Regional Baseline Analysis: Climate Change Partnerships

Report information

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About Sustainability West Midlands

Sustainability West Midlands (SWM) was established in 2002 as an independent, not-for-profit company and is the sustainability adviser for the leaders of the West Midlands.

Our vision is that the West Midlands is leading in contributing to the national target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 whilst addressing health inequality and driving inclusive growth. We monitor the West Midlands Sustainability 2030 Roadmap which acts as a framework that all organisations based or operating in the region can use to help them make changes to their activities in the knowledge that they will contribute to wider regional ambition.

SWM's support our members and other local stakeholders in the public, private and third sectors to implement these changes by enabling them to demonstrate innovation and leadership and provide opportunities to collaborate and celebrate success.

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1 Introduction and objectives

The East of England is home to Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, four LEPs (South East, South East Midlands, Hertfordshire, and New Anglia) and 50 local authorities covered by varied county level climate change partnerships and commissions (in Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, Essex, Norfolk, and Suffolk, and in Bedfordshire where there are three unitary authorities).

The objectives of the work are research and analysis to understand the following across the climate change partnerships in the East of England region:

- Current progress, strengths, areas for improvement and barriers to delivery in achieving climate action targets with consideration of:
  - Biodiversity and natural environment
  - Adaptation to climate change
  - Retrofit and sustainable housing
  - Sustainable energy
  - Sustainable travel
  - Sustainable economic growth and development
  - Social equity and health
  - Waste, recycling and the circular economy
  - Procurement
  - Behavioural change and comms
- The extent to which the LGA's climate change offer is already being utilised
- Similarities and differences in the methodologies and tools currently used by county partnerships to measure the impact of climate change interventions, providing additional comparative information from other regions/nationally where possible
- Identifying key barriers that are affecting all/multiple parts of the region which could be present opportunities for more intensive collaborative work at regional scale

The work will also identify case studies and good practice that can be shared regionally and will propose additional analytical work that would be beneficial.

1.1 Methodology

The following activities have been undertaken to meet the objectives set out above:

Desk-based review:
SWM undertook a desk-based review of all documentation provided by the partnerships. The desk-based review also sought to identify good practice examples which can be used to inspire action.

SWM have provided an Excel spreadsheet listing all documents reviewed and links to the online publications where possible.

Interviews:
SWM interviewed the representative officer/s and councillor or elected member for climate change (where they exist) in each climate change partnership. The interviews included an unstructured discussion for the individual to provide their background and history followed by semi-structured discussion making use of

open questions around challenges, opportunities and priorities for climate change activity going forwards, with particular focus on key partners.

All interviews were recorded to allow a concise written summary of the interview to be produced, and key insight to be fed into the final outputs.

A summary of individuals interviewed as part of the study is provided in Appendix 1.

Baseline questionnaire:
A baseline questionnaire was circulated to each climate change partnership for self-completion and return by 17 June. At the time of writing, completed baseline questionnaires had been returned by six of the eight partnerships or commissions.

2   Findings

2.1   Different types of partnership/approach

Our analysis has led to a greater understanding of the nature of the different climate change partnerships across the region, and the benefits and challenges associated with the different approaches. The table below summarises our findings at a high level:

Area	Name of partnership/approach	Type of partnership	Governance context
Bedford	Climate Change Committee	Cross-party internal representation. Members of the public can attend and raise questions	Unitary authority
Cambridgeshire & Peterborough	Independent Commission on Climate	Independent commission providing advice and challenge. Combined authority led with council membership	Three tier authority area
Central Bedfordshire	No mention of partnership, only Central Bedfordshire's own goals	Internal only	Unitary authority
Essex	Essex Climate Action Commission	Independent commission providing advice and challenge to the council	Two tier authority area
Hertfordshire	Hertfordshire Climate Change & Sustainability Partnership (HCCSP)	Council led with limited external membership	Two tier authority area
Luton	Climate Change Executive Advisory Board	Cross-party internal representation	Unitary authority
Norfolk	Norfolk Climate Change Partnership	Council led with some external membership	Two tier authority area
Suffolk	Suffolk Climate Change, Environment & Energy Board	Estuary	Two tier authority area

2.1.1 Bedford

The Bedford Borough Council Climate Change Committee is an internal body with no external stakeholders and is chaired by the Mayor, Dave Hodgson. Committee meetings can be attended by the public who can raise queries. The aim and purpose of the Committee is to reduce the council's own carbon emissions by implementing projects and policies and encourage the residents and businesses of the borough to reduce their carbon emissions, so Bedford Borough is seen as a place to grow and has a good quality local environment. The committee aims to achieve this by doing the following:

1. Benchmark current carbon emissions in Bedford Borough Council
2. Track the progress of the council's carbon reduction measures and towards the aim of achieving carbon neutrality by 2030
3. Monitor best practice in local government and beyond and consider carbon reduction schemes for the council itself and for residents, households, businesses, and other organisations across the borough
4. Challenge the delivery and direction of the council's carbon reduction measures to ensure that improvements are timely and sustainable

2.1.2 Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough have an Independent Commission on Climate, created by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) to provide authoritative recommendations to it. The Commission is made up of academics, representatives from third sector organisations, private businesses, and clergy. The Commission is supported by a Management Group and a Technical Group. The Management Group includes senior officers from local authorities in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. These groups meet monthly. The Management Group will ensure that the Commission is supported to deliver to time and on budget and will act as liaison, especially with the Technical group, to ensure requests from the Commission are actioned.

To deliver the CPCA's Climate Action Plan the Commission works with private sector partners, universities, utility companies, and industry bodies.

To deliver on the Commission's recommendations, the Cambridgeshire local authorities have formed a working group to co-ordinate action.

2.1.3 Central Bedfordshire

Central Bedfordshire is a unitary authority and its climate change work is chaired by Cllr Steve Dixon, the Executive Member for Transformation and External Partnerships. Their Sustainability Plan was co-developed with council officers and members, and focuses on improving the council's own operations and processes as well as supporting residents and local businesses to adopt sustainable behaviours and practices. It is an Action Plan rather than a strategic document, reflecting the urgency the council feels for this issue, and further requires that sustainability objectives are considered by councillors when they are committing to implement any project or programme.

Progress against this plan is reported on via council overview and scrutiny committees every 6 months. The Sustainability Plan further requires that. Sustainability action is supported by a Head of Sustainability, with circa 11 staff working to him split into two teams; (general) sustainability, and sustainable travel.

Central Bedfordshire does not have a Climate Change *Partnership* as such, being a unitary authority such a body was not considered to be necessary.

2.1.4 Essex

Essex Climate Action Commission was set up by Essex County Council (ECC) to provide recommendations for action for the whole of Essex (public and private bodies and communities) on how best to tackle the climate challenge and become a net zero emissions county by 2050, published in their report Net Zero: Making Essex Carbon Neutral in July 2021. The Commissions includes over 30 representatives from a variety of organisations including:

- Young Essex Assembly
- University of Essex
- Anglia Ruskin University
- Writtle College
- Northumbrian Water Group
- Third sector
- Local authorities

The purpose of the Essex Climate Action Commission is to:

1. Identify ways in which ECC can mitigate the effects of climate change, improve air quality, reduce waste across Essex and increase the amount of green infrastructure and biodiversity in the county by drawing on inhouse expertise, commissioning research and forming new external partnerships.
2. Explore how we attract investment in natural capital and low carbon growth. The Commission will be provided with regular updates on the status of the year one recommendations.

Essex County Council has networks with its district, borough and city council partners (in total there are 15 local authorities in Essex) to deliver against these recommendations. Essex County Council has also produced its own climate change action plan using the same headings as the Commission's report, and has committed £200 million over 4 years to delivering the action plan.

2.1.5 Hertfordshire

Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership (HCCSP) consists of all 10 districts and the county council, plus the LEP. HCCSP was formed in March 2020 with representation at Leader and/or Executive Member level, along with Chief Officers. All 12 partner organisations are listed below:

- Broxbourne Council
- Dacorum Borough Council
- East Herts District Council
- Hertfordshire County Council
- Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership
- Hertsmere Borough Council
- North Herts District Council
- St Albans City and District Council
- Stevenage Borough Council
- Three Rivers District Council
- Watford Borough Council

- Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council

Councillor Graham McAndrew is the Chair of HCCSP. He is the Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability at East Hertfordshire District Council and also Bishop Stortford Rural Division member for Hertfordshire County Council, in which he is Deputy Executive Member for Highways and Transport. He sits on the Hertfordshire Waste Partnership (HWP) and is Deputy Chair. To avoid any misconception that the HCCSP is a county council driven initiative it is headed by the Chief Executive of Stevenage Borough Council, Matthew Partridge. On an annual basis Graham and Matthew speak in confidence with members and officers from each authority on a one-to-one basis to understand challenges and opportunities within their respective areas.

The work programme is supported by officers from each authority and the LEP, who work on priority topics that are focused on action planning and implementation in several key areas:

- Water Sustainability
- Biodiversity
- Carbon Reduction
- Transport
- Behaviour Change
- Adaptation

HCCSP works closely with the [Hertfordshire Growth Board](#) (made up of the County Council, the 10 district and borough councils, the Integrated Care System, Homes England and Hertfordshire LEP) and also reports regularly to the Hertfordshire Leaders Group (attended by all Council Leaders). The partnership maintains key strategic links with other groups across the county such as the Hertfordshire Infrastructure Planning Partnership (Executive Members and Heads of Planning) and the Hertfordshire Planners Group, as well as the [Hertfordshire Growth Hub](#), a central point of access for businesses seeking support and advice who can provide guidance for businesses to be more sustainable and work toward net zero.

HCCSP has direct links to the Hertfordshire Sustainability Forum, and the partnership is supported by the Hertfordshire Sustainability Officers Group (HSOG) with officers from all Council directorates, and further thematic sub-groups working on key priorities.

HCCSP seeks to engage across Hertfordshire with community groups, the voluntary sector, residents and businesses to stimulate and facilitate behaviour change around climate change and to achieve shared carbon reduction goals across the county. HCCSP is currently in discussions with the University of Hertfordshire to form a working Partnership.

2.1.6 Luton

Luton Borough Council has a Climate Change Executive Advisory Board made up of cross-party council members and chaired by Cllr Tom Shaw. This board is a sub-committee of the Council Executive and provides strategic steer and political commitment. The Climate Change Executive Advisory Board can provide recommendations on climate change policy and engagement with the community to the council's Executive. This committee is internal and has no external members, however meetings are held in public. This is similar to the approach at Bedford Borough Council and their Climate Change Committee. There are limited references to this group online, or in the documentation provided.

2.1.7 Norfolk

The Norfolk Climate Change Partnership was established on 06 January 2020. The partnership shares knowledge and practices in relation to the local authority response to climate change, and how to influence climate change in Norfolk as a whole. The group also has an interest in supporting communities, voluntary and community organisations, businesses, and residents to reduce their carbon emissions. The group provides regular updates to the Norfolk Leaders and Chief Executives.

The focus of this partnership is on climate change, environmental issues, biodiversity, adaptation, mitigation, and sustainability. The partnership consists of the following:

- Norfolk County Council
- All district/borough councils
- New Anglia LEP
- Broads Authority
- Environment Agency
- Norfolk Strategic Planning Forum

2.1.8 Suffolk

The Suffolk Climate Change, Environment & Energy Board is overseeing the implementation of the Suffolk Climate Emergency Plan (SCEP) on behalf of Suffolk's public sector leaders. The SCEP sets out the partners' shared aspiration to work towards a carbon neutral Suffolk by 2030.

Senior Officers from across Suffolk's public sector, including local authorities, health and police services, attend the Board, which receives political input from a cross-county Environment Portfolio Holders group.

This structure builds on an existing delivery Partnership: Established in 2007, the Suffolk Climate Change Partnership (SCCP) consists of Suffolk's local authorities and the Environment Agency, working with other organisations locally including Groundwork East and the University of Suffolk.

In Autumn 2019, Suffolk's public sector organisations set out to:

1. Undertake analysis of existing data to provide a baseline for Suffolk partners on the current picture, including clarity on data and any current gaps
2. Identify areas of current and potential influence by Council policy and collaboration with partners to understand the extent to which emissions can be reduced
3. Feasibility test options so that the focus was on actions that could deliver meaningful emissions reductions
4. Engage stakeholders and the wider community
5. Co-design and launch a delivery plan (including associated communication activity) that builds on the evidence base, feasibility options and community engagement
6. Provide project management to initiate delivery of the action plan

Ricardo Energy & Environment were commissioned to support this process, which culminated in the publication of the SCEP in Spring 2021.

Delivery of the five SCEP themes is underway, with an Officer Delivery Group per theme. Some of the groups enjoy wider stakeholder representation.

2.2 Progress against priority areas

Our analysis has shown that, across the range of priority themes, progress and action can be demonstrated. However, the scale of this is variable and the table below provides a high-level RAG indication of progress across the partnerships in the East of England.

Priority Theme	Progress
Biodiversity and natural environment	
Adaptation to climate change	
Retrofit and sustainable housing	
Sustainable energy	
Sustainable travel	
Sustainable economic growth and development	
Social equity and health	
Waste, recycling and the circular economy	
Procurement	
Behavioural change and communications	

It must be recognised that whilst some areas have been given a red or amber rating, there may still be evidence of good progress within particular partnerships or councils.

2.2.1 Carbon

Bedford
The council has a Sustainable Development and Environmental Efficiency Strategy in place with an annual action plan. The Sustainable Development and Environmental Efficiency Strategy sets out how the Council will continue to lead by example to increase its environmental efficiency and resilience, whilst also encouraging and supporting local communities and businesses in the Borough to do the same. There is also a carbon reduction plan, which is aiming to achieve carbon net zero by 2030. Net zero is built into the procurement process and projects must suggest ways to mitigate any emissions that could impact this net zero target. Total carbon emissions from council operations are 6,528 tonnes (2020/21) based on the Annual Greenhouse Gas Report. Waste is not included in this.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough
The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Commission on Climate implicitly calls for carbon emission reduction throughout its report 'Fairness, Nature and Communities', with particular focus (and targets that would lead to emissions reduction) on energy, buildings, travel and waste. All but one of the constituent local authorities declared a climate emergency in 2019. In general, the interviews demonstrated a perception from the County Council is that it is now making good progress on climate change action but that some work should have been started earlier.

Central Bedfordshire
The Central Bedfordshire Sustainability Plan 2020-2030 states the objective to become carbon neutral (including Whole Life Costing) within its own operations by 2030. To support his, a baseline survey of carbon emissions was completed in 2019. The council's carbon footprint is monitored and reported upon

annually as part of the progress report (although this is currently delayed, and the collation of scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions is in progress). To further support carbon reduction in the council, staff are undergoing carbon literacy training, with 80 staff members having done this thus far.

Beyond the council's own operations and estate, the council aims to influence other stakeholders to progress towards net zero by leading by example. Progress across all areas is only just beginning as the Head of Sustainability has only been in post since January 2021 and finished recruiting his team six months ago.

Essex
The recently published 'Everyone's Essex: our plan for levelling up the county 2021 to 2025' includes the ambition to work across the council and the county to hit net zero targets, by ensuring that the council significantly reduces its carbon footprint, whilst also supporting an acceleration in the progress towards sustainable housing and energy, and active and alternative forms of travel across the county. This also includes a commitment to build resilience to climate change through increasing green infrastructure across the county. This is supported by the Essex Climate Action Commission's report 'Net Zero: Making Essex Carbon Neutral', which in addition to this also calls for carbon capture through large scale land use change and the enhancement of the natural environment. Additionally, the Commission's report included technical annexes and a carbon baseline which gives a clear picture of carbon emissions for Essex. ECC will report annually on its own carbon footprint and that of Essex as a whole.

Hertfordshire
The HCCSP partnership is working to achieve a consistent framework for partners to calculate carbon emissions and to monitor carbon savings. HCCSP is developing initiatives to address carbon reduction and to agree targets for reducing emissions. The potential for joint initiatives working with businesses and the private sector will enable green growth and ensure successful delivery of our carbon reduction agenda. Priority actions are set out in the Carbon Reduction Strategic Action Plan.

Luton
Luton Council has set a target to achieve net zero by 2040. Luton Council commissioned Anthesis to write their Climate Action Plan Support report in January 2020. The report used outputs from both the SCATTER tool and BEIS local authority emissions data to quantify the councils carbon footprint. The SCATTER tool also includes emissions factors other than CO_2, whilst the BEIS tool only represents CO_2 emissions. The SCATTER tool also provides a split of carbon emissions, breaking the emissions up into scopes 1, 2 and 3. The SCATTER tool is therefore likely to provide a more accurate representation of the council's actual footprint. The carbon accounts included in the Carbon Action Plan report include buildings and other assets, vehicle fleet, business travel, employee commuting and procurement spend. Scope 3 is the council's largest source of emissions (82%). A further report is expected in 2022. The council's carbon budget is currently being reassessed due to the national inventory for carbon emissions having a two-year lag time.

The Luton Borough Council Climate Action Plan Support report demonstrates transparency, which is considered best practice for carbon accounting. The report was written to better understand the borough's carbon footprint using a location-based accounting approach, which determines the proportion of emissions that can be influenced locally without the action of regional or national actors. Emissions were broken up into four categories including emissions within the council's direct control, emissions that the council have a strong and weak influence over and emissions that are a point of concern. The final category includes emissions whose owners and operators are not clearly defined, leading to limited influence. This level of understanding of the source of emissions is key to achieving net zero.

Norfolk

The Norfolk Climate Change Partnership's approach to carbon is to share best practice and develop a Norfolk consistent approach to carbon auditing, provide initial workshops on carbon auditing and share information on carbon audits. The local authority members of the Partnership have each individually calculated their carbon footprint or are in the process of calculating their carbon footprint. Different councils are using different approaches which may cause an issue with consistency. For example, the King's Lynn and West Norfolk borough councils report their operational footprint rather than the carbon footprint for their geographical area.

Suffolk

The Suffolk Climate Emergency Plan focuses on greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and clean power generation and interacts with action being taken in other areas. The plan identifies over 100 actions to work towards achieving carbon neutrality, spread across five sectors:

1. Collaborative action
2. Sustainable homes
3. Low carbon transport
4. Industrial and commercial energy use
5. Cleaner power

These actions have been grouped into outcomes, and these outcomes further grouped into high level goals for each of the sectors:

1. Goals – what needs to happen in each sector to deliver carbon neutrality
2. Outcomes – what we expect to result from achieving the goals
3. Actions – what needs to happen to deliver the outcomes and goals.

Of the 100 actions identified as part of this plan, the 25 Priority Actions indication where SCCP can accelerate and build on activities. The plan also sets out the ask of national Government.

All Suffolk local authorities declared a climate emergency in 2019, with commitments to be carbon neutral across their own estates and operations by 2030 and to work towards the aspiration of a carbon neutral Suffolk by 2030. Suffolk councils are working together through the Suffolk Climate Change, Energy & Environment Board to implement a cross-county programme of work to influence the reduction of emissions from transport, housing and businesses.

Spotlight on good practice: Suffolk Climate Emergency Dashboard

The development of the online Suffolk Climate Emergency Dashboard allowing information on emissions reductions is underway and will be publicly available soon. The dashboard is developed using Power BI which is a self-service Microsoft platform allowing data visualisation.

This will allow users to see data according to sector including homes, transport, industrial and commercial, and energy and multiple pages under each section.

2.2.2 Biodiversity and natural environment

Bedford

Biodiversity is spoken about a lot within the council. Projects worth over £100,000 are requested to have an environmental impact assessment. The council also have a tree planting in the community scheme which has led to 30,000 trees being planted during the last planting season. The council have also rolled out a Defra award winning bees and bugs project. This project has committed the council to supporting food and shelter for animals, bees, and other insects. This is to enhance Bedford's Parks, open spaces and provide more sustainable natural environments. The council are also providing carbon offsetting though the creation of a wildflower meadow as part of the bees and bugs project.

The Sustainable Development and Environmental Efficiency Strategy Action Plan also highlighted that a goal of the council is to promote biodiversity, natural habitats, and adaptation within green infrastructure developments. Biodiversity is not mentioned in the Carbon Reduction Delivery Strategy for 2020 -2030.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

All local authorities within the partnership support the Local Nature Partnerships Doubling Nature vision, but different constituent authorities are going at different paces. For instance, the County Council has a baseline quantification underway, while Cambridge City Council has a Biodiversity Strategy 2022-23 which includes an objective to secure a measurable net gain in biodiversity across the city by 2025. Where there are no targets, all local authorities are supporting the Queen's Green Canopy supporting tree planting.
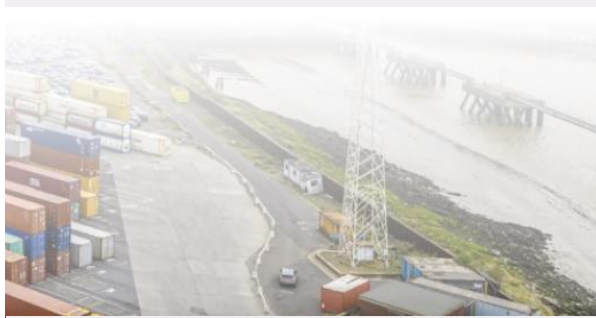
Central Bedfordshire

The Central Bedfordshire Sustainability Plan has an objective to support the delivery of joined-up green and blue infrastructure to support water resilience, increase biodiversity and integrate nature into urban environments. This will be achieved via maintenance of council land, as well as through provision of guidance on appropriate management (aimed for publication by the end of 2022) and good practice, partnership working with other stakeholders (including landowners, farmers and agencies such as the Environment Agency and Anglian Water), seeking and supporting funding and investment, and tree planting. Interviews identified some good work going on around tree planting, with a target to support the planting of 1 million trees by 2030, where the design is properly considered to achieve a range of health, biodiversity and flood mitigation co-benefits.

Tree planting in particular has been a focus of attention, with £1.6 in funding going towards tree planting projects, via tree planting grants. Projects have included the Queen's Green Canopy, free tree giveaways, urban Treescapes, Town and Parish Council planting, and school projects. To date approximately 38 projects have been supported, 18,000 trees planted, and 3km of hedgerow planted.

Essex

The Essex Climate Action Commission report 'Net Zero: Making Essex Carbon Neutral' focuses on land use and green infrastructure as one of its six key themes, and this has fed through into Essex County Council's Climate Action Plan, which includes a move to 100% sustainable farming and a land use change target of 30% green infrastructure by 2040. A Green Infrastructure Strategy is now in place which has been awarded Excellence by Natural England. The Essex Forest Partnership is committed to planting one million trees by 2025, and money has been secured to assist this through a bid to the Urban Trees Challenge and Local Authority Treescape Fund. The Local Nature Partnership (LNP) is developing a Nature Recovery Strategy which will deliver wildlife protection and enhancement, and is also and is supporting farming to move to more sustainable approaches. Overall, this was an area in which interviewees felt that solid progress was being made.

Spotlight on good practice: South Essex Estuary (SEE) Park

The South Essex Estuary (SEE) Park plans include a continuous accessible coastal path stretching from Tilbury Fort to Shoeburyness will give every home along its route easy access to high quality green space, create new woodlands, restore marshlands, and complete a huge, connected network of natural landscapes. It will provide 200 km of continuous costal paths and create over 550km of greenways and cycleways.

Hertfordshire

In Hertfordshire, water sustainability was one of the four initial priority themes for the partnership and it is covered in the HCCSP Water Reduction Strategic Action Plan and supported by the HSOG water sub-group. HCCSP has a role in influencing planning and wider local authority teams to take water sustainability into consideration in their activities and projects.

A second priority theme for the HCCSP is biodiversity with priority actions set out in the HCCSP Biodiversity Strategic Action Plan.

HCCSP can make a valuable contribution under the following themes:
- Raising awareness of the value and need for protection of biodiversity and promoting behaviour change among residents and businesses
- Enhancing biodiversity through suitable land management and other operations, delivered directly by HCCSP members or through partnership working with multiple stakeholder engagement
- Protecting and enhancing biodiversity through the planning system
- Evidence gathering and establishing appropriate resources to support biodiversity enhancements Lobbying or arguing the case for government to make changes in national policy

HCCSP came together to fund and commission a Hertfordshire wide biodiversity baseline study which will be used to inform districts' local plans, and biodiversity net gain discussions with developers. This will enable a coordinated approach across the county and obviate the risk of developers 'playing districts off against each other'.

Development sessions on this topic have been held with officers and members from across the county.

The partnership is uniquely placed to coordinate and collaborate on a county-wide scale with officers and Members across Planning, Parks and Green Spaces, Highways, Sustainability, Licensing and more.

Luton

Biodiversity and natural environment are not mentioned in the Anthesis report. Luton Council does have a target to increase tree canopy by 1ha by 2025 and is supported by the Luton Tree Policy and Tree Management Strategy. The Council are required to achieve 10% biodiversity net gain, this is currently not being measured.

Biodiversity is mentioned in the council's Climate Change Action Plan which supports tree planting initiative and gives ownership of this project to the parks, property and highway teams. This plan also stated that a trial started to test public perceptions of relaxed mowing regimes to promote natural

grassland and meadows to increase biodiversity. The highways team is also introducing the wilding of highway verges in line with the Plant Life recommendations.

Norfolk

Biodiversity and nature are not mentioned in the Norfolk climate change partnership action plan, this is due to the partnership still being in its infancy. Suffolk and Norfolk County councils have commissioned a natural capital evidence compendium to present information on natural assets, the pressure that they are under, and the consequent risks to the benefits that we depend on. This is ongoing and will identify what actions to prioritise. There is likely to be pockets of biodiversity and natural environment work going on within the partnerships geographical area that the local authorities are doing. For example, there are tree planting schemes in Sedgeford, King's reach and Lynnsport.

The Norfolk Greens group offers a safe route for people and animals to travel. This doesn't seem connected to the partnership but was highlighted in the baseline survey. The project, as of 2018, has been looking at the following disused railways, Weavers' Way and King's Lynn. The website of the Norfolk Greenway initiative is currently conducting a feasibility study looking to develop a greenway network across the county. This is to extend the rail network in Norfolk to promote walking and cycling.

Suffolk

The 'Green Suffolk' website provides information on air quality across the area and ways to help address the issue. Suffolk and Norfolk County Councils commissioned a Natural Capital Evidence Compendium presenting the latest information on natural assets, the pressure they are under, and the consequent risks to the benefits we depend upon them for. It identifies priorities for consideration as part of a long-term plan. This work is ongoing.

2.2.3   Adaptation to climate change

Bedford

Adaptation and resilience are included in the council's action plans and in the flood risk management plan. The council has a website to help residents prepare for a flood which contains a flood warning section to alert people of the current a flood risk.

In the Sustainable Development and Environmental Efficiency Strategy Action Plan, adaptation measures are mentioned. One action is to adopt a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to ensure that developers integrate sustainable surface water management into developments. The desired outcome of these measures will be to retain the wastewater, either on site or within the immediate area.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

Within this partnership, the focus has primarily been on mitigation of climate change, rather than adaptation to it. There is a Risk Study as part of the Local Plan update, and some advice and guidance need are given to residents, for example through the Community Flood Action Forum. However, the baseline survey and interviews highlighted that more work needs to be done here.

Central Bedfordshire

There is no mention of climate change adaptation in the Central Bedfordshire Sustainability Plan, but a climate change risk assessment is in progress to be completed in the next 12 months. However, the actions to improve green and blue infrastructure will provide some localised resilience. The interviews identified a project to regenerate Dunstable High Street, which has suffered two one-in-250 year floods in a four year period. Tree planting and rain gardens have been incorporated to mitigate the risk of flooding.

The Environment Agency is working with Central Bedfordshire and Luton Borough councils to develop a strategy to identify flooding and resilience issues across the area and how they can be creatively tackled to maximise benefits to the community and the environment. This is known as the Resilient and Adaptive Communities project.

Additionally, in order to support communities to adapt to climate change, Central Bedfordshire are planning to improve their web-based content and continue to attend community events.

Essex

The recently published 'Everyone's Essex: our plan for levelling up the county 2021 to 2025' includes the commitment to help communities by making them more resilient against flooding, heat stress and water shortages, by enhancing green infrastructure and reducing air pollution. The Climate Action Commission's report has climate change adaptation embedded throughout.

Essex County Council's Climate Action Plan states the aim to finalise the Essex Water Strategy by September 2023 with aim of setting out actions to manage water scarcity and water quality across the county. There already isa a £12 million Nature Based Flood Resilience Capital programme reducing flood riak across the county. There is an expert planning advisory services for developers , focusing on Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) and green infrastructure as a priority. Additionally, nine specific green infrastructure principles are currently being signed off and approved for addition to the Essex Design Guide. On the ground, the SuDS team have managed 317 planning applications, thereby improving flood resistance on circa 16000 new developments in Essex. Work on climate adaptation in Essex goes hand in glove with their work on biodiversity and as such interviewees felt that good progress was being made.

Finally, there is a range of advice for residents to enable them to prepare for a greater incidence and severity of extreme weather events, including resident advice packs, flood advice online, and flood resilience grants for homes affected by floods.

Hertfordshire

HCCSP has a well-established subgroup focussed on adaptation and producing a framework for a cross-county risk register and climate adaptation plan. A survey has been distributed and the results demonstrated:

- Only two councils currently have climate change risk assessment plans
- Nearly all councils have no budget set aside for climate related impacts on its services
- Most councils do not have any adaptation plans in place
- No councils store any records of past unusual weather-related incidents in the county

The proposed approach to improved adaptation and resilience includes:

- Identification of predicted climate risks across the county
- Agree initial scope of adaptation plan
- Completion of local risk/climate assessments from all councils
- Identification of current gaps and risks
- Production of draft adaptation plan

Hertfordshire County Council has a Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA) and service-specific action plans.

Luton

Luton is classified as a flood risk area. The council have a flood risk strategy and are very active in developing projects with the Environment Agency who are working with the Council and Central Bedfordshire Council to develop a strategy to identify flooding and resilience issues across the area and how they can be creatively tackled to maximise benefits to the community and the environment. This is known as the Resilient and Adaptive Communities project. The adaptation measures vary from large scale capital projects to smaller local projects, such as SuDs in schools. The council also have awareness campaigns for community engagement. Luton was successful in developing a partnership with the EA to develop flood schemes for 600 properties. £2 million has been invested in river restorations in Luton to date and new projects are in development and in pipeline.

Norfolk

Adaptation is not mentioned in the Norfolk Climate change partnerships work plan, their website, or any other published documentation. This is due to the partnership still being in its infancy. There is a strategic flood alliance, but this is not linked to the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership.

Suffolk

The Local Energy Asset Representation (LEAR) for Suffolk includes consideration of flood risk areas in the context of the building stock that may be affected.

Suffolk County Council produced a 'Local Climate Impacts Profile' following UKCIP guidance in 2007 and, in partnership with all Suffolk local authorities, produced an adaptation action plan in 2010.

Suffolk Flood Risk Management Partnership (SFRMP) are responsible for co-ordinating implementation of any actions required as a result of the Floods and Water Management Act 2010 and the Flood Risk Regulations 2009. Suffolk Coast Forum takes a partnership approach to flood and coastal erosion risk management on the coast and estuaries and closely related issues in the context of an Integrated Coastal Zone Management approach.

Reclaim the Rain is a project run by Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils to test new ways of reducing flooding in small rural locations. To begin with, they aim to improve at least six communities' resilience to flood and drought risk, three in each county.

2.2.4   Retrofit and sustainable housing

Bedford

Retrofit is not specifically mentioned in the 2020-2030 Bedford Carbon Reduction Delivery but the Council itself has been through a multi-million pound Retrofit Capital funding project several years ago to significantly reduce the Councils carbon emissions. The Council has also recently been awarded further government funding to retrofit the fuel poor properties in the borough. It is mentioned in the Sustainable Development and Environmental Efficiency Strategy Action Plan which highlights that the council has a role as a strategic and enabling authority in relation to housing with the key objective to increase energy efficiency, improve adaptability to climate change and fuel poverty.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Commission on Climate recommend that all new buildings be net zero ready by 2023, for new developments to be located in sustainable places, and for all existing buildings to achieve high energy efficiency standards and be heated from low-carbon sources. It is recommended that work begin by 2025 to retrofit housing, beginning with those below EPC 'C'. All local authorities within the partnership are working both independently and collaboratively in this area, for

example through the Cambridgeshire Energy Retrofit Partnership which has secured £9m for the area. There is technical support available in some places for sustainable building. Furthermore, local authorities in this partnership have also accessed the Public Sector Decarbonisation Fund – indeed the Commission has recommended that the CPCA and local authorities' own estates be net zero by 2030 at the latest.

Central Bedfordshire

The Central Bedfordshire Sustainability Plan has an objective to improve the energy and water efficiency of its existing building stock; through taking advantage of digital connectivity, through the Built Assets Improvement Programme and the School Capital Maintenance Programme. The Sustainability Plan also has an objective to ensure that council-led and commissioned capital building projects are sustainable. Milestones includes flagship sustainable developments to act as best practice case studies, the development of a Sustainable Design Guide for construction projects, and greater sustainability ambition within the Schools for the Future Programme. Furthermore, Central Bedfordshire has also been successful in drawing down BEIS green homes grants to support housing retrofit.

A particularly good example of sustainable housing is a care home being built in Leighton Buzzard, due for completion in September 2022, which was designed to Passivhaus standards.

Spotlight on good practice: Marigold House Care Home, Leighton Buzzard

This 63 place care home due for completion in September 2022 is being built to Passivhaus standard. It will improve on traditional buildings of this nature through its energy efficiency, with air source heat pumps providing the main heating.

This is initially more costly but will be cheaper to run and a healthier building to live in. The decision to build to such high standards was made based on Whole Life Costing.

Essex

The recently published 'Everyone's Essex: our plan for levelling up the county 2021 to 2025' includes the commitment to ensure support of the move towards net zero, climate resilient developments, including new garden communities, by delivering sustainable, healthy neighbourhoods for the future. The Climate Action Commission's report 'Net Zero: Making Essex Carbon Neutral' also focuses on this as one of its six priority areas, and highlights current pilot projects looking to inform planning guidance for net zero homes. The planning authorities in Essex work together to produce best practice guidance for sustainable and low carbon design for new build housing which is brought together in the Essex Design Guide.

Brentwood Borough Council is delivering 62 net zero homes in a development; Essex Housing is bringing forward a pilot scheme which is net zero in both operation and materials. Multiple developers are also planning further net zero developments. Regarding retrofit, action on fuel poverty is ongoing, with £25 million grant funding secured over 2021-23 for qualifying households. Most of the funding for fuel poverty reduction was achieved through partnership working with all Essex councils, which was ambitious and praiseworthy. One parish is piloting a community approach with the aim of moving a village to net zero.

Hertfordshire

HCCSP has an ambition to identify and deliver carbon reduction improvements to domestic housing through establishment of joint working partnerships, contracts and projects. Through this they are actively working in the areas of retrofit / sustainable housing, sustainable energy, social equity and health. Only four of the 10 districts have council stock and have their own focus on retrofit. In regard to sustainable new

housing, HCCSP have an action 'to develop a template for a sustainability SPD which can be adopted by planning teams'.

Luton

According to recent documents 82% of council homes in Luton are currently Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating C or above. The council have also taken advantage of interest-free finance to upgrade the insulation and heating systems of council buildings. This is an ongoing process and was not driven by the climate emergency. The council now enforce minimum energy standards in the private rental market. This aspect of the council's decarbonisation approach lies within the property and construction team. According to the most recently published Climate change action plan (November 2021) the council is reviewing the investment prioritisation criteria to include carbon targets and a review of the council buildings in relation to retrofit.

The council have achieved the following so far:
- 30 communal sites have LED lighting
- Over £200,000 has been spent by the Building and Technical Services team on LED lighting
- 15 communal sites have access to heat pumps as secondary heat source
- 184 properties (2.6%) have access to electric storage heating
- LAD phase 2 – application to be made for installation of insulation and renewable heating options in stock
- £650,000 allocated to Luton via the LAD2 scheme

The Anthesis report also highlights how housing, fuel and power account for 21% of household emissions based on expenditure. The report recommends switching to renewable energy and improving the energy efficiency of homes to reduce emissions. The report also mentioned the need for Luton to provide an attractive platform for private homeowners to invest in retrofit measures.

Norfolk

Retrofit is mentioned in the Climate Change Partnership Work Plan. The Plan states that it will investigate building retrofit options across Norfolk authorities. This is predicted to finish this year. The Norfolk Warm Homes Partnership is led by the local authorities in the area and funded by the National Grid and central Government.

In addition the Norfolk Local Energy Asset Representation (LEAR) project provides a review of building stock, energy demands, energy networks, embedded generation, domestic and public electric vehicle charging and social data. This is being completed by Norfolk County Council and Energy Systems Catapult and will produce a robust evidence base to guide the County Council and partners towards clean energy.

Suffolk

A key theme of the Climate Emergency Plan is the delivery of sustainable homes, both new housing and through the retrofit of existing homes. There are various actions linked to this priority.

The Net Zero Carbon Toolkit has been produced which is a guide on how to plan net zero housing that should be considered in conjunction with local authority planning policies and building regulations.

Suffolk Green Buildings Network provides information on making buildings greener. Over £12 million was awarded to three Suffolk consortium bids led by West Suffolk Council (LAD 1A and 1B; HUG) and Suffolk County Council (LAD2) to provide energy efficiency measures for households with properties with poor energy performance ratings.

2.2.5 Sustainable energy

Spotlight on good practice: Solar Together

Various local authorities across the East of England participate in the Solar Together scheme. This includes those across Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire and Norfolk, and Cambridgeshire County Council, Essex County Council and Suffolk County Council which is a group buying scheme for solar PV and battery storage provided by iChoosr.

Residents living in participating council areas and who own their own house (or have permission from the landlord to install a solar PV system) can register for the Solar Together group-buying scheme. SMEs and Commonhold Associations meeting this requirement can participate as well.

iChoosr negotiates the best deal on behalf of the participants maximising economies of scale. Without such discounts and marketing, many homeowners would otherwise not take up solar panels or battery storage. Participants also benefit from confidence that suppliers are pre-approved and will be of high quality. The scheme unlocks significant private investment in solar and at limited or no cost to the councils.

Bedford

The council purchases 100% 'green electricity' from REGO backed certificates for its own corporate estate. The council also support projects that install renewable energy technologies. A current project the Council has delivered, the 'Bedford Green Technology and Innovation Park, is a 4.2MW solar farm, turning an old landfill site into a new solar farm in collaboration with Southeast Midlands LEP.

The Sustainable Development and Environmental Efficiency Strategy Action Plan includes aspects on sustainable energy. This includes aims such as installing insulation and home improvements at residents' homes in Bedford. The strategy also comments on supporting schools and academics to develop and implement energy management initiatives by delivery of energy service level agreement.

The council representative highlighted how sustainable energy is not new to the council. The sustainable energy journey started in 2009 and they have invested £2.3 million in energy conservation. This includes evaporative cooling, solar panels, and hydropower systems for green energy. Further examples of projects and work can be found online.

Spotlight on good practice: Boatslide hydro power facility

The boatslide hydro power facility utilises the river to generate electricity. Since it started operations in April 2012, it has since generated 721,848.64 kWh of electricity and exported 567,223.86 kWh. This has then provided an income of £201,738.83 from a feed in tariff.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Commission on Climate Change report recommends local area energy planning and the exploration of hydrogen, and calls for Ofgem and Government to act on network capacity, investment, hydrogen availability and long term funding. Following on from this, the

County Council is developing a Local Area Energy Plan for Cambridgeshire, and working with other local authorities to do this.

There are no set targets around renewable energy in the local authorities here, however all have some proportion of green electricity and are in the process of decarbonising buildings, often using zero carbon energy technologies. The Solar Together Scheme allows residents to buy PV at better prices through economies of scale.

Spotlight on good practice: Swaffham Prior District Heating Scheme

The village of Swaffham Prior in East Cambridgeshire isn't connected to the gas grid and 70% of homes rely on burning oil for heating. The Swaffham Prior District Heating Scheme involves the use of ground and air source heat pumps to feed into a district heating system. The scheme will bring benefits including reducing fuel poverty and dependence on oil, and provide cheaper, renewable heating.

It was funded by many partners, including EU and UK Government, and is a good demonstrator of how you can introduce a village scale heating system that doesn't depend on fossil fuels.

The village of Bildeston in Suffolk are now learning from the Swaffham scheme and have secured funding from the Rural Community Energy Fund to deliver a feasibility study looking at the options for utilisation of heat pumps connected to a district heating scheme.

Central Bedfordshire

The Central Bedfordshire Sustainability Plan has an objective to facilitate investment in renewable energy and enable the creation of a smart energy grid. To this end it is identifying sites for solar PV and battery storage, and has a target of installing an additional 150MWp of renewable energy by 2030. It is also preparing an area wide Energy Strategy, and has the Biggleswad Grid Upgrade Programme to implement renewable energy in that area. The Central Bedfordshire Climate Change website highlights innovation in renewable energy.

Essex

The Essex Climate Action Commission report 'Net Zero: Making Essex Carbon Neutral highlights sustainable energy as one of six key areas of action and set multiple targets as part of this. Several projects are going forward; Essex County Council is moving to 100% renewable energy for its own buildings and has installed solar PV on several of its estate buildings. Southeast New Energy is a £6 million grant scheme for community solar and storage, and Solar Together is a group-buying scheme allowing residents and small businesses to buy solar panels and battery storage at an affordable price. There is also a support

programme for residents to enable them to set up their own Community Energy groups and a Community Climate Action Challenge Fund which offers grants of up to £20,000 for climate action, many of which include community energy grants, as well as mentoring and seedcorn funding for feasibility and scoping), to help them bring forward their own renewable energy programmes. Finally, there is also a large LED programme for streetlights across Essex.

At the strategic level, a local area energy plan for the LEP currently exists, and work is ongoing to refresh this, due to complete in the next 12 months.

Hertfordshire

The Carbon Action Plan includes an action to 'produce guidance notes to demonstrate local authority best practices in local authority renewable energy/energy efficiency procurement'. This has been put on hold due to current energy pricing issues. Additional relevant actions which have already been achieved include:

- Producing a guidance note to demonstrate best practice in utilisation of BEIS's Energy Technology List
- Assist in the promotion and marketing of government schemes such as ECO-Flex and Low Carbon Workspaces in Hertfordshire

Spotlight on good practice: Hertfordshire Energy Advice Tool (HEAT)

The Hertfordshire Energy Advice Tool in an app launched by the HCCSP allowing domestic users to allows you to calculate the energy savings that can be made around your home. It is supported by the Energy Savings Trust. The app is free to download and gives users a virtual tour around a typical home, asking questions about different habits and appliances and giving advice to reduce energy use along the way. Once the virtual tour has finished, a tailored report can be provided via email to give a summary of the potential carbon and financial savings. The average saving from using the HEAT app is currently estimated to be £70 a year.

Initial feedback from users is that the app is very basic and so improvements could be considered in order to encourage greater uptake and impact.

Luton

The borough's street lighting is 97% LED. According to the Anthesis report, 4.8 MW of solar PV was installed in 2018, with an output of 4.7 GWh. This report used data from 2018 and may now be outdated. The same report highlights how, due to the boroughs small area, wind power is difficult to implement with solar PV being an important solution for decarbonisation of the area. Commercial viability will need to be established first.

Norfolk

The Norfolk Climate Change Partnership plan states that the partnership has submitted an application to the Community Renewal Fund for a community energy feasibility study. This is the only mention of energy in this plan or on any other documents that have been made public. This is another example of work being done within the geographical area of Norfolk that has not been commented on by the partnership. Kings Lynn has procured 100% electricity from renewable sources.

The University of East Anglia are members of the Partnership and input into the Greater South East Net Zero Hub on specific projects.

Suffolk

'Cleaner Power' is a focus area in the Suffolk Climate Emergency Plan. There are various actions linked to this priority theme. Solar Together Suffolk is a group buying scheme for residents, businesses and communities. SCCP provides support for community energy schemes.

Energy Systems Catapult were commissioned to conduct a [Local Energy Asset Representation](#) (LEAR) for Suffolk. LEAR is a local energy system modelling tool that pulls together information on energy demand, generation, storage and distribution assets, social factors like fuel poverty and characteristics like building design types and local geography, using data analysis and aspects of machine learning. It enables planners and innovators to strategically decide how they might deploy and grow low carbon businesses. The report provides analysis of building stock (domestic and non-domestic), energy demands, energy networks, embedded generation, domestic and public EV charging, and social data.

2.2.6   Sustainable travel

Bedford

Council owned transport accounts for (2,051 tonnes) of the council's internal carbon footprint (2020/21). The sustainable travel team works with schools to encourage active travel and alternative methods to get to school. The council has also facilitated the installation of 49 charging points in the borough.

Transport is mentioned in the Sustainable Development and Environmental Efficiency Strategy Action Plan. The goals around this initiative are to reduce mileage and emissions from fleet vehicles though route optimisation and improved logistics of fleet vehicles. The new Local Plan 2030 requires developers to install infrastructure at each new dwelling, in communal locations for flats, businesses and at community facilities. The council also support and promote the use of a wide range of alternative transport options such as buses, trains and cycling.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Commission on Climate set out a number of recommendations, including the phase out of fossil fuel cars by 2050, for buses and taxis operating in the partnership area and council owned and contracted vehicles to be zero emissions by 2030, and a reduction in car miles by 15% and exclusion of diesel vans and trucks from urban centres by 2030.

Across the partnership this ambition is being followed up, although the interviews highlighted that this area is still very embryonic given the rural nature of the county which forces many to rely on car transport. Nevertheless small scale low carbon vehicle projects are being delivered, an EV strategy is being developed for the region through a collaboration between all constituent authorities. EV taxis are being incentivised via licensing policy and charging facilities in some local authorities, and a trial of electric buses is underway after a successful bid to government ZEBRA by the Combined Authority.

Central Bedfordshire

The Central Bedfordshire Sustainability Plan has objectives and actions around low carbon travel and hybrid working for council staff. It has introduced an Employee Travel Survey and is preparing an Employee Travel Plan to incentivise sustainable travel for business-related trips where cots are eligible for reimbursement. Employee contracts are also being changed to reflect the change to a hybrid working arrangement. For those staff travel trips which are not reimbursed, the council incentivises sustainable travel through initiatives such as the Cycle to Work Scheme and season ticket loans. An EV purchase salary sacrifice scheme is also being considered., and employees can currently recharge EVs for free at the Council's main office buildings.

The Sustainability Plan also includes plans to enable an EV charging network by developing a full EV Strategy, investing in charge points on its own estate, and switching its fleet to EV. A draft technical guidance SPD for EV charging infrastructure for new developments has very recently been published in June 2022. The council is also exploring the possibility of switching to EV buses; it has failed to secure government funding for this in Luton and Dunstable, but may be able to use S106 contributions to do this in Leighton Buzzard.

There is also an objective and associated action plan to develop a strategic active travel and public transport network. This work will follow the strategy set out in the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, which is due to be finalised midway through 2022. Initially, there are targets to increase commuting by cycling to 26% by 2030. The council has for several years worked with Sustrans to promote sustainable travel and currently funds a Bike-It officer. Leighton Buzzard (the largest town within the authority) secured Cycling Town status in 2010 and remains a focus for investment, including most recently, an experimental pedestrianisation of the High Street and a trial to test the feasibility of restricting traffic around the school gate. It is also worth noting that Central Bedfordshire Council currently has three Air quality Management Areas in Dunstable, Ampthill and Sandy in order to manage nitrogen dioxide emissions from road traffic.

The interviews highlighted this as a strong area of work for Central Bedfordshire, with a team of 7 people working to the Head of Sustainability to deliver sustainable and active travel.

Essex
The recently published 'Everyone's Essex: our plan for levelling up the county 2021 to 2025' includes the ambition to deliver a step change in sustainable travel across the county, by growing passenger transport and active travel. The Essex Climate Action Commission report 'Net Zero: Making Essex Carbon Neutral' has led to new transport policy focused on avoiding unnecessary journeys, shifting to public and active travel and improving journeys by building active travel and EV infrastructure. A Bus Improvement Plan has been published, as has a Walking Strategy and Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans for Essex districts, with funding secured for five active travel schemes. There is a free bike scheme in Jaywick Sands, giving bicycles to residents to support active travel and a number of behaviour change initiatives, and an EV Infrastructure Strategy in development. There is also a pilot on-demand EV bus service. With regard to local authority staff, ECC has changed its working practises to support working from home for a minimum of 3 days per week for office-based staff, reducing travel. Other authorities within the partnership are working to reduce staff travel.

At a county level there are modal change targets to reduce car dependency and increase the use of public transport and active travel.

Hertfordshire
Transport is one of four initial key themes, covered by the Strategic Action Plan for Transport. Activity in this area is led by Hertfordshire County Council. The ambition is to deliver net zero carbon emissions for council transport operations by 2030 and to work towards zero carbon emissions for Hertfordshire's transport network by 2050. Further objectives include:

- Embedding sustainable transport policies in Local Plans and prioritising the needs of sustainable travel within every planning decision
- Only supporting new developments where they will have full sustainable transport access
- Systematically pursuing opportunities for active travel
- Reducing air pollution from local transport sources
- Promoting a shift to active travel and public transport through behaviour change campaigns and infrastructure improvements

- Facilitating appropriate EV charging networks across Hertfordshire
- Maintaining an open mind and investigating the potential for new technologies as they arise
- Facilitating a move to low emission vehicles (LEV) for taxis across the county

The approach to encouraging LEV taxi's has recently been approved, with the following recommendations for all HCCSP partner local authorities to work together to:

- Develop a model Taxi Vehicle Licensing Policy which promotes the accelerated uptake of lower emission vehicles amongst the taxi trade
- Promote the roll out of the model Policy across the county's licensing authorities, navigating perceived difficulties as they arise
- Refine our understanding of wider barriers to adoption of LEVs by the taxi trade and collaborate to bring forward remedies
- Assess and understand the EV charging infrastructure requirements for e-taxis and use this information to assist in accelerating provision through joint action and external funding and/or market-led opportunities as they arise

The HCCSP is hoping for success with a ZEBRA (Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas) bid which should lead to funding to introduce an electric bus fleet.

Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) are currently being developed by seven of the 10 districts across the county, with plans for the remaining three areas of Dacorum, Hertsmere and East Hertfordshire to be developed later this year.

Hertfordshire County Council launched the HertsLynx demand responsive transport (DRT) service in the east and north of the county on in September 2021. It has been established with funding from the Department for Transport's Rural Mobility Fund and is operated by Uno. The service is intended to improve connections between rural areas and town centres, as well as access to employment, education, healthcare and shopping.

Luton
Transport is included in the carbon report written by Anthesis. This provides detailed transport information such as the number of residents who have access to private vehicles and in which areas. The report aims to map emissions across different modes of transport to income quintiles, as a method for understanding the emissions associated with travel at each household income level. Luton is heavily congested and reliant on cars. The council believe that a modal shift is a priority. This was highlighted by Cllr Tom Shaw who said that the council need support with this aspect of their carbon reduction plan.

Within the council, they adapted staff travel plans for three main office and depot locations. Staff travel is monitored through annual surveys. The town wide ambition in the transport strategy is to increase cycling and is anticipated to reduce car travel by 40%.

The council have a partnership with the regional Cycle Hub East of England and national schemes like Sustrans and the Bikeability Trust. The council also operate a free of charge bike servicing scheme outside Luton train station called Dr Bike. Before the COVID pandemic, the Council run a residential e-Car club which has had over 500 bookings over the past two years and saved 45,000 miles. The car club closed in late 2021, however wider network of car clubs in the town centre is currently being considered.

The Anthesis report stated that 63.4% of commuters use motor vehicles and 13.9% use active travel.

Norfolk

Transport is mentioned in the Climate Change Work Plan. Out of the twelve action points around transport in this plan, only four of these actions are being taken up by the Partnership. This includes:

- Agree to a Norfolk strategic approach to EV charging infrastructure, this has no lead and is 'ongoing'
- Community Renewal Fund bid for hydrogen HGV/PSV feasibility study. This has a nominated lead
- Support NCC Community Renewal Fund bid for a Norfolk movement corridor, to decarbonise transport to push for modal shift. This has no lead and is also ongoing.
- Engagement with the NALEP on their transport work and transport board. This also has no lead and is ongoing.

Suffolk

Low carbon transport is a focus area in the Suffolk Climate Emergency Plan. There are various actions linked to this priority theme. Driving sustainability in the transport sector can be challenging in Suffolk due to the rural nature of the area, limited rail services and the road network, and the port at Felixstowe.

Plug in Suffolk is a project to simplify the procedure of charging an electric car and make Suffolk Zero Emission Vehicle ready. It is promoted as the UK's first open access, standard, county-wide charging network. The process has been simplified by removing the need for registration with a particular network, smartphone app, access card or key fob. The only requirement is for the user to have a contactless payment system. The Plug in Suffolk Community Grant can contribute to the initial purchase costs of an EV charge point.

2.2.7 Sustainable economic growth and development

Bedford

The council has a Mayors Climate Change Fund with £400,000 to assist the community to deliver carbon saving projects. The Fund can provide 50% match funding (from £5,000 up to £20,000) for improvements that reduce carbon emissions and energy costs of community buildings within Bedford. The Growth Plan is currently being rewritten. The council is looking to facilitate collaboration between businesses and further-education establishments to drive green projects.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Climate Change Commission's recommendations around the skills agenda are being taken forward by the CPCA's Climate Action Plan. The CPCA has an Economic Growth Strategy which incorporates sustainability and has some focus on emerging clusters of energy and green technology, environmental services and high quality food. Additionally, South Cambridgeshire District Council have a Skills Strategy and Business Service Plan covering low carbon and environmental goods and services. The local authorities work collaboratively across the partnership area to develop renewable energy sector and create skilled jobs and training.

The [Eastern New Energy](#) (ENE) project is funded from ERDF as part of the European Structural and Investment Funds Growth Programme 2014-2020. ENE supports business, councils, communities, organisations, households and individuals to understand and help remove the barriers preventing rapid decarbonisation. This covers Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

Central Bedfordshire

For Central Bedfordshire, building local prosperity is about making the area a place where local people can influence economic growth and share in its benefits. Central Bedfordshire has a target to create 24,000 jobs

requiring 240,000m^2 of new floorspace by 2030. This represents a big opportunity for the development of the green economy.

The Central Bedfordshire Sustainability Plan has an objective around innovation-led infrastructure. This includes plans to facilitate the creation of a Central Bedfordshire Innovation Hub to enable low-carbon business incubation and drive local innovation and business growth. Plans for the creation of Energy Innovation Zones to stimulate clean technology innovations are also included.

Central Bedfordshire also facilitates sustainable economic growth by supporting access to Cranfield University's Net Zero programmes, sponsored Cranfield University's Venture Day (a sustainability event), launched a Central Bedfordshire Green Business Network Green Connectors, and sponsors an SME Sustainability Award. Work is also carried out with the LEP to support growth of the local low carbon economy, such as the 'Additional Restrictions' funded wider business support programmes, which included the 'Ready for Net Zero Growth' and 'Net Zero Top Up' projects.

Essex
The recently published 'Everyone's Essex: our plan for levelling up the county 2021 to 2025' includes a sustainable economy as one of four priority areas with ambitions to support green growth by developing Essex as a centre for innovation, supporting new technologies and business models to enable the economy to transition to net zero and secure green jobs for the future by ensuring they have the right local skills and drawing in investment opportunities. As part of this work a green skills review has just been completed, and a new action plan will follow. A sector development plan, identifying key sectors which are important for Essex has been published.

On the ground, the Net Zero Innovation Network brings together Universities and local businesses to develop innovation projects and pull in investment funding. Also the Eastern New Energy project covering the Uttlesford region of Essex is an example of a green growth project.

Hertfordshire
Whilst not directly produced by HCCSP, the Clean Growth Strategy has been published by Hertfordshire LEP. This will be championed by the LEP but delivery is reliant upon many partners including HCCSP. The two high level areas of focus are:

1. Pillar One: Growing the low carbon environmental goods and services (LCEGS) sector in Hertfordshire - Creating jobs and generating income as well as providing environmental goods and services to customers in Hertfordshire and elsewhere
2. Pillar Two: Improving the environmental performance of businesses, communities and places in Hertfordshire - Delivering better environmental outcomes, and delivering social and economic outcomes in a better way

The HCCSP has also stated the ambition to support a carbon reduction pledge that organisations can sign up to, and to set up local business forum, with an energy expert facilitator, to design and deliver a zero-carbon action checklist.

The Eastern New Energy project covers Hertfordshire.

Luton
The council's measures and schemes across domestic retrofit, transport and waste all serve to meet the Council's aim to eradicate poverty within Luton by 2040.

Norfolk

The Partnership have a shared interest in supporting Norfolk's authorities, communities, public, voluntary and community organisations, businesses, and residents to reduce their carbon emissions, realise economic benefits of reducing utility consumption and adopt to and mitigate against future impacts of climate change. The Partnership commissioned the Norfolk Chamber of Commerce to hold a business focused climate change expo.

The Carbon Charter is an accreditation recognising businesses for effective environmental management. It is aimed at SMEs across Norfolk and Suffolk. The website includes resources available to all businesses, providing support and guidance on carbon reduction and related activities including a Carbon Footprint Calculator, and guidance on producing an Environmental Policy and Action Plan. Over 120 businesses are accredited.

The Eastern New Energy project and Road to Net Zero Business Support Programme (delivered by New Anglia LEP) cover Norfolk.

Suffolk

The Climate Emergency Plan includes various actions focussed on sustainable economic growth. There is an ambition to encourage low emission freight to support the development of the Freeport East Hydrogen Hub and to promote partnerships between local firms and the Hub. Assistance will be provided to companies in local supply chains through economic programmes, targeting support and investment in skills at low carbon infrastructure sectors such as offshore wind and nuclear power.

The Carbon Charter is an accreditation recognising businesses for effective environmental management. It is aimed at SMEs across Suffolk and Norfolk. The Charter is administered by Groundwork East and overseen by the Environment Agency and Suffolk County Council on behalf of the SCCP.

The Eastern New Energy project and Road to Net Zero Business Support Programme (delivered by New Anglia LEP) cover Suffolk.

2.2.8   Social equity and health

Bedford

To help meet their statutory requirements, the council assess the impact of their activities on equality. This includes projects, policies, strategies, functions, and services. This involves collecting information and making evidence-led judgements on the impact of any activity and deciding the necessary action. This is used by senior managers and elected members. It is not mentioned in the Sustainable Development and Environmental efficiency Strategy Action Plan.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Commission takes a Just Transition as a core approach in its climate change recommendations – this follows through into the CPCA's climate action plan. This includes the convening of a 'climate and inclusion' working group with a remit to reach, engage and represent the views of groups who are often left out of climate and policy discussions, as well as other participative democracy activities such as Citizen's Assemblies. Within Cambridgeshire County Council, the Just Transition approach is supported through the authority's Triple Bottom Line accounting, and through a £14m Just Transition Fund, which has funded some flooding mitigation measures.

There are no specific *targets* relating to health inequalities across the different local authorities in this partnership, but there are various anti-poverty strategies which include objectives around improving health

outcomes for people on low incomes. In particular the public health functions in the County Council do have some targets around health inequalities.

Central Bedfordshire

The Central Bedfordshire Sustainability Plan makes no specific mention of social equity and health as this is implicit to everything they do, and is threaded through their work. For instance, targets to retrofit council properties up to an EPC C will act to reduce fuel poverty. Furthermore, improvements to public transport and active travel infrastructure will also improve health and equality of opportunity. As a unitary authority, Central Bedfordshire is also a local public health body, so there is alignment of thinking around active travel, biodiversity and climate resilience, and the health benefits that will follow from investment in these areas. Central Bedfordshire also has a strategic fairness task group, to ensure that ensure fairness is embedded in decision-making.

Essex

The recently published 'Everyone's Essex: our plan for levelling up the county 2021 to 2025' includes the commitment to address inequalities (including health inequalities) affecting children and families by focusing on recovery from the pandemic, tackling family poverty, mental health support, emotional wellbeing and healthy, active and productive lifestyles, and engaging with hard-to-reach groups. It also focuses on reducing health inequalities by bringing together partners and communities to address the socio-economic drivers that underpin poor health outcomes, such as poor housing, poverty, economic insecurity and low skills.

A detailed set of actions has been agreed under the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy. In addition, the Essex Climate Action Commission recommended that 100% of fuel poor homes be retrofitted by 2030. Essex supports the roll out and monitoring of performance of government fuel poverty grants.

On the ground, a joint bid was submitted to government from all Essex authorities to support retrofit in fuel poor homes. The country has secured £25 million in grant funding 2021-23 to support eligible households.

Hertfordshire

HCCSP has referenced a possible review of health and wellbeing benefits of engaging with greenspace and opportunities for greenspace access, with a view to producing guidance to inform greenspace planning and management. Health was the focus of the latest HCCSP meeting in March 2022.

Luton

Luton Borough has the highest percentage of fuel poor households in the East of England region. The data provided by the Anthesis report highlighted how the highest earning quintile income level's total travel emissions per person was 1.8 times higher than the second level quintile levels. Procurement is also meant to ensure that the Social Value Framework also addresses climate change.

Airports above a certain size are required to produce a Noise Action Plan designed to manage noise issues and effects arising from aircraft departing from and arriving at the airport. Luton also contains several 'important areas' for noise which are considered hot spot locations there the highest 1% of noise levels at residential locations can be found. To address this, the airport have a Noise Action Plan and a noise website to achieve continuous improvement.

Norfolk

Social equity and health are not mentioned in the Climate Change Plan, this is due to the partnership still being in its infancy. This doesn't seem to be a priority for the partnership. This again is an example of work being done in the region that the partnership does not seem to be involved in.

Suffolk

The [Health Inequalities Dashboard](#) is produced by the Suffolk Office of Data and Analytics on behalf of Suffolk's public sector organisations. It is an incredible resource clearly showing information at county, borough and district, and local area level including levels of poverty, fuel poverty, life expectancy, and unemployment.

2.2.9 Waste, recycling and the circular economy

Bedford

Waste is currently not being measured and was not included in the Council's Carbon Reduction Plan. This is because the council is waiting for a DEFRA consultation to conclude. The council has plans to treat waste food through an anaerobic digestion process to produce energy. The Sustainable Development and Environmental efficiency Strategy Action Plan comments on optimising residential and trade waste collection rounds to improve efficiency and reducing emissions.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

Across the Partnership there are targets for waste reduction. There is a Shared Waste Partnership from the County Council and all districts and KPIs are reported against this. The baseline survey reported good active project delivery in waste. However the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Commission on Climate does criticise the overall waste management strategy of the area as being out of date and called for its revision, to increase recycling, reduce residual waste, and re-examine the role of incineration in waste disposal.

Central Bedfordshire

The Central Bedfordshire Climate Change website highlights plans to provide food recycling to all households, although a target date for this is not mentioned. There are other examples of good practice such as the council's re-use shop at one of their recycling centres and their recycled bikes scheme.

Essex

The recently published 'Everyone's Essex: our plan for levelling up the county 2021 to 2025' includes the commitment to minimise the impact on the environment by supporting residents and businesses to reduce waste and increase the amounts recycled, and by working with others to deliver a more circular economy whereby natural resources are better protected though the efficient and ongoing reuse of materials. There are targets on waste reduction and annual waste performance metrics are published including residual waste volumes and recycling levels. There is partnership work across all the local authorities underway now to revise the Essex Waste Strategy. There are multiple projects operating on the ground encouraging composting and use of reusable nappies, and a specific grant funded programme of work to develop a local authority blueprint for a circular economy.

Key initiatives that are currently ongoing include a food waste pilot, a library of things and 'Love Your Period'; a sustainable period products campaign.

Hertfordshire

Chair of HCCSP Graham McAndrew is Deputy Chair of Hertfordshire Waste Partnership (HWP) and actively promotes waste minimisation. Some officers and members sit on both the HCCSP and HWP. Any issues associated with waste and the differing roles and responsibilities which sit across a two-tier authority area would be dealt with by both partnerships where the subjects of climate change and sustainability overlap. Two Hertfordshire authorities are in the top 10 nationally for recycling; St Albans and Three Rivers.

Luton

Luton has a town wide waste reduction and recycling strategy and a goal to achieve a 10% reduction in average household waste between 2018 – 2028, equating to 100kg per household. The council is also aiming to implement a citizens' responsibility agenda that incorporates key messages, such as 'waste less, recycle more'. Recycling rates decreased during the pandemic. At executive level the council have integrated an impact assessment which asks officers to consider the waste management hierarchy and waste arising from their proposals. There is currently no policy on single use plastic. The council moved to a fortnightly residual waste collection which resulted in the reduction of overall residential waste by 5%. Waste is considered in the Anthesis report, but specific focus on the circular economy is not mentioned in any documentation. The highest consumption-based emission associated with expenditure for the council was waste and recycling contract, contributing to 11% of total procurement expenditure.

Norfolk

Waste and circular economy is not mentioned in the Climate Change Partnership Work Plan, this is due to the partnership still being in its infancy. There is again, work being done within the Norfolk geography that looks at recycling and features the household recycling rates for several local authorities. This the 'public-facing' brand of the Norfolk Waste Partnership, which involves Norfolk's County, district, borough and city councils working together to improve waste and recycling services.

Suffolk

Suffolk Waste Partnership (SWP) is a strategic partnership across the county, which works together to continuously improve waste management services throughout Suffolk. SWP created a Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy in 2003, covering the period until 2020.

2.2.10 Procurement

Bedford

The council have sustainability procurement guide and have sustainable procurement incorporated into the procurement strategy, which is aligned with the sustainability action plan. The aim of this strategy is to promote responsible procurement to address environmental, social and economical issues. The sustainability procurement guide is located on the council's procurement website and covers the following aspects:

- Energy
- Wastewater
- Construction and maintenance
- Resources and biodiversity
- Transport and travel

The council also promote the use of E-procurement to reduce paper waste in the procurement process. The interview highlighted how this was initially challenging to integrate but is now an expected standard.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

Procurement across this partnership is something of a mixed picture. All local authorities consider the environment at a minimum via their commitments to secure Social Value. Cambridgeshire County Council goes further and now carries out Triple Bottom Line Accounting.

Spotlight on good practice: Triple Bottom Line Accounting

The triple bottom line is an accounting framework that incorporates three dimensions of performance: social, environmental and financial.

In Cambridgeshire, all business plans are now scored against prevention (financial criteria), decentralisation of decision making (social criteria) and the environment, allowing the council to demonstrate the social, environmental and financial case for expenditure on projects, and so allow some of those projects to go ahead.

Central Bedfordshire

The Central Bedfordshire Sustainability Plan aims to embed sustainability and social value in procurement processes, particularly by identifying 'high carbon' items within the current procurement pipeline and producing a sustainable procurement toolkit. This work is currently in progress. The council has an ambition to move to Whole Life Costing but is still on a journey to embedding this within all council thinking. The decision to build a care home in Leighton Buzzard (see above) to Passivhaus standards *was* approved based on Whole Life Costing.

Essex

In 2020, ECC introduced a weighting of up to 20% for climate impacts in procurement decisions with a range of climate focused themes, outcomes and measures. They are also introducing the first climate action plans as part of public tenders. Further work is ongoing to fully map Scope 3 emissions and green the supply chain.

There is also business support in the form of advice and grants to go green and reduce emissions. Nevertheless, interviews discussed the challenge of capturing benefits that would accrue from projects to *other* budget holders, within business cases.

Hertfordshire

HCCSP has ambitions to review extent that biodiversity is considered within the procurement policies and processes of local authority members, and benchmark against national best practice. An action has also been agreed to produce guidance notes to demonstrate best practice in local authority renewable energy/energy efficiency procurement and sustainable procurement.

Luton

Procurement equates to 78% of the council's total emissions, which has increased from 75,349 tCO_2 in 2009/2010 to 115,368 tCO_2 in 2018/2019. A recommendation from the Anthesis report is to review the procurement strategy, which is currently underway Project managers and executive report authors are expected to assess impacts of their proposals on the built and natural environment, low carbon economy and waste and consumption. The council is also looking to define and adopt a 'whole life costings' approach to projects to consider carbon and utility costs together. Projects are also meant to specify the integration of renewables, thermal heating, and heat pumps into refurbishments programme of council buildings.

Luton's current procurement strategy addresses the need to reduce environmental harm and this is covered in the 'value added to community' and 'enabling innovations' sections. The Kingsway Depot, covering waste collection and passenger transport fleet and building technical services, continue to source 90% of equipment locally.

Norfolk

The Norfolk Climate Change Partnership Work Plan says that it will investigate green procurement options. This has no lead or timeline. The individual stakeholders in the partnership may have procurement approaches, for example Kings Lynn Borough Council has a procurement strategy. This is potentially another example of the partnership's geographical area having pockets of good practice that don't appear on the Partnership's website or in any published documentation.

Suffolk

The Climate Emergency Plan includes action to agree a minimum sustainability expectation to be included in all public sector procurement. It also encourages partners to adopt Suffolk County Council's Climate Change Commercial Ask. This sets out the ask of contractors, including:

- Knowing impact on the environment
- Having an Environmental Policy that embeds a culture of reducing negative environmental impacts
- Ensuring environmental impact is measured and regularly reported and overseen at the highest level
- Reducing negative environmental impacts with a clear action plan outlining the work to be undertaken focusing on the biggest impacts, with key targets and timelines to the actions to be undertaken
- Working with the supply chain to know the environmental impact of the goods/services purchased and mitigate/reduce the negative impact, where the negative impact is not able to be reduced, offset the impact
- Working towards net zero by 2030

2.2.11 Behavioural change and communication

Bedford

Behaviour change is mentioned in the Carbon Reduction Delivery Strategy. The council have mandatory online Carbon Literacy training for all staff on climate change and sustainability. There was a sustainability champion scheme but that has been put on hold since the Covid-19 pandemic.

The council is looking to improve residents' knowledge of affordable warmth and fuel poverty by distributing information through existing networks and signpost residents to organisations for advice (Age UK). There also plans to deliver an energy and water awareness learning programme to staff. In addition, the council is looking to improve communication with partners and stakeholders to have access to online tools.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

As recommended by the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Independent Climate Commission, Citizens Assemblies are being set up. There is no co-ordinated approach for the whole region, but during the drafting of its report the Commission engaged with the public, the LEP ran a Citizen's Assembly on sustainable travel, and in addition there is also the Fenland residents citizen assembly.

Central Bedfordshire

The Central Bedfordshire Sustainability Plan has an objective to establish mechanisms to support people to live more sustainably, through a virtual Advice Centre, other support programmes, and funding through existing Ward Councillor grant schemes for community-led sustainable projects. The council is also trying to facilitate community energy projects.

Work is also going on to support young people to engage with sustainability, particularly through the ECO school forum and ECO school support programme.

Essex
There is a rolling programme of events and communications including a monthly newsletter, advice packs for residents and schools on how they can tackle climate change, and the Essex is Green Facebook page which reached over 10 million newsfeeds in its first year and the Climate Action Commission website.

To help local people to actively get involved, there is the Essex Changemakers group, whereby over 200 groups meet to share information and gain support. There are also lots of volunteering opportunities, for instance 1,164 volunteer hours spent tree planting so far this year, a year long series of webinars for parish councillors, and community action grant funding.

Behaviour change is being addressed through Involve's local Climate Engagement Programme, development of a local carbon app, travel behaviour change programmes and the Essex Climate Action Challenge Fund which offers up to £20k grants for local communities to deliver their own projects.

Hertfordshire
The recently approved HCCSP Behaviour Change Strategic Action Plan will bring together proposed actions from the initial four action plans that have a behavioural aspect to allow HCCSP to develop targeted interventions for behaviour change with the capability, opportunity and motivation approach.

The HCCSP sub- group for Behaviour Change seeks to clarify appropriate messages and interventions to engage the most amount of people in making positive changes to their behaviour. The aims and objective of this sub-group will be to decide appropriate target areas, use an evidence-based approach to develop target interventions, and to offer these interventions to all Partners.

In developing the first four HCCSP Action Plans, of the 146 actions identified, 59 of them were identified as Actions which rely on partners encouraging, influencing or facilitating others to change and of the 146, 33 were identified as Actions requiring others to act in response to partners' use of their regulatory powers (i.e. a form of regulatory or policy-based behaviour change). Over 60% of the actions identified by HCCSP are outside the direct control of its membership. Encouraging, influencing and facilitating all require a form of behaviour change to elicit meaningful and enduring impacts in these four areas.

The HCCSP Communications Strategy sets out the approach to encouraging residents and businesses to take action to reduce their greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The priority areas are:

- For residents:
    - Heating
    - Home insulation
    - Transport (modal shift)
    - Transport (EV)
    - Renewables installation
- Commercial:
    - GHG monitoring & management
    - Heating
    - Premises insulation
    - Transport (fleet)
    - Renewables installation

The focus of the Strategy is how change can be created through the messages communicated by the HCCSP partners. Where appropriate, policies and incentives to support specific behaviour change actions will be identified and progressed separately by the partnership.

Residents and business across Hertfordshire will be encouraged by partners to share their stories within the context of the campaign to make it more engaging, and to build dialogue between HCCSP's partners and those living and working across the county.

Luton

The council have created a [climate guide](link). The guide features a recommended carbon calculator and provides tips on reducing a person's carbon footprint at home with focus on food and travel. Councillors and staff are encouraged to take an e-learning module and Carbon Literacy accredited training. The council have a team who promote walking, cycling, public transport and car sharing to businesses and council staff.

The Anthesis report recommends behaviour change to reduce CO_2 emissions from schools. This is most likely because the council classes these emissions under 'weak influence'. Educating local young people is a priority. In his interview Cllr Tom Shaw commented on how they have a youth representative from the Asian community to act as a climate champion.

As part of the Anthesis report a stakeholder engagement piece was done. This involved internal stakeholder engagement (council officers and elected members) and external stakeholder engagement involving community groups and businesses in Luton. This was done to understand barriers and enablers through discussion around the various emission reduction measures suggested by the SCATTER analysis.

The internal stakeholder engagement highlighted the following learnings:
- Engagement and educating young people is a top priority
- The approaches overlap with existing council aims
- Collaboration across council departments is crucial
- Renewable energy generation is a challenge

The external stakeholder engagement sessions had the following feedback:
- There is a desire from business in Luton to collaborate
- There is an opportunity to share knowledge within the Luton business community
- Large businesses in Luton have demonstrated emissions reduction through energy efficiency measures
- Businesses who have undergone energy efficiency measures need ongoing assistance due to emissions plateauing
- Finance is a barrier to progress
- Luton's ambitions to reduce poverty align with net zero carbon ambitions

Norfolk

Local authorities within the partnership run events to spread awareness of sustainability initiatives. King's Lynn ran a series of events in 2019 to create an opportunity to engage with residents and local stakeholder groups to voice their opinion on the Weaver's Way and Norfolk Coast Path.

The partnership itself does not cover behaviour change and communication in much detail. The work plan states that it will investigate behaviour change options and further engagement. This however has no lead or timeline. The Partnership does promote renewable energy suppliers (Octopus Energy and Roar Power). No further detail is provided. According to the plan the partnership is preparing to promote the Solar Together program and support like the Green Homes Grant.

Suffolk

Collaborative action is a focus of the Climate Emergency Plan with various actions linked to this priority theme. The focus is on residents and commercial and industrial organisations.

Spotlight on good practice: Suffolk Climate Action Community Match Fund

The £150,000 Suffolk Climate Action Community Match Fund opened in June 2022 for applications from not-for-profit organisations looking to deliver community-based carbon reduction projects.

The fund is available to charities, community interest companies, parish councils, voluntary groups and other not-for-profit organisations whose projects contribute to the Climate Emergency Plan and support the vision of carbon neutrality by 2030.

Projects could include improving the energy efficiency of buildings, promoting walking and cycling, using sustainable or recycled materials, or raising awareness of climate change through events.

The fund will support up to 50% of costs (up to a maximum of £10,000) for projects that can demonstrate support from others in the community in the form of contributions from multiple other sponsors for the remaining project costs.

2.3 Measuring and monitoring

There was a sense across the partnerships that whilst strategies and action plans are well developed, measuring progress and reporting on this is more of a challenge. Whilst Scope 1[1] and 2 emissions were cited as being easier to monitor and measure, Scope 3 emissions are notoriously difficult to quantify. Engagement with a wide range of businesses across the region is essential in improving this.

In Cambridgeshire and Peterborough progress towards carbon reduction targets is reported to be mixed, with some areas on track, others not but with further measures identified, and other areas known to be a challenge. However, no carbon budget has been calculated for the area. This is seen as something that needs to be clearly agreed with central Government. Local authorities in this partnership use the Greenhouse Gas Protocol to measure carbon emissions. Cambridge County Council, for example, use the SCATTER tool, and have extended it to give more granular detail.

In Essex the SCATTER tool has also been used and all local authorities within this partnership collate and monitor carbon emissions following the GHG Protocol and BEIS carbon conversion factors.

As previously mentioned, the SCCP will shortly publish an accessible dashboard showing emissions progress against key areas such as housing, transport and energy.

2.4 Utilisation of LGA support offer

The interviews highlighted that the support offer from the national LGA in relation to climate action is well understood, with the following aspects being utilised across the partnerships:

- Climate emergency knowledge hub where councils share information and experiences
- Searchable database of climate change case studies

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[1] Information on scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions: https://www.local.gov.uk/climate-change-reporting-guidance-local-authorities

- [Net Zero Innovation Programme](link) develops partnerships of researchers and climate change officers from English councils and supports them in tackling the climate emergency
- Senior officer leadership training in carbon literacy
- Monthly e-bulletin on climate change

There was limited feedback to confirm that the [Greenhouse Gas Accounting Tool](link) (developed by Local Partnerships working with the LGA to provide a consistent approach for councils to calculate their own carbon baseline) was being many of the partnerships or their member councils, with only Bedford highlighting their interest in using this tool.

The EELGA Talent Bank requires further development to fully meet the needs of local authorities to support their climate action.

2.5 Barriers and challenges to progress

The following sections summarise issues which were flagged by more than one partnership as being barriers and/or challenges to progress in relation to climate change action.

2.5.1 Ownership and engagement on climate change responsibility

The partnerships reported challenges associated with people thinking that if 'climate change' is not in their job title, then it has nothing to do with them.

Spotlight on good practice: Climate change and net zero training
Cambridgeshire County Council are working to improve climate literacy with a climate change and net zero training session to managers and councillors, as well as a more extensive 'root and branch' long term approach to raising climate skills and teaching colleagues to embed climate change in their service provision. The training aims to teach people to understand the data, to calculate carbon and the whole lifetime costs of their services and understand that the council is comfortable to take a longer term view on finances. Phase one of this programme is dealing with technical competency and phase two will build a platform that will help colleagues make climate informed decisions.

The interviews highlighted the need for better coordination across varied local authority teams including planning, waste and recycling, economic growth etc. This is essential to ensure that their activities are captured in the context of climate change action. Some individuals or departments may not be aware that their projects are directly related to this agenda and outputs including financial impact, carbon savings, or community engagement may not be captured for reporting.

2.5.2 Sharing across local authority boundaries

Several partnerships stated that they would like to develop better collaborative working across different local authorities within their county, and also with neighbouring authorities outside the county. Whilst this has been achieved successfully though the partnerships in Hertfordshire, Norfolk and Suffolk, it is not as well embedded in other areas.

In the Bedfordshire area all the authorities are unitary, which seems to create something of a barrier for working in partnership in comparison to two tier authority areas where you have different responsibilities but for the same geographic patch.

2.5.3 Resourcing

Resourcing to drive climate change action was cited as one of the main challenges within individual local authorities and at the partnership level.

In Central Bedfordshire, for example, the Head of Sustainability has only been in place for 18 months, and only finished fully recruiting two teams six months ago. Hence their Sustainability Plan has many very good ideas and concrete actions to take, but the council has only recently had the resource and capacity to start acting on this.

2.5.4 Funding

Many individuals interviewed raised the challenge of funding available to drive climate action.

Government funding is often short term in nature meaning that projects where the programme of works required is long term (more than one year) are not a good fit. This has been seen in Essex and Central Bedfordshire. Short term funding is also a barrier in a different way – it can lead to more 'risk averse' decisions being made, e.g. School Governors choosing *not* to have a heat pump installed when school boilers needed upgrading as there wasn't time to convince them that a heat pump (a novel technology) was reliable and cost effective.

Funding is also not seen as being responsive to localised need. For instance active travel is very difficult and expensive to implement in rural areas like Central Bedfordshire. In the CPCA area where some powers are devolved from central Government there may be more opportunities for locally appropriate decision making to take place.

2.5.5 Governance

Securing cross-party support for some initiatives is reported as being a challenge.

For example, to make progress in decarbonising transport, robust disincentives to discourage the use of individual motorised transport is required, such as congestion charging. This can become a very politicised issue, and action can be blocked.

Some sectors are particularly carbon intensive, but economically important. Along with farming, air travel is another example. Luton Airport is obviously a carbon intensive operation, but provides many jobs for local people. As such, addressing these issues can be very sensitive.

There can be challenges in local authorities working together successfully, perhaps because of sensitivities around housing allocation in local plans along with other areas.

An issue that was raised during the Norfolk Partnership interview was that different councils within the Partnership have different Net Zero goals and sustainable objectives. This makes collaboration particularly challenging because different stakeholders in the partnership are working towards different timelines, which leads to different levels of urgency and proactiveness.

2.5.6 Skills

The interviews demonstrated that multiple partnerships were concerned about having the right skills to drive climate action and in the wider supply chain.

This can apply to skills within the local authorities themselves and is illustrated by the fact that Central Bedfordshire has been recruiting to their sustainability and sustainable travel teams over the past year and reported challenges in finding people with the right technical expertise. As such they have had to redesign at least one role, and rethink what they wanted that role to do.

This can also apply to skills in the supply chain where there are challenges in supporting ambitions on areas including housing retrofit (whole house, terraced housing etc.) and decarbonisation of heat. To illustrate this point, CPCA were awarded £22 million from Government to support retrofit projects but were unable to implement this because they could not find the companies with necessary skills to deliver the projects in the short timescales available.

2.5.7 Land use

A high proportion of land in the East of England is agricultural and farming practices which are highly carbon emitting (for instance, the draining of peat in the Fenlands) are embedded in some communities. Here, farming is integral to the community and their sense of pride and identity. Engagement with farmers and their communities to develop a vision and strategy for these areas which takes account of economic impact and goes beyond the single issue of peat emissions is important in overcoming this. Councils may have varied levels of experience in engaging with the farming and land-use community.

The Food, Farming and Countryside Commission (FFCC) are piloting a Land Use Framework for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough providing a more strategic approach to land use decision making. The overall objective of the Land Use Framework approach is to establish an integrating, collaborative and place-based approach to land use decision making, to mediate complex requirements from land and to generate multiple benefits for nature, communities and a fair and sustainable future.

A land use framework is an approach to managing land use decisions that mediates competing pressures and encourages multifunctionality, enabling land to provide multiple benefits for public value. It would consist of a set of agreed principles and practices that are embedded across local, regional and national organisations, guiding decision making. The framework could also be integrated into support schemes for landowners and farmers to encourage them to align their decisions to the same principles.

Spotlight on good practice: Land Use Framework for Cambridgeshire & Peterborough
The FFCC are piloting a Land Use Framework for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough with the overall objective of establishing an integrating, collaborative and place-based approach to land use decision making, to mediate complex requirements from land and to generate multiple benefits for nature, communities and a fair and sustainable future.

Land Use Framework

PLACE
Land-led

Is the land being used for the things which it is best at, going with the grain, learning from experience/history, appropriate to the geology, soil and landscape character?

PUBLIC VALUE
Multifunctional

Is the land being used to bring about multiple benefits to address varied human and ecological needs? Are organisations and agencies working together to take more coherent account of land use interactions and potential unintended consequences to identify best value?

PUBLIC VALUE
Integrative

Are all the nation's targets, needs and aspirations for land in view, considered collaboratively and coherently, to enable better land use decisions to be taken across a wider area?

PLACE
Adaptive & Resilient

Is the land being used in a way that adapts to and mitigates change created by the climate crisis and the uncertainties and risks brought by increased flooding and drought, enabling communities to respond to multiple future scenarios?

PEOPLE
Locally Responsive

Are those who own, manage or farm land leading decision making, integrating local needs and aspirations into plans and mindful of responsibilities to their local environment and community?

PEOPLE
Outward & Future-focussed

Is local decision-making taking into account impacts on other communities, the nonhuman world and on the needs and wellbeing of future generations?

2.3.8   Other External Factors

We find ourselves in unusual times as we continue to grapple with the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic whilst also facing a cost-of-living crisis and conflict within Europe. These issues may lead to climate change action becoming a lower priority for both councils and residents, but they can also have benefits when it comes to sustainability.

High fuel prices may mean that use (and particularly sole occupancy) of private cars decreases as people turn to public transport or active travel options which are more affordable.

High energy prices mean that where a council owned building is particularly energy intensive, it makes sense to retrofit this (if funding is available) as quickly as possible as the payback on investment will be quite short, or to consider selling the building. If decisions are not made swiftly, then money and carbon emissions are wasted on these energy intensive buildings.

The pandemic has led to much more hybrid working than had hitherto been the case. This has resulted in a decrease in emissions associated with travel. The ability to collaborate across online platforms was cited by some as a positive change, meaning that engagement can be more easily achieved with a wide range of partners. However, it was also cited as making organic collaboration more difficult, and removing the immediacy and urgency one might want to bring to an issue through impromptu, face to face discussions

3 Recommendations

Based on the analysis undertaken, our recommendations are summarised in the table below, with an indication of who may be best placed to lead and support in each area.

Ref.	Action	Lead
	Biodiversity and natural environment	
1	Support the region to explore further, and share guidance and good practice in relation to, leveraging net gain and investment from biodiversity strategies	EELGA
2	Share emerging practice and learning across the region about how best to engage farmers and landowners in local nature strategies. Recommend that evidence of such engagement activity be included in climate change action plans in local areas (if not already evident)	RCCF
	Adaptation to climate change	
3	Consider development of regional strategy for climate change mitigation and adaptation, providing a common framework for action	RCCF
	Retrofit and sustainable housing	
4	Advocate for consideration of whether Housing Revenue Account (HRA) debt could be written off and used to invest in climate action (housing retrofit for example)	RCCF/LGA
	Sustainable Energy	
5	Encourage better engagement with Energy Systems Catapult in relation to the potential for delivery or support in Local Energy Action Planning, building on pilots in other areas of the UK (Bury (Greater Manchester), Bridgend and Newcastle)	Individual Local Authorities County Partnerships RCCF
	Sustainable Travel	
6	Review areas where policy could be brought together regionally for greater impact (e.g. more connected transport, LCWIPs)	Individual Local Authorities Sub-national transport bodies
	Sustainable economic growth and development	
7	Support collaboration with the LEPs and support programmes across the East of England to achieve better engagement with businesses (particularly SMEs) and support with decarbonisation	RCCF LEPs
8	Consider supporting the development of an 'East of England Net Zero Business Pledge' allowing any business in the region to align on the ambitions for net zero and to gain recognition and support in doing so	RCCF LEPs Chambers
9	Consider developing a set of prioritised investment propositions/a pipeline of opportunities to attract private sector investment to support the delivery of climate change action plans in the East of England	RCCF

10	Build upon previous activity and provide ongoing engagement. An example is the 'Achieving Sustainable and Inclusive Growth Prospectus'. What are the next steps and how can the partnerships get involved?	EELGA
	Procurement	
11	Push for greater standardisation of reporting and accreditation standards, so that all local authorities (or even all public sector bodies) use one system, and contractors bidding for work with different public bodies need only be conversant with one system for demonstrating their carbon emissions. This could include the Triple Bottom Line approach utilised in Cambridgeshire.	RCCF LGA
12	Consider whether a central resource could be secured to support the Regional Climate Change Forum in an efficient and cost-effective way. The Talent Bank currently includes limited expertise on climate change and sustainability (with only two associates listed in these fields)	EELGA
	Behavioural change and communications	
13	Share case studies to allow for greater learning and collaboration on climate change action – the good and the bad! We can learn just as much from projects that haven't gone well as those that were successful	RCCF LGA
14	Support the provision of standardised communication materials which can then simply be tweaked by each partnership or local authority for use in their own area	RCCF LGA
	Advocacy and lobbying	
15	Advocate for greater clarity on the responsibilities that sit with central versus local government including carbon emissions and accounting	RCCF LGA
16	Advocate for greater devolved power to be given to local authorities to develop climate change action relevant to their local communities, and with appropriate levels of funding	
17	Work with other LGAs and national-level organisations and networks (e.g. UK100, APSE etc) to advocate for the above two requests.	
18	Advocate for funding to be better designed i.e. longer term programmes, not 'won' through competitive tender, but allotted to each authority to allow for long term planning (Links directly to EELGA's Regional Advocacy Action Plan)	
	Regional Collaborative Actions	
19	Consider repeat of analysis 1-2 years to establish progress and challenges	RCCF
20	Enable better collaboration across local authorities and the partnerships to collectively make a bigger impact. Knowledge transfer from the more well established to the emerging partnerships	Individual Local Authorities County Partnerships RCCF
21	Encourage better collaboration with the Greater South East Net Zero Hub to benefit from support, expertise, resources and funding available	Individual Local Authorities County Partnerships RCCF

22	Where possible, strategically align targets to ensure stakeholders within climate change partnerships are working to the same goal e.g. Net Zero by 2030	RCCF
23	Encourage all county climate change partnerships to be inclusive of a wide range of stakeholders.	Partnerships
24	The themes of 'social equity and health' and 'waste, recycling and the circular economy' require further exploration to develop recommendations	EELGA RCCF
Tools, information and communication		
25	In relation to action 9) carry out a webinar focused on the public and private sector financial mechanisms and funding options available, their suitability, and pros and cons	RCCF LGA
26	Explore producing a consistent approach for carbon literacy (or similar) training for council officers and members in the region.	EELGA
27	Given that monitoring and reporting is cited as a challenge, consider whether the Climate Emergency Dashboard being developed in Suffolk could be replicated across the region	RCCF Partnerships
28	Where themes have been identified as having limited progress, support the sharing of knowledge across partnerships through training and education. Focus areas should include: • Energy • Biodiversity and natural environment • Adaptation to climate change • Retrofit and sustainable housing • Social equity and health • Sustainable economic growth and development (with particular focus on engagement and support to SMEs) • Procurement • Behaviour change and communications	RCCF Partnerships
29	Undertake review of carbon reporting tools and techniques currently available to, and being used by, local authorities. Where possible, utilise same approach across the region	Individual Local Authorities County Partnerships RCCF

4 Appendix 1: Stakeholders interviewed

Bedford

- Cllr Charles Royden
- Paul Pace

Cambridgeshire & Peterborough

- Cllr Lucy Nethsinga
- Steve Cox

Central Bedfordshire

- Cllr Steven Dixon
- Stephen Mooring

Essex

- Cllr Schwier
- Samantha Kennedy

Hertfordshire

- Cllr Graham McAndrew
- Matthew Partridge

Luton

- Cllr Tom Shaw
- Katarzyna Wysocka

Norfolk

- Cllr Ian Sherwood (planned)
- Lorraine Gore (planned)

Suffolk

- Cllr Andy Drummond (Portfolio Holder for Climate Challenge)
- Jill Korwin

5 Appendix 2: Example briefing information

[Sustainability West Midlands](#) (SWM) have been commissioned by East of England LGA to provide a baseline analysis in relation to climate change activity across the eight county-level climate change partnerships. We are looking at:

- Current progress, strengths, areas for improvement and barriers to delivery in achieving climate action targets with consideration of:
  - Biodiversity and natural environment
  - Adaptation to climate change
  - Retrofit and sustainable housing
  - Sustainable energy
  - Sustainable travel
  - Sustainable economic growth and development
  - Social equity and health
  - Waste, recycling and the circular economy
  - Procurement
  - Behavioural change and comms
- The extent to which the LGA's climate change offer is already being utilised
- Similarities and differences in the methodologies and tools currently used to measure the impact of climate change interventions, providing additional comparative information from other regions/nationally where possible
- Identifying key barriers that are affecting all/multiple parts of the region which could be present opportunities for more intensive collaborative work at regional scale
- Case studies and good practice that can be shared regionally

We are assessing this using:

1. Interviews
2. Review of documentation provided
3. Responses provided to the baseline questionnaire

Our work will conclude by the end of July 2022.

Logistics of the interview
- The interview will take no more than 60 minutes
- It will take place on Teams
- It will be recorded for the sole purpose of note taking and feeding into the final report. The recording will be deleted once your feedback has been captured
- Your feedback can be anonymised if you wish –please make this clear to the interviewer at the time

Questions:
We will work through the following standard questions along with locally specific discussion points resulting from the literature reviewed:
a) How do you feel the council is progressing in relation to climate action?
b) Where do you feel the most progress has been made?
    a. Where are your greatest areas of strength in relation to climate action?
c) What do you feel are the barriers to improvement (if any)?

       a.   What would need to happen for these barriers to be overcome?

d)   What support do you receive from the LGA in relation to climate action?

e)   What methodology and/or tools do you use to measure the impact of climate change interventions?

f)   Do you have any examples of work in your area which you are particularly proud of, and which could be used to inspire others?

On behalf of EELGA we are hugely thankful for you taking the time to contribute to this analysis.

6 Appendix 3: Baseline questionnaire

The following questions were included in the baseline questionnaire:

Targets and monitoring
1. Have you declared a climate emergency, and if so, when?
2. Do you have a clear picture of carbon emissions within your control?
3. Do you monitor and report on your carbon footprint on at least an annual basis?
4. Are you on track to meet your carbon reduction target?
5. Have you calculated a carbon budget (amount of carbon emissions left to 'spend' between baseline and target date) that is in line with your carbon target?
6. Have you supported/implemented targets for waste management in line with the waste hierarchy (reduce, reuse, recycle)? Do you measure performance against these targets?
7. Have you supported/implemented targets focusing on sustainable staff travel, such as number of trips made by walking, cycling or public transport? Do you measure performance against these targets?
8. Have you supported/set targets to reduce air, water and/or noise pollution in your area? Do you measure performance against these targets?
9. Have you supported/set targets that focus on improving biodiversity, natural capital or tree planting? Do you measure performance against these targets?
10. Have you supported/set targets to strengthen the low carbon and environmental goods and services sector in the local area?
11. Have you supported/set targets around improving health inequalities in the locality? Do you measure performance against these targets?
12. Have you supported/set targets for fuel poverty reduction in the locality? Do you measure performance against these targets?
13. Have you supported/set targets on using energy sourced from renewables? Do you measure performance against these targets?
14. Have you supported/set targets around reducing flood risk in your area? Do you measure performance against these targets?
15. Have you implemented any other relevant targets related to sustainability?

Policies, plans and leadership
16. Do you have a Councillor/ cabinet member responsible for sustainability/ climate change?
17. Do you ensure that sustainability objectives are considered by Councillors when they are committing to implement any project or programme?
18. Do you have an individual or team whose role it is to accelerate and monitor the implementation of sustainability related activities (e.g. a Sustainability Manager or Low Carbon Projects Officer)?
19. Do you have sustainability champions allocated across a variety of teams to support the implementation of sustainability outcomes?
20. Do you provide training to staff about climate change and sustainability issues?
21. Do you work with independent, cross-sector organisations to help shape climate change policy and activity e.g. via a Climate Change Commission?
22. Have you mapped out the roles and responsibilities of external partners to help achieve sustainability and carbon reduction objectives?
23. Are you required to publish an annual independent and audited report to the public on progress in meeting climate change targets, and do you report on your successes and achievements around sustainability externally, either on websites, through social media or presenting at events?

24. Have you run a Citizens Assembly on sustainability or used other approaches to ensure the views of local residents are heard?
25. Do you have a carbon reduction action plan that commits to the implementation of quantifiable activities that will reduce carbon?
26. Do you have a waste management policy or plan in place that details how waste and single-use plastics will be reduced and how recycling can be improved across the area?
27. Do you have a sustainable procurement policy in place, including targets and tangible actions around sustainable and ethical sourcing of products and services?
28. Have you produced a sustainable travel plan, including actions on walking, cycling, public transport and remote working capitalising on the impact of Covid-19?
29. Have you implemented a biodiversity action plan that includes factors around wildlife protection, species enhancement and tree planting?
30. Does your economic growth strategy focus on sustainable growth rather than growth without limits, and a 'green' recovery from Covid-19?
31. Do you have a diversity and inclusivity policy or strategy that ensures fairness is embedded into decisions and thinking?
32. Do you have a renewable energy implementation plan, or contribute actively to a local area plan produced by the LEP or combined authority?
33. Do you have guidance or technical support available to aid the implementation of sustainable and low carbon design and technologies in new builds?
34. Have you assessed the present and future risks that climate change may pose to your local area?
35. Have you implemented an adaptation action plan?
36. Have you implemented any other action plans relevant to sustainability?
37. Have you fully costed and determined resourcing requirements for all relevant plans related to sustainability for at least the first year of their implementation?
38. Have you prioritised the actions included in your sustainability-related action plans in terms of cost, benefits and their ability to help meet related targets?
39. Have you won any awards for your sustainability activity?

Activities and project/programme delivery
40. Have you mapped out current and future funding options that could help with the implementation of sustainability projects?
41. Do you encourage staff participation in sustainability/low carbon activities via implementation of behaviour change programmes?
42. Do you encourage local residents to live more sustainably by providing support and opportunities for active involvement in activities? E.g. community energy, tree planting, plastic-free initiatives, community resilience etc.
43. Have you provided support or implemented actions to improve sustainability objectives in schools?
44. Have you delivered projects that have notably contributed to the reduction in waste or better recycling of waste?
45. Are you supporting the rollout of low carbon vehicles into the community, such as low emission buses or taxis or installation of rapid EV charging points?
46. Are you involved in any community schemes or development of infrastructure projects aimed at encouraging the population at large to travel more sustainably, such as by public transport or walking and cycling?
47. Do you ensure that environmental factors, including potential pollution impacts, are considered prior to the implementation of any capital project?
48. Have you implemented any schemes that aim to improve biodiversity, or integrating greening into building capital projects, such as green space development, green roofs or tree planting?

49. Do you run or signpost to (a) sustainability business support programme(s) or networks for local SMEs?
50. Do you work with the LEP to support the growth of the local low carbon economy through jobs and skills and to ensure their decisions factor in local sustainability targets?
51. Are you participating in any programmes that help contribute to local area health outcomes and that could result in a reduction in health inequalities in the area?
52. Have you ensured that actions related to sustainability benefit all areas of society, including more vulnerable and socially deprived residents?
53. Have you worked with partners to enable residents to obtain advice or practical solutions on improving their homes to prevent the risk of fuel poverty?
54. Have you participated in the Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery scheme to help improve the energy efficiency of hard-to-treat homes?
55. Do you encourage local residents to uptake renewable technologies or set up new, partly owned energy companies to provide local, low cost, low carbon energy?
56. Do you work with the local Net Zero Hub and the Regional Senior Energy Projects Officer for your area to help support the delivery of local energy projects?
57. Do you support installation of energy efficiency measures across the local authority estate and, where relevant, street lighting?
58. Have you implemented any measures to ensure services and estates are protected from future climate changes, such as better ventilation in buildings or flood protection schemes?
59. Do you provide advice, guidance or practical solutions to local residents to enable them to better prepare for a greater incidence and severity of extreme weather events?
60. Are there any other projects and activities not aligned to the above but that are focused on sustainability that you have implemented?