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ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY SELECT COMMITTEE

Date: Tuesday, 12 November 2024

Time: 6.00pm,

Location: Council Chamber - Daneshill House, Danestrete

Contact: Alex Marsh (01438) 242587

committees@stevenage.gov.uk

Members: Councillors: R Broom (Chair), A McGuinness (Vice-Chair), L Brady, F Chowdhury, A Gordon, S Mead, C Parris, E Plater, G Snell, N Williams and J Woods

AGENDA

PART 1

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2. MINUTES - 8 OCTOBER 2024

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 8 October 2024 as a correct record.
3 – 8

3. CLIMATE CHANGE UPDATE

Members are invited to interview the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Environment and Performance and the Climate Change Officers regarding an update on the Council's Climate Change performance and delivery against the Committee's previous review recommendations.

9 – 76

4. URGENT PART 1 BUSINESS

To consider any Part 1 business accepted by the Chair as urgent.

5. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

To consider the following motions –

1. That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in paragraphs 1 – 7 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act as amended by Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

2. That Members consider the reasons for the following reports being in Part II and determine whether or not maintaining the exemption from disclosure of the information contained therein outweighs the public interest in disclosure.

6. URGENT PART II BUSINESS

To consider any Part II business accepted by the Chair as urgent.

Agenda Published 04 November 2024

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT & ECONOMY SELECT COMMITTEE MINUTES

Date: Tuesday, 8 October 2024

Time: 6.00pm

Place: Council Chamber - Daneshill House

Present: Councillors: Rob Broom (Chair) (Chair), Andy McGuinness (Vice-Chair) (Vice Chair), Leanne Brady, Forhad Chowdhury, Alistair Gordon, Sarah Mead, Claire Parris, Ellie Plater CC, Nigel Williams and Jade Woods

Start / End Time: Start Time: 6.00pm
End Time: 8.00pm

1 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Graham Snell.

There were no declarations of interest.

At this juncture, the chair welcomed the guest speakers in attendance, Theresa Kilworth (Barnardo's Children's Services), Jackie Johnson (Deputy Head at Barnwell Secondary School), Lahaina Sutherland (Stevenage Youth Mayor) and Frankie Duncan (Deputy Stevenage Youth Mayor). The Chair also welcomed Carol Richardson, the Council's Enterprise and Skills Partnership Officer.

2 **MINUTES - 17 SEPTEMBER 2024**

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Environment and Economy Select Committee meeting held on 17 September 2024 be approved as a correct record and signed by the chair.

3 **INTERVIEW WITH STEVENAGE CHILDREN'S CENTRE**

Theresa Kilworth from Barnardo's Children's Services provided an overview of the services offered by family centres in Stevenage, specifically addressing the funding available for childcare to support parents returning to work. She highlighted the recent government funding changes, including:

- 9 to 23 months funding: 15 hours of funded childcare, increasing to 30 hours in September 2025, for families earning under £100k annually.
- Two-year-old funding: Available for low-income families or those on benefits, currently at 15 hours and increasing to 30 hours next year.
- Three- and four-year-old funding: Universal 15 hours of childcare, with an additional 15 hours for working families earning under £100k.

Theresa outlined the available childcare facilities in Stevenage, including eight day nurseries and 81 childminders, noting gaps in provision for certain age groups in pre-schools. She emphasised the importance of sufficient childcare availability for parents looking to return to work and discussed the pressures on local childcare settings, including staff ratios, facility limitations, and the need for 7-day childcare services.

Feedback from parents indicated that the funding helped reduce the financial burden of returning to work, though challenges remained, especially for those who worked shifts or weekends. Childcare providers raised concerns about matching specific childcare needs with available spaces and highlighted difficulties in staffing and facilities.

The presentation concluded with suggestions for improving support for families, such as reviewing toddler group provisions and addressing the decreasing take-up of two-year-old funding. Theresa also mentioned the potential future need for extended childcare hours due to the increasing demands of a 24/7 work culture.

Members asked a number of questions related to:

- Information Clarity
- Funding
- Balancing Work with Childcare
- Financial Viability of Providing Services
- Challenges Faced by Settings
- Training and Reskilling

In response, the Committee heard that:

- Parents often found the information confusing, particularly when accessing funding through online platforms. Many struggled to understand what they were entitled to, and this issue was compounded for those without internet access or with limited literacy skills.
- While parents could access 15 hours of funded childcare, they often had to pay for additional hours, particularly outside term time. This led many to rely on informal family support during holidays.
- While no weekend childcare provision currently existed in Stevenage, it might be something that would need to be considered in the future, particularly as more and more parents returned to work in roles that fell outside of traditional working hours.
- While most nurseries were managing, they faced difficulties in recruitment, particularly for staff to cover opening and closing times. For most settings, the loss of just one key staff member would significantly affect their operations.
- The potential of new T-level qualifications that involved hands-on learning, could help nurseries train staff more efficiently.

Members highlighted that parents needed to apply for childcare funding several months in advance and had to regularly reapply to ensure continued support. In addition to this, many childminders refused to take children over the age of three due

to financial constraints.

Theresa acknowledged these issues adding that the process could be challenging for parents, especially when navigating various types of funding and settings that accept them. She noted that the limited number of nurseries in Stevenage, combined with the financial strain on childminders, made these pressing issues.

The Chair thanked Theresa for her contribution.

4 **INTERVIEW WITH BARNWELL SECONDARY SCHOOL ASSISTANT HEAD TEACHER - JACKIE JOHNSON**

Responding to a question from the Chair regarding collaboration, Jackie Johnson, Deputy Head at Barnwell Secondary School highlighted the strong partnership between secondary schools in Stevenage, specifically in sharing resources due to teacher shortages, such as students studying A-level Chemistry at neighbouring schools. She spoke of a Stevenage 6th Form Partnership, which fostered collaboration between sixth forms but faced challenges in recruitment, especially for STEM subjects. The relationship between schools and North Herts College was slightly competitive, given that both offer post-16 programmes.

The Committee heard that Barnwell had a successful collaboration with the University of Hertfordshire, benefiting from its widening access programme. This provided financial support, enabling Barnwell to run programmes like the Brilliant Club, which helped raise aspirations by giving students access to top universities like Oxford and Cambridge. Jackie praised the University's efforts in promoting higher education and broadening student horizons, noting that it had helped students see university as a viable path.

In response to a question regarding T-Levels, Jackie discussed challenges, particularly due to financial constraints and work placement requirements that made them less appealing compared to A Levels. She advised the Committee that Barnwell School could adopt T Levels, but their previous status as a "Requires Improvement" school had restricted them from offering this pathway to date.

The Chair asked a question related to mentoring. Jackie responded that mentoring was a significant focus at Barnwell School, supported by programmes like "Zero Gravity", which helped disadvantaged students connect with undergraduates to support their university applications.

Jackie described a "homegrown talent pipeline" where older students mentored younger ones, helping to create a supportive educational environment. Students from disadvantaged backgrounds particularly benefited, as they often lacked parental support or role models. Jackie explained that mentoring from slightly older peers, who had firsthand experience, resonated more with students than when advice came from teachers. She envisioned a "mentoring spiral" that could extend beyond secondary schools to include partnerships with primary schools.

The Committee heard an anecdote about a student, who had faced significant

obstacles but was supported through mentoring and succeeded in securing a university place. This highlighted the emotional impact and importance of providing those opportunities to students who face socio-economic challenges.

A Member posed a multi-layered question regarding the impact of mental health on a lack of aspirations in young people. Jackie responded that post-COVID mental health issues had risen, and schools faced challenges with attendance and behaviour. The Committee heard that while schools had various support networks in place, connecting with local employers, especially post-COVID, had become more difficult, particularly due to hybrid working environments. Jackie also mentioned that face-to-face work experience had become less accessible, which affected students' development of employability skills.

When asked about degree apprenticeships, Jackie advised the Committee that they were difficult to access for students with no prior industry experience, which often skewed national statistics. Apprenticeships were highly competitive, and students needed more support in preparing for the interview processes.

A Member expressed concern for students who weren't academically inclined or motivated, particularly those who chose subjects like "triple sport" because there weren't enough places in more relevant vocational courses. They pointed out the issue of students working long hours in low-paid jobs, sometimes out of necessity due to the cost of living and worried that those students lack clear pathways to fulfilling careers and often remained in jobs with limited prospects.

Jackie acknowledged those concerns, noting that schools must balance offering courses with ensuring students didn't fail due to poor subject suitability. The Committee heard of a pre-apprenticeship programme aimed at vulnerable students who would struggle with traditional academic routes, but also the difficulties of limited resources in schools. Jackie advised that while some students needed to pursue alternative qualifications or careers, it could be argued that sometimes those pathways could lead to future opportunities.

Members challenged the notion that only vulnerable students needed support, highlighting that some students simply missed opportunities because their chosen fields weren't available. Jackie agreed but stated that schools could only offer courses that were financially viable.

The Chair thanked Jackie Johnson for her contribution to the meeting.

5 **INTERVIEW WITH YOUTH MAYOR AND DEPUTY YOUTH MAYOR**

The Chair welcomed Lahaina Sutherland and Frankie Duncan, the Council's Youth Mayor and Deputy Youth Mayor.

In response to a question related to the quality of career's advice in schools, the Youth Mayor expressed concerns about the lack of specialised career advisors at their school. Until recently, there had only been one advisor for approximately 900 students, who had now left, leaving a gap in support. They emphasised the

importance of encouraging students to apply for opportunities like work placements, as many felt discouraged due to competitiveness and a fear of entering professional environments. The Deputy Youth Mayor added that careers advice in their school was limited to a single brief session and agreed there was insufficient pressure or guidance in helping students explore their career options. The Committee heard that there had been a general focus on university over apprenticeships or employment, with little information about alternative routes. Members expressed concerns regarding the lack of specialist, in person, careers advice available for students in schools acknowledging budget constraints.

The Chair asked a question related to the age at which students began to consider their career options. In response, the Deputy Youth Mayor commented that there was no blanket answer available but suggested that some students would start thinking about their career options around Year 8 or Year 9 as they began thinking about their GCSE options.

In response to a question regarding mock interviews, the Youth Mayor shared that they had one mock interview in Year 12, which was beneficial but suggested that such exercises should be more frequent. They also highlighted their school's efforts to assist students with CV writing, although some resources, such as Unifrog, were found unhelpful. The Deputy Youth Mayor had not yet received any mock interview opportunities, demonstrating variability between schools. Members noted that good CV writing was a critical skill often undervalued in schools.

Responding to a question related to work experience, the Deputy Youth Mayor advised the Committee that they had been able to secure a work experience placement but noted that those opportunities should be more widely vocalised in schools. They advised that their school had been supportive in securing placements, and they planned to seek experience in a solicitor's office. However, it was mentioned that data protection could be a barrier in some industries.

In response to a question regarding exam stress, both the Youth Mayor and Deputy Youth Mayor discussed the pressures of exam preparation, mentioning the support their school offered through revision sessions and rest breaks during exams. They highlighted that more could be done to inform students about available assistance.

The Chair expressed their appreciation for the Youth Mayor and Deputy Youth Mayor for their insightful contributions and thanked them for attending the session. Members commented that there was a significant disparity in access to careers advice for young people across schools in Stevenage. It was noted that certain students missed out on opportunities due to lack of information, with one suggestion being the creation of a dedicated page on the Council's website where work experience providers, and other businesses, could share key details such as open days, work experience opportunities and application deadlines. It was also suggested that such a page could include captions from officers, from across the Council, sharing their views on the specific skills required for certain job roles.

Members also discussed the challenge of engaging young people with Council platforms, observing that young people were less likely to visit these sites. It was suggested that involving the Youth Mayor could help promote content relevant to

young people. The Enterprise and Skills Partnership Officer added that there needed to be an emphasis on finding ways to better communicate with parents to ensure they are aware of the opportunities available.

Members remarked that while young people might not naturally engage with the Council's website, an awareness campaign could help to direct them to relevant information, similar to how residents access the site for services like bin collections.

Concerns were raised about competition between schools and colleges, with examples provided where institutions withheld information about external opportunities.

A recommendation was made that the Council explore the possibility of establishing an independent body to provide careers advice, similar to Citizens Advice, which could serve as a liaison between schools, local businesses, and employers.

6 UPDATE ON THE SITE VISIT TO NORTH HERTS COLLEGE SITEC UNIT

It was **RESOLVED** that the notes of the Chair and Scrutiny Officer, of the visit to North Herts College SITEC Unit, be noted.

7 URGENT PART 1 BUSINESS

There was none.

8 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

Not required.

9 URGENT PART II BUSINESS

There was none.

CHAIR

Climate Change Annual Update 2024

Page 9 E&E Select Committee – November 2024

Fabian B. Oyarzun - Head of Climate Action

Julia Hill – Environmental Policy & Development Manager

Agenda Item 3

Climate Change Strategy: 9 Levels

- Our focus: the 9 levels for Climate Change Strategy.



Climate Change Strategy: 9 Levels

- Our focus: the 9 levels for Climate Change Strategy.

- **Global Climate Action**



Despite significant funding delivered, COP28 revealed slow progress.

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Current climate finance is far short of the trillions required globally.

Need for a **43%** reduction in global emissions by **2030** to stay on the **1.5°C** pathway.



Climate Change Strategy: 9 Levels

- Our focus: the 9 levels for Climate Change Strategy.

- **UK National Climate Action**

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CO₂

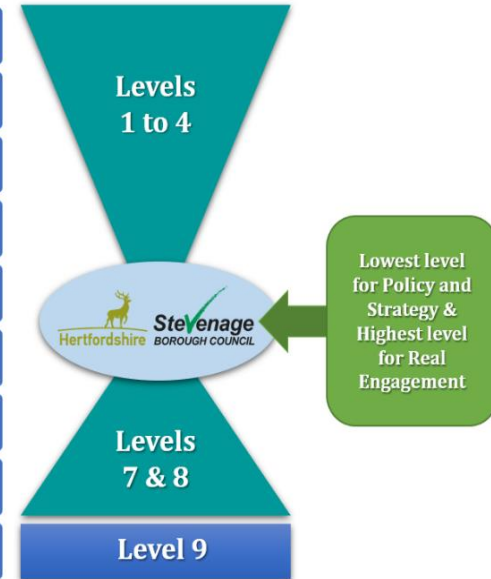
GHG emissions continue to decrease.
Transport → Main emitting sector.

The UK aims to cut emissions by **68%**
by **2030** and reach **net-zero** by **2050**.



New Government → More stable
funding for LAs long-term climate
action.

Despite progress, just **1/3** of the
target reductions backed by **credible
plans** (CCC).



Climate Change Strategy: 9 Levels



- Our focus: the 9 levels for Climate Change Strategy.

- **Large Businesses**



Stevenage hosts prominent businesses (aerospace, biotechnology, defence) → On track to meet corporate net-zero targets.
The Council continues to collaborate to share best practices and learnings.

Study Cases:
Bioscience Catalyst
Fujitsu



Climate Change Strategy: 9 Levels

- Our focus: the 9 levels for Climate Change Strategy.

- **Regional / Countywide**


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HCCSP → Crucial for SBC's climate action, facilitating collaboration, securing investment, and coordinating projects for greater impact.


 Solar Together

 "Your Tree, Our Future"

 LEVI

 HGB's Sustainable County Mission.

 HWP → Waste Partnership.

 RCCF → Further collaboration for regional climate action.

 Sustainable Procurement



Climate Change Strategy: 9 Levels

- Our focus: the 9 levels for Climate Change Strategy.

- **Stevenage Level**



In 2022, Stevenage recorded its lowest historical emissions.



Emissions consistently decreasing across all sectors since 2005.



Transport, the main emitting sector.



SBC's emissions have dropped by 39%. 61% reduction expected when switching to HVO.

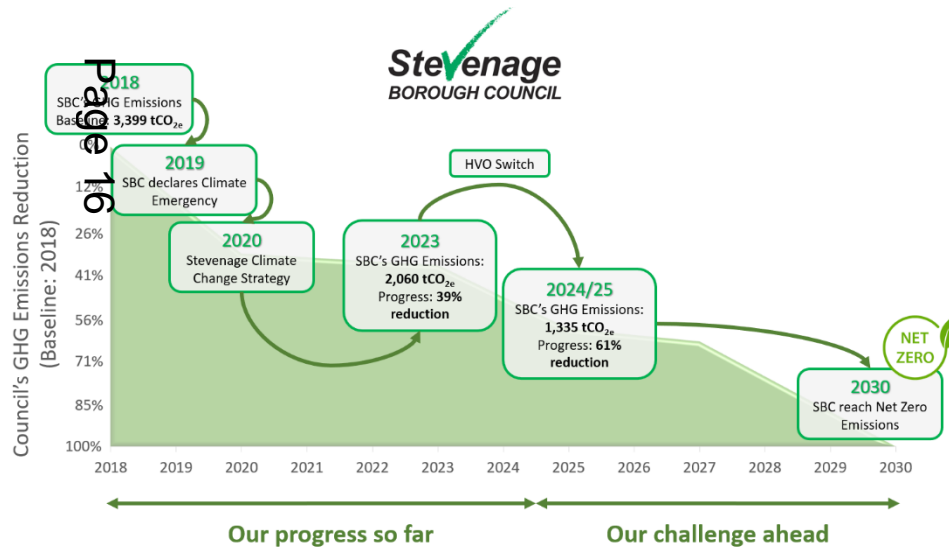


Stevenage Climate Action Plan Tracker is now online → Over 50 actions across 8 strategic themes.

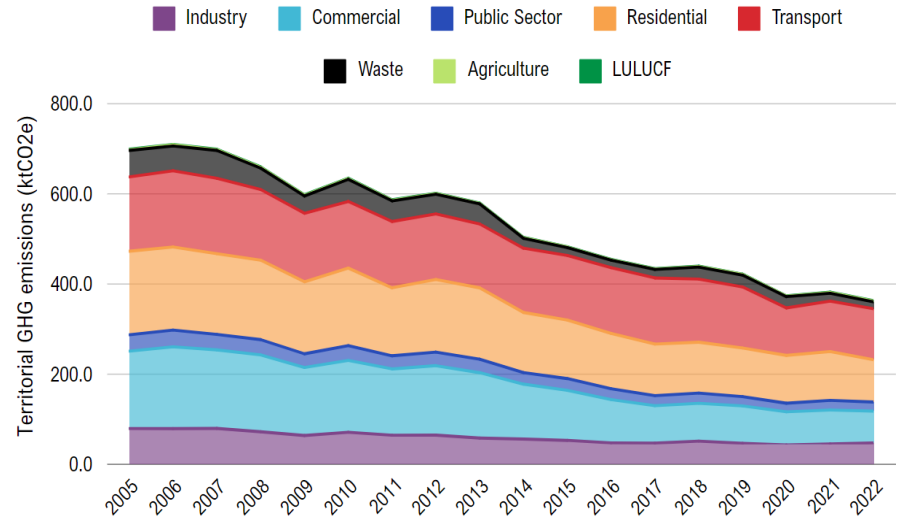


Climate Change Strategy: 9 Levels

- Stevenage Level
- The Council



- The Town



Climate Change Strategy: 9 Levels

- **Stevenage Level: 8 Strategic Themes**

1) Businesses

- Wenta Zero Action Programme.
- UKSPF Sustainable Business Programme.
- Green Business Grant Scheme.
- Local Plan Green Economy Policies.
- Sustainable Procurement & Social Value.



2) Homes

- Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund.
 - Warm Homes Social Housing.
- Private Homes Decarbonisation
 - ST, HUG, LAD, WH.
- Housing Development 5★ Approach.
 - Helston House
 - Kenilworth Close.
- Local Plan Partial Review.



**Minimum EPC Band C 8,000
Housing Stock**

Climate Change Strategy: 9 Levels

- **Stevenage Level: 8 Strategic Themes**

3) Waste & Recycling

- HWP Initiatives & Campaigns.
- Recycling Collection & Banks.
- Flat Blocks Recycling Pilot.
- Food Waste Initiatives.
- Solar Panels on SBC Lorries.

60% Recycling Rate by 2035
Zero Waste to Landfill by 2030

4) People

- Staff Climate Champions Group.
- Literacy & Training.
- Climate Change Risk Assessment.



Climate Change Strategy: 9 Levels

- **Stevenage Level: 8 Strategic Themes**

5) Construction & Regeneration

- Regeneration Programme
 - Railway North MSCP
 - Public Services Hub
- Local Plan Partial Review.

6) Transport

- Pathway 1 - Fuel & Fleet
 - HVO Switch
 - Fleet Replacement.
- Cycle Hire Scheme.
 - Cycling Infrastructure.
- EV Charging Infrastructure.
- Staff Travel Survey & Incentives.
- Taxi Licensing Policy.

**SBC Fleet Decarbonisation by
2030**



Climate Change Strategy: 9 Levels

- **Stevenage Level: 8 Strategic Themes**

7) Energy & Water

- Zero Carbon Electricity Tariff.
- Energy Monitoring & Audits.
- Leisure Facilities & MSCP Upgrades.
- Water Management Policies.
- Rainwater Harvesting Projects.

8) Biodiversity

- Tree Planting
 - Fairlane Wood
 - Miyawaki Micro-woods
 - Community Orchards.
- Tree Replacement.
- Tree & Woodlands Strategy
- Green Spaces Strategies.
- **Biodiversity Action Plan (*)**.

**4,000 Trees Planted by 2030.
19% Town's Tree Canopy.**

(*) For approval.



Stevenage Biodiversity Action Plan

Background

- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 places a duty on LAs to have regard, so far as is consistent within its functions, to conserving, restoring or enhancing biodiversity.
- Stevenage currently remains the only district / borough in Hertfordshire to have a BAP.
- 34 Local Wildlife Sites have been designated in Stevenage, most of which are Ancient Woodlands.
- Stevenage currently has the most local wildlife sites in favourable condition within Hertfordshire.

Stevenage Biodiversity Action Plan

STEVENAGE BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN:
A Wilder Stevenage
2024-2028

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- 63 actions across 5 habitat types.
 - Grassland, Woodland, Wetland, Ancient Hedgerows, and Neighbourhood Nature.
- Focus on, but not limited to, SBC estate.
- Realistic and achievable but ambitious within the capacity of SBC and partners.
- Compatible with and complement the HCCSP BAP.
- Accessible, in language terms, to the wider community.
- Provides evidence of need to support funding bids to assist with delivery.
- Identify priorities based on protecting sites already important to wildlife and/or identifying sites that could lose potential for wildlife if works are not delivered within the next 5-6 years.

Stevenage Biodiversity Action Plan

Funding / Delivery

Previously:

- £25k from So Stevenage Partnership
- £50k from Heritage Lottery Fund
- £34k from Environment Agency
- 1 CB

Future Opportunities:

- Planning Gain
- Biodiversity Net Gain
- Landfill Communities Fund
- National Lottery Funds
- Climate Change Community Fund

Delivery supported by:

- Green Space Volunteers
- Specialist contractors
- Partnership with Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust

- In-house Team
- Officer Working Parties

Climate Change Strategy: 9 Levels

- Our focus: the 9 levels for Climate Change Strategy.

- **Local Engagement**

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Local community engagement remained a key focus: engagement with various stakeholders at events and delivery of presentations.

Provision of educational resources (Environmental Days Calendar, Sustainable Event Handbook).

CCCF approved 8 projects (2023/24) supporting benefits:

- Reduction of waste, improved biodiversity, water conservation, climate adaptation, tree planting.



Lowest level for Policy and Strategy & Highest level for Real Engagement

Climate Change Strategy: 9 Levels

- Local Engagement



Peartree Rainwater Collection Pilot

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The Peartree Rainwater Collection Pilot, led by the Shephall Resident's Group and endorsed by Councillor Rob Broom of Shephall, sought funding to enhance the front area of Peartree Shops with additional shrubs and flowers, and to install a rainwater collection system. This system is designed to harvest sufficient water for the maintenance of these flowerbeds.

The project received approval in October 2023 and was allocated a total of £2,000. This funding covered the costs of a structural engineer evaluation, raw materials, plants, and installation.

The installation of the 200-litre capacity water butt promotes water conservation in the area, reducing the dependency on tap water from nearby shops for watering the flowerbeds. Should the project prove beneficial and replicable in the long term, it may be possible to install similar measures in other neighbourhood centres.

The project was successfully completed in August 2024. Photographs of the installation are available for viewing on the right.



Coventry Close Community Garden

The Coventry Close Community Garden project, led by the community group Waste Not Want Not (WNNW) and championed by Cllr. Sandra Barr of St Nicholas, applied for £600 from the CCCF to create a community garden within an underutilised green space situated between residential properties. The initiative also aimed to establish a local gardening group to promote social interaction.

The project received approval in October 2023, with work commencing shortly after the allocation of funds. WNNW, in collaboration with local residents, transformed the 16x14 metre area by planting 13 fruiting and flowering bushes, clustered perennials and spring flowering bulbs. This effort created a more diverse habitat for birds and insects, particularly pollinators. The plant species were chosen for their low maintenance requirements and resilience to future climatic changes.

The project also included the installation of raised vegetable beds, enhancing the community's ability to grow their own produce. Additionally, locally crafted wooden benches, made from donated wood, were installed to provide an outdoor social space for residents.

Soil health in the area was also improved with the addition of peat-free compost, soil conditioner and wood chip.

The project was completed in spring 2024. Before and after photographs are available for viewing to the right and below.

Before



After



**Thanks for your attention.
Any questions?**



Meeting Cabinet
Portfolio Area Environment and Performance.
Date 09 of October 2024



CLIMATE CHANGE – ANNUAL UPDATE OCTOBER 2024

KEY DECISION

Author Zayd Al-Jawad
Lead Officers Zayd Al-Jawad, Fabian Oyarzun, Jennifer Bratchell
Contact Officer Zayd Al-Jawad, 2257

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 This report builds upon the update provided to the Executive at its meeting in October 2023 and provides Cabinet with an overview of the action that Stevenage Borough Council (SBC) is taking to address climate change. Specifically, the report outlines the most important climate action work undertaken across the eight strategic themes identified as priorities in the Stevenage Climate Change Strategy of 2020.
- 1.2 The report also outlines further action being taken by SBC, in partnership at the county level through the Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership (HCCSP) and references the regional activities of the East of England Regional Climate Change Forum (RCCF).
- 1.3 Furthermore, the report outlines the street-level work and opportunities being undertaken to support local people in making positive environmental changes in their local areas, reducing Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions, and increasing support for behavioural change in local neighbourhoods.

- 1.4 Importantly, the report also highlights the continuing need for substantial legislative and financial support from the UK Government to achieve the target for the town and Council to be net-zero by 2030.
- 1.5 The report also presents the latest draft of the Stevenage Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP), prepared in partnership with Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust. This plan summarises progress to date and outlines habitat priorities for the next five years.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS – CABINET:

- 2.1 To acknowledge the progress in delivering the Stevenage Climate Change Strategy and action plan across the eight strategic areas, and delegating powers to the Portfolio Holder to make alterations following further engagement with other members.
- 2.2 To approve the Stevenage Biodiversity Action Plan 2024-2028, attached as **Appendix 3**, with a one-page summary in **Appendix 4** and a neighbourhood breakdown in **Appendix 5**.
- 2.3 To note the release of the Climate Change Action Plan tracker available at [Stevenage Climate Action Plan](#) (for further details, see **Error! Reference source not found.** in **Appendix 1**).
- 2.4 To recognise the updated national climate action context, especially the new UK Government’s climate priorities (further details in “*Level 2 – UK National Climate Action*” in **Appendix 1**), and SBC’s collaborative regional and countywide work.
- 2.5 To note the launch of the Stevenage Green Business Grant Scheme to help local businesses implement greener solutions to reduce their carbon footprint (details in **Appendix 1**, “*Level 6 – Stevenage Level*” under “*Businesses*”).
- 2.6 To note the implementation of the “*Pathway 3 – People & Processes*”, focusing on ways of working and service-related emissions, particularly the establishment of the Staff Climate Champions Group (details in **Appendix 1**, “*Level 6 – Stevenage Level*” under “*People*”).

3 INTRODUCTION

- 3.1 Council officers have been working with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Performance to review the Stevenage Climate Change Strategy¹ and action plan. This includes assessing current and potential projects and identifying the necessary steps to achieve the goal of a net-zero town and Council by 2030.
- 3.2 Central to our efforts to tackle the climate crisis is recognising the actions needed at all levels, from coordinated international efforts, such as those

¹ Available at: [Stevenage Climate Change Strategy](#)

outlined in the latest UNFCCC² Conference of the Parties (COPs), all the way through to collective and individual actions that can be implemented in the Stevenage's neighbourhoods and communities.

- 3.3 This report highlights several of Stevenage Borough Council's engagement and actions, ranging from reflecting global trends to implementing local actions and improving active engagement within the community, as illustrated in the scheme below.



Figure 1. SBC Climate Action Approach: the 9 levels for Climate Change Strategy.

4 CLIMATE CHANGE UPDATE – SUMMARY

Level 1 – Global Climate Action

- 4.1 The Paris Agreement, adopted by 196 countries at COP21 (2015), is a legally binding treaty aimed at limiting global warming to well below 2°C, with efforts to cap it at 1.5°C. It has driven significant global funding for reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and investing in low-carbon technologies. Under this treaty, countries are required to submit Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) detailing their plans to reduce GHG emissions and adapt to climate impacts.
- 4.2 COP28 in Dubai (2023) concluded with the first global stocktake of climate action under the Paris Agreement, revealing slow progress across all areas of climate action and the need for a 43% reduction in global GHG emissions by 2030 from 2019 levels to stay on the 1.5°C pathway, and calling for accelerated climate action and a faster transition away from fossil fuels. COP28 also emphasized scaling up climate finance, with £9.88 billion pledged for the Green Climate Fund and a historic agreement to address climate-related losses and damages in vulnerable countries. However,

² United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

current climate finance flows fall short of the trillions needed for clean energy transitions and adaptation efforts.

Level 2 – UK National Climate Action

- 4.3 The UK has committed to reducing GHG emissions by at least 68% by 2030 compared to 1990 levels, aiming for net-zero by 2050.
- 4.4 Nationally, GHG emissions have continued to decrease, with transport as the main emitting sector. Provisional figures for 2023 estimate national net territorial GHG emissions at 384.2 million tCO_{2e}, a 5.4% decrease from 2022 and 52.7% lower than in 1990. The long-term trend in UK territorial GHG emissions is outlined below.

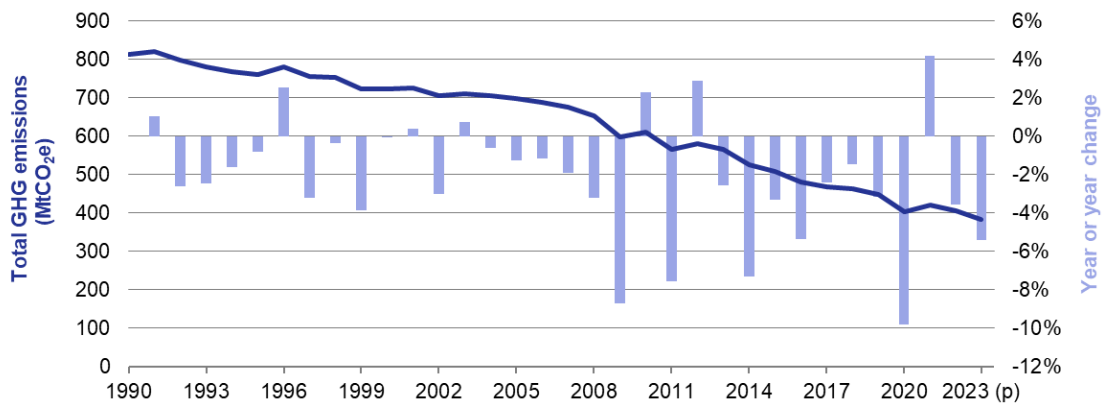


Figure 2. UK territorial GHG emissions, 1990-2023 (provisional figure for 2023).
Source: DESNZ, National Statistics.

- 4.5 The long-term decrease is due to a shift from coal to gas and renewables, energy efficiency, and a decline in energy-intensive industries. In 2023, emissions fell mainly due to lower gas demand for buildings and products, and higher electricity imports from France.
- 4.6 Despite this progress, the Climate Change Committee (CCC) indicates the UK is not on track to meet its net-zero target, and only a third of the required reductions are backed by credible plans.
- 4.7 The new UK Government aims to reinstate and strengthen climate policies (e.g., ban on petrol and diesel cars, transition to heat pumps) and establish new ones for home retrofitting and decentralised energy production. Its new approach is expected to provide more stable funding for Local Authorities' long-term climate initiatives.

Level 3 – Large Businesses

- 4.8 Over 90% of global GDP is now covered by net-zero targets, presenting a significant market opportunity for British businesses and job creation.
- 4.9 Stevenage hosts prominent businesses in aerospace, biotechnology, technology, and defence, many of which are well on track to meet their corporate net-zero targets. Brief case studies on the climate actions and commitments of Fujitsu and the Stevenage Bioscience Catalyst are included in the **Appendix 1**, “*Level 3 – Large Businesses*”.

4.10 The Council continues to collaborate with these businesses to share best practices and learnings on climate action.

Levels 4 & 5 – Regional and Countywide Climate Action

4.11 Collective work at countywide and regional levels is crucial for the Council's climate action, bringing together resources for the greatest impact, effectiveness, and efficiency.

4.12 The Council actively participates in the Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership (HCCSP), a member-led organisation advancing climate change and sustainability initiatives across the county. HCCSP has facilitated collaboration with local partners, secured funding, and coordinated projects delivery, including Solar Together for solar installations, LEVI for charging infrastructure deployment, and the tree planting scheme “Your Tree, Our Future”. HCCSP is also collaborating with the Hertfordshire Growth Board (HGB) to deliver the Sustainable County Mission.

4.13 The East of England Regional Climate Change Forum (RCCF) has been established and is enhancing SBC's efforts by providing collaboration opportunities for regional climate action. As part of this collaboration, the Council has been discussing and analysing its sustainable procurement practices through various initiatives.

Levels 6 – Stevenage Level

4.14 In 2022, Stevenage recorded its lowest historical GHG emissions at 362.8 ktCO_{2e}, a 5.02% decrease from 2021 levels, and 17.5% lower than in the baseline year (2018). GHG emissions have consistently decreased across all sectors since 2005, with transport as the main emitting sector, followed by the residential sector. Stevenage's per capita emissions in 2022 were lower than county, regional, and national averages. The territorial GHG emissions trajectory for Stevenage is shown below.

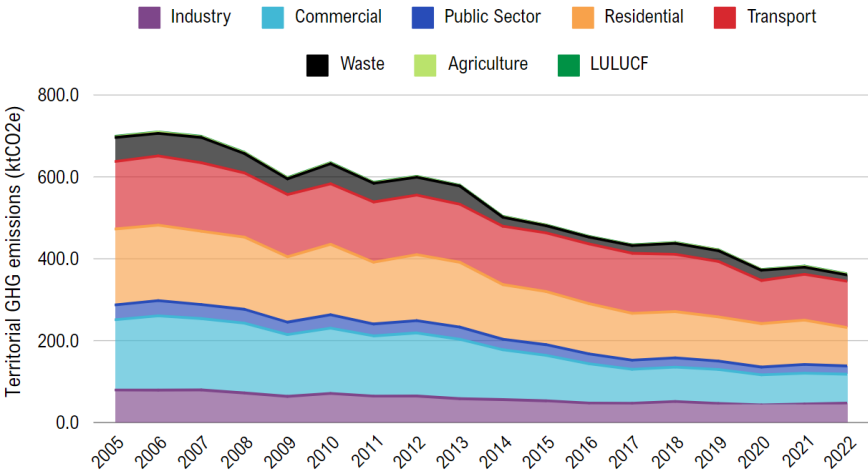


Figure 3. Stevenage territorial GHG emissions estimates 2005-2022 (ktCO_{2e}). Source: Based on DESNZ data.

4.15 The Council’s GHG emissions have dropped by 39% since 2018, with a 61% reduction expected by October 2024 when switching the fleet fuel to Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO).

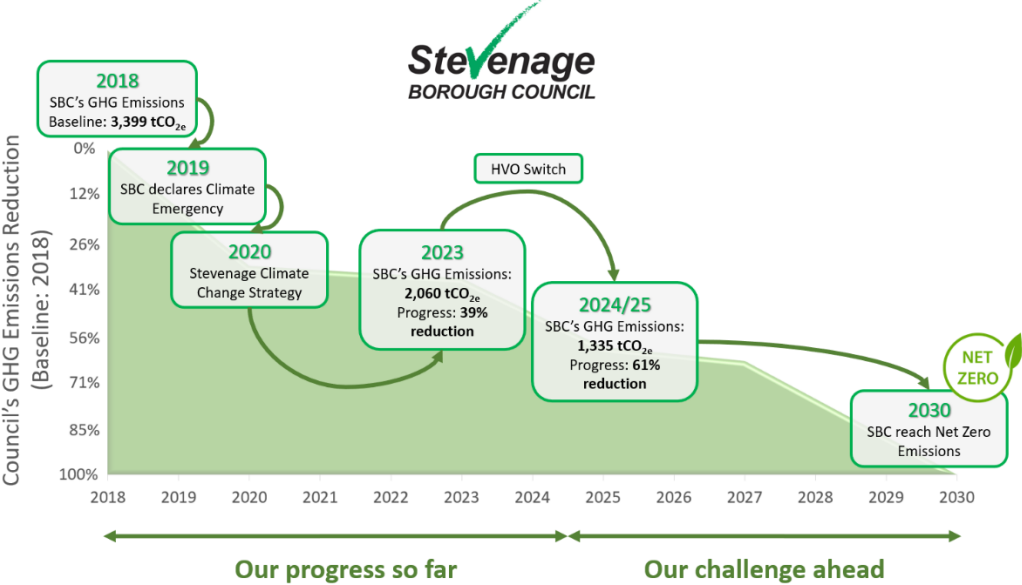


Figure 4. SBC emissions trajectory so far and expected challenge ahead.

4.16 Following the declaration of a Climate Emergency in 2019, the establishment of a target for Stevenage to be net-zero by 2030 (for both the town and the Council), and the development of the Climate Change Strategy in 2020, the Council has now released its Climate Action Plan Tracker online. This tracker showcases over 50 actions across eight strategic themes, as described in the following paragraphs.

4.17 **Businesses:** The Council has been actively supporting local businesses, particularly micro-businesses and SMEs, in understanding, setting, and meeting their climate goals. This support has been delivered through Wenta’s Action Zero Programme (119 businesses registered so far) and the Sustainable Business Programme funded by the UKSPF. These programmes offer advice on understanding sustainable needs, developing action plans, monitoring and reporting progress, and creating Carbon Reduction Plans (CRPs). Building on these programmes, the new Green Business Grant Scheme provides SMEs with £70,000 this year for green solutions implementation. Additionally, the Council continues to promote and deliver actions on sustainable procurement and social value.

4.18 **Homes:** The Council aims to achieve a minimum EPC band C for all 8,000 Council homes by 2030, essential for becoming a net-zero organisation and town³. UK Government central funding is crucial for reaching this target. SBC has been delivering decarbonisation and retrofitting actions funded by the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF), upgrading properties from below EPC band C to above, reducing bills, and cutting emissions.

³ While it is essential for SBC to continue investing in decarbonising its social housing stock and achieving an EPC standard that ensures safe, warm, and quality homes, this is subject to affordability within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), given the broader pressures currently faced by all social landlords.

Improvements have included wall insulation, loft insulation, double glazing, efficient lighting, and solar panels. 209 houses were upgraded through SHDF Wave 1, and 237 homes are being retrofitted now under SHDF Wave 2.1. The Council has also been promoting schemes to decarbonise private homes (e.g., LAD, HUG, Solar Together), and ensuring that its new housing developments are greener and include sustainable features as part of its 5-star quality approach. Finally, the Stevenage Borough Local Plan (SBLP) is being partially review, with policies for sustainable, low-carbon, and zero-carbon homes across Stevenage being proposed.



Figure 5. External appearance of Mount Pleasant properties before and after SHDF retrofits.

- 4.19 **Construction & Regeneration:** Transforming the building and construction sector is critical for achieving climate goals. As a leader in town centre regeneration, the Council has significant influence in building better and more sustainable buildings and places. A comprehensive regeneration programme has delivered sustainable projects with various partners (e.g., Railway North MSCP, opened in May 2023) and will deliver key projects in the future, such as the Public Services Hub. A crucial tool for the Council to lead climate action is the Local Plan, currently under partial review to update existing climate policies and incorporate new ones, on topics such as energy efficiency, emissions targets and offsetting (including whole-life carbon targets for large developments), overheating and cooling, water and wastewater management, and green infrastructure.
- 4.20 **Waste & Recycling:** The waste sector significantly impacts climate change. Currently, 77% of residual waste in Hertfordshire is processed at EfW facilities, with a target for zero waste to landfill by 2030. The Council also aims to increase recycling rates to 60% by 2035. However, Stevenage's current recycling rate is 39.1%, the lowest in Hertfordshire. The Council is conducting a pilot programme to increase recycling rates in flat blocks and has implemented solar panels on the rooftops of seven refuse collection lorries, to save money and reduce GHG emissions. SBC has also made progress by participating in the Hertfordshire Waste Partnership (HWP), through various initiatives and communication campaigns to promote waste reduction and recycling.



Figure 6. Solar panels installed on Stevenage's refuse collection lorries

- 4.21 **People:** Stevenage can only achieve its net-zero targets if everyone participates. In November 2023, the Council's SLT approved the *Pathway 3 – People and Processes*, identifying staff-related emissions requiring significant behavioural changes. To implement Pathway 3, a Staff Climate Champions Group (SCCG) was established to improve engagement, raise awareness, and drive positive change within SBC. This group aims to discuss themes like business travel, waste, water use, and service delivery. Last year, the Council also organised several training initiatives on climate change and sustainability. Finally, as climate adaptation is critical to prepare for and adjust to the climate impacts, the Council developed its first Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA), outlining 51 specific climate-related risks, within four categories and across 18 service areas.
- 4.22 **Biodiversity:** Biodiversity loss and climate change are intricately connected, making it crucial to protect and enhance biodiversity, and highlighting the importance of new policies such as the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). The Council aims to plant over 4,000 trees by 2030 and increase the town's tree canopy cover to 19%. Recently, 3,500 saplings were planted in Fairlane Wood, alongside other initiatives like community orchards. The Council is also discussing a new tree replacement policy for new developments in the Local Plan partial review and is developing new strategies for Tree & Woodlands and Green Spaces. Moreover, a new Biodiversity Action Plan (2024-2028) has been produced and is presented for approval. The detailed presentation of this plan is included in **Appendix 1**, "*Level 6 – Stevenage Level*", under the "*Biodiversity*" section, whereas the full report is attached as **Appendix 3**, with a one-page summary in **Appendix 4** and a neighbourhood breakdown in **Appendix 5**.



Figure 7. Stevenage's Fairlane Wood.

- 4.23 **Transport:** Transport is the main emitting sector in Stevenage, contributing 31.2% of the borough's total GHG emissions. The Council aims to decarbonise its fleet before 2030. Starting October 2024, the fleet will switch to HVO, reducing net GHG emissions by up to 90%. Since 2023, three new electric vehicles have been incorporated into the fleet. The Council also recognises the importance of active travel for meeting its climate targets and is implementing a Cycle Hire scheme across the town, with 45 hubs and 150 e-bikes, along with other cycling initiatives (e.g., cycle hangars, maintenance stands). Additionally, EV chargers are being deployed across the town, an EV Car Club has been established, and a new taxi licensing policy with climate considerations has been developed. The Council also conducted its first post-pandemic Staff Travel Survey to assess employee's commuting and business travel habits and explore further sustainable incentives.
- 4.24 **Energy & Water:** The energy sector is responsible for over two-thirds of global emissions. The UK aims to decarbonise its electricity system by 2035. Meanwhile, the Council has switched to a zero-carbon electricity tariff since 2022, and continuously monitors electricity demand across its main sites using a digital meter explorer. Natural gas usage remains the main challenge for SBC in this regard. In 2023, energy audits were conducted for Daneshill House, Cavendish Road Depot, and the Indoor Market, and efficiency upgrades have been delivered across leisure facilities, Daneshill House, and the MSCPs. Besides energy, water is also crucial for the town's sustainability, especially since Hertfordshire is one of the driest regions in the UK. Water and wastewater management policies are being included in the Local Plan partial review, and rainwater harvesting infrastructure has started to be implemented locally.

Level 7-9 – Local Engagement

- 4.25 Local community engagement remained a key focus for 2023/24. Initiatives included an updated Climate Change Communications and Marketing Plan, a dedicated Climate Action Plan tracker portal for resident feedback, and participation in community events like Stevenage Day, featuring educational stalls and giveaways to promote sustainability. The Council also provided educational online resources, such as an Environmental Days Calendar and a Sustainable Event Handbook. Additionally, the Council engaged with

various stakeholders, including the Central Library, the Stevenage Football Club Foundation, and local businesses, to promote sustainability initiatives.

- 4.26 Finally, the Council continues to prioritise neighbourhood and street-level work, particularly through topic reference groups and the implementation of the Climate Change Community Fund (CCCF). The CCCF has supported eight green community projects within seven wards, delivering benefits such as reduction of waste, improved biodiversity, water conservation, and climate adaptation. Details on the CCCF process, requirements, and case studies are included in **Appendix 1**, “*Level 7-9 – Local Engagement*” under the “*Neighbourhood and Street Level Work*” section. Further information on the approved CCCF projects is available in **Appendix 6**.

5 IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

- 5.1 The costs associated with producing and consulting on the climate change strategy have been met from the agreed departmental budget. A number of projects referenced within this report have secured third party funding from government and other sources, such as S106 agreements, to be able to pilot initiatives, or to improve sustainable travel assets. Local CIL funding may also be available to support improvements to local infrastructure that reduce the GHG emissions in the area such as new trees, better lighting, and footway improvements.
- 5.2 It is recognised that a move to net zero and sustainable travel could mean reduced income, for example related to car parking income, which is used to fund other services, and will need to be continually reviewed through the Medium-Term Financial Plan process. There are likely to be significant reductions in income to the Council linked to changes in the way people commute and use the Council’s car parks. This will need to be carefully managed to ensure the services and provisions for sustainable transport the income funds can continue.
- 5.3 As the Council works on options and future projects to achieve the ambition of being a net zero carbon Council and town by 2030, Officers will need to bring forward a number of business cases. If the government does not step in to support the local government sector and the Council is required to provide the investment, then a significant reprioritisation of other projects and activities would be required to progress highly complex projects to absorb increased revenue and capital costs.

Legal Implications

- 5.4 There are no direct legal implications associated with adopting or delivering the Climate Change Strategy, however it is likely the UK Government will begin introducing stricter targets with legal implications for those Councils that are not meeting Greenhouse Gases reductions.

Risk Implications

- 5.5 The greatest risks associated with this work are failing to secure sufficient support from residents, businesses, and government to protect us all from the effect of climate change.
- 5.6 There is also a reputational risk of not meeting our climate targets set in 2019-2020, primarily due to the lack of resources or funding and co-funding from the UK Government.

Policy Implications

- 5.7 The annual update on Climate Change supports the Council's own Climate Change Strategy and wider corporate ambitions for a low carbon future across the town.

Climate Change Implications

- 5.8 This report highlights the risks, challenges, and opportunities that the Council must address, not only GHG emissions but its wider climate action aspirations.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 5.9 Climate change affects those in most need both in the UK and around the world. Those in deprivation, hunger or unwell are both most affected by climate change and least able to address it. Therefore, the Council is duty bound as one of those in the world that are more able to act, to act now.

List of Acronyms

APSE:	Association for Public Service Excellence.
ASHP:	Air Source Heat Pump.
BAP:	Stevenage Biodiversity Action Plan.
BMS:	Building Management System.
BNG:	Biodiversity Net Gain.
BREEAM:	Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method.
CCC:	Climate Change Committee.
CCCF:	Climate Change Community Fund.
CCPG:	Climate Change Progress Group.
CCRA:	Climate Change Risk Assessment.
CIL:	Community Infrastructure Levy.
COP:	UNFCC Conference of the Parties.
COP21:	21 st UNFCC Conference of the Parties, Paris, France, 2015.
COP28:	28 th UNFCC Conference of the Parties, Dubai, UAE, 2023.
Council:	Stevenage Borough Council.
COVID-19:	Coronavirus Disease 2019.
CPO:	Charge Point Operator.
CRP:	Carbon Reduction Plan.
CSC:	Customer Service Centre.
DEFRA:	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.
DESNZ:	Department for Energy Security and Net Zero.
EA:	Everyone Active.
EELGA:	East of England Local Government Association.
EfW:	Energy from Waste.
EPC:	Energy Performance Certificate.
EV:	Electric Vehicle.
GDP:	Gross Domestic Product.
GHG:	Greenhouse Gas.
GPC:	General Purposes Committee.
HCC:	Hertfordshire County Council.
HCCSP:	Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership.
HFCEV:	Hydrogen Fuel-Cell Electric Vehicle.
HGB:	Hertfordshire Growth Board.

HGV:	Heavy Good Vehicle.
HMWT:	Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust.
HP:	Heat Pump.
HRA:	Housing Revenues Account.
HUG1:	Home Upgrade Grant Phase 1
HUG2:	Home Upgrade Grant Phase 2
HVO:	Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil.
HWP:	Hertfordshire Waste Partnership.
ICT:	Information and Communication Technology.
ktCO2e:	Thousands of tonnes of Carbon Dioxide Equivalent.
LA:	Local Authority.
LAD3:	Green Home Grant Local Authority Delivery Phase 3.
LCA:	Life Cycle Assessment.
LCB:	Local Community Budget.
LED:	Light-Emitting Diode.
LEP:	Local Enterprise Partnership.
LEVI:	Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure.
LGA:	Local Government Association.
LNRS:	Local Nature Recovery Strategy.
LP:	Local Plan.
LULUCF:	Land Use, Land Use Change, and Forestry.
MSCP:	Multi-Storey Car Park.
MTB:	Meet the Buyer
MtCO2e:	Millions of tonnes of Carbon Dioxide Equivalent.
MVHR:	Mechanical ventilation with Heat Recovery.
NDC:	Nationally Determined Contribution.
Net-Zero:	Balance in the amount of GHG emitted with the amount removed from the atmosphere, resulting in no net increase in these gases.
NHS:	National Healthcare System.
ORCS:	On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme.
ORR:	Operational Risk Register.
OZEV:	Office for Zero Emission Vehicles.
PAAP:	Project Assessment and Approval Process.
PSDS:	Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme.
PV:	Photovoltaic.

RCCF:	East of England Regional Climate Change Forum.
SBC:	Stevenage Borough Council.
SBLP:	Stevenage Borough Local Plan.
SCCG:	Staff Climate Champions Group.
SHDF:	Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund.
SLT:	Senior Leadership Team.
SME:	Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise.
SSSI:	Sites of Special Scientific Interest.
SuDS:	Sustainable Drainage System.
tCO₂e:	Tonnes of Carbon Dioxide Equivalent, a standard unit used to measure the impact of different greenhouse gases on global warming.
TOMs:	Themes, Outcomes and Measures (Social Value).
UK:	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.
UKSPF:	UK Shared Prosperity Fund.
UNFCC:	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.
WNWN:	Waste Not Want Not.
ZCB:	Zero Carbon for Business Tariff.
ZEV:	Zero Emissions Vehicle.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 Detailed Climate Change Annual Update 2024**
- Appendix 2 Stevenage Territorial Emissions Infographic**
- Appendix 3 Biodiversity Action Plan 2024-2028 Report**
- Appendix 4 Biodiversity Action Plan One-Page Summary**
- Appendix 5 BAP – Neighbourhood Breakdown**
- Appendix 6 Climate Change Community Fund (CCCF) Projects**

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Stevenage's Territorial Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions 2022

At a glance



Territorial GHG emissions are those that occur within Stevenage's geographical borders, including all our residents, businesses, and activities.

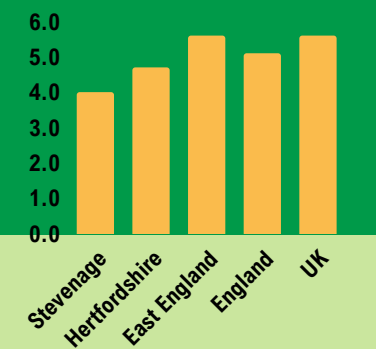
In 2022, we achieved the lowest historical emissions record: 362.8 ktCO₂e for the entire town. Even lower than during the pandemic!



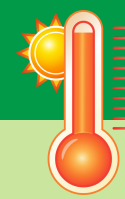
Our 2022 GHG emissions were 5% lower than in 2021, 14% lower than the pre-COVID pandemic levels (2019) and 48.1% lower than in 2005.



Stevenage's annual per capita GHG emissions (tCO₂e) are lower than county's, region's, and national emissions.



Residential sector reached its lowest recorded emissions (93.7 tCO₂e). Driven by a cleaner power grid, and a warmer year (less gas).

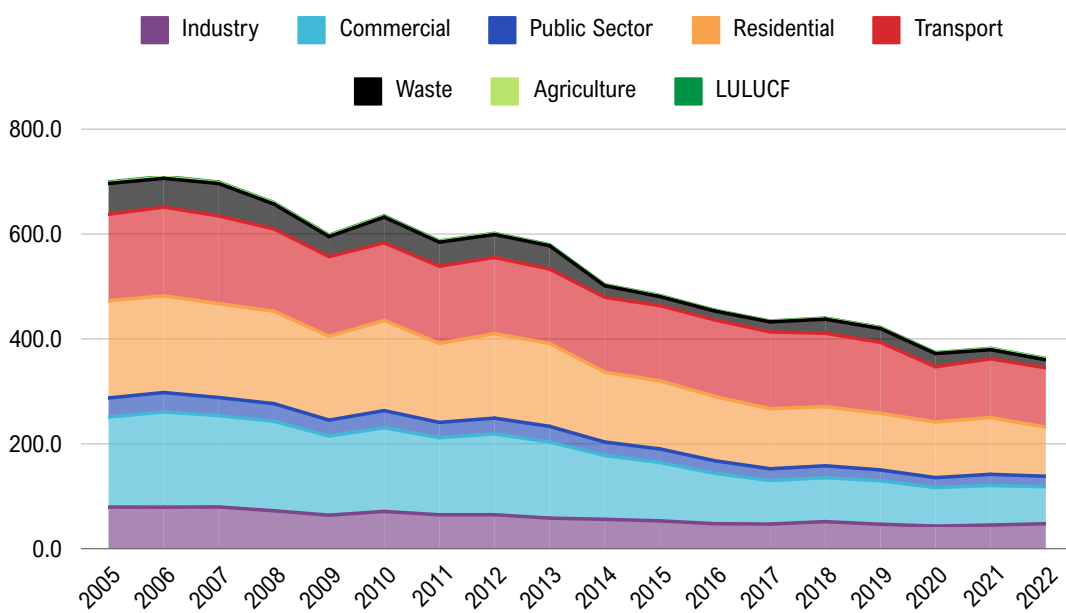


Transport (primarily road transport) is the main emitting sector in Stevenage (31% of total), showing recovery from pandemic levels.



Our historic trend

Territorial GHG emissions estimates 2005-2022 (ktCO₂e)

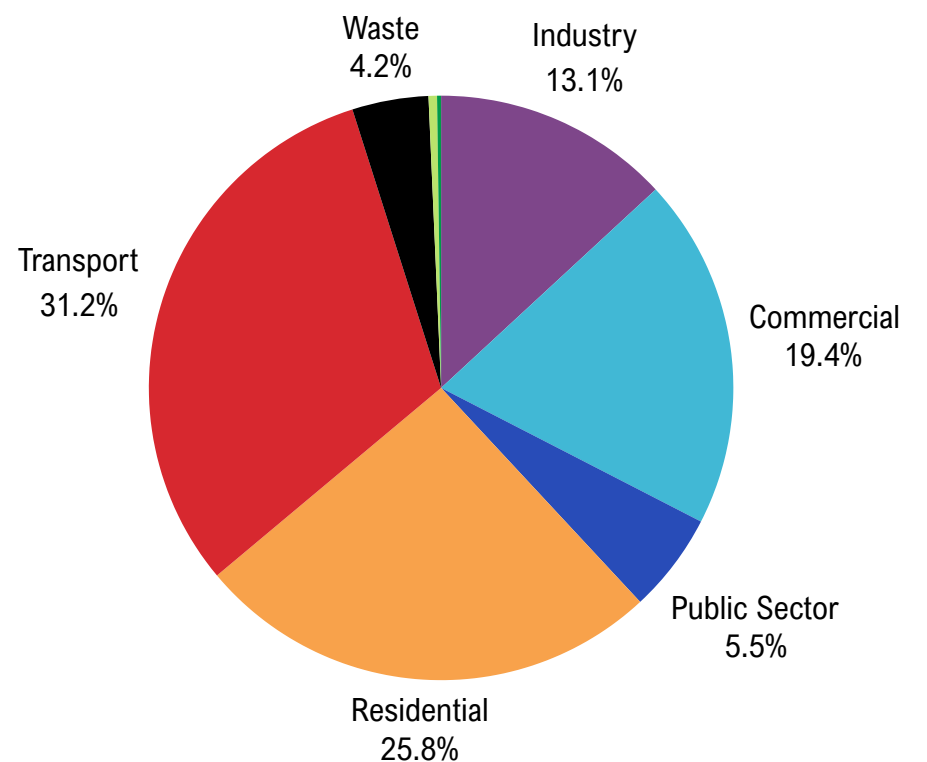


- Consistent decrease in most sectoral emissions from 2005 to 2022.
- Residential emissions dropped significantly from 185.4 ktCO₂e in 2005 to 93.7 ktCO₂e in 2022 (49.5% reduction).
- Public sector, which includes SBC, has reduced its emissions 44.9% over the period.
- Commercial emissions have reduced by 58.9%, whereas waste-related emissions have been reduced by 73.9%.
- Agriculture and LULUCF (*) sectors have shown minor fluctuations over these years.
- Since the COVID-19 pandemic, industry and transport related emissions have shown recovery signals.



By economic sector

Territorial GHG emissions estimates 2022 (%)



- Transport was the main emitting sector in 2022 with 113.1 ktCO₂e (96.2% of these came from road transport).
- Residential sector was the second largest emitter (93.7 ktCO₂e, primarily from gas use). The energy transition has strongly supported electricity supply decarbonisation in the UK.
- Commercial sector and industry accounted for 70.5 and 47.6 ktCO₂e, respectively.
- Public sector accounted for just 5.5% of the total emissions, primarily coming from gas use.

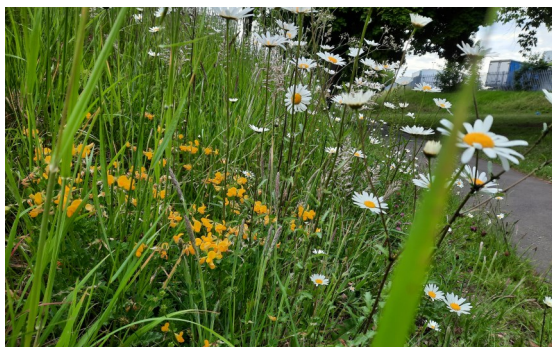


(*) LULUCF: Land Use, Land Use Change & Forestry.

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Stevenage Biodiversity Action Plan 2024—2028

Summary



Grasslands

Overall objective: To conserve, link and diversify the composition and structure of Stevenage's grasslands to optimise their value to wildlife and people.

Summary of actions:

- Update cutting and scrub management regimes



Woodlands

Overall objective: To conserve and enhance Stevenage's woodlands. To develop and maintain an appropriate structure within the woodlands to optimise their value for wildlife and people.

Summary of actions:

- Introduce structural diversity through thinning, ride and glade creation.
- Control of invasive non-native species



Ancient Hedgerows

Overall objective: To manage Stevenage's ancient hedgerows to produce a diverse structure and to ensure their survival for the benefit of wildlife and local residents.

Summary of actions

- Review management & designation.
- Implement Hedgerow Conservation & Management Plans.



Wetlands

Overall objective: To conserve and restore Stevenage's wetlands through appropriate and sensitive management to optimise their value to wildlife and people.

Summary of actions:

- Vegetation and scrub management in and around ponds/lakes
- Raise awareness of chalk rivers
- Continue rotational management



Neighbourhood Nature

Overall objective: To maximise biodiversity in the urban environment by encouraging the design and use of our buildings, gardens and allotments to be sympathetic to the requirements of our wildlife.

Summary of actions:

- Introduce policy to require Swift bricks on all new buildings.
- Raise public awareness through articles in Chronicle

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Neighbourhood: Shephall, Bandle Hill & Poplars

Site	Habitat	Owner	Action Ref	Action Description	Estimated Cost	Estimated Carbon Storage (tC)
Abbots Grove	Woodland	SBC	WO11	Thinning, ride and glade creation.	£15,000	
Aston Valley Flood Storage	Wetland	SBC / EA	WE18	Create pond-scape with EA.	TBD	
Barnwell School	Wetland	HCC	WE3	Arrange survey	n/a	
FVP Environment Lake	Wetland	SBC	WE5	Extend grass buffer. Diversify scrub management.	£1,000 / year	
FVP Main Lake	Wetland	SBC	WE4	More rafts / floating islands.	£13,000	
FVP Millennium Lake	Wetland	SBC	WE7	Extend grass buffer. Diversify scrub management.	£1,000 / year	
Great Collens Wood	Woodland	SBC	WO13	Thinning, ride and glade creation.	£30,000	1,522
Poplars Wood	Woodland	SBC	WO21	Conifer removal, thinning	£35,000	941
Poplars Meadow	Grassland	SBC	GR8	Re-establish rotational hay cutting regime.	£1,300 / year	117
				Cut back scrub to create grass/scrub 'scallops'.	£1,000 / year	
Poplars Pond	Wetland	SBC/Scouts	WO8	Continue management, increase buffer zone.		
Ridlins Wood	Woodland	SBC	WO17	Continue thinning Poplars, create ponds	£50,000	2,556
Shackledell	Grassland	SBC	GR3	Continue scrub and grassland mowing regimes.	£2,000/year	282
Triangular Grassland	Grassland	SBC	GR4	Open up and cut/clear grassland.	£4,000	
Shackleton Springs	Woodland	SBC	WO20	Improve structure, remove invasive non-native species	£35,000	945
Wiltshire's Springs	Woodland	SBC	WO8	Minimal intervention in woodland, create 5m uncut buffer around wood.	£1,500	269

NB Estimated Carbon Storage figures calculated from figures provided in Natural England Research Report NERR094; Carbon storage and sequestration by habitat: a review of the evidence

Neighbourhood: Almond Hill & Bedwell

Site	Habitat	Owner	Action Ref	Action Description	Estimated Cost	Estimated Carbon Storage (tC)
Almond Springs	Woodland		WO18	Minimal intervention	£3,000	251
Monks Wood Ponds	Wetland	SBC	WE11	Continue rotational management.	£10,000	
Whomerley Wood Moat	Wetland	SBC	WE10	Open up by coppicing within boundary.	£20,000	
Monks Wood & Whomerley Wood	Woodland	SBC	WO7	Continue with coppicing, thinning, glade creation and conifer removal.	£100,000	8,953
Whomerley Wood Verge	Grassland	SBC	GR6	Continue current mowing regime.	£1,300 / year	

Neighbourhood: Chells & Manor

Site	Habitat	Owner	Action Ref	Action Description	Estimated Cost	Estimated Carbon Storage (tC)
Ashtree Wood	Woodland	SBC	WO11	Thinning, ride and glade creation.	£60,000	
Blacknells Spring	Woodland	SBC	WO16	Minimal intervention – litter pick	£1000	223
FVP Balancing Pond	Wetland	SBC	WE6	Vegetation and scrub management.	£3,000 / biennially	
Hanging Hill Wood	Woodland	SBC	WO14	Minimal intervention in woodland, create 5m uncut buffer around wood.	£1,500	343
Pestcotts Spring	Woodland	SBC	WO12	Thinning, ride and glade creation.	£30,000	1,104

Neighbourhood: Longmeadow & Roebuck

Site	Habitat	Owner	Action Ref	Action Description	Estimated Cost	Estimated Carbon Storage (tC)
Broadwater Marsh	Woodland	SBC	WO5	Minimal intervention	£1,500	276
Marymead Springs	Woodland	SBC	WO10	Minimal intervention – litter picking	£1000	347
Monks Wood West	Woodland	Private	WO4	Rotational coppice over 10-year period.	n/a	421
Ridlins Mire	Wetland	SBC	WE2	Rotational cutting, consider grazing	£5,000 / year	1,612
Six Hill Common	Grassland	SBC	GR5	Continue current mowing regime.	£3,000 / year	44
Stevenage Brook	Wetland	SBC / Environment Agency	WE17	Study be carried out to investigate the potential for restoration.	TBD	
Stevenage Brook Marsh	Grassland	Environment Agency	GR7	More intensive cutting and scrub management regime required.	n/a	352
Stevenage Golf Course	Grassland	SBC / Everyone Active	GR12	Initiate discussions between Golf Course, SBC and HMWT	TBD	
Towers Pond	Wetland	SBC	WE9	Rotational clearance of emergent vegetation.	£12,000	
Warren Springs	Woodland	SBC	WO6	Minimal intervention	£1,500	110

NB Estimated Carbon Storage figures calculated from figures provided in Natural England Research Report NERR094; Carbon storage and sequestration by habitat: a review of the evidence

Neighbourhood: Old Town, Symonds Green & Woodfield

Site	Habitat	Owner	Action Ref	Action Description	Estimated Cost	Estimated Carbon Storage (tC)
Fishers Green Pond	Wetland	SBC	WE13	Continue rotational management.	£1,200 / year	
Fishers Green Wood	Woodland	SBC	WO9	Potential for selected coppicing	£15,000	382
Martins Way Bank	Grassland	SBC	GR2	Scrub cutting and treatment on a 5-year rotation	£8,000 / biennially	74
St Nicholas Churchyard	Grassland	SBC	GR9	Instigate a more targeted, rotational cutting pattern.	£1,500	115
Symonds Green Common	Grassland	SBC	GR10	Maintain and refine current hay cutting and scrub management.	£1,100 / year	67
Symonds Green Ponds	Wetland	SBC	WE12	Continue rotational management.	£3,000 / year	
Whitney Drive Wood	Woodland	SBC	WO19	Minimal intervention	£1,500	149

NB Estimated Carbon Storage figures calculated from figures provided in Natural England Research Report NERR094; Carbon storage and sequestration by habitat: a review of the evidence

Neighbourhood: Martins Wood & St Nicholas

Site	Habitat	Owner	Action Ref	Action Description	Estimated Cost	Estimated Carbon Storage (tC)
Ascot Crescent Pond	Wetland	SBC	WE14	Continue rotational management.	£1,500 / biennially	
Martins Wood	Woodland	SBC	WO3	Introduce structural diversity through thinning, ride and glade creation.	£30,000	1,299
Sishes Wood	Woodland	SBC	WO2	Continue removing non-native species. Increase structural diversity. Mark out pathways.	£20,000	520
Wellfield Wood	Woodland	SBC	WO15	Thinning, ride and glade creation. Remove conifers. Create Halo around the Wild Service Tree	£40,000	1,685

Updated: 09/09/2024

Climate Change Community Fund (CCCF) Projects

Project Name	Community Group	Ward	Cllr. Champion	Application Date	Decision Date	Project Status	Date Completed	Bid Amount (Approved Amount) (£)*	Project Description
Repair Café	Bedwell Community Association	Bedwell	Lin Martin-Haugh	Jul-23	Aug-23	Operational	Jan-24	311	A space where members of the community can go to repair their broken items and engage socially. Avoids items going to landfill and promotes a more sustainable mindset within the community.
Coventry Close Community Garden	Waste Not Want Not	St Nicholas	Sandra Barr	Aug-23	Sep-23	Operational	Mar-24	600	Community garden for residents in the adjacent houses to socialise, create a gardening group, and improve local environmental factors such as air quality and biodiversity. Fruiting and flowering bushes, clustered perennials and spring-flowering bulbs to provide a more diverse habitat. Raised beds for vegetable planting and wooden benches built locally from donated wood. Addition of compost, soil conditioner and wood chip to improve soil health.
Peartree Rainwater Collection Pilot	Shephall Resident's Group	Shephall	Rob Broom	Sep-23	Nov-23	Operational	Aug-24	2,500	Water container installed to the side of Peartree shops which collects rainwater to be used for the maintenance of the flowerbeds outside the shopping district. The flowerbeds are currently maintained by members of the Resident's group who are provided funding for plants to improve the year-round colour of the beds and increase the presence of pollinators.
Elliot Road Community Garden Allotment	Everyone Active Charitable Trust	Chells	Julie Ashley-Wren	Oct-23	Nov-23	Operational	Aug-24	1,000	The allotment is available for the community to enjoy, managed by Everyone Active and volunteers. The aim of the project was to improve mental and physical wellbeing, improve social inclusion and to produce harvests for the Food Bank. Biodiversity is being enhanced with a range of habitats and vegetation structures available at the site.
Repair Café	Bedwell Community Association	Bedwell	Lin Martin-Haugh	Jan-24	Jan-24	Operational	Jul-24	311	Additional 6 months rent to sustain the project.

Silkin Court Garden	Waste Not Want Not	Bandley Hill and Poplars (previously Bandley Hill)	Mason Humberstone	Jan-24	Mar-24	In progress	Estimated Oct 24	7,500	To create an environment which improves climate adaptation and biodiversity, whilst providing a space for the residents to do some food growing. It involves a collaborative approach between the residents and staff of Silkin Court, Waste Not Want Not, and SBC officers. Items included in the project are new long-lasting and low-maintenance benches, one new pergola with climbing plants and bird feeders to serve as a biodiversity area, one new gazebo area for shading, a solar powered water fountain, wildlife products and homes, flowers, raised beds, fruit trees, products for gardening, and solar bollard lighting. The aim is for the space to be a relaxing sensory garden with shading from the summer sun to be enjoyed by the residents, their families and visitors. While the project is seeking a provisional allocation of £7500 for the works, it is likely to settle under budget.
Austen Paths, Chells Planter and Beds Upgrade	Waste Not Want Not	Chells	Julie Ashley-Wren	Mar-24	Mar-24	In progress	Estimated Spring 2027	1,800	The project will see the upgrade and maintenance of ten planters over the next three years within the Austen Paths area and near the Squirrel Pub. Submitted by Waste Not Want Not, the chosen plants will be suitable for the current and changing weather patterns of warmer, wetter winters and hotter summers, while also attracting birds and insects, along with improving enhanced local air quality through pollutant absorption and dust damping. Having received £500 from LCBs, the project seeks £1800 from the CCCF for additional planting and maintenance.
Hampson Park Orchard Extension and Tree Planting	Friends of Hamspon Park	Almond Hill (previously Pin Green)	Jeanette Thomas, Maureen Mckay, and Lin Martin-Haugh	Mar-24	Mar-24	Planning	Estimated Winter 2024	5,000	Bid to fund the expansion of the existing Community Orchard and the planting of more trees within Hampson Park. The project will use the funding to purchase the trees and plant them around November 2024, when planting season begins, with the help of the local community. It is expected that the extension of the community orchard will allow for greater community engagement and the additional trees will aid future plans in creating more wildlife corridors within Stevenage.

Old Town Permanent Christmas Tree	Stevenage Old Town Business and Community Partnership	Old Town	Loraine Rossatti	Mar-24	Mar-24	Planning	Estimated Winter 2024	6,437	A project proposed by members of the community and the Stevenage Old Town Business & Community Partnership (SOTBCP) to erect a permanent Christmas tree within the Old Town. Currently, the Council purchases a new tree each year for the christmas lights which has needed to be cut down and transported to Stevenage. Planting a permanent Christmas tree will be more sustainable, reduce transport emissions, sequester local carbon and pollutants, while providing an additional local habitat for birds and insects. The Picea Albies species will be sourced from a local nursery and has been grown without the use of pesticides. The CCCF would be supporting the purchase and planting of the new permanent tree for the community which would occur during the next planting season (November 2024).
Total								25,460	

* Total amount spent by the applicant(s) may be slightly below the amount approved due to project implementation particularities.

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Executive Member Response to Environment & Economy Select Committee Review of the Council's response to the Climate Emergency

(Consolidation of composite document including the interim recommendations dated 23 March 2022 and final report 17 January 2023)

Date Recommendations of final report agreed by Environment & Economy Select Committee on 17 01 23:

(circulated Wednesday 25 January 2023)

Date responses should be made by:

Executive response on behalf of the relevant Executive Portfolio Holders should be received by
Wednesday 22 March 2023

This document was updated in November 2023 and is again updated for November 2024.

Recommendations:	Executive Response:	Executive Update 1 Nov 2023:	Cabinet Update 12 Nov 2024:
<p><u>Resident engagement:</u></p> <p><u>Interim report – March 2022</u> <u>RECOMMENDATION 1</u></p> <p>(i) With regards to the Citizen Panel, the handling of future iterations needs to be improved regarding the</p>	<p><i>Response supported by AD Planning & Regulatory Zayd Al-Jawed and Operations Director, Housing Investment & Communities & Neighbourhoods, Rob Gregory and Executive Portfolio Holders with responsibility for Environment & Climate Change, Cllr Simon Speller, Communities, Neighbourhoods and Co-operative Council, Cllr Sandra Barr.</i></p>	<p><i>Response supported by AD Planning & Regulatory Zayd Al-Jawed</i></p> <p><i>We have established the first Topic Reference Panel, on Sustainable Transport and Active Travel, including critical members of the local community. This panel has carried out site visits and has met periodically. We have also participated in engagement activities with local companies, with the NHS and with the</i></p>	<p><i>Response supported by AD Planning & Regulatory Zayd Al-Jawed</i></p> <p><i>While the original purpose of the Citizen Panel – to support the development of the Climate Change Strategy – has been fulfilled, the Council's ongoing commitment to collaborative and community engagement on climate action is evident through various ongoing activities.</i></p>

<p>feedback with the group and ongoing engagement.</p> <p>(ii) That the plans for working alongside and influencing local people be provided to Members.</p> <p>Action: AD Planning & Regulatory Zayd Al-Jawad; Head of Climate Action, Fabian Oyarzun; Climate Change Programme Lead Officer, Veronica Chan.</p>	<p>(i) Officers have responded to all previous Panel Members. Future <i>Topic People Panel</i> style engagement will provide an opportunity for local ward members and officers to hear the concerns of local people and provide opportunities for engagement and involvement in driving solutions.</p> <p>(ii) Moving forwards the Co-operative Neighbourhoods approach will develop to include resident engagement at a local street/neighbourhood level around climate change. This will enable local ward members to be at the forefront of this engagement activity with local people.</p>	<p>Central Library, where we have been able to publicise the work carried out by the Council on climate change, and we have been able to receive feedback from the community.</p> <p>In June 2023 we participated for the first time with a stand related to climate change at Stevenage Day. We have also been promoting communications through our digital platforms on sustainability matters. Finally, we have been scoping opportunities for street level engagement, promoting the implementation of Green Neighbourhood Plans, of which Bedwell is currently starting a trial.</p>	<p>The Topic Reference Panel on Sustainable Transport and Active Travel remains active, planning future discussions and site visits. The Council continues to engage with local companies, the NHS trust, Stevenage Football Club Foundation, and Stevenage Central Library. Additionally, the Council now produces yearly an updated Climate Change Communications and Marketing Plan, outlining aims, target audiences, key messages, strategies, and specific promotional campaigns.</p> <p>A significant step towards community engagement was the launch of the Climate Action Plan Tracker, available online here, allowing residents to provide direct feedback to the Council.</p> <p>In June 2024, Climate Action officers participated in Stevenage Day for the second year, hosting a stall with educational information on climate change and Council’s initiatives, such as the Climate Change Community Fund (CCCF). The stall featured interactive activities and giveaways like seed packets, plantable pencils, and biodegradable toothbrushes.</p> <p>The Council has also enhanced sustainability awareness by providing online resources, including an Environmental Days Calendar for 2024, which will be updated annually. Additionally, the Council now offers a Sustainable Event Handbook, guiding residents on organising eco-friendly events, covering renewable energy, energy efficiency, waste management, and local sourcing.</p> <p>Finally, the Council is exploring opportunities for street-level engagement, promoting Green Street Plans to be developed further this financial year.</p>
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<p><u>Baseline figures - measuring how we are doing with regards to our Net Zero targets for 2030 linked to a shared study with the University of Hertfordshire Zero Carbon Lab</u></p> <p><u>Interim report – March 2022</u> <u>RECOMMENDATION 2</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Officers continue to work with the University of Hertfordshire to assist with achieving the council's zero carbon ambitions. <p>Action: AD Planning & Regulatory, Zayd Al-Jawad; Head of Climate Action, Fabian Oyarzun; Climate Change Officer, Jennifer Bratchell.</p>	<p><i>Response supported by AD Planning & Regulatory Zayd Al-Jawad and Operations Director, Lead Climate Change Officer, Veronica Chan and Executive Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Environment, Cllr Simon Speller.</i></p> <p>SBC is continuing to work with the University of Hertfordshire Zero Carbon Lab on areas of joint research. It is also working with the Lab through HSCCP on research about lower carbon buildings.</p>	<p>SBC has completed work with the University of Hertfordshire Zero Carbon Lab on lower carbon buildings and carbon offsetting. Currently, through HCCSP, it is also related to local carbon offsetting (carbon “insetting”) studies carried out by the University, which regularly takes part in the HSOG meetings.</p>	<p>The collaboration with the University of Hertfordshire Zero Carbon Lab regarding our net zero targets for 2030 has been completed. However, the Council continues to work closely with the University of Hertfordshire through the Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership (HCCSP) to achieve our zero carbon ambitions.</p> <p>To track our progress, a new Sankey Diagram and graphics showing emissions trends have been included on the Climate Action Plan Tracker website, available here. Additionally, an infographic showing the progress for the entire town has been produced and is available online here.</p> <p>An external audit on climate data and reporting has been completed in September 2024 by the Hertfordshire SIAS (Shared Internal Audit Service). This audit has found 2 low and 1 advisory action. The low priority actions are to incorporate references for data-driven statements in climate-related reports, and to develop a reporting strategy, whereas the advisory action is to liaise with IT to ascertain continuity arrangements to be adopted to ensure there are no system breaches whilst key reports and data are being created.</p> <p>Furthermore, the Climate Action team is currently developing a methodology for annually reporting the Council's emissions using the Local Government Association (LGA) Carbon Accounting Tool.</p>
<p><u>Establishment of a Climate Change Lead Officer</u></p>	<p><i>Response supported by AD Planning & Regulatory, Zayd Al-Jawad and SD Resources Section 151 Officer, Clare Fletcher and Executive Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Environment & Climate Change, Cllr Simon</i></p>	<p>The post has been made permanent, and Veronica Chan has been appointed and starts with SBC on the 13th of September 2022. The post of Head of Climate Action has also been appointed and Fabian Oyarzun started with SBC on the 26th April 2022.</p>	<p>Completed. The Climate Action Team, composed of the Head of Climate Action and the Climate Change Programme Lead Officer is now operating in a steady state.</p>

<p><u>Interim report – March 2022</u> <u>RECOMMENDATION 3</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> that this post be made permanent. <p>Action: AD Planning & Regulatory, Zayd Al-Jawad; SD Resources, Section 151 Officer, Clare Fletcher.</p>	<p><i>Speller and Executive Portfolio Holder for Resources, Cllr Joan Lloyd.</i></p> <p>The post has been made permanent, and Veronica Chan has been appointed and starts with SBC on the 13th of September 2022.</p>		
<p><u>Interim HEART – Community Group - Challenge</u></p> <p><u>Interim report – March 2022</u> <u>RECOMMENDATION 4</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> that the Council engage further with HEART to provide some Member seminars on the Climate Emergency and that the Council teams up with HEART in support of a social enterprise such as a Climate Resilience Hub, or Climate Emergency Centres (CEC's) Increasingly, these local physical hubs or spaces are popping up over the UK, and they collaborate, network and learn from each other. There are none so far in Hertfordshire – see presentation to E&E Select Committee 18 11 21 	<p><i>Response supported by AD Planning & Regulatory, Zayd Al-Jawad and Operations Director, Housing Investment & Communities & Neighbourhoods, Rob Gregory and Executive Portfolio Holders with responsibility for Environment & Climate Change, Cllr Simon Speller, for Communities, Neighbourhoods and Co-operative Council, Cllr Sandra Barr</i></p> <p>Through the recent award of the Shared Prosperity Fund the council will be keen to support the growth of social enterprises and co-operatives of this nature. This can be explored with HEART.</p> <p>Both E&E and officers continue to engagement with HEART and they are likely to be part of our work through Topic Reference Panels and wider advice sharing.</p>	<p>The Council is delivering activities supported by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (and previously by the Community Renewal Fund) and it has been working to support the growth of social enterprises and co-operatives of this nature. This can be explored with HEART.</p> <p>Furthermore, the Council's Climate Community Fund (CCF) – Dragon's Den scheme has been launched and it would cover projects that can be explored with HEART. Officers will soon contact HEART members to provide this information.</p>	<p>The Portfolio Holder and officers have been in touch with HEART, particularly exploring potential projects under the Climate Change Community Fund (CCCF). The Council work closely with Wenta, a social enterprise, on the Wenta Zero Action Programme, along with Sustainable X utilising UK Shared Prosperity Funding to support businesses, social enterprises, and the third sector to integrate sustainable practices into their operations. This support includes one to one consultancy support alongside access to resources, template policies, guides, and wider tools to support organisations with their sustainable plans and strategies, help and support with Carbon Reduction Plans and learning how to maximise operational efficiencies.</p> <p>These efforts are part of our broader strategy to foster a supportive environment for social enterprises, community interest companies (CIC's) and the third sector in order to enhance our community's resilience to climate change.</p>

<p>Action: AD Planning & Regulatory Zayd Al-Jawad; Head of Climate Action, Fabian Oyarzun; Business Relationship Manager, Mena Caldbeck.</p>			
<p><u>Mainstreaming of Climate Emergency thinking with regards to all Council activities</u></p> <p><u>Interim report – March 2022</u> <u>RECOMMENDATION 5</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Council activities to ensure carbon friendly practices are truly embedded. (Strategic) Look for opportunities where the Council can consider if an activity or an event can be made as low carbon as possible. A helpful tool is the good ideas about running a reduced carbon and more sustainable event, considering things such as measuring the current event's carbon footprint; making a plan; consulting with contractors; organise essential waste management and start simple – How to make an event sustainable (7 examples) Eventbrite blog 	<p><i>Response supported by AD Planning & Regulatory Zayd Al-Jawad and Operations Director, Lead Climate Change Officer, Veronica Chan and Executive Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Environment & Climate Change, Cllr Simon Speller and the Leader of the Council, Cllr Richard Henry</i></p> <p>With the appointment of the new Climate Change Lead Officer, they will be reviewing the Council work streams and challenging each AD to demonstrate how their Business Unit is work in a low carbon way.</p> <p>Due consideration will be given to the council's own events calendar, alongside new events being programmed at the new Event Island in the Town Centre. In addition, the current guide for community organisations on running and event provided by the council events team will be updated to include such considerations. The ideas from Eventbrite will be considered where suitable.</p>	<p>We have been promoting initial assessment of carbon emissions and carbon avoided in our events. We have promoted the water refill stations across towns for different events throughout the year. We have also considered solar panels on the stage for Stevenage Day and we assessed the solar energy generation through these initiatives. Officers have been scoping how to include sustainable guidelines as part of our SBC Events Guidelines Toolkit.</p>	<p>The Council acknowledges the recommendation to ensure carbon-friendly practices in our activities and to explore opportunities for making events as low carbon as possible. We are committed to promoting sustainability in all our activities and events.</p> <p>We continue to promote the assessment of carbon emissions and carbon avoided in our events. Additionally, we have been actively promoting water refill stations across the town for various events. For Stevenage Day, we have used solar panel and/or battery generators to power the stages, significantly reducing our carbon footprint, and demonstrating our commitment to renewable energy and low carbon solutions.</p> <p>Furthermore, the Council has now published a Sustainable Events Guide, available here. It includes advice on integrating sustainability into events planning from the outset; using venues with strong environmental practices; promoting the use of public transport, carpooling, and active travel; incorporating effective waste reduction, recycling and composting; using renewable energy sources and energy efficient equipment; sourcing local, organic, and sustainable food and beverage; advocating for the use of reusable, recyclable and biodegradable materials and products, and involving the local community.</p>

<p>Action: AD Planning & Regulatory, Zayd Al-Jawad; Head of Climate Action, Fabian Oyarzun, Corporate Events Manager, Robbie Bratchell; Climate Change Programme Lead Officer, Veronica Chan.</p>			<p>These efforts demonstrate our ongoing commitment to embedding carbon-friendly practices in our activities and events.</p>
<p><u>Protected and enhanced Tree Canopy</u></p> <p><u>Interim report – March 2022</u> <u>RECOMMENDATION 6</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> That the Executive Portfolio Holder for the Environment and Regeneration and Officers establish a plan to meet the 2% gap in Stevenage’s Tree Canopy, and that an even more ambitious plan be considered to expand the number of trees in Stevenage or offsetting in other locations as this offers one of the best measures for carbon reduction open to the Council ideally once any feasible mitigation measures have been implemented. <p>Action: AD Planning & Regulatory, Zayd Al-Jawad; Head of Climate Action, Fabian Oyarzun; Arboriculture & Conservation Manager, Cristian</p>	<p><i>Response supported by AD Planning & Regulatory Zayd Al-Jawad and Lead Climate Change Officer, Veronica Chan, Arboriculture & Conservation Manager, Cristian Pinta and Executive Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Environment & Climate Change, Cllr Simon Speller.</i></p> <p>Officers have drafted a report, outlining future opportunities for consideration by Environment & Economy Scrutiny Committee. Officers are anticipating presenting this report to Members at the meeting on the 20 October 2022.</p> <p>Officers are also finalising a public consultation document that will help inform the development of a Tree & Woodland Strategy (alongside the Amenity Tree Management Policy) that will provide further direction about how additional tree planting can be delivered successfully and with support from the Stevenage community.</p>	<p>The report was considered by Members of the Environment & Economy Scrutiny Committee in October 2022.</p> <p>In the last 2 years the Council have planted 237 trees in support of increasing the tree canopy coverage, not including around 3,500 newly planted tree saplings creating Fairlane Woodland in Fairlands Valley Park, Southfield. These will take around 15-20 years before they start to contribute to the tree canopy cover, but will not provide full benefit until 30-40 years.</p> <p>An approximate 600 trees a year would need to be planted to meet the 2% canopy increase, and officers are investigating funding opportunities, internally and externally to help support this. A key aspect is to provide the 3-year aftercare each tree needs for it to establish.</p> <p>Further consideration in identifying suitable locations within Stevenage for planting is ongoing. Initial public consultation to help inform the Tree & Woodland Strategy is expected to commence in November 2023.</p>	<p>As part of our Climate Change Strategy, the Council has committed to planting over 4,000 trees by 2030 and increasing the town's tree canopy cover to 19%. According to the Stevenage Amenity Tree Management Policy, the tree canopy cover in Stevenage, including woodlands, was 17% in 2016. One of the key recommendations from the Emergency Tree Plan for the UK (Woodland Trust, 2020) is to provide a minimum of 19% tree cover to support the UK being carbon neutral by 2050. The Council has continued to work towards these targets. Key initiatives include creating Community Orchards and a new 1-hectare woodland (Fairlane Wood) in the South Field of Fairlands Valley Park by planting 3,500 tree saplings. Additionally, the Council will establish three new micro woods using the Miyawaki technique and DEFRA’s Coronation Living Heritage Fund, planting over 4,500 saplings of various species across three sites (St Nicholas Park, Hampson Park, and Shephalbury Park) in December 2024-January 2025. These planting initiatives complement the trees planted through the “Your Tree, Our Future” scheme, which allocated 6,637 trees saplings (2 feet tall) to Stevenage in 2023, and 3,169 trees saplings in 2024, with the latter available for collection and planting in December this year.</p>

<p>Pinta; Environmental Policy & Development Manager, Julia Hill.</p>			<p>However, our internal assessment indicates that approximately 600 adult standard trees (3 meters tall) a year would need to be planted in areas where they can mature individually rather than grouped together in woodlands to achieve the 2% canopy increase. Officers continuously seek funding opportunities, both internally and externally support this effort. A crucial aspect in this regard is provide the 3-year aftercare each tree needs to establish. To meet the 2% tree canopy, increase by 2050, 2% of the town's area, which is 52 hectares, would require 16,250 trees (at 32 sqm per tree), over the next 26 years, equivalent to 625 trees/year. Currently, the Council is not close to these numbers with the existing resources, having planted a maximum of 160 large trees (not whips) in one year, with an average of around 100 adult trees per year.</p>
<p><u>Planning & Development</u></p> <p><u>Interim report – March 2022</u></p> <p><u>RECOMMENDATION 7</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within the constraints of the exiting planning legislation and powers for local planning authorities, establish a plan to make Climate change a planning consideration for all applications. • Officers devise a strategy re tree management & Planning & Development (Strategic) 	<p><i>Response supported by AD Planning & Regulatory Zayd Al-Jawed and Executive Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Environment & Climate Change, Cllr Simon Speller.</i></p> <p>All Strategic Major applications now have a paragraph on Climate Change impact so decisions makers can understand the impact.</p> <p>The Local Plan review will have a large focus on where we can strengthen Local Plan Policies around Climate Change, particularly low carbon buildings and the identification of 'carbon sinks'</p>	<p>Stevenage Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document has been adopted in January 2023 providing details on sustainability matters included or strengthened in the Local Plan, including building and designing energy efficient building and spaces and carbon neutral specifications.</p> <p>Our Local Plan is being updated and climate change considerations are being reviewed for the version that will be ready in 2024.</p>	<p>The Council is currently conducting a partial review of the Stevenage Borough Local Plan (SBLP) 2011-2031 to update existing climate policies and incorporate new ones. As part of this review, climate policies are being prioritised in the SBLP's strategic planning. The Council aims to balance new low-carbon homes and developments with the provision of new jobs and infrastructure, while protecting Stevenage's green and cultural assets. The SBLP partial review is now incorporating critical policies related to energy efficiency, which will set GHG emissions targets for developments, overheating and cooling, water and wastewater efficiency and management, green infrastructure, among others. Under the reviewed policies, large-scale major development proposals would be</p>

<p>Action: AD Planning & Regulatory, Zayd Al-Jawad; Head of Climate Action, Fabian Oyarzun; Arboriculture & Conservation Manager, Cristian Pinta; Environmental Policy & Development Manager, Julia Hill; Head of Planning Policy, Lewis Claridge.</p>	<p>Planning working with SDS will develop an updated tree management strategy.</p>		<p>required to demonstrate whole-life carbon net zero, including the construction phase, through an assessment and statement.</p> <p>In the context of this partial review, the Council is currently discussing an updated tree replacement policy for new developments to reduce net tree loss. This policy would set specific standards for replacing removed trees, ensuring no net loss of tree cover, and aiming to increase tree-canopy cover.</p> <p>Council officers have also conducted public consultation to help inform the current development of a new Stevenage Tree & Woodland Strategy (alongside the existing Amenity Tree Management Policy), which will provide further direction about how additional tree planting can be delivered successfully and with support from the Stevenage community.</p> <p>While tree planting is important, supporting biodiversity requires the provision of a matrix of habitats, including woodlands, grasslands, wetlands, and ancient hedgerows. In this context, SBC has undertaken public consultations for a new Tree & Woodland Strategy and a new Green Spaces Strategy. The Tree & Woodland Strategy will be a comprehensive 10-year plan to enhance and maintain the town's tree stock, ancient hedgerows, and woodlands.</p>
<p><u>Focus on improved Recycling</u></p> <p><u>Interim report – March 2022</u></p> <p><u>RECOMMENDATION 8</u></p>	<p><i>Response supported by AD Stevenage Direct Services, Steve Dupoy and Executive Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Environment & Climate Change, Cllr Simon Speller.</i></p>	<p>A recent Defra announcement has now confirmed that a feature of the national Resource and Waste Strategy; 'Consistency' – has been renamed to 'Simpler Recycling' and this will help to define how waste and recycling kerbside services are delivered in the future.</p>	<p>The Council is part of the Hertfordshire Waste Partnership (HWP), which includes all 10 district and borough councils in Hertfordshire and HCC. HWP focuses on helping residents reduce, reuse, and recycle waste effectively, through public awareness campaigns and long-term strategies.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> That the Executive Portfolio Holder for the Environment and Regeneration and AD Stevenage Direct Services brings back a report to Scrutiny Members on the actions and strategy it is taking to improve the Council's recycling rates. <p>Action: AD Stevenage Direct Services, Steve Dupoy; AD Planning & Regulation, Zayd Al-Jawad; Head of Climate Action, Fabian Oyarzun; Operations Manager, Kris White; Environmental Policy & Development Manager, Julia Hill; Transformation Project Manager Waste, Claire Nicholls.</p>	<p>Officers have drafted a report for consideration by Environment & Economy Scrutiny Committee, outlining actions to date and future opportunities for improving recycling rates. Officers are anticipating presenting this report to Members at the meeting on the 20 October 2022.</p> <p>Some future actions, which have the ability to have an impact on local recycling rates, will be influenced by the Governments' emerging Resources & Waste Strategy.</p>	<p>Details have started to be released by Defra, which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The requirement for a weekly domestic food waste collection by March 2026 (formerly March 2025). Permitting co-mingled dry recycling. <p>Government will provide local authorities with funding to meet agreed "reasonable new burdens" arising from this policy, including up-front transition costs, and revenue and capital funding. SDS are currently working with WRAP (https://wrap.org.uk/about-us) and consultants Circulogic to help model and identify the most suitable waste / recycling collection service. The new information from Defra is timely and will help to inform this work.</p>	<p>Through HWP, SBC has launched various initiatives to promote recycling within the community. The Council also runs an in-house recycling collection service, separating materials into paper & card, glass, plastics, and cans, with private arrangements for their onwards journeys and further processing. In 2023/24, the Council collected over 30,295 tonnes of waste, with 11,855 tonnes recycled or composted, and 18,440 tonnes as residual waste. The goal is to increase recycling rates to 60% by 2035, but the HWP Annual Report 2023-24 shows Stevenage's current recycling rate at 39.1%. The Council is working to boost recycling rates across SBC's sites, housing, and commercial buildings. A pilot programme to improve recycling rates in flat blocks has been launched. The first phase introduced better recycling infrastructure and signage at six flat blocks, resulting in a 185% increase in recycling. The programme featured resident surveys, engagement to understand recycling habits and barriers, and educational resources, with plans to expand successful strategies. The Council is also preparing for a UK Government mandate requiring weekly food waste collections for households starting in 2026 and is collaborating with HWP on a campaign to reduce edible food waste by 20%, saving 10,000 tonnes of food. There is still great uncertainty around EPR (Extended Producer Responsibility) and DRS (Deposit Return Scheme) and how this will impact our collection service, the public's participation, and the volume of material in the waste stream,</p>
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			whether recyclable or not. This will impact recycling rates and potentially the Council's ability to accurately record recycling levels in Stevenage.
<p><u>Protecting climate emergency targets within the budget setting process</u></p> <p><u>Interim report – March 2022</u> <u>RECOMMENDATION 9</u></p> <p>(i) That Members and Officers involved in the budget setting process, as a minimum, consider the climate change implications of any budget decisions. Nor should there be a cut to services if there is a detrimental climate change implication; and</p> <p>(ii) Going further, scrutiny members would like the Executive to consider creating a small ring fenced budget in each service delivery area to investigate the long term budget implications of climate change for that business unit.</p> <p>Action: SD Resources, Section 151 Officer Clare Fletcher; AD Planning & Regulation, Zayd Al-Jawad; Head of Climate Action, Fabian Oyarzun.</p>	<p><i>Response supported by SD Resources Section 151 Officer, Clare Fletcher and Executive Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Resources, Cllr Joan Lloyd</i></p> <p>All Executive reports now have a climate change section to detail the impact of that decision on climate change. Going forward officers are reviewing options for more clearly reporting on both the climate change impact and the funding required to deliver it.</p> <p>At the October Executive there is a report coming forward for the PH for Environment & Climate Change about allocating £15k per neighbourhood area towards local infrastructure improvement, that could be used to lower carbon and improve local biodiversity.</p> <p>PH and AD will need to identify from their own resources any additional requirements, however the new Climate Change Lead officer can offer both support and guidance across the Council.</p> <p>When considering the need to make savings Officers and Members will have due regard for all the Council's priorities and set out any implications prior to any options being approved.</p>	<p>The allocation of funding for local infrastructure on climate change and environmental projects has been done, including £7.5k per ward through the Climate Change Community Fund (Dragon's Den scheme). Furthermore, as part of the Pathway 3 aimed to be presented to SLT, we are developing a tool to trial for assessing the sustainability in the decision making across the Council.</p>	<p>All Executive and Cabinet reports now include a section on climate change considerations and implications, enabling members to consider these factors in their decision-making.</p> <p>While no additional budgets have been identified for assessing the long-term budget implications of climate change, a cross-departmental officer working group (Staff Climate Champions Group) has been established to address climate change issues across each department. Furthermore, the first Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA) was conducted and completed in 2024, identifying climate-related risks. This work is currently being enhanced by a new climate adaptation assessment conducted by the Climate Action team, which will assess different time horizons and climate scenarios and their impacts on our services. This work aims to be completed by March 2025.</p>

<p><u>EV Charging Points in Neighbourhood Centres & Electric Car Club</u></p> <p><u>Interim report – March 2022</u> <u>RECOMMENDATION 10 (i) & (ii)</u></p> <p>(i) Re EV Charging in neighbourhood centres – Members recommended that, where possible, officers consider the locations used should be close to the cycle network.</p> <p>(ii) Members suggested that when the Electric Car Club charging equipment was reinstalled in town centre locations that a promotional campaign with residents of town centre accommodation be carried out to promote their use and officers should consider rebranding it, making it clear that it is for public use not just for SBC officers as the original livery made it appear it was just for corporate use.</p> <p>Action: AD Planning & Regulatory, Zayd Al-Jawad; Head of Climate Action, Fabian Oyarzun; Engineering Services Manager, Rob Woodisse.</p>	<p><i>Response supported by AD Planning & Regulatory Zayd Al-Jawad and Executive Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Economy, Enterprise & Transport, Cllr Lloyd Briscoe.</i></p> <p>(i) and (ii) are agreed and under way.</p>	<p>Underway with some delay due to some technical changes.</p>	<p>(i) The Council is committed to expanding public EV charging infrastructure across the town using different delivery and funding schemes. Over the past year, it installed 18 EV charge points (36 bays) at various locations through the Neighbourhood Centres EV Charge Point Project, funded by the On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme (ORCS) from the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles. Additionally, the Council installed two Blink EV chargers (4 bays) at Marshgate in 2023, funded by contributions from developer Autolus. In May 2023, 30 EV charging points (single socket) were opened at the Railway North MSCP. Currently, more EV chargers are planned to be delivered through the LEVI funding (from DfT), primarily in car parks supporting local parks, sport facilities, and garage compounds. To determine the locations for EV chargers, the Council considers the compatibility and complementarity between EVs and the cycle network. Additionally, factors such as safety, accessibility, coverage, and other criteria are taken into account.</p> <p>In 2023, an EV Car Club, run by Enterprise, was launched in Stevenage, offering an eco-friendly transport option for staff and residents, who can enrol in it and use these vehicles, without needing to own or use a personal car. Council communications have highlighted the potential benefits of this scheme for our residents (Enterprise Car Club Launches in Stevenage).</p>
<p><u>SBC Social Housing & resident led environmental community projects</u></p>	<p><i>Response supported by Operations Director, Housing Investment & Communities &</i></p>	<p>(i) The revised HRA Business Plan is going to the November 23 executive meeting for approval and</p>	<p>(i) To date the Council has secured over £5m of Government funding to part fund works to help</p>

<p><u>Interim report – March 2022</u> <u>RECOMMENDATION 11 (i) , (ii) , (iii) & (iv)</u></p> <p>(i) That Officer’s provide Members with the plans to decarbonise its housing stock over the coming decade.</p> <p>(ii) That new tenants receive information on climate change in their “welcome packs” when they enter a new property, to include the Council’s ten climate change pledges and the most up to date information on recycling at their property.</p> <p>(iii) In addressing the gap between the Council’s current engagement processes and where it needs to be, can more be done with residents groups to, over time, move residents away from the day to day housing tenant issues to considering wider, more strategic, Climate change matters that in time will affect all residents?</p> <p>(iv) encouraging very local, small scale, grass roots events that can focus resident’s involvement in things such as environmental projects</p>	<p><i>Neighbourhoods, Rob Gregory and Executive Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Deputy Leader and Housing & Housing Development, Cllr Jeannette Thomas.</i></p> <p>(i) The HRA Business Plan will include the council’s aspirations to decarbonise its housing stock over the next 30 years. This will be updated this year. It will be vital that funds are released from central government to enable this to happen. In addition, officer’s will be proactive in bidding for any external opportunities to deliver on the decarbonisation agenda.</p> <p>(ii) This will be included as part of the next refresh of “welcome packs”.</p> <p>(iii) This will form part of new resident involvement functions through Co-operative Neighbourhoods, where council tenants and leaseholders will engage on wider neighbourhood issues beyond housing management.</p> <p>(iv) A number of these types of projects and initiatives are emerging across the town and the neighbourhood teams continue to encourage and facilitate these as communities come forward with ideas.</p>	<p>incorporates our decarbonisation aspirations. At this point the decarbonisation of the housing stock is not fully funded in the plan. We have to date secured over £5m of government funding to help deliver decarbonisation but it will be vital additional government funding is provided to support the full decarbonisation of the housing stock.</p> <p>(ii) This is being analysed to be included as part of next refresh of “welcome packs”.</p> <p>iii) This will form part of new resident involvement functions through Co-operative Neighbourhoods, where council tenants and leaseholders will engage on wider neighbourhood issues beyond housing management. Through our Co-operative Neighbourhoods Programme, we have a series of engagement opportunities that take place throughout the year and offer a variety of ways for residents to engage with us on a whole host of topics. Methods used are: face to face at local events, residents meetings, pop ups in local neighbourhoods, ward walkabouts and patrols, digitally through newsletters, consultations and website/social media platforms and more targeted engagement by workshops (on specific subjects). We also have a suite of engagement opportunities that fit both Housing related remits as well as the wider resident engagement functions that are currently being piloted, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Armchair reviewer: Help shape services by reviewing policies and procedures from comfort of your sofa - Resident writer: review communications or suggest/write content for publication on specific topics - Resident Investigator: Interview council officers on services and policies to inform change 	<p>meet our target to improve all homes to a minimum of EPC C by 2030. In order to continue working towards this target and to decarbonise our housing stock it is vital more government funding is secured to meet these targets. At present the decarbonisation of the housing stock is not funded in the Housing Revenues Account (HRA) business plan beyond achieving EPC C by 2030. Due to financial pressures, investment plans including meeting EPC C, may need to be reviewed by prioritising legal and regulatory requirements. A further update can be provided once the HRA Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and 2025/2026 budget have been confirmed.</p> <p>(ii) At the moment, our Lettings teams provide energy-related information to the resident at the time of sign-up. This includes an EPC in all lettings pack alongside the gas certificate, electricity certificate and asbestos report. We are permanently analysing the expansion of this to include new climate-related information for residents.</p> <p>(iii) Resident involvement functions are delivered through Co-operative Neighbourhoods, where council tenants and leaseholders can engage on wider neighbourhood issues beyond housing management. Through our Co-operative Neighbourhoods Programme, we have a series of engagement opportunities that take place throughout the year and offer a variety of ways for residents to engage with us on a whole host of topics. Methods used are: face to face at local events, residents meetings, pop ups in local neighbourhoods, ward walkabouts and patrols, digitally through newsletters, consultations and</p>
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<p>(gardens/trees) or community kitchen/growing or bulk buying schemes as an example, which needs to be joined up with other neighbourhood activities and needs to be a thread through all activities to address climate change, not as an add on or special one off focus. The Assistant Director, Communities and Neighbourhoods, Rob Gregory agreed with this approach and informed members that he was working with his teams to mainstream this as a default thinking and activity for all things they do.</p> <p>Action: AD Planning & Regulation, Zayd Al-Jawad, Head of Climate Action; Fabian Oyarzun, Head of Housing Asset Management, Andrew Garside, Housing & Investment Energy & Sustainability Coordinator, Kirsten Simpson; Cooperative Neighbourhood Manager, Jane Konopka.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community participator: attend pop up consultation and get involved in participatory budgeting - Chatty rooms: online forums and webinars” (iv) Linked to our corporate Co-operative Neighbourhoods targets and the CIL, we have also launched the Climate Change Community Fund (Dragon’s Den scheme) through which the projects of this type can now be funded by the Council. . 	<p>website/social media platforms and more targeted engagement by workshops (on specific subjects). We also have a suite of engagement opportunities that fit both Housing related remits as well as the wider resident engagement functions. In addition to this we are launching our new Resident Engagement Strategy 2024-2027 that also includes our intention to develop a Resident Influence and Assurance Group that will have a clear remit of scrutiny, making decisions and recommendations, and holding the Council to account.</p>
<p><u>E&E Members Quick Wins & Strategic Projects</u></p>	<p><i>Response supported by AD Planning & Regulatory Zayd Al-Jawed Communications Manager Lucy Watsham, Operations Director, Housing Investment & Communities & Neighbourhoods, Rob Gregory and Executive</i></p>	<p>(i) We are currently developing a Pathway 3 report focused on people and processes where these matters are aimed to be included.</p>	<p>(i) The “Pathway 3 – People and Processes” Report was developed, completed, and presented to the SLT in late 2023. As part of its implementation, a newly established Staff Climate Champions group is working on various initiatives,</p>

<p>Interim report – March 2022 RECOMMENDATION 11 – (1 to 5)</p> <p>(i) Members and Officers lead by example, even if the benefits are small by acting appropriately in Council offices, plastic bottles, drinks cups etc. (Quick wins)</p> <p>(ii) Consider how to represent the progress of the strategy? Fishbone chart/Gantt chart, target lines, KPIs etc.(Strategic)</p> <p>(iii) A communications plan needed with channels, calendar, key messages, campaigns etc. Suggest starting with a campaign on the reduce your heating by 2 degrees (Strategic)</p> <p>(iv) Engage with young people via schools, Youth Mayor and Mayor's activities. (Distinct Project)</p> <p>(v) Promoting the 20 Minute Neighbourhood theory and willingness to encourage local businesses and tap into big business. These items would suit a workshop that needs to be facilitated externally to</p>	<p><i>Portfolio Holders with responsibility for Members, the Leader, for the Environment & Climate Change, Cllr Simon Speller and (Children, Young People), Cllr Sandra Barr.</i></p> <p>(i) This is supported and Comms can support with this messaging</p> <p>(ii) Under review as part of our climate change reporting</p> <p>(iii) Comms Plan for Climate Change in 22/23 about to be agreed.</p> <p>(iv) The Youth Mayor and Youth Council are keen to support Climate Change activities and would be keen to champion new projects identified.</p> <p>(v) Can be supported by the community development teams.</p>	<p>(ii) We are developing an action tracker which is going to be presented in this November 2023 E&E Select Committee session.</p> <p>(iii) Comms Plan for Climate Change in 23/24 about to be agreed.</p> <p>(iv) We have been working with HCC led Stevenage Youth Strategy Group and we are delivering a local school intervention (for leaders) through the Sustainable X project funded by UK Shared Prosperity Fund.</p> <p>(v) To be analysed in the context of the Local Plan update. Currently being supported by the design and implementation of the Hire to Cycle Scheme across the town.</p>	<p>including leading by example, and coordinating matters related to ways of working, such as resource usage (plastic, printed paper) and recycling.</p> <p>(ii) Currently, progress is being displayed in the Climate Action Plan Tracker (available here), which has been online since February 2024 and shows the advancement of each action. This tracker is updated 6-monthly. The next step in the implementation of the tracker is to identify critical KPIs for some of the priority actions. Additionally, graphs have been included on the website to show the trend of GHG emissions for both the borough and the Council, including a Sankey diagram for the latter.</p> <p>(iii) Now, each year, an updated Climate Change Communications and Marketing Plan is prepared by the Council. The plan outlines the aims, target audiences, key messages, and strategies for the year ahead alongside specific campaigns for promotion. Furthermore, the Council has developed an online resource called Environmental Days Calendar for 2024 (available here), which will be updated annually, serving as a quick go-to resource for identifying important international and national environmental dates throughout the year, facilitating community awareness activities around these.</p> <p>(iv) We continue to participate with HCC led Stevenage Youth Strategy Group and we are delivering a local school intervention (for leaders) through the Sustainable X project funded by UK Shared Prosperity Fund.</p> <p>(v) This is currently being analysed in the context of the Local Plan partial update and being supported</p>
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<p>tease out some tangible actions. Possible HEART (focus on adaptations only, in their view we are past the point where behaviour can affect significant climate change) or Mutual Gain (a neutral facilitation company who facilitated the Climate Emergency Panel – circa £5K) or another external organisation to facilitate? (Officers have suggested that adaptation measures will also be considered on a countywide basis through the Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership of which Stevenage is an active member) (Distinct Project)</p> <p>Action: AD Planning & Regulatory, Zayd Al-Jawad; Head of Climate Action, Fabian Oyarzun; Communications and Marketing Officer, Lucy Watsham; Climate Change Programme Lead Officer, Veronica Chan; Climate Change Officer, Jennifer Bratchell; Head of Planning Policy, Lewis Claridge.</p>			<p>by the design and implementation of the Hire to Cycle Scheme across the town. Furthermore, the Council is taking part in the Sustainable Travel Town programme led by HCC (further information: Sustainable Travel Town Programme).</p>
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<p>Flightpath to reaching Net Zero by 2030</p> <p><u>Final Report Jan 2023 - RECOMMENDATION 1 - SBC and area wide pathway and targets</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is recommended that clear targets and a pathway to 2030 for both SBC targets and area wide targets need to be established. It is not currently clear what the targets or pathway are to see how Stevenage gets from where it is now to 2030. The way progress against the 2018 baseline figure is measured and publicised needs to be thought through so that this is clearly described to show what progress is being made each year and understood by officers, Members and by the public. <p>Action: AD Planning & Regulatory, Zayd Al-Jawad, Head of Climate Action, Fabian Oyarzun; Climate Change Lead Officer, Veronica Chan; Climate Change Officer, Jennifer Bratchell.</p>	<p><i>Response supported by AD Planning & Regulatory, Zayd Al-Jawad and the Lead Climate Change Officer, Veronica Chan and Executive Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Environment & Climate Change, Cllr Simon Speller.</i></p>	<p>We have been working on updating our baseline from 2018 which included transport and buildings as an organisation. Our most accurate data at the moment is the new updated baseline on our own fleet but we have been making improvements on our buildings' emissions baseline moving from previous 12 SBC sites to 549 sites. It is underway to keep on improving this baseline.</p> <p>At Stevenage level the data we use is the data from DESNZ. A bottom-up baseline at Stevenage level would require new carbon accounting tools.</p>	<p>Currently, the Climate Action team is developing a methodology for annually reporting the Council's emissions, systematically including Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions, with a view to expanding the incorporation of Scope 3 emissions in the future. To achieve this, the use of the LGA Carbon Accounting Tool or the GHG Protocol is being considered. Additionally, graphs have been incorporated to show the progress made at the town and Council levels in reducing emissions compared to the base year 2018. These graphs are available online at Stevenage Climate Action Plan. At Stevenage level the data we use is the data from DESNZ, produced and updated annually.</p>
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<p>Pace of change required to reach Net Zero by 2030</p> <p><u>Final Report Jan 2023</u> <u>RECOMMENDATION 2 – Pace</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the climate emergency really being treated as an emergency? It is recommended that there is a need to ramp up the pace to get to net zero for the town by 2030. Members accept there are challenges around funding but where it sits in corporate priorities is an area that is a decision for the authority. Members will be looking to see how the pace is picked up leading to 2030. <p>Action: SBC CEO, Matt Partridge; AD Planning & Regulatory, Zayd Al-Jawad; Head of Climate Action, Fabian Oyarzun.</p>	<p><i>Response supported by SBC CEO Matt Partridge, AD Planning & Regulatory, Zayd Al-Jawad and the Lead Climate Change Officer, Veronica Chan and Executive Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Environment & Climate Change, Cllr Simon Speller.</i></p>	<p>We are now working at county wide and regional level through the HCCSP and the Regional Climate Change Forum established by the East of England LGA. Our Chief Executive has lead positions in these initiatives. As part of the Pathway 3 report aimed to be presented to SLT, we are developing a tool to trial for assessing the sustainability in the decision making across the Council.</p>	<p>The Council continues to work at the county-wide and regional level through the HCCSP and the EELGA Regional Climate Change Forum (RCCF). Our Chief Executive holds lead positions in these initiatives, and our Portfolio Holder for Environment and Performance is now the Chair of the HCCSP for the current year. Furthermore, tackling climate change is now one of the priorities in the Corporate Plan: Making Stevenage Even Better (2024-2027), showcasing the strategic importance given to the subject within the organisation.</p>
<p>Adaptations of SBC Estate and Sheltered Housing</p> <p><u>Final Report Jan 2023</u> <u>RECOMMENDATION 3 – Adaptations</u></p>	<p><i>Response supported by SD Resources Section 151 Officer, Clare Fletcher and the Lead Climate Change Officer, Veronica Chan, Operations Director, Housing Investment & Communities & Neighbourhoods, Rob Gregory and Executive Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Environment & Climate</i></p>	<p>We are currently working now to include climate related risks as part of our risk register and actively working with the HCCSP Adaptation to support this assessment. An initial assessment is expected to be completed by December 2023.</p>	<p>We have completed a first Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA) for SBC as an organisation, including 51 specific climate-related risks, within four categories and across 18 service areas. This CCRA included risks such as extreme weather events causing deterioration of building fabric and damage to buildings, air quality issues for SBC tenants due to warmer wetter winters leading to</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The review established that due to extreme weather events linked to climate change there is already a need for adaptations to buildings and for up-to-date emergency response plans to care for older residents in sheltered housing schemes. It is recommended that there be an audit of all adaptations required across the Council. <p>Action: SD Resources Section 151 Officer, Clare Fletcher; AD Planning & Regulation, Zayd Al-Jawad; Head of Climate Action, Fabian Oyarzun; Climate Change Programme Lead Officer, Veronica Chan; Climate Change Officer, Jennifer Bratchell.</p>	<p><i>Change, Cllr Simon Speller, Resources, Cllr Mrs Joan Lloyd, Deputy Leader and Housing, Housing Development, Cllr Jeannette Thomas.</i></p>		<p>increased mould and damp, increased flood risk causing damage to council owned residential buildings or access to them, SBC residential tenants affected by surface water or fluvial flooding, overheating of Council housing stock resulting in increased energy consumption, increased water consumption, increased complaints, and risk of morbidity or death. These risks are currently being reviewed to be presented at the Audit Committee and will be updated in the context of SBC's participation in the ARP4 voluntary round with DEFRA for climate adaptation reporting, aiming for completion by March 2025.</p>
<p>Helping residents to make simple behaviour changes</p> <p><u>Final Report Jan 2023</u> <u>RECOMMENDATION 4 - Behaviour Change</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is recommended that officers from SBC link up with officers from the HCC Behaviour Change unit to work together on behaviour change initiatives. 	<p><i>Response supported by the Lead Climate Change Officer, Veronica Chan, Operations Director, Housing Investment & Communities & Neighbourhoods, Rob Gregory and Executive Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Environment & Climate Change, Cllr Simon Speller, and Communities, Neighbourhoods and Co-operative Council, Cllr Sandra Barr.</i></p>	<p>We are currently part of the HCCSP Behavioural Change subgroup, and we are working on the updates required for its action plan design and delivery.</p>	<p>Underway. We are currently part of the HCCSP Behavioural Change subgroup, and we are taking part in all the actions analysed and delivered by the subgroup, particularly those related to homes retrofitting.</p>

<p>Action: Head of Climate Action, Fabian Oyarzun; Climate Change Programme Lead Officer, Veronica Chan.</p>			
<p>Regular monitoring of Climate Change actions</p> <p><u>Final Report Jan 2023</u> <u>RECOMMENDATION 5 -</u> <u>Future review</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It has been recommended by the Chair of the Environment and Economy Select Committee that the issue of the climate emergency should be under regular review by the Committee and that a progress report should be brought back to the committee on a yearly basis. <p>Action: AD Planning and Regulation, Zayd Al-Jawad; AD Stevenage Direct Services, Steve Dupoy.</p>	<p><i>Response supported by the AD Planning & Regulatory, Zayd Al-Jawad and the Lead Climate Change Officer, Veronica Chan and Executive Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Environment & Climate Change, Cllr Simon Speller.</i></p>	<p>Agreed and underway.</p>	<p>Agreed and underway.</p>
<p>Training package for Members and officers</p>	<p><i>Response supported by the Lead Climate Change Officer, Veronica Chan, Senior HR Manager Clare Davies/Kirsten Frew and Executive Portfolio Holder with responsibility</i></p>	<p>As part of the Pathway 3 aimed to be presented to SLT, we are developing a strategy to establish Climate Champions (or an eco-staff volunteer group) as part of every team across SBC. This will involve a</p>	<p>The Council has been delivering internal activities, as well as those through the HCCSP, to train key and senior officers on climate change topics. These have included Carbon Literacy training for the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and for the Climate</p>

<p>Final Report Jan 2023 <u>RECOMMENDATION 6 – Training</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Committee recommends the creation of a training package for members, and additional training for senior officers, on climate change mitigations and adaption, so that future decision makers are well informed in all aspects of the councils’ operations, and the bearing climate change mitigation and adaption may have on them. <p>Action: HR Managers – Clare Davies/Kirsten Frew; Head of Climate Action, Fabian Oyarzun.</p>	<p><i>for Environment & Climate Change, Cllr Simon Speller and Resources, Cllr Mrs Joan Lloyd.</i></p>	<p>strategy for carbon training and carbon literacy for these champions.</p>	<p>Champions, with invitations extended to other interested officers. The Staff Climate Champions Group has been established in 2024, with representatives from all different departments, to discuss cross-cutting climate action themes. The training activities have also included sessions on Biodiversity Net Gain, Planning for Climate Officers, Climate Change for Planning Officers, and Sustainable Buildings Certification.</p>
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