Supplemental Item for Resources and Place Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 12 May 2026 at 6.30pm

in the Council Chamber Council Offices Market Street Newbury

Part I

Page No.

Sarah Clarke.

Sarah Clarke
Executive Director - Resources
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Environment Strategy Annual Progress Report 2024/2025

Committee considering report:	Resources and Place Scrutiny Committee
Date of Committee:	12 May 2026
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Stuart Gourley
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	23.02.2026
Report Author:	Emily Ashton-Jelley and Helen Ramsey
Forward Plan Ref:	EX4767

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1. The purpose of this report is to present to the Resources and Place Scrutiny Committee the Environment Strategy Annual Progress Report. The last time the Environment Strategy was considered by Scrutiny was in April 2024. At that time the activities and projects up to the end of 2022/23 were being reported. A significant amount has happened across the intervening 2 years, and it is therefore appropriate to provide an update to this committee.

1.2. The Annual Progress Report covers the period from July 2024 through to July 2025. It is, however, part of the continuous story of how the council is addressing climate change, biodiversity enhancements and promoting environmental sustainability in West Berkshire.

1.3. The report includes a summary of achievements as well as an update on the council's carbon footprint for financial year 2024 / 2025 and looks ahead to how existing and new projects will assist the Council in achieving Net Zero by 2030 with a 'pathway to Net Zero' graph. A key finding from this year's report is the council's carbon emissions have reduced by 38% compared with the baseline year (2019/20).

2. Recommendation

2.1. It is recommended that the Resources and Place Scrutiny Committee note:

- the latest 2024/2025 Progress Report on the Environment Strategy (as included in Appendix A)
- the additional information provided in relation to our update on Biodiversity Duty reporting (Appendix B)

2.2. The remainder of this report is the same information drafted for the Executive meeting on 21st May unless otherwise stated.

3. Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	There are no direct funding implications as a result of this report. Projects and actions already underway are funded by existing approved budgets and/or external funding. Teams across the council will use the budget setting process to plan for future programmes and secure funding for them.
Human Resource:	There are no direct HR implications as a result of this report.
Legal:	There are no direct Legal implications as a result of this report.
Risk Management:	A high-level risk register has been developed for the Environment Strategy. This is reported to the Net Zero Steering Group and kept under review.
Property:	There are no direct property implications as a result of this report. Whilst there are projects discussed or indicated in the Pathway to Net Zero that impact on the council's property portfolio, these are projects that are already approved and nothing new is being proposed through this report.
Policy:	Priority Area: 3. Tackling the climate and ecological emergency. This annual progress report aims to demonstrate how the Environment Strategy is being delivered and will play a part in informing and shaping relevant Council policies and plans across the organisation. With the introduction of the Sustainability Assessment Tool last year, this is assisting in increasing the influence and understanding of the Environment Strategy and how the Council can address the climate and ecological emergencies as well as other important health and wellbeing outcomes through its policies, plans and events. The Sustainability Assessment Tool is also helping to guide staff and Members on how they can assist in delivering environmental outcomes within their roles.

	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equalities Impact:				
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?		X		No impact directly as a result of the annual progress report. Across the Delivery Plan this will need to be dealt with on a project-by-project basis through the PMM process to ensure delivery does not have a negative impact.
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?		X		No impact directly as a result of the annual progress report. Across the Delivery Plan this will need to be dealt with on a project-by-project basis through the PMM process to ensure delivery does not have a negative impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics.

Environmental Impact:	X			The purpose of the annual progress report is to demonstrate the delivery of the Environment Strategy which seeks to have a positive impact on the environment in numerous ways addressing both the climate and ecological emergencies declared by the council. It has a primary target of achieving net zero on Council operations by 2030. An outline of the Council's vision can be found in section 4 of the Environment Strategy. As the projects within the Delivery Plan are implemented, consideration will be given in the detailed planning stages as to whether there are unintended negative environmental impacts that require mitigation. The Sustainability Assessment Tool will help determine and mitigate against any negative impacts of projects. The ecological emergency declared by the Council in 2023, will add further focus for positive environmental improvement and will be assisted by a framework to drive positive change as well as identifying collaboration and engagement opportunities.
Health Impact:	X			The Annual Progress Report does not have a direct impact on health outcomes, however the projects and activities within the Environment Strategy Delivery Plan that have a focus on carbon reduction will have health benefits through a reduction in air pollution. Some projects delivered to date are not purely focused on outcomes that reduce carbon and seek to improve health and wellbeing as a key benefit.
ICT Impact:		X		There is not a significant ICT impact.
Digital Services Impact:		X		There is not a significant impact on Digital Services.

Council Strategy Priorities:	X			The main Council Priority to which the projects and actions within the Delivery Plan contribute is **tackling the climate and ecological emergency**. They do this in many ways but will have a key focus on achieving net zero and enhancing biodiversity. Other priorities from the Council Strategy that the Environment Strategy helps to deliver are: Develop local infrastructure, including housing, to support and grow the local economy. The Delivery Plan includes active travel infrastructure, green and blue infrastructure and influencing the environmental standards of other infrastructure, including housing.
Core Business:	X			As a result of projects detailed within the Annual Progress Report the council will see some of its core business processes improved as the Environment Strategy starts to have an impact. For example, the implementation of the Sustainability Assessment Tool that includes environmental and socio-economic factors to consider, is having a positive impact on project delivery and aligns with the Environment Strategy and bring environmental improvements.
Data Impact:		X		It is not envisaged that there will be any data impacts.

Consultation and Engagement:	The Annual Progress Report has been presented to key personnel. Those consulted are: - Councillor Stuart Gourley, Executive Portfolio Holder: Environment and Highways - Clare Lawrence, Executive Director, Place - Jon Winstanley, Service Director, Environment

	- Kofi Adu-Gyamfi, Service Lead Climate Change - Jenny Graham, Environment Delivery Manager Various teams across the council have contributed to and been consulted on the Annual Progress Report and the pathway to net zero graph.

4. Executive Summary

4.1. The purpose of this report is to present the Environment Strategy Annual Progress Report. The Annual Progress Report covers the period from July 2024 through to July 2025. It is, however, part of the continuous story of how the council is addressing climate change, biodiversity enhancements and promoting environmental sustainability in West Berkshire.

4.2. The Environment Strategy Annual Progress Report is included in Appendix A. The report includes a summary of our achievements as well as an update on the council's carbon footprint for financial year 2024 to 2025 and looks ahead to how existing and new projects will assist the Council in achieving Net Zero by 2030 with a 'pathway to net zero' graph. Key projects highlighted in the 'pathway to net zero' demonstrate projects on the horizon, the momentum that exists and the significant investment being made in planning some of our larger infrastructure projects.

4.3. A key finding from this year's report is the council's carbon emissions have reduced by 38% compared with the baseline year (2019/20) decreasing from 11,619.59 tCO_2e to 7,162 tCO_2e in 2024/25. In addition, emissions have fallen by 20.65% compared with last year, representing a reduction of 1,864 tCO_2e from the 2023/24 total of 9,025.90 tCO_2e. This is due to several factors including better quality data and fewer estimates for school sites; a reduction in staff mileage claims; energy efficiency measures and solar panel installations at several council sites; and HVO fuel being used in our food waste vehicles. These figures demonstrate continued and meaningful progress toward our long- term decarbonisation goals.

4.4. At a district level, the Government releases annual CO_2 emissions data for each local authority with both a full dataset and a subset that removes emissions from nationally managed roads. The latest available data is for 2023 due to a two- year lag in data being reported. Long- term trends show decreases across both datasets, mainly due to cleaner electricity generation, better energy efficiency in buildings, economic changes, gradual improvements in transport emissions, and strong climate policies.

5. Supporting Information

Introduction

5.1. The report seeks to inform the public about this year's progress on the Environment Strategy.

5.2. The Annual Progress Report covers a busy year of climate- related activity for the Council, with several projects completed, new ones launched, and strong progress on longer-term initiatives.

5.3. Three main areas of action continue to guide the work:

5.4. **Reducing the Council's own carbon emissions**, with contributions from teams across the organisation.

5.5. Collaboration between colleagues across the organisation to **address the ecological emergency.**

5.6. **Supporting and engaging communities and stakeholders** to help lower emissions and improve the environment across the whole district.

Background

5.7. Although it's not a legal requirement for local authorities to publish their emissions, it is considered good practice. Mandatory reporting may be considered by the Government in the future, so this report, in conjunction with our carbon footprint calculation methodology, ensures the Council is prepared.

5.8. The Council's 2024/25 data indicates emissions continuing to fall, remaining below the levels seen during the COVID- 19 pandemic. This confirms that reductions are now being achieved through sustained action rather than temporary circumstances. Overall emissions have decreased by 38% since 2019/20, decreasing from 11,619.59 tCO_2e to 7,162 tCO_2e in 2024/25. Breaking this down further, since last year, emissions have fallen by 20.65% representing a reduction of 1,864 tCO_2e from the 2023/24 total of 9,025.90 tCO_2e.

5.9. Improvements in data collection, especially more accurate, site- specific information for schools has contributed to more reliable reporting. This enhanced accuracy supports better decision- making as the council progresses toward its Environment Strategy goals.

5.10. Additional reductions have come from:

- **Lower staff mileage**, supported by increased use of pool cars (including an EV), public transport, and smarter working practices.
- **Energy- efficiency upgrades** at council sites including leisure centres, such as improved boilers and pool covers.
- **Transition to Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO)** for food- waste vehicles, cutting emissions through the use of a renewable, lower- carbon fuel.

5.11. The council remains committed to continuously improving its carbon reporting by adopting best practice and updating methodologies as needed.

5.12. The Government publishes annual data on carbon dioxide emissions for every local authority, measured in tonnes of CO_2 per person. Two versions are provided: a full dataset covering all local emissions sources and a subset that excludes emissions from

nationally managed roads like the M4 and A34. Due to a lag in the reporting cycle, the latest available figures are for 2023.

5.13. COVID- 19 significantly influenced the 2020 data, with emissions dropping during lockdowns. Emissions rose again in 2021 as restrictions eased and remained broadly similar in 2022, with slight reductions in some areas.

5.14. Overall, both the full and subset datasets show a long- term downward trend. Key drivers include cleaner electricity generation, improved energy efficiency in buildings, structural economic changes, gradual reductions in transport emissions, and better waste and land management. National and local climate policies have also supported these reductions.

5.15. The Council emphasises the need for continued district-wide action and highlights the importance of community engagement, supportive policies, and measures within the Delivery Plan and Local Plan to help reduce emissions and respond to the climate and ecological emergencies.

Proposals

5.16. We propose the Environment Strategy Annual Progress Report is approved for publication on the website specifically noting:

- A reduction in emissions from the baseline year of 38%.
- The progress the Council has made in delivering our projects as outlined in our Environment Strategy Delivery Plan.
- The updated Pathway to Net Zero graph which shows the key projects the council has committed to in order to progress towards net zero for its own operations by 2030.

6. Other options considered

6.1. The Council is committed to reporting annually on its progress in delivering the Environment Strategy. Each report covers activity and achievements from July of one year to the end of June the following year, reflecting the Strategy's approval in July 2020.

6.2. The Council's own carbon footprint is measured by financial year, with the most relevant data included in each Annual Progress Report (APR). District- wide emissions figures, provided by central government through the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ), are reported by calendar year, and the latest published data is also incorporated into the APR.

6.3. Alternative options would be:

(a) *Not reporting on progress in delivering the Environment Strategy, or*

(b) *Reporting only the Council's carbon footprint data and the District- wide emissions data from DESNZ.*

Response:
Whilst the Council are in a position to resource the reporting of progress in delivering the Environment Strategy and the latest carbon footprint figures, this will be carried out. Limiting the report to data alone would overlook the wider work, projects, initiatives and policy development that contribute to reducing environmental impacts. Producing a more detailed report allows both the Council and the communities of West Berkshire to showcase the broad range of activity taking place across the district. It also helps to inspire further action by sharing useful and engaging information about ongoing work.

7. Conclusion

7.1. The Annual Progress Report highlights the progress made over the past year in delivering the Environment Strategy. It forms part of the ongoing narrative of how the Council is addressing the challenges of tackling the climate and ecological emergencies.

7.2. Both the council's own carbon emissions and those recorded across the district continue to show an overall downward trend, moving us closer to our net zero target. While there is still significant work ahead, the delivery of several major projects currently in development will support meaningful progress in the coming years.

7.3. Work will continue to be driven by the Environment Strategy Delivery Plan, which is updated throughout the year and published on the Council's website. Both the Strategy and the Delivery Plan have recently been refreshed to ensure resources are focused on the actions with the greatest impact.

7.4. Despite wider challenges, such as the ongoing cost of living pressures, it remains essential to maintain momentum on climate action and protecting and enhancing the district's natural habitats for future generations.

7.5. We're also forging ahead with rooftop solar projects; we have secured a four-year contract to install solar PV across council sites and schools. Alongside this we are progressing a significant nutrient mitigation programme in the River Lambourn catchment to stop the decline of water quality in sensitive habitats by ensuring that new developments do not increase the overall load of nutrients. Our successful Town and Parish Forum has been expanded (now the Community Climate Forum) to include community groups and individuals which will provide greater collaboration on climate action. A great deal of background work has been happening around EV infrastructure which will help secure the delivery of further installations.

8. Biodiversity Duty

8.1. For the purposes of the Resources and Place Scrutiny Committee meeting and in response to a request from the Chair, Appendix B is included which provides an update on the Council's Biodiversity Duty reporting. This is one aspect of the Council's response to the declared ecological emergency. The Council has previously reported

its actions and activities on the website and will continue to keep this updated when the next full reporting data is available.

9. Appendices

9.1. Appendix A – Environment Strategy Annual Progress Report July 2024 – July 2025

9.2. Appendix B – Update on Biodiversity Duty reporting

Background Papers:

The Environment Strategy (2025 Refresh) and previous annual progress reports are all on the Council's website.

Subject to Call-In:

Yes: ☐ No: **No**

The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval ☐

Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council ☐

Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position: ☐

Considered or reviewed by Scrutiny Commission or associated Committees, Task Groups within preceding six months ☐

Item is Urgent Key Decision ☐

Report is to note only ☒

Wards affected: This is not an item for decision, but the Annual Progress Report includes actions and projects being delivered throughout the district.

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Document Control

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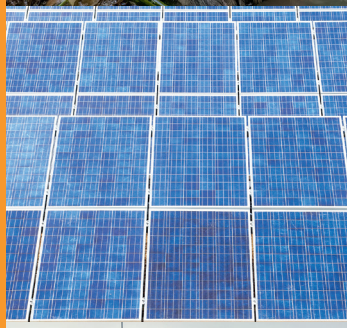
Author:	Emily Ashton-Jelley		
Owning Service	Climate Change Service, Environment Department		

Change History

Version	Date	Description	Change ID
1.0	02/01/26	ES Annual Progress Report	EAJ
2.0	24/02/26	ES Annual Progress Report	EAJ
3.0	22/04/26	Updates for Executive Briefing including info on Biodiversity Duty	JG
4.0	06/05/26	Updates for Resources and Place Scrutiny Committee	JG

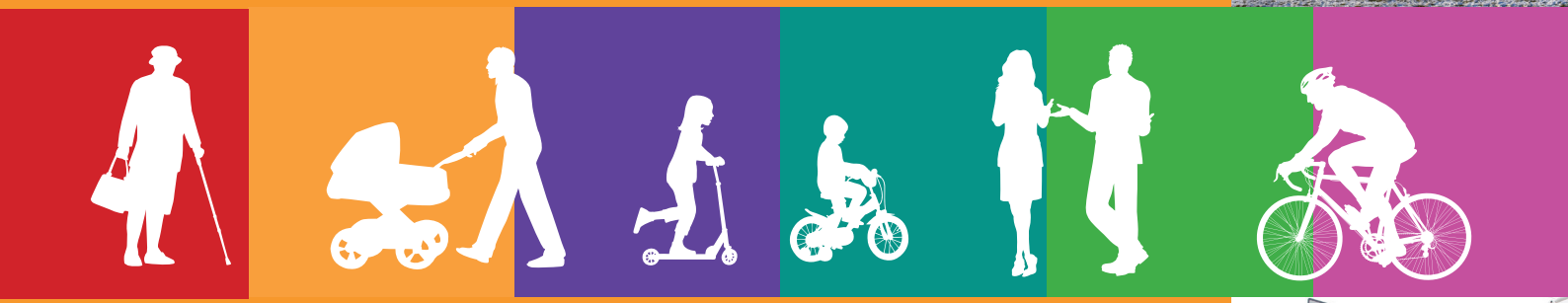
APPENDIX A

Environment Strategy Annual Progress Report 2024/25



Environment Strategy

Annual Progress Report
(July 2024- July 2025)



Improving your **Environment**

West Berkshire COUNCIL

Foreword

This year marks a milestone for West Berkshire as we complete several major initiatives shaping a greener, more connected future.

Our updated Local Plan now embeds ambitious policies to tackle climate change, ensuring development is sustainable and resilient. Alongside this, Government funding is supporting the Council to develop nutrient mitigation projects in the River Lambourn catchment, directly addressing the ecological emergency while unlocking opportunities for responsible growth.

We also published our new Local Transport Plan (LTP4) in summer 2025. This sets out a clear vision for modernising transport across the district, tackling challenges and embracing opportunities to deliver a system that supports residents, businesses, and visitors.

Together, these achievements highlight our determination to protect the environment, strengthen communities, and invest in infrastructure. They demonstrate that West Berkshire is not only meeting today's challenges but actively shaping a sustainable future.

Councillor Stuart Gourley
Executive Member for Environment and Highways

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Introduction

Tackling climate action is imperative. This year saw above-average tropical cyclone activity, with 18 named storms by October, alongside devastating floods, heatwaves, and wildfires globally. (Source: Assessing the Global Temperature and Precipitation Analysis in October 2025 | News | National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI))

West Berkshire Council (WBC) declared a climate emergency in July 2019 and is committed to achieving net zero for Council activities by 2030, while supporting net zero across the district.

Following the declaration, we published an Environment Strategy in July 2020 and our first annual report in 2021. In October 2023 we also declared an ecological emergency which is addressed in our plans.

We revisited and refreshed our Environment Strategy and Delivery Plan earlier this year, taking stock at the mid-point on our pathway to net zero target of 2030. The refreshed version of the Environment Strategy and Delivery Plan, which included a look ahead to how the Council will reduce its carbon emissions by 2030, was approved by the Executive on the 22nd of May 2025. The aim of the refreshed Environment Strategy and our Environment Strategy Delivery Plan is to be more focussed, achievable and resource efficient. Full detail of the Environment Strategy and Delivery Plan refresh and previous Annual reports can be found on the Green Hub section of the Council's website.

Our Annual Reports are designed to keep our residents and local businesses informed of our progress to date and outline the actions the council will be taking on the pathway to net zero by 2030.

This fifth report covers activities from July 2024–July 2025. This edition of the Annual Report looks at our 2019/20 carbon footprint baseline and analyses and compares this data with the recently compiled 2024/25 carbon footprint data set. The Annual Report also reports on district-wide emissions figures which are collected by the Government.

We've aimed to streamline this report in comparison to previous years, focusing on data and key stories from the year. Further information, events and news stories can be found in our monthly Environment Newsletters.

Included on Appendix C, for reference, is a glossary of terms, created after public consultation in 2021.

The Fifth Year - summary of actions and achievements

In its fifth year of implementation, the Environment Strategy has delivered significant progress, with a variety of actions and achievements across the council and within our local communities.

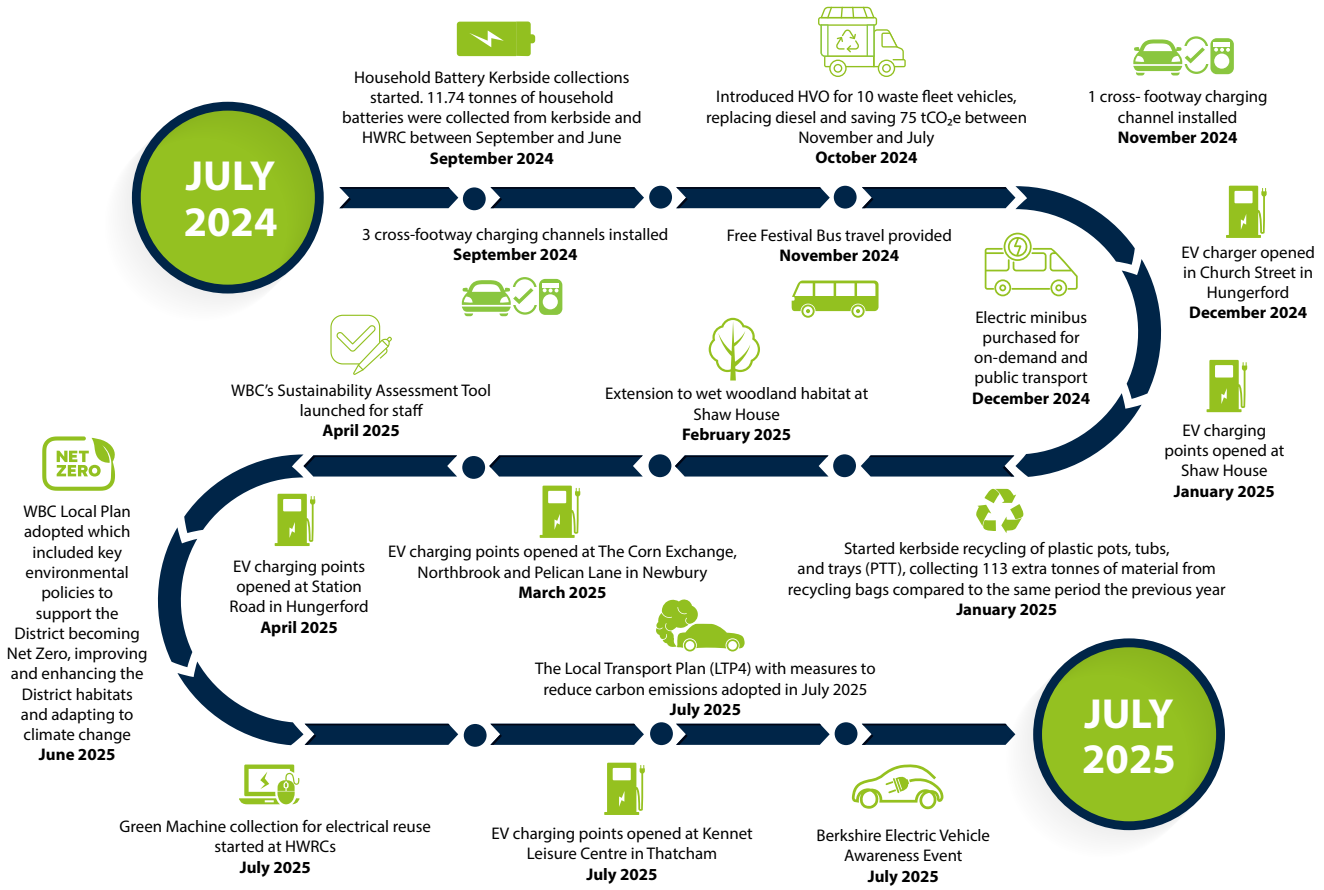
Since the publication of the original Environment Strategy in July 2020, Annual Progress Reports have been produced and presented to the Executive. These reports, available on the council's Environment Strategy webpage, track progress in reducing the Council's carbon footprint and showcase a wide range of climate action from both the council and the community.

Each Annual Progress Report includes a roadmap highlighting the key projects and achievements of the year. The latest roadmap is shown below, previous roadmaps are included in Appendix A.

Over the last year, the Council with its partners has been working on several key projects to assist in delivery of the Environment Strategy and Delivery Plan Refresh and support the council addressing the climate and ecological emergency.

An overview of these projects is highlighted within the July 2024 – July 2025 roadmap.

Figure 1: Highlights of delivery of the Environment Strategy July 2024 – July 2025



The roadmap is followed by case studies of actions and achievements that have taken place throughout the year.

Climate mitigation measures along the River Lambourn

In February 2025, West Berkshire Council's Environment Delivery and Countryside Teams established a riparian tree buffer zone along the River Lambourn on council-owned land at Almond Avenue Park, near Shaw. This initiative forms part of ongoing efforts to protect and enhance one of the world's rare chalk streams.

Working in partnership with the Wild Trout Trust (WTT) and the Environment Agency (EA), the project aims to help future-proof the river's marginal corridor at Almond Avenue Park. The River Lambourn is globally significant, being one of only 220 chalk streams on earth. Around 80% of these protected rivers are found in Southern England, with several located in West Berkshire. The section at Almond Avenue is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and a Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

Chalk streams support unique habitats and species that are highly sensitive to climate change, water quality, flow variations, pollutants, and invasive species. To strengthen resilience, 48 native riverside trees- including Blackthorn, Alder, Downy Birch, Bird Cherry, Goat Willow, Alder Buckthorn, and Hawthorn were chosen and planted within newly unmown marginal areas. Biodegradable tree guards are being used to minimise environmental impact.

The buffer zone will provide multiple benefits: mitigation from the impact of climate change, supporting carbon sequestration, providing valuable food sources, protect areas from predation and increased bankside stability. Over time, it will develop into a valuable riverbank habitat, enhancing biodiversity and ecological stability.

Additionally, mowing practices have been adapted along river edges, introducing a 3-metre 'no-mow' zone. This change, implemented by Countryside Team contractors, will encourage the growth of native vegetation, offering shade, shelter for fish and invertebrates, and improved bank stability. These measures collectively aim to protect wildlife, increase habitat diversity, and safeguard the future of this rare chalk stream.

West Berkshire Local Plan: Supporting a Sustainable Future

West Berkshire Local Plan

West Berkshire Council adopted its new Local Plan Review (2023–2041) on the 10th of June 2025, setting out a vision for how the district will grow and develop over the coming years. This plan replaces previous planning documents and provides a framework to guide housing, employment, and infrastructure while ensuring that sustainability remains at the heart of decision-making.

A key priority of the Local Plan is tackling climate change. All new development must contribute to West Berkshire's ambition to become net zero as a District by 2030. This means homes and businesses will be designed to achieve net zero carbon, with a strong emphasis on energy efficiency, low and zero carbon technologies and renewable energy. The plan also promotes sustainable transport and reducing reliance on cars.

Protecting and enhancing the natural environment is another central theme of the Local Plan. The Local Plan requires developments to incorporate green and blue infrastructure, such as trees, open spaces, and water features, which help absorb carbon, provide cooling, and support biodiversity. It also includes measures to manage flood risk through sustainable drainage systems and improve water quality. Wildlife habitats will be safeguarded and connected to allow species to adapt to climate change.

By embedding these principles, the Local Plan ensures that growth in West Berkshire is not only about meeting housing and economic needs but also about creating resilient communities and a healthier environment for future generations.

West Berkshire Council Drives EV Awareness at Berkshire rEVolution

West Berkshire Council played a pivotal role in this summer's Berkshire Electric Vehicle Awareness Event, held on the 11th of July 2025 at Winnersh Triangle Business Park. The event, known as Berkshire rEVolution, brought together over 200 residents, business owners, and sustainability advocates to explore the future of transport and accelerate the transition to electric vehicles (EVs). Visitors had the chance to:

- test drive over 40 electric vehicles from brands like Tesla, BMW, Citroën, and Porsche.
- attend expert-led presentations on EV innovation, climate change, and government grants.
- explore indoor and outdoor exhibitions featuring EV infrastructure providers, sustainability initiatives, and local authority projects.
- engage in panel discussions with industry leaders and academics, including speakers from the University of Reading, Energy Saving Trust, and EZOO.

At the EV event, the following WBC approved products and services were present with stands: Kerbo Charge, Solar Together (our partners), Ubitricity (on-street charging installer), and Enterprise Mobility (Car Club Provider).

The event was organised in partnership with Let's Experience Electric, Winnersh Triangle Business Park, and all six Berkshire local authorities - including West Berkshire Council. West Berkshire Council made a strong impression with a vibrant stand showcasing:

- EV infrastructure projects across the district
- environmental strategy materials
- press coverage of recent EV charger installations

Council Officers led by Service Lead for Climate Change, Kofi Adu-Gyamfi, engaged with attendees throughout the day, answering questions and sharing insights into local EV initiatives. West Berkshire Councillor Justin Pemberton and Mayor of Thatcham Town Council Petra Pemberton, also visited the stand, discussing future plans and offering support for promoting EV adoption in Thatcham and beyond.

Feedback was overwhelmingly positive:

- 92% rated the event as Good or Excellent
- 75% said they're very likely to consider purchasing an EV
- test drives were the most popular feature, followed by presentations and exhibitor engagement

West Berkshire Council's active participation in Berkshire rEVolution demonstrates its leadership in climate action and sustainable transport. By promoting EV infrastructure, collaborating with partners, and engaging the community, WBC is sparking real change on the road to a net zero future.

Update on the Council's carbon footprint

Following WBC's declaration of a climate emergency in 2019, we established a baseline for our carbon footprint covering April 2019 to March 2020. A specialist contractor supported us in assessing the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions generated by our assets and activities.

We adopted an operational control approach, meaning emissions from assets under our direct control were included in the calculations.

GHG emissions are categorised in 3 different scopes:

- **Scope 1 (Direct):** Emissions from sources we own or control, such as our fleet vehicles.
- **Scope 2 (Indirect):** Emissions from purchased energy (electricity, heat) used in our buildings.
- **Scope 3 (Indirect):** Emissions from goods and services we use but do not directly control, such as investments and contractor activities.

It is mandatory for us to report Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions. Scope 3 emissions are optional; however, we have included emissions from our largest contracts:

- Waste Management (Veolia),
- Highways (Volker Highways) and,
- Leisure centre operator (Everyone Active).

West Berkshire Council's carbon reporting cycle aligns with the financial year, i.e., 1st April to 31st March, annually. Therefore, activity data within the period 1st April 2024 – 31st March 2025 has been used to update the carbon footprint and to compare against the baseline data.

Using the data available, the council's carbon emissions (or carbon footprint) are calculated using the following formula: Activity Data x Emissions Factor = Emissions (tCO_2e).

Emission factors represent the quantity of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions linked to specific activity data, for example, the emissions produced from burning one litre of diesel. The term tCO_2e refers to tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent, a standard metric used to compare emissions from different greenhouse gases. It does so by converting the amounts of these gases into the equivalent amount of CO_2, based on their Global Warming Potential (GWP).

Table 1: West Berkshire Council's Carbon Footprint 2024/25 compared to baseline (2019/20)

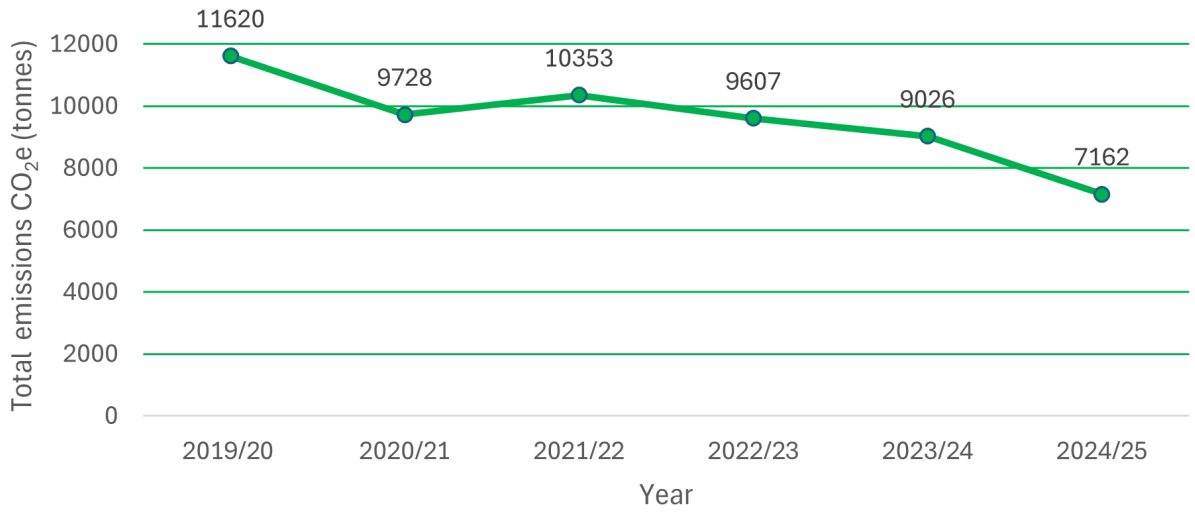
Emissions Scope	Emissions Source	2019/20 (Baseline)		2024/2025		difference CO_2e (tonnes) between baseline and 24/25	% difference between baseline and 24/25
		CO_2e (tonnes)	% of total emissions	CO_2e (tonnes)	% of total emissions		
1	Stationary Combustion (e.g. energy use)	3,502.3	30.1%	1,836.69	26%	-1665.6	-47.5%
	Mobile Combustion (e.g. vehicles)	290.6	3%	210.2	3%	-80.4	-27.6%
	Sewage Processing and Refrigerants	146.0	1%	124.2	2%	-21.8	-14.9%
	Total Scope 1	**3,939.0**	**34%**	**2,171.1**	**30%**	**-1767.9**	**-44.9%**
2	Purchased electricity	3,495.8	30%	2,196.1	30%	-1299.7	-37.1%
	Total Scope 2	**3,495.8**	**30%**	**2,196.1**	**31%**	**-1299.7**	**-37.1%**
3	Contractor Emissions	2,574.7	22%	1,897	26%	-677.7	-26.3%
	Leisure Centres	1,228.9	11%	631.2	9%	-597.7	-48.6%
	Business Travel	381.2	3%	266.5	4%	-114.7	-30.0%
	Total Scope 3	**4,184.8**	**36%**	**2,794.7**	**39%**	**-1390.1**	**-33.2%**
	All Scopes	11,619.6	100.0%	7,161.9	100.0%	-4457.70	-38.3%

Table 1 shows the comparison between the baseline data and the data for 2024/25. The percentage differences between these two positions are shown in the last column in the table. The overall position is that the latest 2024/25 figures show a 38% reduction in emissions from the baseline.

The year-on-year changes from the baseline through to 2024/25 are set out in the full data table in appendix B.

Figure 2 below shows a summary of the total emissions for each of the years from the baseline to current position.

Figure 2: West Berkshire Council's Carbon Emissions 2019/20 - 2024/25



In our first annual report, we showed how the COVID-19 pandemic had a clear impact on our carbon footprint for 2020/21. The big drop from the baseline was mainly because many council activities were put on hold and buildings weren't running as usual during the national lockdown. Once restrictions eased, many of those activities resumed, and the 2021/22 figures reflect that increase. Even so, emissions didn't return to pre-COVID levels, and we still saw a solid reduction compared to the baseline.

The graph for 2024/25 shows that, as in the previous year, the Council's emissions have fallen below the levels recorded during the COVID-19 pandemic. This demonstrates that reductions are being achieved through the Council's ongoing actions rather than temporary external factors. Since reporting began in 2019/20, overall emissions have decreased by 38%. Continued progress is expected as further projects and initiatives are implemented.

We've seen a 38% reduction in our reported carbon footprint this year, in part due to improvements in how we collect and manage data, particularly for our school sites. By moving away from estimates and using more accurate, site-specific information, we're now able to report our emissions with greater confidence. This not only gives a clearer picture of our environmental impact but also helps us make more informed decisions as we work towards our Environment Strategy and Delivery Plan goals.

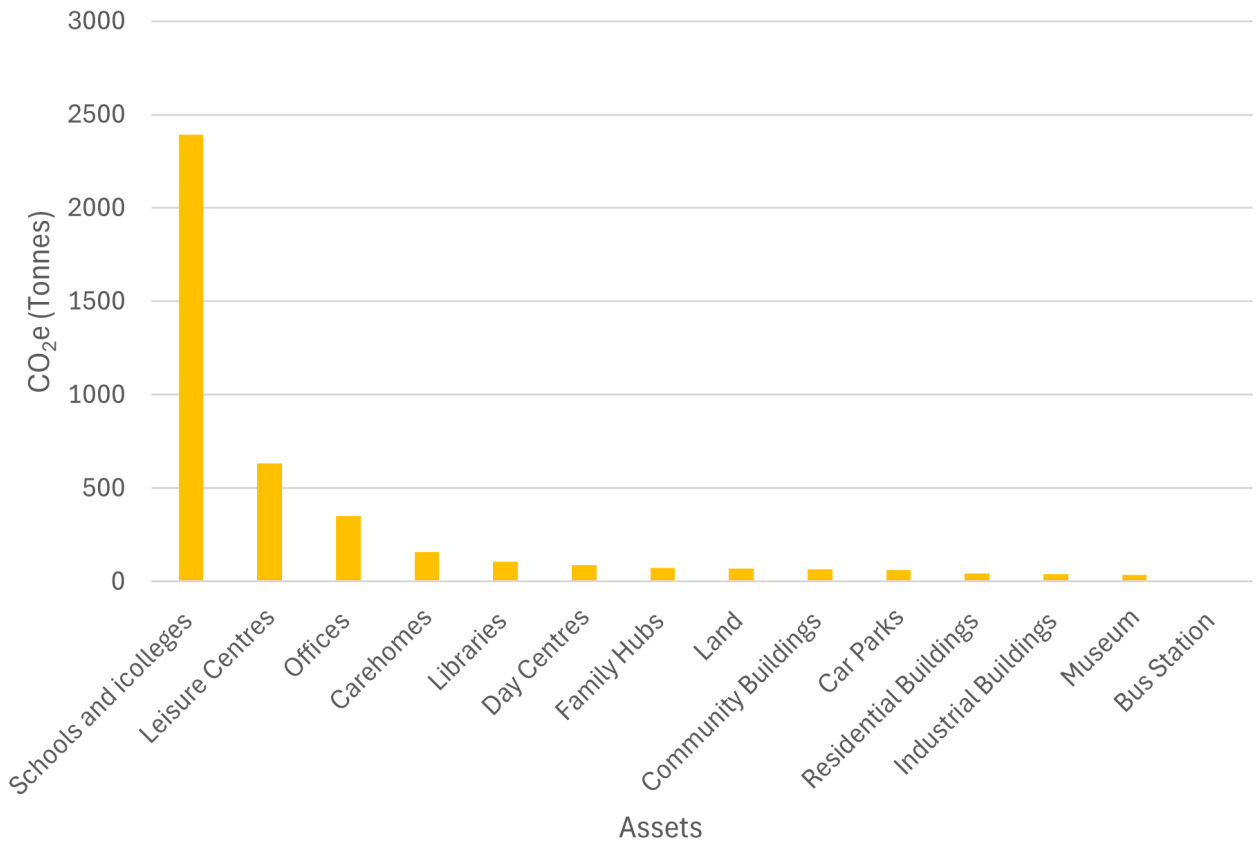
In addition, staff mileage has significantly decreased this year, partially due to an increase in staff using pool cars (one of which is an EV), staff being encouraged to use public transport and smarter ways of working, i.e. reducing the need for in-person meetings this has also contributed to our reduction in emissions.

We've made improvements to some of our leisure centres too, such as the installation of more efficient boilers and using pool covers to save energy.

The transition to using Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) fuel, particularly for our food waste collection vehicles, has contributed to a measurable reduction in our carbon emissions. As a renewable diesel alternative, HVO offers significantly lower greenhouse gas emissions compared to conventional fossil fuels, supporting our commitment to more sustainable operations and helping us progress toward our net zero targets.

WBC remains committed to continuous improvement in carbon reporting by adopting best practices, considering new guidance, and updating methodologies as required to ensure our reporting is as accurate as possible.

Figure 3: West Berkshire Council Emissions by Asset Type 2024/25



The Council owns a significant number of buildings and other assets that all contribute to the organisation's carbon footprint. Figure 3 details the emissions in relation to the council's assets reported by asset type.

We have updated the accuracy of our reporting, hence some of these assets have different names since the last reporting period. In addition, in previous years some assets of similar types were merged, but we have separated them for greater clarity.

Schools and icolleges have reduced their emissions by 1,864 tonnes this year, as mentioned previously, this is mainly due to more accurate data being received.

Although leisure centres still appear in our top emitters, they have reduced their emissions this year by 235 tonnes, for the reasons discussed previously, which is very encouraging. With the Northcroft Leisure Centre Decarbonisation Project underway, we expect to see greater reductions in the future.

Pathway to Net Zero

Looking ahead, we've updated our pathway to net zero graph (the initial version of which features in our Environment Strategy Refresh 2025 document), to reflect the recent changes and incorporate the latest carbon footprint data.

Figure 4 shows the impact of all our funded projects (some of which are yet to start), on our target towards net zero by 2030. The gap in emissions is currently estimated to be 49 tonnes of CO_2e. This graph will be 'live' and be revised as and when more projects are agreed and each time the carbon footprint calculation is published.

Figure 4: West Berkshire Council's predicted Carbon Footprint (tCO_2e) 2019/20 – 2029/30 – committed projects

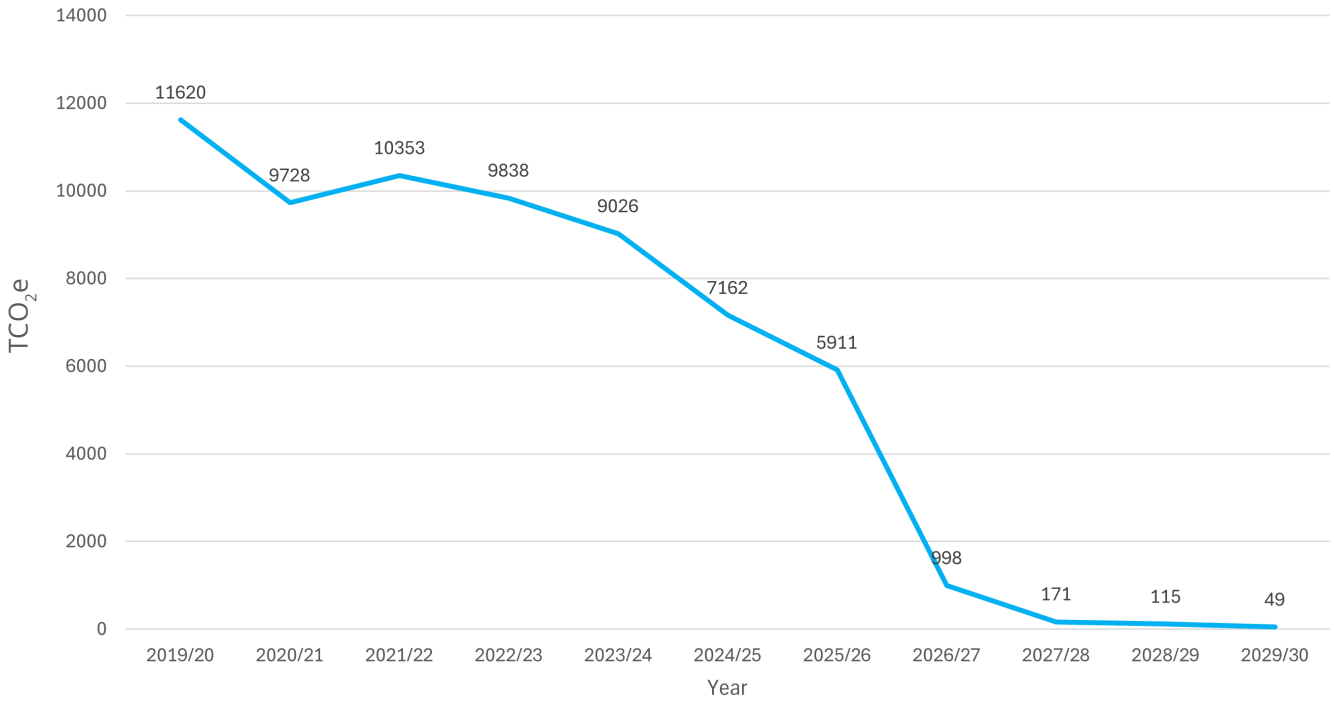


Figure 5: How projects contribute to meeting net zero

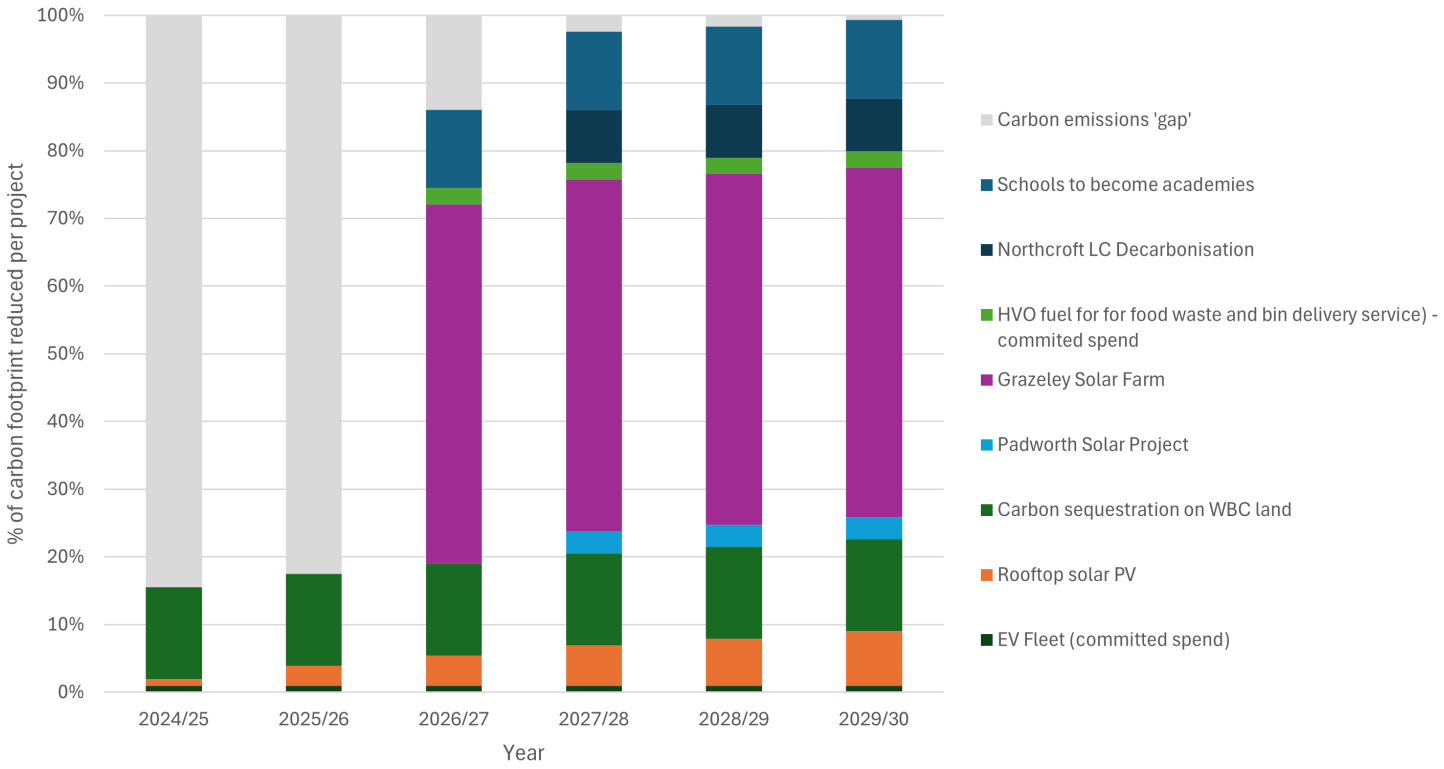


Figure 5 above shows how each funded project contributes to our net zero by 2030 target. Grazeley Solar Farm is expected to deliver the highest proportion of CO_2e reduction on the Council's pathway to Net Zero, however it should be noted that the viability of this proposal is still being considered.

Update on the District's emissions

Every year, the Government publishes data showing how much carbon dioxide is emitted in each local authority area. This is reported as tonnes of CO_2 per person.

Two sets of figures are provided:

- The Full set – includes emissions from transport, homes, businesses, and agriculture.
- The Subset – removes emissions we can't control locally, such as traffic on major roads like the M4 and A34, which are managed nationally.

Because of the way data is collected, there's a two-year delay before figures are confirmed. The most recent data available is for 2023, and you'll find these figures in Table 2 and Figure 3, along with previous years to show progress over time. We also include updates the government have made since the last report was published.

The 2020 figures highlighted the significant changes in behaviour brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic and associated lockdowns. By 2021, as restrictions were lifted, new patterns of activity emerged, resulting in higher emissions. The 2022 data shows a similar trend, with overall emissions remaining broadly consistent with 2021, though showing a slight decrease in some subsets.

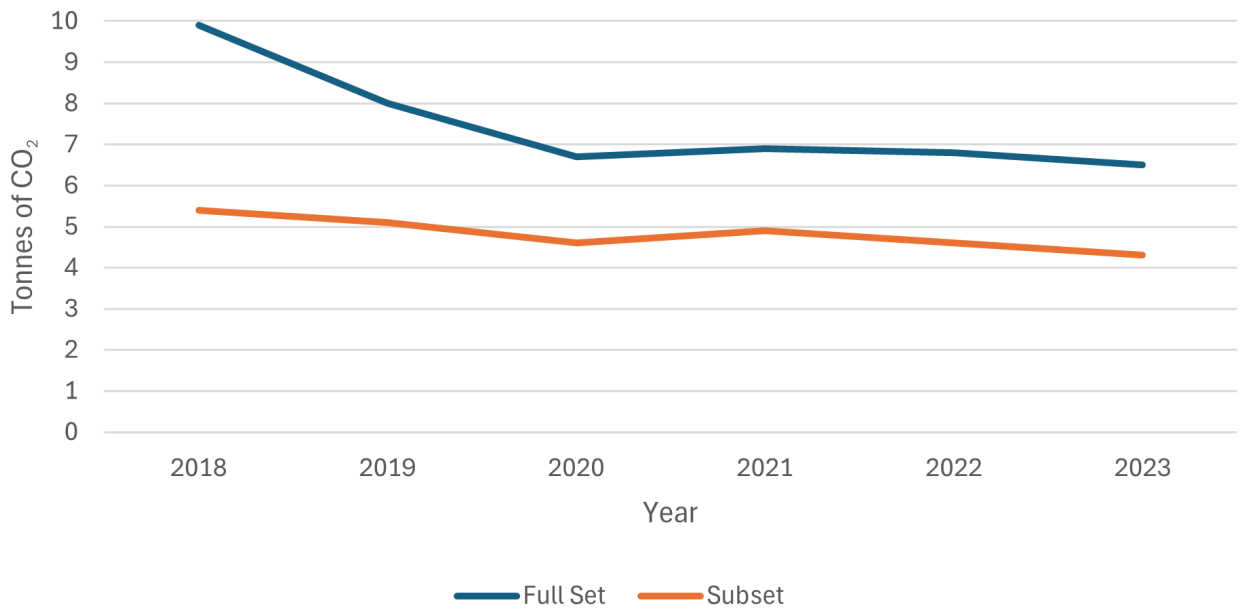
Both the subset and the full set of data have reduced, this is due to several factors. The biggest driver has been the decarbonisation of electricity, with a shift from coal to renewables and nuclear power. Energy efficiency improvements in homes and buildings, along with structural economic changes such as the decline of heavy industry, have also contributed. Transport emissions have reduced more slowly but are impacted by electric vehicle uptake and public transport initiatives. Additionally, better waste management, land use changes, and strong national and local climate policies have supported this downward trend.

Continuous action is needed across the district to reduce emissions, and the Council recognises its role in encouraging and influencing communities and residents, as well as ensuring that the policies and plans it sets align with carbon reduction aims. Actions within the Delivery Plan highlight the importance of working with the local community, to support everyone living and working in West Berkshire to have a positive impact and help address the climate and ecological emergencies. Policies within the recently adopted Local Plans also play an important role in reducing carbon emissions across the district.

Table 2: Full Set and Sub Set Per Capita Carbon Dioxide emissions (tonnes) for West Berkshire

	Full Set	Sub Set
2018	9.9	5.4
2019	8.0	5.1
2020	6.7	4.6
2021	6.9	4.9
2022	6.8	4.6
2023	6.5	4.3

Figure 6: Full Set and Subset per capita carbon dioxide emissions (tonnes) for West Berkshire.



There is still a lot of work to be done, but with continued, collective effort progress can be made. Innovation and collaboration are essential to achieving a more sustainable future for the district.

Conclusion and looking ahead

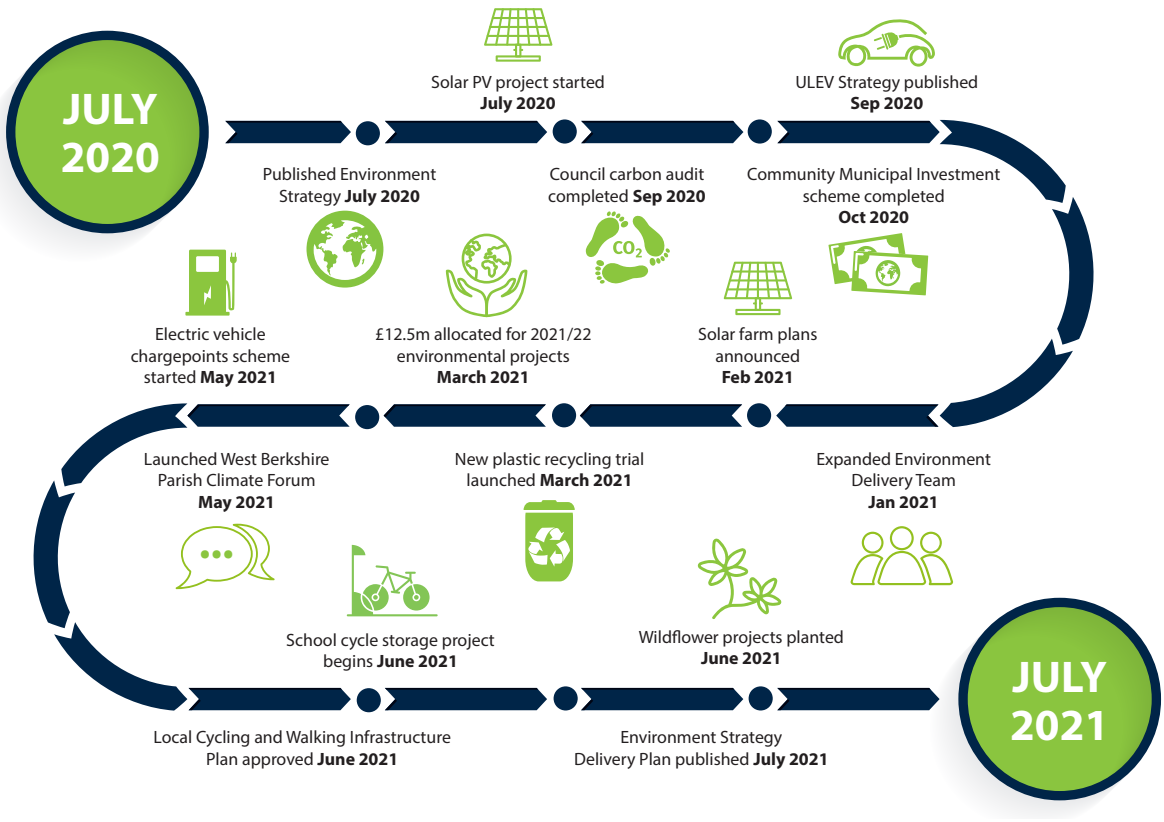
This year has been full of progress and collaboration as we continue delivering our Environment Strategy. From project delivery and new initiatives to funding bids and future planning, we've worked closely with the local community to share opportunities and drive climate action, including via the Town and Parish Climate Forum.

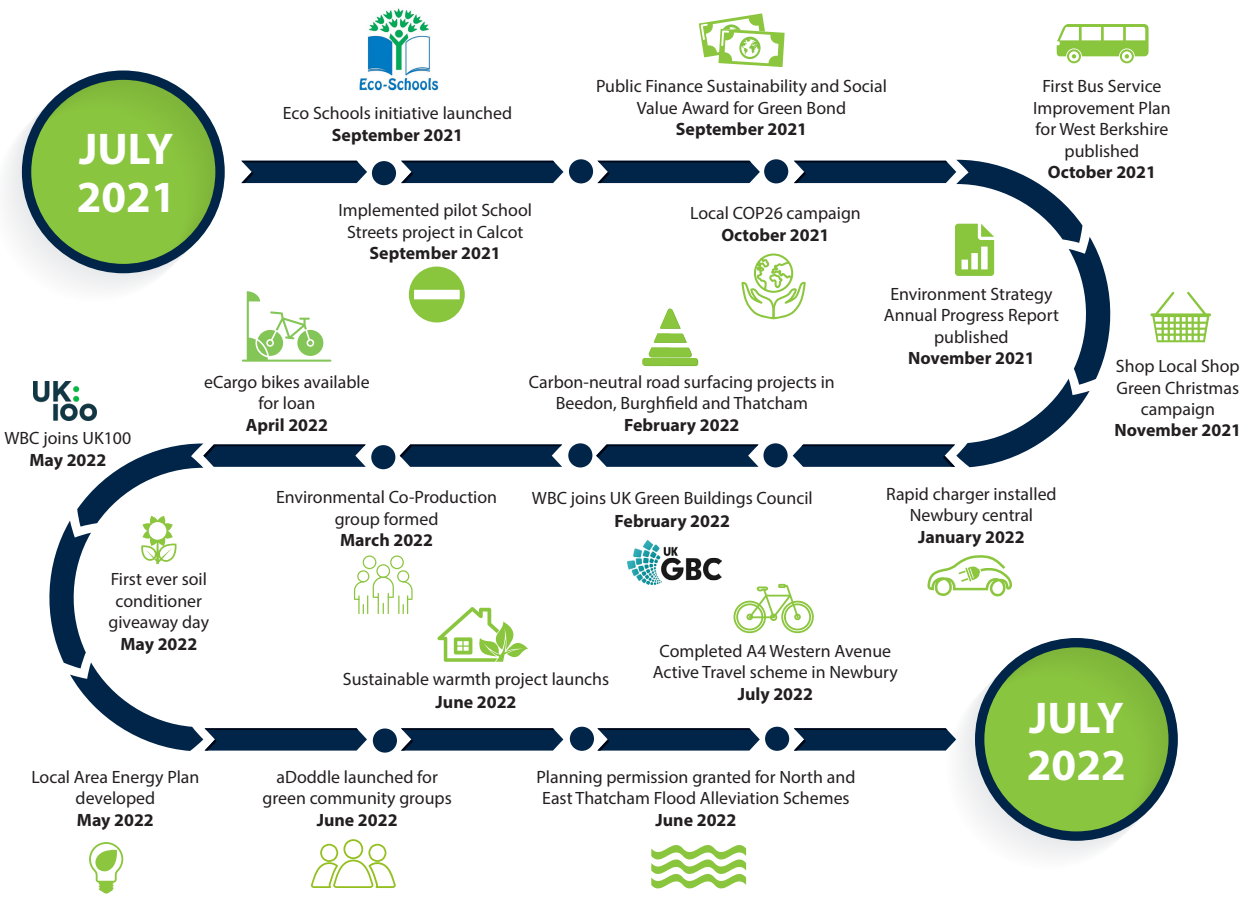
Officers from the Climate Service supported a variety of sustainability events this year, including 'Green Fest' in Newbury, The Berkshire Electric Vehicle Awareness Event and The Great British Spring clean.

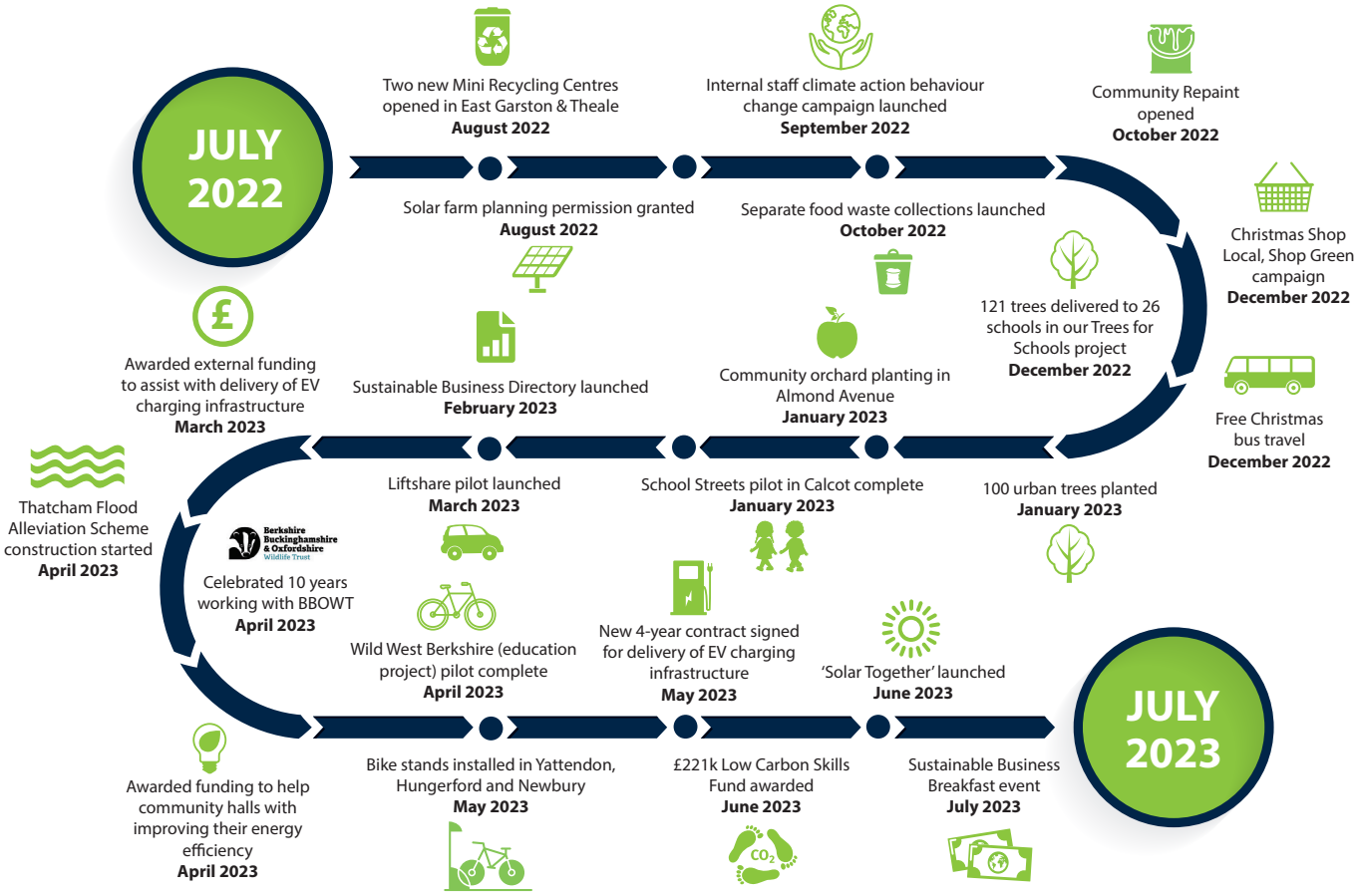
We have more exciting and impactful projects planned for next year, including the Northcroft Leisure Centre Decarbonisation Project. We're also forging ahead with our roof top solar project; we have secured a four-year contract to install solar PV across council sites and schools. Alongside this we are progressing a significant nutrient mitigation programme in the River Lambourn catchment to stop the decline of water quality in sensitive habitats by ensuring that new developments do not increase the overall load of nutrients. Our successful Town and Parish Forum has been expanded to include community groups and individuals which will provide greater collaboration on climate action. A great deal of background work has been happening around EV infrastructure which will help secure the delivery of further installations.

Engagement through forums, newsletters, and blogs has helped inspire and connect our community. As we reach the halfway point of 2025, we've refreshed the Environment Strategy and our Delivery Plan to sharpen our focus, streamline delivery, and strengthen our pathway to net zero.

Appendix A - Roadmaps






JULY 2022
Two new Mini Recycling Centres opened in East Garston & Theale
August 2022
Internal staff climate action behaviour change campaign launched
September 2022
Community Repaint opened
October 2022
Christmas Shop Local, Shop Green campaign
December 2022
Free Christmas bus travel
December 2022
121 trees delivered to 26 schools in our Trees for Schools project
December 2022
Community orchard planting in Almond Avenue
January 2023
Separate food waste collections launched
October 2022
Solar farm planning permission granted
August 2022
Sustainable Business Directory launched
February 2023
Awarded external funding to assist with delivery of EV charging infrastructure
March 2023
Thatcham Flood Alleviation Scheme construction started
April 2023
Liftshare pilot launched
March 2023
School Streets pilot in Calcot complete
January 2023
100 urban trees planted
January 2023
Celebrated 10 years working with BBOWT
April 2023
Wild West Berkshire (education project) pilot complete
April 2023
New 4-year contract signed for delivery of EV charging infrastructure
May 2023
'Solar Together' launched
June 2023
JULY 2023
Awarded funding to help community halls with improving their energy efficiency
April 2023
Bike stands installed in Yattendon, Hungerford and Newbury
May 2023
£221k Low Carbon Skills Fund awarded
June 2023
Sustainable Business Breakfast event
July 2023
JULY 2024
Household Battery Kerbside collections started. 11.74 tonnes of household batteries were collected from kerbside and HWRC between September and June
September 2024
Introduced HVO for 10 waste fleet vehicles, replacing diesel and saving 75 tCO2e between November and July
October 2024
1 cross- footway charging channel installed
November 2024
EV charger opened in Church Street in Hungerford
December 2024
EV charging points opened at Shaw House
January 2025
Started kerbside recycling of plastic pots, tubs, and trays (PTT), collecting 113 extra tonnes of material from recycling bags compared to the same period the previous year
January 2025
Electric minibus purchased for on-demand and public transport
December 2024
Free Festival Bus travel provided
November 2024
3 cross-footway charging channels installed
September 2024
Extension to wet woodland habitat at Shaw House
February 2025
WBC's Sustainability Assessment Tool launched for staff
April 2025
WBC Local Plan adopted which included key environmental policies to support the District becoming Net Zero, improving and enhancing the District habitats and adapting to climate change
June 2025
EV charging points opened at Station Road in Hungerford
April 2025
EV charging points opened at The Corn Exchange, Northbrook and Pelican Lane in Newbury
March 2025
The Local Transport Plan (LTP4) with measures to reduce carbon emissions adopted in July 2025
July 2025
JULY 2025
Green Machine collection for electrical reuse started at HWRCs
July 2025
EV charging points opened at Kennet Leisure Centre in Thatcham
July 2025
Berkshire Electric Vehicle Awareness Event
July 2025

Appendix B – Full Carbon Footprint Data Table

The table below shows the annual emissions data for West Berkshire Council's activities (Scope 1, 2 and 3). It covers the period from 2019/20 (baseline year) through to 2024/25. Figure 2 of the main report represents the total emissions data from this table in a graph.

Emissions Scope	Emissions Source	2019/20 (Baseline)		2020/2021		2021/2022		2022/2023		2023/2024		2024/2025	
		CO_2e (tonnes)	% of total emissions	CO_2e (tonnes)	% of total emissions	CO_2e (tonnes)	% of total emissions	CO_2e (tonnes)	% of total emissions	CO_2e (tonnes)	% of total emissions	CO_2e (tonnes)	% of total emissions
1	Stationary Combustion (e.g. energy use)	3,502.34	30.1%	3,219.1	33.1%	3,586.2	34.6%	3,164.79	32.2%	2953.1	32.7%	1,836.69	26%
	Mobile Combustion (e.g. vehicles)	**290.64	2.5%	353.9	3.6%	552.9	5.3%	232.73	2.4%	218.4	2.4%	210.20	3%
	Sewage Processing	38.33	0.3%	38.3	0.4%	15.7	0.2%	15.68	0.2%	124.2	1.4%	15.7	0%
	Refrigerants	107.71	0.9%	81.9	0.8%	121.2	1.2%	108.61	1.1%	108.5	1.4%	108.5	2%
	Total Scope 1	**3,939.01**	**33.9%**	**3,693.1**	**38.0%**	**4,276.1**	**41.3%**	**3,521.80**	**35.8%**	**3295.8**	**36.5%**	**2,171.10**	**30%**
2	Purchased electricity	3,495.76	30.1%	2,946.6	30.3%	2,643.4	25.5%	2,475.21	29.4%	2,529.4	28%	2196.10	31%
	Total Scope 2	**3,495.76**	**30.1%**	**2,946.6**	**30.3%**	**2,643.4**	**25.5%**	**2,475.21**	**29.4%**	**2,529.4**	**28%**	**2196.10**	**31%**
3	Contractor Emissions	2,574.72	22.2%	2,397.0	24.6%	2,359.3	22.8%	2,537.77	25.8%	2,010.23	22.3%	1,897.00	26%
	Leisure Centres	1,228.93	10.6%	691.3	7.1%	1,066.3	10.3%	938.34	9.5%	865.54	9.6%	631.2	9%
	Business Travel	**381.17	3.3%	0.3	0.0%	8.4	0.1%	364.56	3.7%	325.0	3.6%	266.5	4%
	Total Scope 3	**4,184.82**	**36.0%**	**3,088.6**	**31.7%**	**3,433.9**	**33.2%**	**3,840.67**	**39.0%**	**3,200.7**	**35.5%**	**2,794.70**	**39%**
	All Scopes	11619.588	100.0%	9,728.2	100.0%	10,353.4	100.0%	9,837.68	100.0%	9,025.9	100.0%	7,161.90	100%

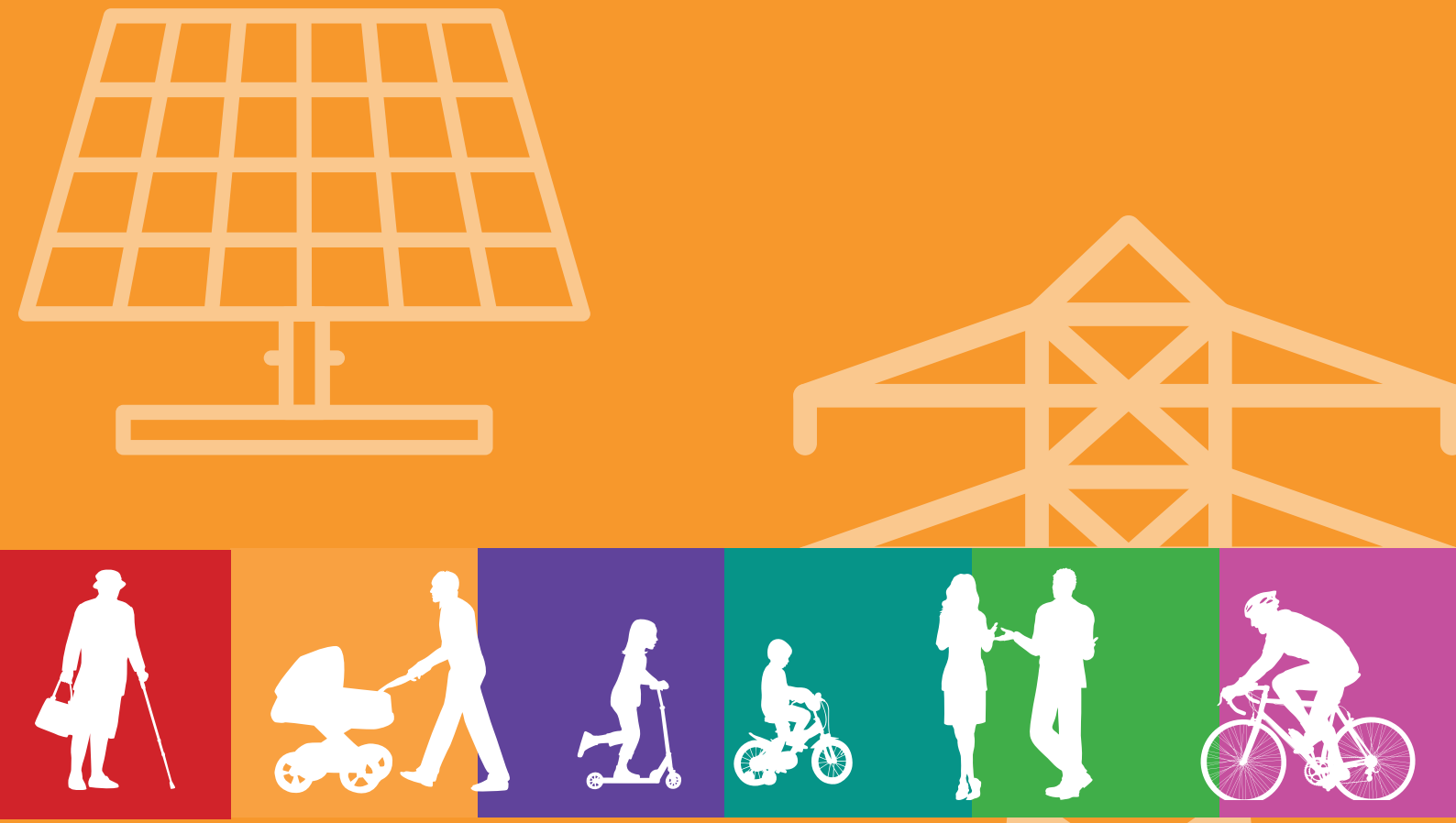
Appendix C – Glossary

This glossary provides an explanation of terms used in this annual report along with some additional terms which may also be of general interest relating to climate change and our environment.

Abbreviation	Term	Explanation
	Anaerobic Digestion	A process in which organic matter is broken down by micro-organisms in an oxygen free 'tank' to produce fuels.
	Baseline	A fixed point of reference used as a starting point for comparison purposes.
	Biodiversity	The variety of plant and animal life.
	Carbon budget	The maximum amount of greenhouse gases that can be emitted over a certain period.
CCS	Carbon capture and storage	Trapping carbon at its emission source, and then storing it long term.
CO2e	Carbon Dioxide Equivalent	A term used to describe different greenhouse gases in a common unit. For any greenhouse gases and their amount, it is the amount of carbon dioxide which would have the equivalent warming impact.
	Carbon footprint/carbon audit	The total greenhouse gas emissions caused by a person/ event/organisation/product, expressed as the carbon dioxide equivalent.
	Carbon neutral/ carbon neutrality	Balancing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by offsetting, or removing from the atmosphere, an equivalent amount of carbon for the amount produced.
	Climate change	The long-term shift in the planets weather patterns and temperatures.
CCA	Climate Change Act 2008	Provides the framework for the UK's climate change policy
	Climate Change Bonds	Fixed income bonds, linked to climate change solutions.
	Climate Emergency Declaration	The Declarations vary for each organisation. The Council's Declaration is set out in the Introduction section of the Environment Strategy.
	CO2 emissions within the scope of influence of Local Authorities	The UK produces a breakdown of carbon dioxide emissions by Local Authority area as a subset of its annual inventory of greenhouse gas emissions. The emissions deemed to be within the scope of Local Authorities exclude large industrial sites, railways, motorways and land-use.
CCC	Committee on Climate Change	Independent body to advise the government on climate change.
CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy	A charge which can be levied on new developments within the Local Authority's area. It helps deliver required infrastructure.
	Delivery Plan	The Council's plan on how the objectives of the Environment Strategy will be achieved.
	Economic Development Board	Newly formed Economic Board which will oversee the Economic Development Strategy, implementing an action plan to fulfil its objectives.

EU ETS	European Union Emissions Trading System	The first and largest greenhouse gas emissions trading system in the world. It works on a 'cap and trade' principle where allowances are set. Allowances are auctioned off or allocated for free. Emitters must ensure they have enough allowances to meet their emissions or purchase more. Those who reduce their emissions and have spare allowances can sell off their credits.
GWP	Global Warming Potential	The potential of a Greenhouse Gas to trap additional heat in the atmosphere relative to Carbon dioxide. Specifically, it is a measure of how much energy the emissions of 1 tonne of a gas will absorb over a given period of time, relative to the emissions of 1 tonne of carbon dioxide. The larger the GWP, the more that gas warms the Earth compared to CO2 over that time period.
	Green energy	Definitions would usually mean the gas or electricity were from 100% renewable sources.
GHG	Greenhouse gases	Gases in the atmosphere that absorb and re-emit heat. They occur naturally in the Earth's atmosphere but human activity increases these, leading to increased warming and climate change.
GDP	Gross Domestic Product	The total monetary/market value of the finished goods and services produced within a country's borders in a specific time period.
	Health and Wellbeing Board	A partnership that brings together West Berkshire's leaders of the health and social care system.
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators	A measurable value/outcome to gauge how well an organisation is meeting its key objectives.
LULUCF	Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry	A greenhouse gas sector defined by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.
LCWIP	Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Programme	Sets out the Council's long-term approach to developing local cycling and walking networks
	Local Plan	The plan is part of the overall Development Plan for West Berkshire, setting out our local planning policies.
LTP	Local Transport Plan	Aims to deliver effective transport solutions for all by increasing choice and minimising congestion.
NAEI	National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory	The Inventory is compiled by Ricardo. It is the standard reference inventory for the UK and includes emission estimates for a wide range of important pollutants.
	Nature Recovery Plan	The plan defines the objectives and key actions required to improve biodiversity and wildlife in the district
	Net zero / Net zero carbon	Making changes to reduce carbon or GHG emissions to the lowest amount – and offsetting as a last resort to reach an overall net position of zero carbon.
	North Wessex Downs National Landscape (previously AONB)	Area of countryside designated for conservation in recognition of its national importance.
	Per capita	The district's emissions divided by the number of people to give a value per person. This can be useful in comparing other areas of differing population size.

	Operational Control	A method of providing a boundary for an organisation to isolate its carbon emissions. This method describes where an organisation has functional operational control of an asset it will be included in calculations.
	Scope 1 Emissions	aka direct emissions, come from sources that are owned or controlled by an organisation, e.g. vehicles
	Scope 2 Emissions	(aka Energy indirect) come from the consumption of electricity used in an organisation's buildings
	Scope 3 Emissions	(aka other indirect) emissions come from goods/ services that an organisation utilise but are not directly responsible for e.g. investments.
SME	Small medium enterprises	Small or medium businesses are generally defined as businesses with less than 250 employees.
SuDs	Sustainable drainage systems	Systems designed to manage the drainage of surface water.
	Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership	An organisation bringing together business, public sector, education and community together to drive the local economy.
	Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum	A Forum to help prepare, respond and recover from emergency incidents.
	The National Adaptation Programme	This sets out the actions that the UK government and others will take over the next five-yearly cycle to adapt to the challenged of climate change.
ULEV	Ultra low emission vehicle	A vehicle that emits no more than 75g/km CO2, based on the NEDC test, at the tailpipe. This includes pure electric, hydrogen, range-extender and plug in hybrid vehicles.
	Whole life carbon	The emissions created for every stage of an item/ buildings production, use and disposal.



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APPENDIX B
Update on Biodiversity Duty reporting

The Environment Act 2021 includes an enhanced duty for Local Authorities to conserve and enhance biodiversity and report on their actions. This links with the Council's own declaration of a climate emergency in October 2023 and our keen involvement in the development of the Berkshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

Updates:
In order to report on how BNG is being delivered through the planning process, some necessary software has been procured, and relevant officers have received training. This will enable the latest data to be reported very soon to DEFRA. The Executive Members for Planning and Environment will be briefed in relation to this reporting.

Another aspect of the reporting is the voluntary sharing of actions being taken by the Local Authority in order to enhance biodiversity and, in turn, evidence examples of how we are working to address the climate emergency.

The following table is an update of previous reporting on this matter for 2025 and will be included in our reporting to DEFRA and published on our website on the following page: Biodiversity and the Natural Environment - West Berkshire Council

Biodiversity Duty - West Berkshire Council actions to conserve and enhance biodiversity (1st January - 31st December 2025)

Action	Policy / Strategy	Evidence of conservation/enhancement
The Council have declared a climate and **ecological** emergency	Environment Strategy	Council Paper declaring an Ecological Emergency October 2023
Countryside Team		
Partnership with BBOWT to manage nature reserves including triple SSSI locations		See BBOWT Annual Report 2025
Partnership with BBOWT - education programmes run on site at the Nature Discovery Centre and with schools.		See BBOWT Annual Report 2025
Management of open spaces by Grounds Maintenance contractor to enhance biodiversity - reduced cutting regimes, areas left to re-wild, protecting naturally occurring wild flowers.		We are realising the biodiversity enhancement as a result of changing working practices.
Grounds Maintenance contractor uses methods that protect and enhance biodiversity with chemicals only being used when there are no alternative options.		We are using the least amount of pesticides possible - a reduction of at least 75% on previous practice.
Land management practices used by PROW team to encourage biodiversity and sustainability, hedgerow management. Look at improved signage including biodiversity information for the public.	Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan.	We are balancing keeping the PROW accessible with adopting practices to encourage biodiversity. We are using what we have locally at sites for work that is carried out. Budget and resource factors.
Tree and orchard planting using native and non-native species and those that will encourage biodiversity, for example fruit trees for pollinators. Diversity of species and wide variety to cope with climate change challenges.	Environment Strategy	Previous annual urban tree planting programme delivered beneficial projects - e.g. Shaw Park (Almond Avenue) and Greenham. Long term carbon sequestration, habitat creation benefits. Capital budget no longer available for further projects.
Working with volunteers using woodland management techniques (such as coppicing) in areas of copse to encourage biodiversity and wildlife.		Working with CRoW to manage three area of copse in Tilehurst. Possibility to create Habitat Banks within the BNG framework.
Encouraging and facilitating community groups to re-wild and environmentally enhance areas in their communities.		Examples - creation of two 'Lockdown Woods' by Newbury Friends of the Earth. Creation of 'Hickson Hedgerows' in Great Shefford. Planting, habitat creation (bat/bird boxes, bug hotels etc) and education.

Work with local organisations to support the creation of wildlife corridors		Example: Friends of the Earth Newbury project.
Tree surveys, Ash dieback work, species and habitat creation advice.		Tree Inspector role alongside Ecology. Species consideration for climate change.
Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) to protect important species and the habitat they create. Advice on planning applications.		Tree Team
The Council continues to achieve Green Flag status at Linear Park in Calcot and Goldwell and Northcroft Parks in Newbury.		Criteria for Green Flag status include 'Environmental management' and 'Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage'.
Encouraging churches to embrace biodiversity in their church yards and reduce grass cutting		Projects run by Diocese of Oxford and BBOWT and WBC Officers have encouraged this approach.
Members' bids for Environmental projects at the Parish level.		
Environment Delivery		
The Council's refreshed Environment Strategy and Delivery Plan was approved in May 2025 and includes a theme on the Natural Environment and several actions which aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity.	Environment Strategy	Delivery Plan
Continuation of the Natural Solutions Delivery Partnership (NSDP). A partnership set up to develop how to use natural solutions within West Berkshire to enhance biodiversity and capture carbon. We hope to establish a coordinated approach for utilising funding from biodiversity net gain, nutrient neutrality and carbon sequestration. The organisations within the informal partnership have an important role by coming together to plan, support each other, share national and local developments and form a coordinated approach. The partnership consist of the following organisations: West Berkshire Council BioCap Limited North Wessex Downs AONB Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment Thames Valley Environment Records Centre Berkshire Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust Natural England Action for the River Kennet Landowners	Environment Strategy	Natural Solutions Delivery Partnership - West Berkshire Council

As part of the NSDP, an initial nature-based spatial plan to support the work of the partnership has been developed and built on going forward. The aim of the spatial plan is to assist in identifying what to do and where across the district. This should be particularly useful for project development and decision making.	Environment Strategy	
As part of the NSDP, a feasibility project has been developed to support and enhance the district's natural capital through the development of several pilot projects, for example the creation of a range of habitats at Sulham.	Environment Strategy	
The Council investigated with Consultants BioCap the potential for developing a Local Natural Capital Market for Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), Nutrient Neutrality and Carbon Sequestration. The decision was taken to pause this work in the Spring of 2024 until additional resource could be secured to allow the Natural Capital Market to be taken forward effectively.	Environment Strategy	
Eco Schools/trees for schools, creation of forest schools, wildlife gardens etc	Environment Strategy	
Use of Environment newsletter, the Green Hub and the Council's Community Climate forum to share best practice and advice on biodiversity. Attendance at events such as Greenfest and Town/Parish Council meetings to encourage community engagement in protecting the local natural environment.	Environment Strategy	Environment News
Shaw Park wet woodland enhancement and tree buffer zone planting - conserving and encouraging biodiversity in this area	Environment Strategy	
Development of the Sustainability Assessment Tool to assist in shaping Sustainability projects including opportunities for cross cutting habitat creation projects.		
Creation of a Green and Blue Infrastructure (GBI) Framework to guide the Council's activities on its own land and assets.- This work links closely with the Council's Local Plan Review (LPR) and inline with the National Planning Policy Framework. The Council's GBI framework has been informed by Natural England's Green Infrastructure (GI) Framework and will be used in conjunction with the Council's Sustainability Assessment Tool.	Environment Strategy	GBI framework is action NE1 in the Council Strategy Delivery Plan
Nutrient Mitigation - the Council has been awarded £2.4 million from the Local Nutrient Mitigation Fund to deliver Nutrient Mitigation in the River Lambourn Catchment to support unlocking housing development within the catchment.		
Waste Management		

Green waste and food waste collections.		DW - Garden Waste collections continue (opt in, chargeable), still accept garden wste FOC and HWRCs and promote composting at home. Food waste collections have seen increase in participation from 49% to 65% since the change in frequency of balck bin collections in September 2025. With tonnage collected uup 22%.
Creation of soil improver from food and garden waste collections which is used by the Grounds Maintenance contractor on WBC open space, sold to businesses and given away to residents.		Use on household gardens and allotments. DW - Product retains PAS-100 certification. Resident giveaway events continue.
Promotion of Veolia's environmental grants, for example orchards for schools and sustainability fund.		Shared on social media and resident bulletins when provided by Veolia.
Improvement of biodiveristy on site at the Council's waste management facility - Padworth - maintaining the green space, introduction of planters with pollinating plants and planting of one apple tree.		Bee hives introduced. Existing biodiversity maintained.
Carrying out litter picking and street cleaning activities. Loaning out litter picking equipment to volunteer gorups to do this in their areas across West Berkshire. This ensures animals do not become entangled in litter, micro plastics do not enter the environment and litter does not enter rivers and streams.		Ongoing. Promotoing GBSC. Takign part in local events. Promoting on Social media, resident bulletins.
Planning Policy		
Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity Policies are included in the in the new Local Plan adopted in June 2025	Local Plan	Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)
Ecology requirements are included in the Local Plan site allocation policies	Local Plan	AMR
BNG has been included in the Minerals and Waste Local Plan Policy	Minerals and Waste Local Plan	Minerals and Waste Local Plan Annual Monitoring Report
Ecology requirements are included in MWLP site allocations	Minerals and Waste Local Plan	MWLP AMR
Include Biodiversity policy in MWLP, and include biodiversity requirements in MWLP Restoration policy	Minerals and Waste Local Plan	MWLP AMR
Development Management (Planning)		
Focusing on delivering mandatory BNG in line with government targets	Biodiversity and the Natural Environment	Biodiversity Reporting Requirement (NERC Act 2006)
Focusing on delivering nutrient neutrality in line with national requirements	Biodiversity and the Natural Environment	Conservation status of relevant SACs (Natural England monitoring)

Secure biodiversity mitigation/enhancements to comply with national legislation and policy through relevant mechanisms (conditions, s.106 etc.)	Biodiversity and the Natural Environment	Biodiversity Reporting Requirement (NERC Act 2006)