

South Cambridgeshire District Council Annual Greenhouse Gas Emissions Account 2024/25

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1. Introduction

These accounts have been compiled to better understand the impact of the Council's estate and operations on climate change, and to inform action to mitigate this impact by reducing emissions. They have been drawn up according to the [Environmental Reporting Guidelines](#) issued by the Government's Departments for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) (formerly the Department for Business, Energy and Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), updated March 2019).

The guidelines provide procedures and principles for accounting and reporting environmental impacts drawn from the internationally recognised Greenhouse Gas Protocol Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard from the World Resources Institute and World Business Council for Sustainable Development, known as the "GHG Protocol Corporate Standard". These principles are that the accounts should be relevant, quantitative, accurate (insofar as is practical), complete (with any exclusions specified, disclosed and justified), consistent, comparable and transparent.

Under the GHG Protocol, emissions are defined in three different scopes.

- Scope 1: Direct GHG emissions from activities owned or controlled by the organisation.

- Scope 2: Indirect emissions associated with consumption of purchased electricity, heat, steam and cooling.
- Scope 3: Indirect emissions that are a consequence of the organisation's actions, but which occur at sources not owned or controlled by the organisation.

2. GHG Emissions from the Council's Estate and Operations

Table 1: Overall GHG emissions for 2024/25 showing the percentage change from the baseline year

	GHG emissions (tCO2e) 2024/25	GHG emissions (tCO2e) 2018/2019 (baseline year)	Percentage change from baseline year
Scopes	2024/25	2018/19	-
Scope 1 (direct emissions)	1,095	1,360	-19%
Scope 2 (indirect emissions, electricity)	190	383*	-50%
Scope 3 (indirect emissions, other)	78	135**	-42%
Total gross emissions	1,363	1,878 (adjusted baseline)	-27%
Population***	169,425	157,519	3%
Intensity measurement (tonnes of CO2e per person)	0.00806	0.01192	- 32%
Emissions from electricity generated from Council owned sources and exported to the grid	1.29	0	-
Emissions from electricity purchased on a renewable energy tariff.	160	0	-
Total Emissions using market-based method	1,202	1,878	-36%

*Scope 2 emissions figure is different to that reported in 2018/19 due to the baseline recalculation of electricity 50% shared with Cambridge City Council at the Waterbeach depot.

** Scope 3 emissions figure is different to that reported in 2018/19 due to the baseline recalculation using the 'unknown' fuel type conversion factor

*** Based on [Office for National Statistics 2021 Mid-Year Population Estimates for 2023](#) provided by Cambridgeshire Insight.

Table 2: Greenhouse Gas Emissions for 2024-25 – by scope showing the percentage change from the baseline year

	GHG Emissions (tCO2e) 2024/25	GHG Emissions (tCO2e) 2018/2019 (baseline year)	Percentage change from baseline year
Scope 1	-	-	-
Gas consumption	134	271	-50%
Fleet	961	1,089	-12%
Process emissions	n/a	n/a	-
Fugitive emissions	n/a	n/a	-
Total Scope 1	1,095	1,360	-19%
Scope 2	-	-	-
Purchased electricity	190	383*	-50%
Total Scope 2	190	383*	-50%
Scope 3	-	-	-
Business Travel	78	135**	-43%
Transmission and Distribution losses	Not included	Not included	-
Employee commuting	Not included	Not included	-
Procured goods and services	Not included	Not included	-
Waste Disposal	Not included	Not included	-
Total Scope 3	78	135**	-43%
Total gross emissions	1,363	1,878	-27%

*Scope 2 emissions figure is different to that reported in 2018/19 due to the baseline recalculation of electricity shared 50% with Cambridge City Council at the Waterbeach depot.

** Scope 3 emissions figure is different to that reported in 2018/19 due to the baseline recalculation using the 'unknown' fuel type conversion factor.

Chart 1: Greenhouse gas emissions from SCDC estate and operations 2024/25

Pie chart showing emissions from South Cambridgeshire District Council's estate and operations, including a breakdown of emissions from Scopes 1, 2 and 3 in tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO2e).

GHG Emissions from SCDC 2024-25 (tCO2e)

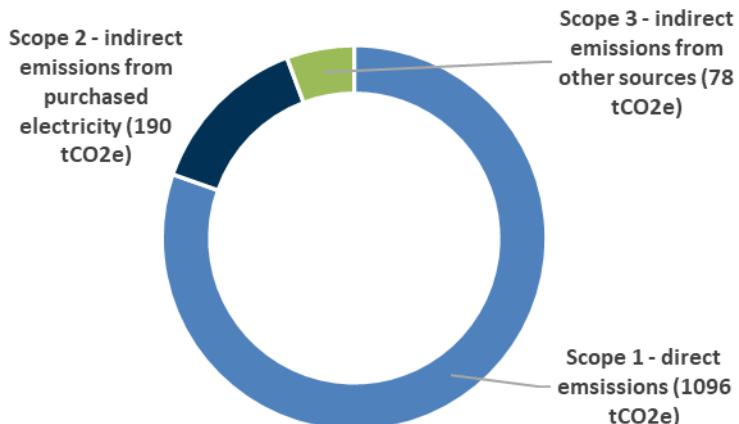


Chart 2: Scope 1: Direct emission from SCDC estate and operations

Pie chart showing South Cambridgeshire District Council's Scope 1 emissions, presenting a breakdown of emissions showing (in order of largest to smallest proportion) fleet diesel usage, gas from small sites owned by the Council, gas from South Cambridgeshire Hall, and HVO usage, in tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO2e).

Scope 1 - Direct emissions (1095 tCO2e)

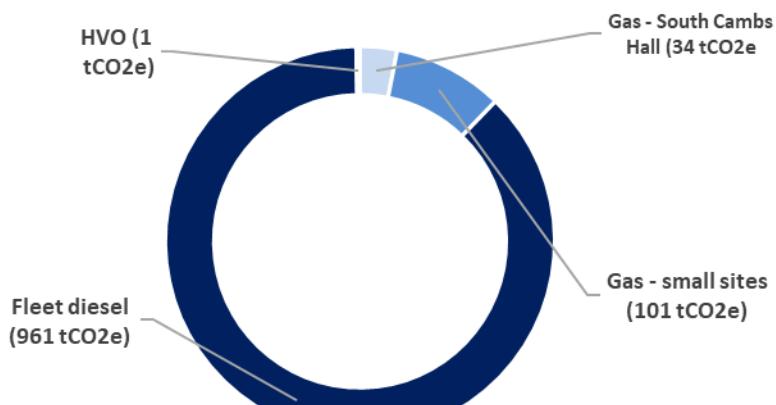


Chart 3: Scope 2: Indirect emissions from purchased electricity

Pie chart showing South Cambridgeshire District Council's Scope 2 emissions, presenting a breakdown of emissions showing (in order of largest to smallest proportion) electricity usage at South Cambridgeshire Hall, electricity usage at small sites owned by the Council, electricity usage at the Waterbeach waste depot and electricity used in footway lighting, in tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO2e).

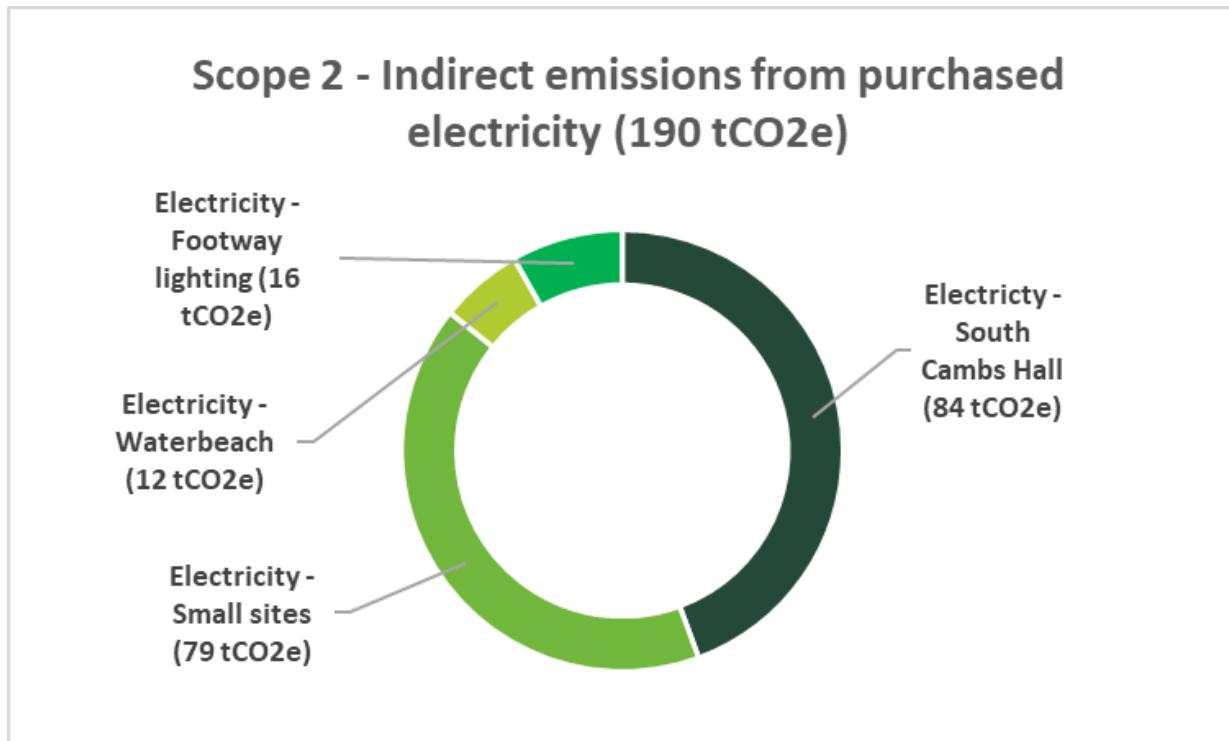
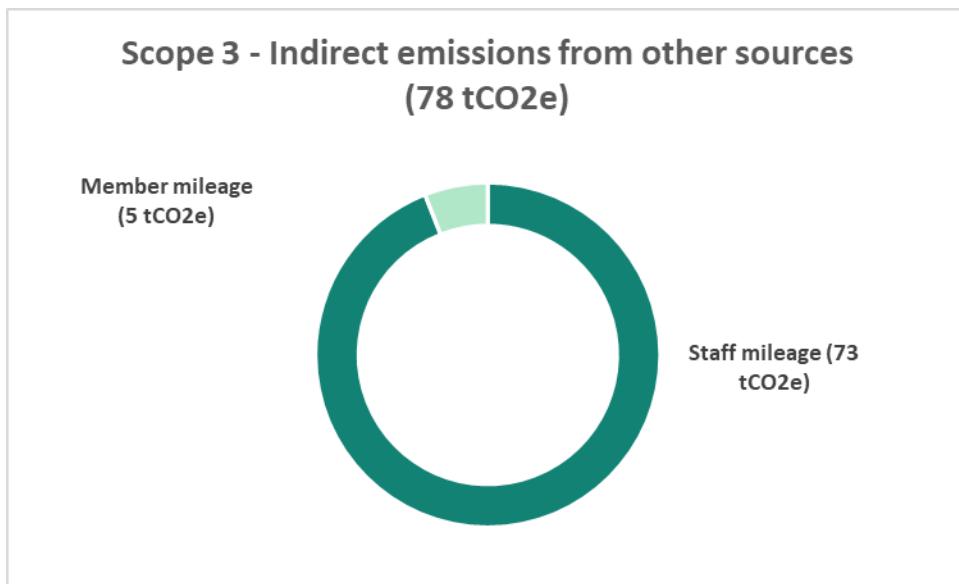


Chart 3: Scope 3: Indirect emissions from other sources

Pie chart showing South Cambridgeshire District Council's Scope 3 emissions, presenting a breakdown of emissions showing (in order of largest to smallest proportion) staff mileage and member mileage in tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO2e).



3. About the Council

South Cambridgeshire District Council is a non-metropolitan district authority and is responsible for providing a range of services to residents of South Cambridgeshire, visitors to the district, and businesses and other organisations based in the district. Services include housing, refuse and recycling collections, licensing, planning and building control, Council Tax collection, and environmental health services. The Council serves a population of 169,425 (est) living in 106 parishes and settlements, has 45 elected Members; and employed 738 members of staff as of 01 April 2025. Further information about the Council can be found on [our website](#).

4. Reporting Period

1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025.

5. Approach

We have followed [Government guidance on measuring and reporting environmental impacts](#), published by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).

6. Organisational Boundary

We have defined our organisational boundary following the Financial Control approach which means we have included operations which the Council owns and controls. Further detail on which operations or activities have been included within our organisational boundary for the purposes of compiling this greenhouse gas report is provided under 'Operational Scopes' below.

7. Operational Scopes

We have included Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions for all properties and vehicles that we fully own and control and for properties that we lease from others, where the Council is delivering a service.

We reported Scope 3 emissions where we have access to comprehensive and reliable data; and where we have a degree of control over the operation/ activity in question. See the table below for details:

Table 3: Rationale for Inclusion and Exclusion of Emissions.

Source of Emissions	Included in reporting?	Reason for exclusion where applicable
Source 1 (Direct)	-	-
Gas consumption in buildings we own and control	Yes	This includes our main office buildings, our three hub offices and our sheltered housing community rooms.
Gas consumption in buildings we lease to others	Partially	We have only included emissions arising from energy used in the communal areas of some of the buildings that we lease out (energy used in communal areas is provided and paid for by the Council). We have not included data on energy used in Council housing, Ermine Street Housing (the Council's private sector housing company), or in the commercial building, 140 Cambridge Science Park, owned by the Council.
Gas consumption in buildings we lease from others	No	The Waterbeach Depot is the only building we lease from others. No gas is consumed on these premises.
Fuel consumption in owned transport	Yes	Includes Shared Waste Services transport, e.g. refuse vehicles, operating in South Cambridgeshire; excludes Shared Waste Services transport operating in the City Council.
Process emissions	No	Not applicable.
Fugitive emissions, e.g. from air conditioning units	No	Excluded due to difficulty and/or cost of obtaining data.
Scope 2 (Indirect, energy)	-	-

Purchased electricity; in buildings we own, occupy and control	Yes	This includes our main office buildings, our three hub offices, our sheltered housing community rooms and the two traveller sites - Whaddon and Blackwell.
Purchased electricity in buildings we lease to others	Partially	We have only included emissions arising from energy used in the communal areas of some of the buildings that we lease out (energy used in communal areas is provided and paid for by the Council). We do not have access to data on energy used by our tenants.
Purchased electricity in buildings we lease from others	Yes	Waterbeach depot.
Purchased electricity used in street lighting owned by the Council	Yes	1,851 streetlights.
Scope 3 (indirect, other)	-	-
Purchased goods and services	No	Excluded due to difficulty and/or cost of obtaining data.
Business travel	Yes	This includes mileage claimed by staff and Members.
Commuter travel	No	Excluded due to difficulty and/or cost of obtaining data.
Waste disposal	No	Excluded due to difficulty and/or cost of obtaining data.
Water usage	No	Excluded due to difficulty and/or cost of obtaining data.
Outsourced activities	No	-

8. Conversion/ Emissions Factors Used

The emissions factors used to calculate the emissions in this Greenhouse Gas Report are those provided by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) and DEFRA titled: '[UK Government GHG Conversion Factors for Company Reporting](#)'.

9. Geographical Breakdown

All of our operations and activities are carried out in the UK.

10. Baseline Year

1 April 2018 – 31 March 2019

11. Base Year Recalculation Policy

For consistent tracking of performance over time, the Council may need to recalculate the baseline year to compare current emissions with historic emissions. The reasons for change are documented in Part 9 of the [Guidance on how to measure and report your greenhouse gas emissions provided by DEFRA](#). For example, changes in calculation methods or improvements in the accuracy of emission factors or activity data that result in a significant impact on the base year emissions data.

Since the 2018/19 report was published, a survey identified the number of footway lamps in use to be 1,796, not 1,677 as reported. Although the figure of 1,796 was used in 2019/20, this number has since changed again for 2020/21 to 1,803 due to the identification of some more footway lamps not captured in this survey. Further to this, the close of the streetlighting LED upgrade project produced a full inventory of the streetlights, listing 1,851 streetlights. Due to the very small difference in numbers and the fact that a small number of streetlamps are due to be disconnected, a baseline recalculation is not necessary.

Further baseline recalculations have been made to reflect 50% of the electricity shared with Cambridgeshire County Council at the Waterbeach depot and the amendment to the fuel conversion factor from 'diesel' to 'unknown' which is used for the business fuel consumption.

Owing to a change in the availability of data, recalculations of the business mileage figures for 2021/22 and 2022/23 were possible. Data before this point is not available. This has not altered the baseline figures but has allowed for further accuracy in the emissions calculations.

12. Intensity Measurement

We have included an intensity ratio of 0.00806 tonnes of CO₂e per resident of South Cambridgeshire, which is based on 2023 mid-year population statistics produced by Cambridgeshire Insight from [2021 Census population estimates produced by the Office for National Statistics](#). This is a reduction from the figure 0.01192 in 2018/19 and serves to reflect the number of residents served by the Council.

13. External Assurance Statement

The Authority's Internal Audit service have had opportunity to review the reported emissions figures, supporting calculations and sample test available source data and have provided assurances on the figures provided.

14. Avoided GHG Emissions

For South Cambridgeshire Hall and the Council-owned small sites, a purchased green electricity tariff has been included and calculated using a market-based method for calculating scope 2 emissions.

15. Amount of Electricity Generated from Owned or Controlled Sources

The solar array on the Waterbeach Depot started exporting electricity in March 2019. We have included the total renewable electricity exported from the PV array as avoided emissions. This is split 50:50 with Cambridge City Council.

16. Amount of Heat Generated from Owned or Controlled Sources

South Cambs Hall benefits from a roof mounted solar thermal installation. As solar thermal panels only 'generate heat' it will in turn mean that the heat drawn by the gas boilers will be less than if solar thermal wasn't available.

For further information about this report, please contact
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