

South Cambridgeshire District Council

Zero Carbon and Doubling Nature Action Plan 2020-25

2023-24 version, incorporating changes and additions agreed at the Climate and Environment Advisory Committee, 6 June 2023

Introduction

This action plan has been developed in response to the climate and ecological emergency, to deliver the objectives agreed by Council in the Zero Carbon Strategy adopted in May 2020 and the Doubling Nature Strategy adopted in February 2021. It is a live document, reviewed and updated annually in line with the Council's Business Plan. This update builds upon learning from independent reviews of the Council's response to the climate and ecological emergencies by Climate Emergency UK and Bioregional. New actions have been added, and information about existing processes and actions that were not previously captured have been included to provide a more complete picture of the Council's work in this area.

Our Zero Carbon Strategy recognises the need to reach net zero emissions by 2050. This is in line with the science-based emissions target for the UK recommended by the Committee on Climate Change and adopted into UK legislation in June 2019. The target is set at the level necessary to deliver the commitment that the UK made in adopting the 2015 Paris Agreement which aims to limit global warming to well below 2, preferably 1.5 degrees Celsius compared to pre-industrial levels.

Our Doubling Nature Strategy supports the vision first articulated by Natural Cambridgeshire, the Local Nature Partnership, to double nature in Cambridgeshire by 2050.

The objectives in the Zero Carbon and Doubling Nature strategies are to:

1. reduce net greenhouse gas emissions from the Council's estate and operations by 45% on a 2018-19 baseline by 2025 and by 75% on the same baseline by 2030
2. achieve net zero for the district of South Cambridgeshire by 2050, (in line with, and as defined by the Committee on Climate Change and adopted into UK legislation in June 2019)

3. double nature in the district by 2050

Reaching net zero and doubling nature are ambitious targets which will require concerted action by many players including the UK Government, higher tiers of local government, businesses and households. Our action plan is limited to actions within our spheres of influence. This starts with our own estate including our 8000+ council homes, extends to our operations for example refuse collection for over 60,000 properties and extends out to the many ways we work with partners to achieve carbon reductions and improvements for nature in the wider district. Where we come across limitations of legislation and finance that stand in the way of taking action on the climate crisis we use the influence we have to overcome these as Members did as part of the Local Government Association delegation at COP26 advocating successfully for recognition of the role of local and regional governments in the Glasgow Climate Pact.

Governance, development and funding of the plan

The action plan is led by the Head of Climate, Environment and Waste. Responsibility for developing and delivering the plan sits with the Lead Cabinet Member for the Environment, who is advised by the Council's cross-party Climate and Environment Advisory Committee. Progress in implementing the action plan is monitored by the Climate and Environment team, overseen by the Head of Climate, Environment and Waste. Progress reviews are provided to the Climate and Environment Advisory Committee at six monthly intervals, who make recommendations to Cabinet or the lead Cabinet Member for the Environment as appropriate.

The plan is embedded in the [Council's Business Plan 2020 - 25](#), which sets 'Being Green to our Core' as a key objective for the Council. Funding for the plan is agreed on an annual basis as part of the Council's budget-setting process, which takes place in tandem with an annual review of the Council's Business Plan. Funding for the plan is drawn from a variety of sources including from within existing budgets, from external grants and awards and from Council reserves, in particular the Council's 'Renewables Reserve' made up of business rates from renewable energy developments in the district, retained under the Business Rates Retention scheme, and earmarked for Green to our Core initiatives. In the longer term, many projects in the plan deliver net cost savings to the Council because of lower energy bills following investment in energy efficiency and renewable energy.

Integration of the plan into existing local authority plans and strategies

The Council has a process in place to ensure that implications for climate change of new and revised local authority plans and strategies are considered before decisions on these are made. Climate change and Biodiversity and green spaces are key themes in the emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan which draws upon a strong net zero carbon evidence base.

Community, engagement and communication

The Council will involve residents, businesses and other local partners in the development and delivery of the plan through regular communication and engagement activities, co-ordinated through an internal Climate Communications group. For the elements of the plan that require working in partnership, the Council will identify and engage those relevant partners and establishment agreements for collaborative action. The Zero Carbon Communities programme including the Green Connect networking sessions are key fora for both communication of key messages, but more importantly collaboration and delivery of projects. As part of the Zero Carbon Communities programme, the Climate and Environment team are exploring partnership working with relevant organisations to expand the reach of the programme to a wider range of participants include young people.

Co-benefits

Action to reduce carbon emissions often results in significant benefits, known as co-benefits, to health and wellbeing, community cohesion and nature. Examples of these include:

- Switching from fossil fuel powered vehicles to electric vehicles and/or active travel results in fewer vehicle emissions and cleaner air, which has a positive impact on health and wellbeing
- Switching from car journeys to cycling or walking means more physical exercise which has a positive impact on health and wellbeing
- Organising community projects funded through our Zero Carbon Communities grant benefits social cohesion
- Planting trees to lock up carbon, provided the trees are well chosen, can enhance green space and provide natural habitat

Impacts of climate change

The impacts of climate change can already be seen in South Cambridgeshire, for example in the unprecedented heat and drought of summer 2022. Further warming is inevitable due to time lags in how quickly the Earth's climate system responds to changes in emissions. An Equalities Impact Assessment will be carried out for this plan and will highlight unequal impacts and action to mitigate these.

<i>RAG rating</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Responsible officer</i>	<i>Expected completion date</i>	<i>Progress at 01/05/23</i>	<i>Next milestone</i>
1	Reduce consumption of resources and waste				
1.1	Identify and implement strategies for overall waste/materials reduction, decreased residual waste and increased recycling	Waste Policy, Climate and Environment Manager	ongoing	Action plan reviewed and revised weekly; KPIs reported internally monthly	ongoing
	Completed actions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review recycling facilities across the Council and implement changes – completed 2019 • Review use of disposable single-use plastic and implement changes – completed 2019 • Move to paper-free Council and committee meetings – completed 2022 				
2	Decarbonise planning and land use				
2.1	Progress planning policies related to net zero carbon and wider climate change policies as part of work on the Greater Cambridge Local Plan Preferred Options consultation and work on the draft plan	Planning Policy Manager	ongoing	<p>First Proposals include seven policies relating to climate change, viz,</p> <p>CC/NZ Net zero carbon new buildings</p> <p>CC/WE Water efficiency in new developments</p> <p>CC/DC Designing for a changing climate</p> <p>CC/FM Flooding and integrated water management</p> <p>CC/RE Renewable energy projects and infrastructure</p> <p>CC/CE Reducing waste and supporting the circular economy</p> <p>CC/CS Supporting land-based carbon sequestration</p> <p>Details of the proposed policies can be viewed at</p>	Draft version of the Local plan to be completed for consultation in 2023.

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				https://consultations.greatercambridgeplanning.org/greater-cambridge-local-plan-first-proposals/explore-theme/climate-change	
2.2	Progress planning policies related to net zero carbon and wider climate change policies as part of work on the Northeast Cambridge Area Action Plan	Planning Policy Manager	2024/25	<p>The submission draft Area Action Plan includes a net zero carbon buildings policy as well as wider policies related to the role of new development in responding to the climate emergency.</p> <p>Further details can be viewed at https://www.greatercambridgeplanning.org/emerging-plans-and-guidance/north-east-cambridge-area-action-plan/</p> <p>The Area Action Plan has been prepared on the basis that the Cambridge Wastewater Treatment Plant, which is currently located in the Northeast Cambridge area, will be relocated off-site. The process is now paused until a decision has been made on the separate Development Consent Order process for the relocation of this plant.</p>	Public consultation expected 2024
2.3	Use all available means to encourage developers to go beyond current requirements for energy	-	ongoing	ongoing	-

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	efficiency in new developments.				
3	Decarbonise transport				
3.1	Decarbonise the Council's vehicle fleet	-	-	-	-
3.1.1	Procure low emissions vehicles where new vehicles are needed and when replacing end of life vehicles (subject to availability of suitable alternative models and charging infrastructure)	Service Manager, Operations	Ongoing, fleet decarbonisation strategy sets out a programme from 2020 - 2028	3 electric refuse collection vehicles (eRCV) and 3 electric vans procured	Order to be placed for 4 th eRCV to be delivered in 23/24 subject to available power supply. Still on course and additional power now sourced.
3.1.2	Develop and deliver solar PV, battery storage and electric vehicle charging network at the Council Depot - Waterbeach Renewable Energy Network project (WREN)	Waste Policy, Climate and Environment Team Manager	Q3 2023/24	Business cases have been approved by the CPCA (providing approximately 40% of total project costs, that is £2.7M) and are in the final stages of sign off by the two councils, South Cambs and City. Commercial contracts are in final stages of preparation.	Contracts expected to be signed by end of June with start on site soon after.
3.1.3	Investigate feasibility of substituting diesel with HVO biofuel in one or more vehicles as an	Service Manager, Operations	Q2 2022/23	Trials completed with both Councils' agreeing to deploy fuel use further subject to budgetary sign off on fuel costs	n/a

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	interim measure to reduce GHG emissions				
3.2	Reduce emissions from the Council's business mileage				
	Completed actions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up salary sacrifice electric car scheme – completed April 2022; purchase of 7 cars approved through the scheme in 2022-23 				
3.3	Work with partners to install EV charging points across the district				
3.3.1	Install Rapid chargers to help meet vehicle charging needs of taxi-drivers	Waste Policy, Climate and Environment Manager	Q4 2022/23	Two Rapid Chargers have been installed at SCH and are available to the public including taxi drivers. The plan to install a third Rapid Charger at Babraham Park and Ride has been dropped as projected costs exceeded the allocated budget. As indicated below, we continue to work with Cambridgeshire County Council to enhance public EVCP provision.	n/a
3.3.2	Support development of Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority and Cambridgeshire County Council's Cambridgeshire-wide Electric Vehicle charging strategy	Waste Policy, Climate and Environment Manager	Ongoing	Draft EV Infrastructure Strategy and action plan written by Cambridgeshire County Council with input from Districts and presented to CPCA Board in March 2023	Continue to Support CPCA/CPCA in development of strategy and actions
3.3.5	Deliver publicly accessible EV Charge Points, working with partners	Waste Policy, Climate and Environment Manager	ongoing	<p>Public EVCPs installed at 2 sheltered accommodation sites and now in operation as of February 2023</p> <p>A new Electric Vehicle Charge Point Grant scheme was approved at Grants Advisory Committee October 2022 with funding now being distributed, two awards made and a</p>	Monitor usage of sheltered accommodation EVCPs for 6 months to assess

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				further two applications under consideration as of 9 th May 2023	if replicable on other sites Continue to run and promote EVCP grant
3.3.6	Install EVCPs at South Cambs Hall for use by staff and visitors	Corporate Programme Manager	Q3 2022/23	18 x 7kW EV chargers and 2 x 42kW Rapid chargers installed and back office system in place. Expected to be fully operational by end of Q1 22/23	Final adjustments
3.3.7	Procure single supplier for EV chargers on Council assets	-	-	The expected volume of public EV chargers on Council assets can be supplied through existing contracts. The need for a separate procurement will be kept under review. (EV chargers will continue to be installed in new Council homes, but these are installed by the developer and do not require a supplier to be procured).	-
	Completed actions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop strategy for EV charging infrastructure on Council assets, see here – completed October 2022 				
3.4	Work with partners on sustainable transport and travel strategy				
3.4.1	Through the CPCA, develop and implement a strategy to decarbonise transport	N/a	ongoing	Four Cambridgeshire strategies are being progressed that will look to reduce travel and provide the infrastructure required to enable low carbon transport. Those due to be approved by Summer 2023 are: Local Transport Connectivity Plan, EV Charging Infrastructure Strategy, Alternative Fuel Strategy and Bus Improvement Plan. A Mayoral precept to support the bus network, and the Zebra project to replace	-

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				10% of buses with electric buses are also progressing, see CPCA Climate Action Plan report, workstream 5 here .	
3.4.2	Through the Greater Cambridge Partnership, develop and implement City Deal funded sustainable transport initiatives.	N/a	ongoing	Current GCP projects are Cambourne to Cambridge, Cambridge Southeast, the 12 Greenways and the Making Connections proposals to transform the bus network, invest in other sustainable travel schemes and create Sustainable Travel Zone. Details can be accessed at Greater Cambridge Partnership .	-
	Completed actions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support development of CCC's Active Travel Strategy, see here adopted March 2023 (SCDC led the development of the Active Travel Toolkit for New Developments) 				
3.5	Taxis and private hire				
	Completed action <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revise taxi licensing policy to phase out fossil fuelled vehicles- completed 2019 and amended 2021 to require all licensed private hire and hackney carriage vehicles to be zero or ultra-low emission by 01 December 2028. 				
3.6	Support community sustainable travel initiatives				
3.6.2	Explore feasibility of community car share/e-club schemes with rural coverage	Waste Policy, Climate and Environment Manager	Q4 2023-24	Not started	Initial report to Green to our Core Cluster Board by Q3
	Completed actions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support community-led active travel projects through Zero Carbon Communities grants (13 community-led active travel projects supported through Zero Carbon Communities grants schemes in 2019 and 2020, see list of projects supported here) 				
3.7	Support sustainable travel through planning policy				

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3.7.1	Progress planning policies which limit the need to travel and facilitate active travel modes as part of work on the Greater Cambridge Local Plan Preferred Options consultation and work on the draft plan.	Planning Policy Manager	ongoing	Proposed locations for development take into account the need to limit the need to travel and facilitate active travel modes, see here .	Draft version of the Local plan to be completed for consultation in 2023.
3.7.2	Progress planning policies which limit the need to travel and facilitate active travel modes as part of work on the as part of work on the North East Cambridge Area Action Plan	Planning Policy Manager	2024/25	<p>The vision is for North East Cambridge to be a healthy, inclusive, walkable, low-carbon new city district.</p> <p>Further details can be viewed at https://www.greatercambridgeplanning.org/emerging-plans-and-guidance/north-east-cambridge-area-action-plan/</p> <p>The Area Action Plan has been prepared on the basis that the Cambridge Wastewater Treatment Plant, which is currently located in the Northeast Cambridge area, will be relocated off-site. The process is now paused until a decision has been made on the separate Development Consent Order process for the relocation of this plant.</p>	Public consultation expected 2024
4	Decarbonise housing and other buildings				
4.1	Decarbonise the Council's buildings & streetlighting				

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4.1.1	Complete retrofit of South Cambridgeshire Hall to include Ground Source Heat Pump, Solar PV car park canopy, Lighting upgrade and new Building Energy Management System	Corporate Programme Manager	Q4 2022/23	After some issues with the tarmac and sub layer the car park is now complete and operational. The EV chargers and solar panels have been installed and are awaiting final sign off which is imminent. The new BMS system is installed and awaiting user training and final sign off. The Ground Source Heat Pump is installed and awaiting commissioning. The fire alarm has been replaced. All internal LED are installed and operational.	Q2 2023/24 Project Completion
4.1.2	Review community rooms on our sheltered housing schemes to identify and deliver carbon reduction opportunities	Service Manager, Housing Assets	Q4 2024-25	Remote heating controls fitted to all communal rooms. PAS 2035 assessments to be carried out on all communal rooms to determine carbon reduction measures available from current technologies and methods, potential proposals to be created from them, these will be complete by July 2023, based on the information obtained a programme will be created to be proposed for funding	Funding proposal due Oct 2023
4.1.3	Install solar PV array to Elm Court sheltered housing scheme, Over	Service Manager, Housing Assets	Q3 2023-24	A new proposal has been received and is being progressed. Funding is agreed and in place in the 23/24 budget. Work is due to commence mid 2023.	Deliver on site by November 2023
4.1.4	Install LED fittings in all Council owned streetlights	Waste Policy, Climate and Environment Team Manager	Q4 2022/23	Streetlighting upgrade and replacement works reached practical completion for standard lights, heritage lights and SCDC Housing lights in March 2023.	-

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4.1.5	Raise energy performance of all Council properties to band C or above	Service Manager – Housing Assets	Q4 2026/7 subject to securing funding from Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund, Government targets moved to 2030	Following the successful award of £1.7m of SHDF funding from DEZNZ we are mobilising the project of over 600 efficiency measures covering 300 properties, over the next 2 years, this will be a step towards reaching EPC C on all properties, measures are restricted within this funding and will not cover all properties, further assessments will be made on remaining properties to bring them up to EPC C following the results of our Stock Condition Survey in early 2024 when an accurate picture of the remaining properties will be gained.	Commencement on site of the SHDF project June 2023 Create plan of remaining properties June 2024
4.1.6	Improve energy efficiency of the Council's Ermine St Housing Company properties	Head of Ermine Street	ongoing	Contractor commissioned to inspect the portfolio and aim to introduce energy improvements to those properties with EPCs at a level C and below. Generally most of acquired stock is D and above with some exceptions. Aran Insulation are continuing with their energy audit, and installing energy efficiency improvements such as additional insulation, and cavity wall insulation. A full stock condition survey is currently being undertaken, including RDSAP data which will assess the energy performance of the portfolio.	Completion of stock condition survey 30 June 2023.
4.1.7	Deliver housing with energy efficiency specifications which exceed current requirements on Council owned land including through the Council's	Head of Housing		New action (agreed at CEAC 6 June 2023)	-

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	South Cambridgeshire Investment Partnership				
4.2	Help householders to decarbonise their homes by improving home energy efficiency and moving to low carbon heating and electricity				
4.2.1	Working through Cambridgeshire Energy Retrofit Partnership, deliver government funded HUG2 scheme	Waste Policy, Climate and Environment Manager	Q4 2024-25	An outline application to the government's Home Energy Upgrade 2 scheme (HUG2) for £11.5M for retrofit of 556 homes across Cambridgeshire was successful. Funding will be released in stages as batches of 'ready to go' homes are submitted. HUG2 will fund low carbon energy improvements to homes occupied by low income households or households in eligible Lower Super Output Areas in off-gas areas. Delivery (by installers on the Action on Energy framework, see below) April 23-March 25.	HUG2 scheme launch June 2023
4.2.2	Deliver the government-funded Sustainable Warmth project to upgrade up to 80 privately owned properties occupied by low income households	Waste Policy, Climate and Environment Manager	Q4 2022/23	Of the two funding streams making up the Sustainable Warmth scheme, HUG1 (off gas) is now closed and LAD1b (on gas) nearing completion. Expected completions will be around 50% of the revised mid-year forecast of 300 due to installer capacity issues. In South Cambs a total of 28 properties completed under Sustainable Warmth, (13 HUG1 and 15 LAD3).	Work will continue until scheme ends on 31 Mar 23
4.2.3	Develop the Action on Energy scheme to serve the needs of able-to-pay households	Waste Policy, Climate and Environment Manager	Q4 2023/24	Contracts have been signed with six companies for the Action on Energy framework. A new website is up and running, see here , and preparation of marketing materials is underway.	-

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4.2.4	Raise energy performance of private rented sector properties	Principal Officer – People & Protection	ongoing	A new Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) enforcement policy for the private rented sector approved by Cabinet (14/11/22).	MEES project to identify properties which fall below minimum standards and actions required
4.2.5	Find ways to be at the cutting edge of improvements to historic buildings that achieve an appropriate balance between heritage and energy efficiency	Built and Natural Environment Manager	ongoing	New action	-
	Completed actions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Energy Advice Project providing free home energy advice for eligible households set up and in operation, 2019 Revamped free thermal imaging camera loan scheme and training for residents set up and in operation, 2022 Webpage created, providing information, resources and case studies to support owners to make their heritage homes more energy efficient, see here. Cambridgeshire County Council's Cambridgeshire Solar Together group buying scheme supported and delivered in South Cambs Zero Carbon Communities grant scheme set up and providing an annual round of funding to support community-led projects to improve energy performance of community buildings, see here. 				
5	Decarbonise business and industry				
5.1	Decarbonise the Council's commercial property	Head of Economic Development	ongoing	270 Cambridge Science Park solar pv completed and tenants benefiting from the energy generated. Proposed work at 140 Science Park on hold on hold until tenant break clause following discussions with the tenant.	-

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		& Investment			
5.2	Provide advice and resources to help businesses understand what they can do to become greener	Economic Development Team Leader	ongoing	<p>Working closely with Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service to help support SMEs with planning applications aligning to core strategies around meeting green and sustainable targets or reducing carbon net zero emissions.</p> <p>Delivering a series of 'Green Business' webinars. 'Why reducing your carbon makes business sense' delivered Feb 23 and had 27 attendees. At least one more webinar to be delivered in 2023.</p> <p>Providing businesses the use of SCDC thermal imaging cameras free of charge.</p> <p>Promoting 'shop local' ethos to residents with campaigns to support small local independent existing businesses, and to provide support to develop local markets across the district through the South Cambridgeshire Markets Webpage</p>	-
5.3	Identify funding opportunities to help businesses meet economic challenges specifically to help businesses to be greener.	-	Q4 2024-25	Delivering Green Business Grants through the Shared Prosperity Fund in partnership with Cambridge City Council and Huntingdonshire District Council deliverable 23/24 and 24/25.	-

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5.4	Explore setting up work hubs and co-working spaces to reduce commuter travel distances	Economic Development Team Leader	ongoing	Project underway to convert ground floor of South Cambs Hall into a co-working space for use by new and expanding business, business advisory and community groups who are looking for meanwhile desk space, collaborative and meeting space.	n/a
	Completed actions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put in place new procurement rules requiring that awarding of contracts >£5,000 takes account of decarbonisation plans of bidders – completed 2019 				
6	Decarbonise food systems and agriculture				
6.1	Run communication campaigns to encourage carbon-friendly diets eg Meat Free Monday, Veganuary	Waste Policy, Climate and Environment Manager	ongoing	Funding awarded for community projects focussing on sustainable food from Cambridge Sustainable Food and Let's Cook in the Zero Carbon Communities grant scheme, 2022, see details here .	n/a
6.2	Explore feasibility of further work in this area, for example, Sustainable Food Strategy	Waste Policy, Climate and Environment Manager	Q4 2022/23	Report to CEAC on Sustainable Food March 2023. Next step is to investigate whether there is sufficient interest within South Cambs for a Sustainable Food Partnership.	-
7	Deliver training, education, communications and advocacy				
7.1	Embed environmental sustainability into HR processes	HR Co-ordinator	Q4 2023/24	Work has started, see below. Next step is to review HR processes and identify opportunities to embed sustainability.	-
7.2	Deliver Carbon Literacy Training to staff and Members	Waste Policy, Climate and Environment Manager	Ongoing	First two Carbon Literacy accredited courses have been delivered by the Climate and Environment team to staff.	Further training courses to be delivered in July,

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					October, and January.
7.3	Develop and deliver appropriate communications around climate change	Waste Policy, Climate and Environment Manager	ongoing	Continuing work to develop and deliver co-ordinated messaging to residents through internal Climate and Environment Communications group and as part of the Cambridgeshire Climate Change Communications group.	Ongoing work
7.4	Advocacy work to influence and support other bodies	All, including elected Members	Ongoing	Various presentations and articles, including presentation on the Zero Carbon Communities programme to LGA webinar on Neighbourhood approaches to decarbonising buildings and transport.	-
7.5	Award grants of up to £15,000 to at least nine community projects to reduce carbon and engage communities on climate change through the Zero Carbon Communities grant scheme			Round 5 of the annual Zero Carbon Communities grant scheme is underway	Report to Grants Advisory Committee 27 July with recommendations for Round 5 awards
	Completed actions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff climate change toolkit launched including intranet webpage and Staff Climate Change Handbook – completed 2022 				
8	Respond to the ecological emergency				
8.1	Increase green infrastructure and enhance biodiversity through Planning				

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8.1.1	Progress planning policies related to doubling nature as part of wider work on green infrastructure on the Greater Cambridge Local Plan Preferred Options consultation and work on the draft plan.	Planning Policy Manager	ongoing	<p>Seven policy areas have been identified under the Biodiversity and Green Spaces theme for the Greater Cambridge Local Plan. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BG/BG Biodiversity and geodiversity BG/GI Green infrastructure BG/TC Improving tree canopy cover and the tree population BG/RC River corridors BG/PO Protecting open spaces BG/EO Providing and enhancing open spaces CC/CS Supporting land-based carbon sequestration <p>Further detail can be viewed at https://consultations.greatercambridgeplanning.org/greater-cambridge-local-plan-first-proposals/explore-theme/biodiversity-and-green-spaces</p> <p>In partnership with Natural Cambridgeshire and Natural England, 14 strategic green infrastructure initiatives have been identified and published alongside the First Proposals for the Local Plan.</p>	Project planning is underway with our partners to identify the tasks needed to refine these initiatives and identify deliverable projects supporting them.
8.1.2	Promote good practice in securing benefits to biodiversity through development by publishing case study/ies	Natural Environment Team Leader	ongoing	We are currently collating information that can be used to demonstrate positive outcomes for biodiversity from development mitigation. This will be presented as single-side narrative case studies with one or two photos.	Case studies to be posted on website
	Completed action				

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update and strengthen guidance relating to biodiversity by drafting and adopting a new Greater Cambridge Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document, adopted Feb 2022 				
8.2	Increase nature by supporting community action				
8.2.1	Provide grants for biodiversity through the Community Chest	Communities Manager	ongoing	Community nature projects funded over previous 6 months from December 2022 to May 2023: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meldreth multi use community garden Whittlesford nature trails Fulbourn community herb bed Duxford community allotments biodiversity project Swavesey biodiversity planting 	Continue and increase promotion of the fund via SCDC channels and through publication of case studies of local nature recovery projects to encourage/inspire grant uptake.
8.2.2	Support tree-planting through Six Free Trees scheme	Waste Policy, Climate and Environment Manager	Ongoing	3 rd /2022 scheme completed with 49 parish councils taking part	Run scheme again in 2023 with ambition of at least 50 Parish Councils taking part
8.2.3	Explore options for delivering support for parish councils and community groups to	Waste Policy, Climate and Environment Manager	Q4 2022/23	Natural Cambridgeshire's Local Nature Recovery Toolkit is being promoted alongside SCDC's Community Chest Biodiversity grant in relevant SCDC publications e.g., South Cambs Magazine. ZCC Newsletter	Continue promotion of the Toolkit, and explore with

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	create and deliver Local Nature Recovery Plans				Nature Cambridgeshire areas that SCDC and NC can work more closely together to promote and support parish and community groups
8.2.4	Support volunteers through our role as Tree Warden network co-ordinator	Natural Environment Team Manager	Under review and on hold	New Trees Officer appointed - The Tree Warden scheme was impacted from the pandemic and the previous Tree Officer leaving. It is understood that the Tree Warden Network is self-sustaining with the long-term ambition to re-engage when SCDC Planning Tree Services have availability to take up.	Long-term review
8.2.5	Share community project good practice at Green Connect webinars and Climate and Environment fortnight	Waste Policy, Climate and Environment Manager	ongoing	Case study of nature recovery work in Cottenham currently being written, to inform and inspire parish/community groups to undertake nature projects, to be shared at Green Connect, SCDC website, and other media channels.	Publish and promote case study on appropriate channels. Climate Conference, Autumn 2023 to showcase exemplars of community nature projects

<i>RAG rating</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Responsible officer</i>	<i>Expected completion date</i>	<i>Progress at 01/05/23</i>	<i>Next milestone</i>
8.2.6	Promote gardening for nature to our residents to increase awareness and better enable residents to preserve and enhance nature within their own spheres	Waste Policy, Climate and Environment Manager		Ongoing work compiling online materials to help residents garden for nature, building on the resources identified in the SCDC Staff handbook. This to be promoted through SCDC media channels, digital and print, see report to 4 April CEAC on Doubling Nature for details	-
8.3	Enhance opportunities for nature on our own estate				
8.3.1	Take forward opportunities for tree-planting, wildflower strips and other initiatives on Council housing estates	Service Manager, Tenancy and Estates	ongoing	<p>262 trees and hedge whips planted on two areas of HRA land through a successful joint bid led by Cambs County Council to the LA Treescapes Fund Tree.</p> <p>We are assessing areas where we can reduce frequency of grass cuts in growing season for 2023, and alongside that considering areas where we could stop cutting altogether and allow wildflowers to grow, again for 2023 growing season. We are working up a pilot of an area where we don't use weedkiller to control weed growth.</p>	Scoping exercise underway to identify more areas of HRA land suitable for nature improvements, and to establish management plan for these areas, developed for Summer 2023.
	Completed action: Complete audit of trees on Council housing estates and undertake recommended maintenance work				
8.4	Enhance opportunities for nature through our work managing watercourses				

<i>RAG rating</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Responsible officer</i>	<i>Expected completion date</i>	<i>Progress at 01/05/23</i>	<i>Next milestone</i>
8.4.1	Review management of awarded watercourses with a view to action to improve biodiversity	Environment Operations Manager	ongoing	<p>SCDC have corporately joined the Wild Trout Trust and are continuing work with the Trust to improve biodiversity on council managed watercourses and to support local groups.</p> <p>In April 2023 the WTT trained SCDC watercourse staff in water vole habitat identification, and SCDC will be assisting WTT in creation of new wild trout habitat in Melbourn by providing staff and equipment.</p>	Moving forwards with WTT and other partner organisations on projects identified by WTT for example restoration work at the River Rhee, and bank strengthening at Shepreth.
8.5	Work with Highways England to ensure positive environmental legacy from A428 Improvement works	Waste Policy, Climate and Environment Manager	Q4 2022/23	Highways England updated in May that that they are engaging with Bidwell's and land owners to see which of various proposals for carbon sequestration and biodiversity can be progressed. The proposals were outlined in a feasibility study funded from the Carbon Theme of Highway England's Environmental Legacy Fund.	Highways England to progress. Updates via the relaunched A428 Legacy Working Group.