district and to bring people closer to the natural environment.

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.

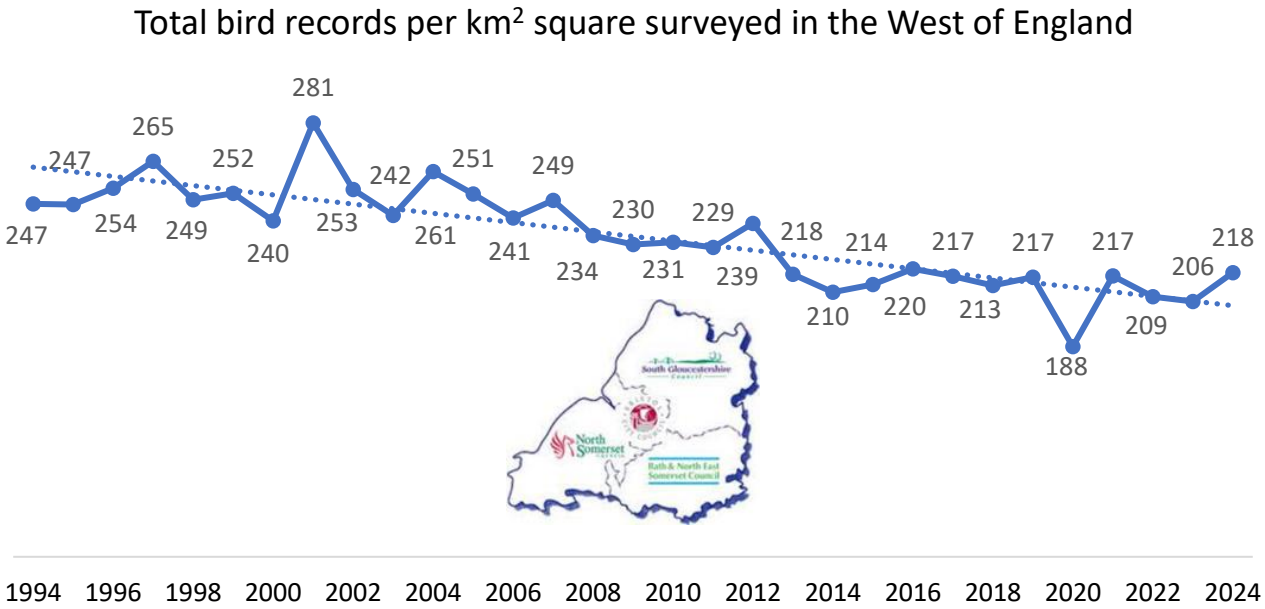


The West of England Nature Partnership has mapped the land managed for nature across the region. The map above shows the land that we are confident is already managed for nature in BANES in green, and land that may be being managed for nature in yellow. We are confident that 6.17% of land in BANES is 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.



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 to ensure that developments include sufficient green infrastructure, such as street trees, green walls, sufficient local green space and allotments. This will ensure developments are better for residents, resilient to climate change, and support nature recovery.
- 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 green spaces.

- 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 project has continued to engage thousands of local people through a variety of events including forest bathing, park yoga, and nature walks, as well as achieving over 3,000 volunteering hours. 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 farmer clusters for the Chew, Cam and Wellow catchments. The Cluster is now active and distributing grants to farmers and landowners for activities 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 and the Chew Valley Reconnected Partnership. The Chew Valley Reconnected Partnership has recently appointed its first Chair and is now aiming to develop partnership proposals to deliver nature recovery across the catchment.

- We have contributed funding to Your Parks 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/

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Abbreviations

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

Abbreviations - Continued

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

CO_2e – 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 CO_2 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.

Sources: Local Government Association, Office for National Statistics

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:

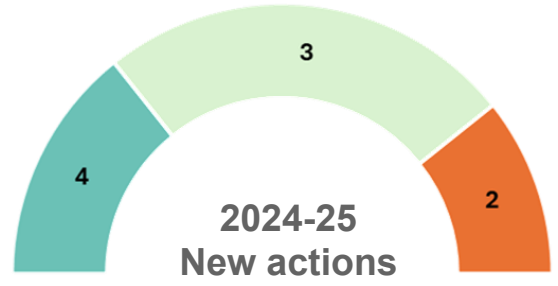
- 29 actions are tracked, split between the 2019 Strategy (15 actions) and new actions set in 2023-24 (14 actions). The 14 new actions set in 2023-24, are reported on for first time in 2024-25.

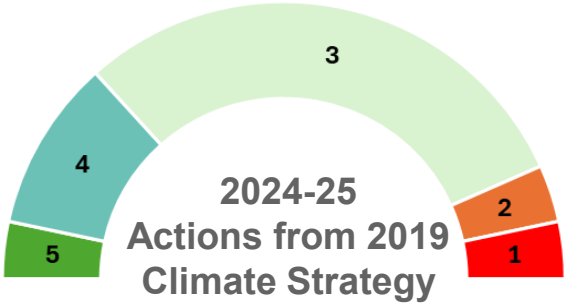
- 26 actions have either progressed their score or remained as ongoing work since 2023-24.

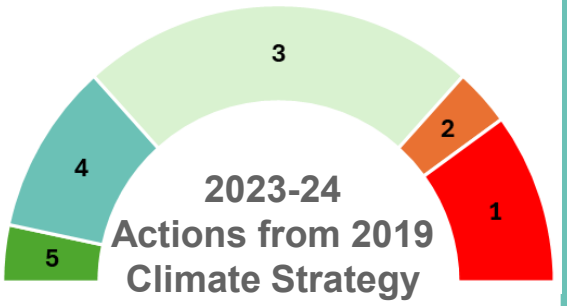
- Of the original 2019 Strategy actions, 10 actions score 3 and 4 and are ongoing works this year where progression to the next score is not yet expected.

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

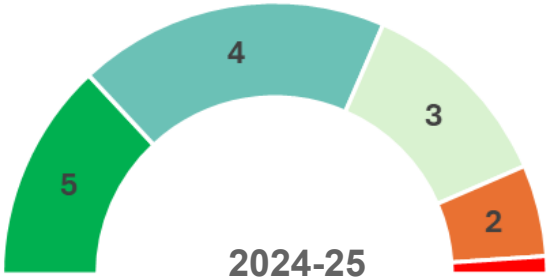
Summary

- 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

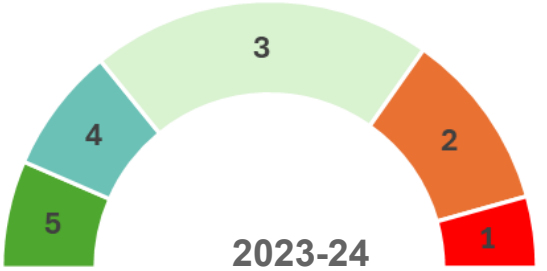
Ecological Emergency – Progress on Actions

Size of wedge indicates number of actions at each score

Number in each wedge is the score represented



2024-25
Actions from 2020 Ecological Emergency Action Plan



2023-24
Actions from 2020 Ecological Emergency Action Plan

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