

Environmental Sustainability Action Plan: 2023 - 24

CARBON NEUTRAL CITY COUNCIL

Ref. no	Title	Project / work package description	Progress to date	Impact	Ownership	Start date	End date
NEW ACTION 1	Low Carbon buildings	Create costed decarbonisation proposals for: -Worcester's three leisure centres -Astwood Cemetery -Sixways Depot.	New action – not started	Emissions from the three leisure centres accounted for 32.8% of the City Council's total carbon footprint for 2021 – 22.	Property Services/ Crematorium management	November 2022	December 2024
REPEAT ACTION ESS-1	Low Carbon buildings	Assess and produce a Decarbonisation Plan for all of the Council's major buildings, taking account of planned maintenance where carbon reductions can be incorporated (previous action). Continue to identify and implement further measures to increase the energy efficiency of The Guildhall, MAG and The Commandery.	Guildhall: insulation, lighting and draught proofing measures put in place. Heating controls and management (TRVs, water temp, external temp sensors) all reviewed. MAG: Replacement LED lighting to Museum areas, upgraded lighting to office areas, LED lighting to basement areas on motion sensors. Sustainable alternative to gas yet to be identified.	Heating buildings accounted for 29% of the Council's carbon footprint for 2021 – 22.	Property Services	September 2022	December 2024
NEW ACTION 2	Low Carbon estate	Review recommendations from feasibility study regarding the installation of further solar panels on the roof of St Martins Gate car park. Make decision on whether to progress and make further investment. Investigate potential to make further energy savings at the site – such as motion-sensitive lighting.	Feasibility study has been commissioned	Existing panels produced more than 126,976 units of electricity between 2019 - 22, reducing the City Council's carbon footprint by approximately 23,368 kg per year.	Property Services	September 2022	Spring 2023
REPEAT ACTION ESS-2	Low emission fleet	Zero emission vehicle fleet options to be considered in our vehicle replacement strategy. Engage with suppliers of alternative zero emission vehicles and seek to be considered for trials.	Report from Energy Saving Trust received - considerations are being built into procurement cycle. Five electric vans now part of City Council's vehicle fleet.	Emissions from fleet vehicles accounted for 38.1% of the City Council's carbon footprint in 2021 – 22.	Environmental Operations	October 2022	Report with recommendations to Environment Committee by end March 2023

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			Electric grounds maintenance equipment purchased - including hedge-trimmers and grass strimmers.				
COMPLETED ACTION ESS-3	Low emission business travel	Promote the refreshed Woo electric bikes project for employees. Ensure office video conferencing is facilitated across all sites. Consider LEV pool vehicle or taxi options for staff travel.	<p>Civil enforcement team allocated bikes and received Bikeability training. Teams patrol city by bike on a daily basis. Four ebikes are available for staff use. An online booking system for staff has been introduced.</p> <p>All office-based staff issued with home-use IT equipment. Video conferencing facilities have been installed at all Council office sites.</p>	<p>Cycling reduces transport-related carbon emissions as well as having health benefits.</p> <p>Holding more meetings online has reducing car emissions from councillors, partners and others attending Council-hosted meetings.</p>	Environmental Sustainability Officer	Spring 2021	Autumn 2021

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REPEAT ACTION ESS-4	Low emission commuting	<p>Further promote the Cycle to Work scheme. Introduce a scheme incentivising staff to travel by foot or bike with charitable donations. Provide cycle storage and showering facilities at all workplaces.</p> <p>Assess the potential to introduce access to the Government's salary sacrifice scheme for electric vehicles.</p> <p>Next steps: Offer bikeability training to all staff to increase confidence and take-up. Expand SHIFT scheme so councillors can join too.</p>	<p>The Council has joined the SHIFT cycle scheme – a donation is made to the Mayor's charity for every business mile cycled by staff. Showers and secure bike storage facilities are now in place at the Guildhall, MAG, Astwood Cemetery and Sixways Depot.</p> <p>EV salary sacrifice scheme still under consideration.</p>	<p>Calculated on the salary sacrifice scheme only: 5% of staff per year (10 staff), average 10k mileage per year, replacing average petrol car = 3tCO2e each. Demonstrates leadership.</p>	HR	Spring 2021	Consideration of salary sacrifice and incentives scheme by March 2023.
COMPLETED ACTION ESS-5	Embedding sustainability	<p>Embed the strategy and governance of the strategy within the Council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reporting on progress • Decision making • Staff training • SWDP review 	<p>Twice-yearly reporting to Environment Committee on progress against Sustainability Action Plan.</p> <p>All City Council staff will have been offered online sustainability training by the end of 2022.</p> <p>SWDP Review SWDPR 31: 'Renewable and Low Carbon Energy' sets out policy relating to requirements for the incorporation of renewable and low carbon energy into new development.</p>	<p>No directly measurable CO2 saving, required for leadership and facilitating future change</p>	Corporate Leadership Team	Spring 2021	Autumn / winter 2021

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			SWDPR 27: Biodiversity and Geodiversity states that "All developments are required to deliver measurable net gains in biodiversity through the restoration, recreation and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of legally protected and priority species populations."				
NEW ACTION 3	Embedding sustainability	Introduce face to face carbon literacy training for all staff. Resources would be provided free, courtesy of the Carbon Literacy Trust. Two officers required to run each seven hour course – plus preparation time.	New action	Increased awareness and understanding around sustainability will result in greater focus and better decision making.	Environmental Sustainability and Active Travel officer	January 2023	December 2024

CARBON NEUTRAL WORCESTER

Ref. no	Title	Project / work package description	Progress to Date	Impact	Ownership	Start date	End date
REPEAT ACTION ESS-6	Domestic energy efficiency (private and social)	Directly deliver the Home Upgrade Grant Phase 2 (HUG2) for properties that do not use gas to heat their homes. Funding available from BEIS Home Upgrade Grant.	136 Worcester properties received energy efficiency improvements, averaging £10K per property, through 2021 and 2022 Green Homes Grant and LADS schemes. 185 applications received to date for LADS3 and HUG2 – these are currently being processed.	According to most recent BEIS statistics, energy consumption from homes accounts for 41% of Worcester's total carbon footprint.	Strategic Housing	December 2020	End of December 2024
COMPLETED ACTION ESS-7	Domestic energy efficiency (social housing)	Provide technical support to encourage the City's major Registered Housing Providers to submit a bid to the BEIS Social Housing Decarbonisation scheme	Initially social housing providers could only apply for the Social Housing Demonstrator Fund with the support of the local authority; however BEIS has now changed rules and is taking applications directly from the social housing provider. Platform understood to have applied.	Depending on project, deep retrofit could have reasonable impact (Average emissions per home 3.89tCO ₂ e, if 50 homes have this reduced by 75% = 145tCO ₂ e)	Strategic Housing	Summer 2021	Applications when scheme announced (by 2022)
REPEAT ACTION ESS-8	Active Travel	Through the Towns Investment Fund, deliver improvements to cycle parking, active travel routes and introduce a public bike hire scheme. £4.5m allocated.	Scheme details and programmes agreed for active travel corridors and Kepax Bridge. Bike share procurement planned for Q1/2 2023/24.	According to latest BEIS data, transport accounts for approximately 30% of Worcester's carbon footprint.	Deputy Director – Corporate Policy and Strategy	Already started	2025
NEW ACTION 4	Zero emission vehicle charging	Create EV charging strategy for Worcester. 75 hours' officer time allocated.	In progress	Provide clear framework around City Council's future plans to develop charge point infrastructure	Environmental Sustainability Officer	October 2022	December 2022
COMPLETED ACTION ESS-9	Zero emission vehicle charging in car parks	Deliver and promote the proposed St Martin's Gate rapid chargepoint hub. £400,000 investment.	Since these points went live in October 2021, there have been over 1,000 individual charging sessions at the site, collectively powering EV vehicles to drive	All miles from charging on these points are zero emission (green electricity).	Property Services	Sept 2020	Spring 2021

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			over 73,000 miles. Petrol or diesel cars would have released over 14 tCO2 for an equivalent distance.				
NEW ACTION 5	Zero emission vehicle charging in car parks	Install more EV chargers in city centre car parks, prioritising those close to residential areas with limited potential for off-street charging. £200K already allocated in 2022-3 budget.	Report to November 2022 Environment Committee	Encouraging more drivers to switch from petrol/diesel cars to an EV, by contributing to development of strong public charging network	Environmental Sustainability Officer/Property	May 2022	July 2023
NEW ACTION 6	Zero emission vehicle charging	Create costed proposal to install EV charge points at leisure and community centres across the city.	New action	Encouraging more drivers to switch from petrol/diesel cars to an EV, by contributing to development of strong public charging network	Environmental Sustainability Officer/Property	August 2023	December 2024
NEW ACTION 7	Car Club and Car Share	Work with partners to expand Car Share Clubs across Worcester. Promote lift share schemes.	Arboretum Car Club vehicle in place. Liftshare scheme promoted in Summer 22 City Life.	Sharing journeys will help to reduce the number of cars on the road, and subsequently emissions	Environmental Sustainability Officer	April 2022	December 2024
REPEAT ACTION ESS-10	Investigate options for heat networks	Apply for funding from the Heat Networks Delivery Unit to commission the feasibility study into heat network opportunities.	This is still under consideration – the University has led proposals to date.	Use power of the River Severn to create local renewable energy supply	Environmental Sustainability Officer	Sept 2020	December 2024
REPEAT ACTION ESS-11	Support for community environmental projects	Develop and deliver a small grants scheme to support community projects that help to deliver the strategy.	Scheme has been launched; £40,000 already allocated (of which £22K has been spent to date). 23 grants have been approved in the 12-month period to October 2022.	Would be assessed on a project by project basis	Community engagement	Scheme first launched in October	December 2024

SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY

Ref. no	Title	Project / work package description	Progress to date	Impact	Ownership	Start date	End date
CLOSED ACTION ESS-12	Employment and Skills strategy	Revise and update the Employment and Skills Strategy to include skills to support the low carbon economy.	No progress reported to date. This action has been superseded by the new action below.	Could provide a significant boost to local low carbon skills provision	Economic Development Team	Spring 2021	Winter 2021
NEW ACTION 8	Employment and Skills strategy	Work with training providers and local employers to identify and promote appropriate training opportunities which deliver a highly skilled local workforce. The delivery of UKSPF funded projects such as the green skills and retraining support for those in high carbon sectors will be key to this.	New action.	Could provide a significant boost to local low carbon skills provision	Economic Development Team	November 2022	December 2024

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Ref. no	Title	Project / work package description	Progress to date	Impact	Ownership	Start date	End date
COMPLETED ACTION ESS-13	City Biodiversity Action Programme	Develop a City Biodiversity Action Programme with key partners and stakeholders.	A biodiversity action plan has been created and is being implemented.	According to the State of Nature report published in 2019, suggests there has been a 13% decline in the average abundance of wildlife in the UK since the 1970s.	Environmental Sustainability Officer with Environmental Operations	Spring 2021	Summer 2021
NEW ACTION 9	Nature trail	Support the Worcester Environmental Group to launch Wild about Worcester 12-mile walking and cycling route. Up to £15,000 (already allocated)	Project underway and scheduled for Spring 2023 launch.	Improved biodiversity and active travel encouragement	Environmental Sustainability Officer	June 2022	April 2023
COMPLETED ACTION ESS-14	Tree planting	Plant 6,000 trees as part of the Urban Tree Challenge Project. Assess other opportunities to increase tree and hedgerow cover within the city.	Over 8,000 trees were planted in Worcester during the winter of 2020-21 and 2021-2 – the majority at Perdiswell Park	A fully grown tree can absorb around 21 kilograms of carbon dioxide per year.	Environmental Operations	January 2021	Spring 2021
NEW ACTION 10	Tree management and planting	Create sustainable tree management and planting plan for 2023 – 2024.	New action	A more strategic approach will ensure the survival of trees planted and will help mitigate the affect of Ash Dieback and other diseases.	Environmental Operations	March 2023	February 2025
REPEAT ACTION ESS-15	Sustainable planting	Increase the use of sustainable planting and vegetation management on Council maintained land.	The frequency of mowing has been	Action to boost pollinator numbers is essential to the	Environmental Operations	Spring 2021	December 2024

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			reduced across the city, resulting in a resurgence of wildflowers.	stability of the food chain.			
REPEAT ACTION ESS-16	Lyppard Ponds Special Area of Conservation	Seek to secure and enhance biodiversity within the Lyppard Ponds habitat.	Worcestershire Wildlife Trust surveyed the pond in May 2021. Licences being sought to conduct reed clearance work.	Protect and enhance the important great crested newt population	Environmental Operations	Summer 2021	Summer 2024
NEW ACTION 11	Sustainable Development	Implement the following adopted policies in the current South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SWDP 5: Green Infrastructure • SWDP 13: Effective use of Land • SWDP 21: Design • SWDP 22: Biodiversity and Geodiversity • SWDP 27: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy – requirement for 10% CO2 reduction in most cases • SWDP 38: Green Space 	New action	Ensuring that future developments will be energy efficient and that measures to protect the natural environment will be implemented.	Planning Department	November 2022	December 2024
REPEAT ACTION ESS-17	Biodiversity value of the city waterway corridors	Explore opportunities for promoting improvements in biodiversity along the city's waterways.	Partnered with Environment Agency to create new channel at Battenhall (Duck Brook) – providing a variety of watery habitats for aquatic invertebrates and small fish.	Would enhance a key wildlife corridor in the city	Environmental Operations	Autumn 2021	December 2024

PREPARING FOR CLIMATE CHANGE

Ref. no	Title	Project / work package description	Progress to date	Impact	Ownership	Start date	End date
REPEAT ACTION ESS-18	Natural Water Management on Barbourne Brook	Work with partners to support further flood alleviation and biodiversity enhancements on Barbourne Brook.	No progress reported to date.	Support the protection of key habitats or assets	Deputy Director – Corporate Policy and Strategy	Summer 2021	By end of 2021
REPEAT ACTION ESS-19	Flood resilience	Work with partners to promote property flood protection and resilience improvement opportunities.	National Flood Forum ran two information sessions for Worcester residents in March 2021.	Minimise the effects of property flooding.	Deputy Director – Corporate Policy and Strategy	Spring 2021	December 2024

Ref. no	Title	Project / work package description	Progress to date	Impact	Ownership	Start date	End date
NEW ACTION 12	Temperature increases and droughts	Review City Council's business continuity plans to ensure impact of heat waves and drought on services is assessed.	Plans tested during 2022 heatwave.	Continued resilience of Council services	Performance and Programme Management	January 2023	May 2023

RESOURCE EFFICIENCY

Ref. no	Title	Project / work package description	Progress to date	Impact	Ownership	Start date	End date
NEW ACTION 13	Increase in recycling rates	Develop action plan and costed marketing strategy to improve domestic and commercial recycling rates and reduce contamination.	New action	Conserves energy, reduces pollution, reduces greenhouse gases, and conserves natural resources.	Environmental Operations	October 2022	June 2023
REPEAT ACTION ESS-20	Waste hierarchy promotion campaign	Run a campaign to promote "reduce, reuse, recycle" to householders. Promote and grow the Council's commercial recycling service	Social media campaigns targeting waste reduction run over Christmas and Easter periods – as well as articles in City Life magazine. Community fridges have been set up at Tolladine and Ronkswood Community Centres, to cut down on food waste.	Emissions from waste account for significant proportion of City Council and County Council emissions	Corporate Policy & Strategy (Comms)	Summer 2021	December 2024
REPEAT ACTION ESS-21	Single Use Plastics elimination	Continue to deliver the Single Use Plastics Action Plan (previous action). Continue to work with Plastic Free Worcester and Severn Rivers Trust to reduce single use plastic consumption and remove from open land and waterways.	Spring 2022 campaign with Plastic Free Worcester and WRS, targeting local food businesses. Ran litter picking competition prior to Diamond Jubilee.	Reduce the use of single use plastics and reduce plastics going into the river	Environmental Sustainability Officer	January 2020	December 2024

APPROACH: ENGAGEMENT

Ref. no	Title	Project / work package description	Progress to date	Impact	Ownership	Start date	End date
NEW ACTION 14	Public engagement	Create sustainability-related social media campaign to run during COP 27 (United Nations Climate Change Conference, 6 – 18 November 2022) and COP 28. Create calendar of national sustainability-related campaigns and create a communications plan to raise awareness of	New action	Improved understanding of the action the City Council and partners are taking to reduce emissions – and the actions residents can	Environmental Sustainability Officer/Communications Team	November 2022	Ongoing

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		local progress to reduce emissions and boost biodiversity.		take to reduce their carbon footprint and boost biodiversity.			
NEW ACTION 15	Business Engagement	Work with stakeholders and local employers to identify and promote opportunities to encourage sustainable business growth and innovations within the low carbon economy. The delivery of UKSPF funded projects, such as the business grant support for decarbonisation and improvements to the natural environment, will be key to this.	New action	Local businesses play a vital role in helping to reduce Worcester's carbon footprint	Economic Development Team	November 2022	December 2024
CLOSED ACTION ESS-22	Forum for the Environment	Establish the City Forum on the Environment	County Council has pledged to set up an Active Travel Forum for Stakeholders following the Sep 22 Summit. Consideration was given as to whether a Forum or Sub Forums should be set up for other areas. Decision made to continue working with existing groups such as Transition Worcester, rather than setting up a new group with similar aims.	Engagement and momentum around partnership working	Environmental Sustainability Officer	February 2021	End 2021
COMPLETED ACTION ESS-23	Summit for the Environment	Hold first Summit for Autumn 2021.	Inaugural Sustainable Worcester Summit held in September 2022. The event, which was attended by over 120 people, included presentations from Energy Saving Trust, WRAP, SYSTRA, Act on Energy, WEG and Christopher Whitehead Language College.	Engagement and momentum around partnership working	Environmental Sustainability Officer	February 2021	End 2021
NEW ACTION 16	Sustainable Worcester Summit	Host Sustainable Worcester Summit once every two years – or partner with other local organisations to deliver the event. 200 hours officer time – estimated cost £12 - £15K	As above	Engagement and momentum around partnership working	Environmental Sustainability Officer	January 2024	October 2024

