

South Cambridgeshire Climate & Nature Strategy

2026-2030



The new joint Climate and Nature Strategy builds on 5 years of progress from the previously separate Doubling Nature and Zero Carbon Strategies, creating synergistic policies that dually address the climate and ecological crises.

The new strategy is being developed to help realise our vision for South Cambridgeshire as a leader in climate action, resilience, and environmental stewardship whilst nurturing sustainable economic growth, innovation and development, social equity, and community well-being.

Our strategy accounts for key challenges including:

- The shifting policy landscapes
- The limitations of the Council's direct influence
- Scarcity of Council-owned land for improving nature
- Projected growth in the district
- The use of AI technologies

Opportunity areas that will be leveraged include:

- Resident appetite for renewable technologies in the district
- A strong legacy of upgrading community infrastructure
- The prevalence of organisations with an innovative focus in the area

We will prioritise working collaboratively with our partners and organisations to maximise the climate and nature benefits for South Cambridgeshire.

We have framed our strategy against the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, an internationally recognised framework for addressing climate change, the decline in nature, and inequalities.

Our strategy and action plan identify seven key themes, each including ambitious actions and targets, namely: transport, energy & retrofit, nature & water, sustainable foods, waste minimisation, communication & behaviour change, and businesses, supply chain and finance.



Transport

We will reduce transport emissions and maximise the benefits of transport schemes such as improved physical and mental health through active travel, improved air quality, and access to transport via economic mobility hubs. As transport is the highest emitter of carbon emissions in South Cambridgeshire, targets and actions have been set based on our spheres of influence to reduce emissions and encourage modal shifts within our estate and the wider South Cambridgeshire area.

Energy & Retrofit

The focus of the targets and actions under this theme are separated into requirements to improve the energy efficiency of buildings and the capacity to increase renewable energy. For buildings, we have identified where we have direct influence and can improve the efficiency of our estate, and areas where we will need to form partnerships to increase the energy efficiency of social housing, commercial buildings, private homes, and historic buildings.



Nature & Water

We will protect and enhance South Cambridgeshire's land and water and create an interconnected, resilient, and productive natural ecosystem. Our main targets focus on doubling and enhancing nature in South Cambridgeshire, whilst also setting standards to improve water efficiency. To achieve this, most of our actions will involve close partnerships with key stakeholders.

Sustainable Foods

We will support a resilient food system that provides affordable, healthy, and local available food for all. One way we will act toward this is to create a network of local food organisations and use the South Cambridgeshire local plan to leverage the placemaking decisions to prioritise allotments and spaces to encourage local food growing.

Waste Minimisation

We will deliver a waste service focused on avoiding and reducing waste as a priority, followed by efficient recycling, composting, and disposal as a last resort. Our goal is to manage waste in a way that is cost-effective and minimises our impact on the climate and natural environment.

Communications & Behaviour Change

We will ensure everyone in our community knows the role they can play to respond to the climate and nature emergencies and receive the support they need. To achieve this, many of our actions centre around involving, engaging, and communicating with wider stakeholders, residents, and community members in South Cambridgeshire.

Businesses, Supply Chain, and Finance

We will collaborate with and support businesses to build their ability to address climate and ecological issues and increase resilience, helping them develop a resilient supply chain.

The Council will track progress on the strategy via an annual review of the action plan and monitor and evaluate developments against these actions. Where necessary we will adapt actions to maximise opportunities to accelerate the delivery of our targets.

