

**APPENDIX 1**

**STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CLIMATE CHANGE ANNUAL  
UPDATE 2025**



**OCTOBER 2025**

## APPENDIX 1

### DETAILED CLIMATE CHANGE ANNUAL UPDATE 2025

#### 1 LEVEL 1: GLOBAL CLIMATE ACTION

- 1.1 The Paris Agreement, adopted by 196 countries at COP21 (2015), remains the cornerstone of global climate action. It legally commits signatories to limit global warming to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels, while pursuing efforts to cap it at 1.5°C. Achieving the 1.5°C target requires a 43% reduction in global emissions by 2030 (relative to 2019)<sup>1</sup>.
- 1.2 The Agreement has catalysed substantial global mechanisms, including climate finance, technology transfer, capacity-building, and transparency frameworks.
- 1.3 It also established a ratchet mechanism, requiring progressively more ambitious Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)<sup>2</sup> for signatories on five-year cycles.
- 1.4 At COP29 (Baku, Azerbaijan, 2024), parties agreed to triple climate finance, raising the annual target from US\$100 billion to US\$300 billion by 2035 to support developing countries' mitigation, adaptation, and resilience efforts<sup>3</sup>. An aspirational goal of mobilising up to US\$1.3 trillion annually from public and private sources by 2035 was also set<sup>4</sup>.
- 1.5 Also at COP29, the UK Prime Minister announced a new national target to cut all GHG emissions by at least 81% by 2035 (relative to 1990), excluding international aviation and shipping. This represents an upgrade from the previous pledge of a 68% cut by 2030<sup>5</sup>.

#### 2 LEVEL 2: UK NATIONAL CLIMATE ACTION

- 2.1 The UK has committed to reducing GHG emissions by at least 68% by 2030 and strengthened its ambition with an 81% reduction target by 2035 (both relative to 1990 levels), one of the most ambitious among major economies. The UK also maintains its net-zero target by 2050<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Further information at: [The Paris Agreement \(UNFCCC\)](#)

<sup>2</sup> Further information at: [Nationally Determined Contributions \(NDCs\)](#)

<sup>3</sup> Further information at: [COP29 Agrees to Triple Finance to Developing Countries](#)

<sup>4</sup> Further information at: [COP29 Key outcomes \(Climate Change Committee\)](#)

<sup>5</sup> Further information at: [UK shows international leadership in tackling climate crisis \(GOV.UK\)](#)

<sup>6</sup> As outlined in its Net Zero Strategy, available at: [UK Net Zero Strategy](#)

- 2.2 Provisional figures for UK territorial GHG emissions up to 2024<sup>7</sup> estimate national net territorial GHG emissions at 371 MtCO<sub>2e</sub>. This is 4% below 2023 levels and 54% lower than in 1990.
- 2.3 The long-term trend in UK territorial GHG emissions from 1990 to 2024 is shown in Figure 1.

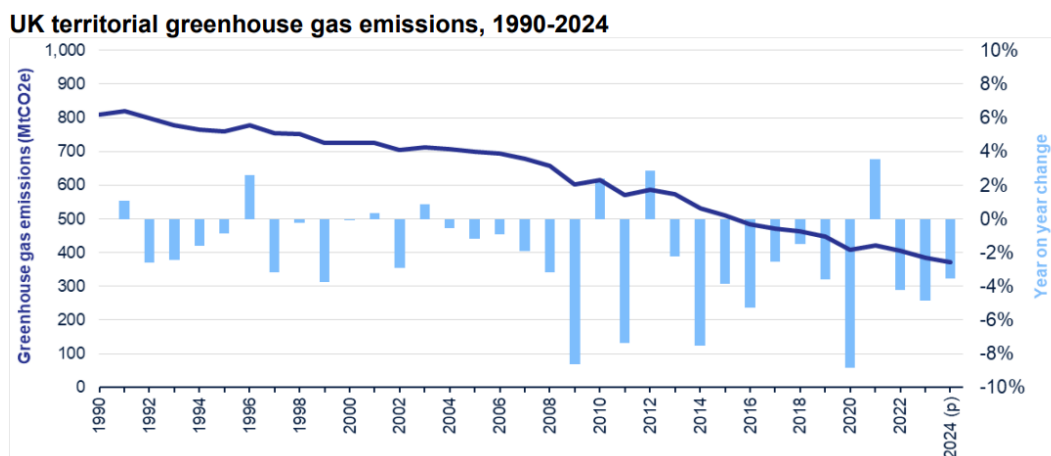


Figure 1. UK territorial GHG emissions, 1990-2024 (provisional figure for 2024).  
Source: DESNZ, National Statistics.

- 2.4 The long-term emissions decline has been driven primarily by the shift from coal to gas and renewables for electricity generation, improved energy efficiency, and the contraction of energy-intensive industries.
- 2.5 In 2024, emissions fell mainly due to lower gas and coal use in electricity generation and industry.
- 2.6 Electricity supply emissions dropped by 6 MtCO<sub>2e</sub> (15%) in 2024, due to record-high electricity imports, increased renewable generation, and the closure of the UK's last coal-fired power station in September 2024<sup>8</sup>. Industry emissions fell by 9% (5 MtCO<sub>2e</sub>) due to blast furnace closures in the iron and steel sector and reduced coal use.
- 2.7 In contrast, emissions from buildings and product uses rose by 1 MtCO<sub>2e</sub> (2%), likely due to higher residential gas consumption as energy and cost pressures eased.
- 2.8 Domestic transport remained the UK's largest emitting sector in 2024, accounting for 30% of total GHG emissions. Its emissions fell by 2 MtCO<sub>2e</sub> (2%) from 2023 (12% below 2019), mainly due to reduced diesel consumption in road transport.
- 2.9 Net UK territorial GHG emissions by sector in 2024 are shown in Figure 2.

<sup>7</sup> Further information at: [2024 UK Greenhouse Gas Emissions \(Provisional Figures\)](#).

<sup>8</sup> Further information at: [UK to close last coal power station after 142 years \(BBC News\)](#)

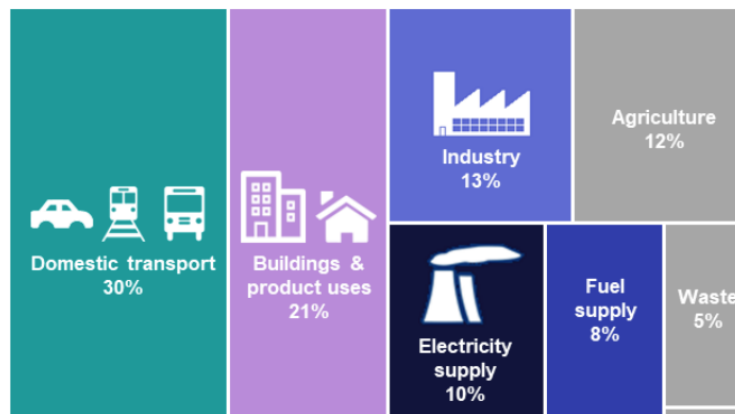


Figure 2. UK net territorial GHG emissions by sector, 2024 (provisional figures).

Source: DESNZ, National Statistics

- 2.10 Continued monitoring is essential to ensure emissions reductions are sustainable and equitable, without worsening energy poverty or limiting access to employment and quality housing.
- 2.11 Rising energy prices could suppress short-term energy demand and drive behavioural and production shifts in the medium term. This underscores the urgency of government measures to expand insulation, retrofitting, energy efficiency, and the transition to low-carbon energy.
- 2.12 Although emissions fell in 2024, the Climate Change Committee's (CCC) 2025 Progress Report<sup>9</sup> warns the UK remains off track for net-zero. Achieving 2030 and 2050 targets is still feasible with urgent action, particularly scaling up low-carbon electricity in transport, heating, and industry, alongside nature-based solutions. While 61% of the 2030 target is underpinned by credible plans, major gaps remain in heat pump deployment and industrial electrification. These require rapid delivery of the Warm Homes Plan<sup>10</sup> and Industrial Strategy<sup>11</sup>. Making electricity cheaper by removing legacy policy costs remains the top priority to speed electrification and cut bills.
- 2.13 Following its 2024 election, the UK Government committed to an accelerated climate agenda, reversing regulatory delays introduced by the previous administration. This includes reinstating the 2030 ban on new petrol and diesel cars<sup>12</sup>, accelerating heat pump adoption, and restoring higher energy efficiency standards for properties.
- 2.14 Core priorities<sup>13</sup> have included establishing Great British Energy (GBE)<sup>14</sup>, decarbonising the power grid<sup>15</sup>, upgrading planning to fast-track low-carbon

<sup>9</sup> Further information at: [CCC - 2025 Report to Parliament](#)

<sup>10</sup> Further information at: [Help to save households money and deliver cleaner heat to homes](#)

<sup>11</sup> Further information at: [The UK's Modern Industrial Strategy 2025](#)

<sup>12</sup> Further information at: [Phasing out the sale of new petrol and diesel cars from 2030 and support for zero emission vehicle \(ZEV\) transition](#)

<sup>13</sup> Further information at: [Make Britain a Clean Energy Superpower](#)

<sup>14</sup> Great British Energy was formally established by the Great British Energy Act 2025, creating a publicly owned company with independence, tasked with investing in and operating clean energy infrastructure across the UK. Further information at: [Great British Energy](#).

<sup>15</sup> The de facto ban on onshore wind in the UK was scrapped in 2024, by eliminating two restrictive footnotes in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

infrastructure, scaling up energy efficiency measures, and supporting green growth.

- 2.15 The Warm Homes Plan will invest £6.6 billion over the current parliament to upgrade 5 million homes, tackling fuel poverty and reducing emissions.
- 2.16 Another key policy, the Local Power Plan (LPP), seeks to decentralise clean energy by partnering GBE with energy companies, local authorities (LAs), and communities to deliver 8 GW of new small- and medium-scale renewable projects. It provides funding and support to LAs and community energy groups for project development.
- 2.17 Overall, to enable local delivery, the Government has committed to award LAs with multi-year funding and end competitive bidding, ensuring stable, predictable support for long-term climate action.

### **3 LEVEL 3: LARGE BUSINESSES**

- 3.1 Powering Up Britain: Net Zero Growth Plan<sup>16</sup> (2023) positions net-zero as a defining economic driver of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, with over 90% of global GDP covered by net-zero targets. For the UK, this represents £1 trillion in market opportunities and 480,000 new jobs by 2030.
- 3.2 Building on this, the UK Government's Modern Industrial Strategy<sup>17</sup> (2025) identifies eight high-growth sectors, including clean energy, advanced manufacturing, and batteries technologies, and commits to doubling low-carbon investment by 2035. It also introduces measures to lower electricity costs for energy-intensive industries to maintain competitiveness during the net-zero transition.
- 3.3 UK large enterprises are increasingly aligning with net-zero goals by investing in renewables, energy efficiency, and circular economy, while embedding sustainability in supply chains. Regulations, such as mandatory carbon reporting and carbon-reduction plans in public procurement, are reinforcing these efforts. Despite wider economic pressures, major firms remain committed to net-zero<sup>18</sup>.
- 3.4 Stevenage hosts several global corporations at the forefront of sustainability and net-zero innovation, particularly in aerospace, biotechnology, digital technology, and defence. Located in the UK's "Golden Triangle" of high-growth innovation, companies such as GSK, Airbus, Fujitsu, MBDA, and the Stevenage Bioscience Catalyst are advancing R&D and investing in climate action.
- 3.5 GSK targets net-zero emissions across its full value chain by 2045, with interim goals of an 80% reduction (from a 2020 baseline) and 100%

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<sup>16</sup> Available at: [Powering Up Britain: Net Zero Growth Plan](#)

<sup>17</sup> Available at: [UK Government - Modern Industrial Strategy 2025](#)

<sup>18</sup> Further information at: [BSI Group - Businesses committed to net zero but progress slows](#)



renewable electricity use by 2030<sup>19</sup>. Its Sustainable Procurement Programme<sup>20</sup> also encourages suppliers to align with 1.5°C targets.

- 3.6 MBDA has invested in energy-efficient infrastructure, contributes to industry-wide decarbonisation in manufacturing and logistics, and supporting local STEM<sup>21</sup> and sustainability education<sup>22</sup>.
- 3.7 Airbus's Stevenage site, a hub for satellite production, focuses on low-emission manufacturing and space-based climate monitoring technologies. It has pledged net-zero operational emissions by 2030<sup>23</sup>.
- 3.8 Fujitsu has committed to net-zero across its global operations by 2040. Its UK sites, including Stevenage, lead on green IT solutions, energy-efficient data centres, and employee-driven sustainability programmes<sup>24</sup>. Local initiatives include renewable energy, tree planting, composting, and biodiversity projects.
- 3.9 Stevenage Bioscience Catalyst promotes sustainable biotech innovation through high-efficiency buildings, green technologies, biodiversity measures, and low-carbon transport<sup>25</sup>.
- 3.10 The Council continues to collaborate with these major employers and institutions to share best practice and accelerate GHG reductions.

#### **4 LEVELS 4 & 5: REGIONAL (EELGA-RCCF) / COUNTYWIDE (HCCSP)**

- 4.1 A key aspect of the Council's climate action is collaboration with local government partners to attract investment, build strong business cases, and jointly reduce emissions while advancing sustainability. This approach maximises the impact of shared resources.
- 4.2 As local authorities develop proposals for reorganisation there is a need for strong cross-boundary collaboration on climate and sustainability. These reforms present both opportunities and challenges for climate governance, including the potential for devolved powers and funding to support net zero ambitions, resilience, and green economic growth. In this evolving landscape, strategic partnerships could play a vital role in aligning local action with regional priorities and emerging governance structures.
- 4.3 Alignment across local, county, and regional initiatives is essential to ensure climate action is both effective and efficient.

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<sup>19</sup> Further information at: [Climate - GSK](#)

<sup>20</sup> Further information at: [GSK launches Sustainable Procurement Programme for suppliers](#)

<sup>21</sup> STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics.

<sup>22</sup> Further information at: [MBDA Systems Sustainability Report 2024](#).

<sup>23</sup> Further information at: [Airbus in the United Kingdom](#)

<sup>24</sup> Further information at: [Fujitsu's Sustainability, ESG Initiatives & Reports](#)

<sup>25</sup> Further information at: [Sustainability - Stevenage Bioscience Catalyst](#)

## Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership (HCCSP)

- 4.4 Launched in January 2020, HCCSP<sup>26</sup> is a member-led partnership delivering joint climate and sustainability initiatives across Hertfordshire. Members include all 10 districts, Hertfordshire County Council (HCC), and Hertfordshire Futures<sup>27</sup> (the former LEP<sup>28</sup>).
- 4.5 The Council has actively participated in HCCSP, supporting its priorities, particularly on carbon reduction, adaptation, biodiversity and retrofit, focusing strategic work at county level to maximise impact and avoid duplication of efforts.
- 4.6 Key initiatives undertaken via HCCSP include:
- Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)<sup>29</sup> – A county-wide framework led by the Hertfordshire Nature Recovery Partnership<sup>30</sup>, supported by HCCSP through shared communications and coordinated officer feedback to shape evidence-based priorities.
  - Solar Together<sup>31</sup> – A group-buying scheme for domestic PV panels and batteries. According to the Round 3 End of Project Report (September 2024), 46 Stevenage residents had accepted PV offers, and 2 accepted battery offers. In the installation phase, 30 installations delivered 333 solar panels (130 kW capacity), £286,959 investment, and 21.8 tCO<sub>2e</sub> annual savings, plus 28 batteries (200 kWh). Round 4 launched in January 2025 and closed in June. According to the 2025 End of Decision Phase Report, 143 interested registrations were received in Stevenage (138 for PV, 5 for batteries) from homeowners and businesses. Of these, 24 accepted their offers for installation later in 2025.
  - Your Tree, Our Future<sup>32</sup> – A scheme enabling thousands of trees to be distributed to residents for planting. In 2024, Stevenage residents planted 5,831 trees, exceeding the original 3,169 allocation thanks to reallocation of unclaimed trees from other districts. For the upcoming 2025 distribution, 4,525 trees have already been claimed by Stevenage residents for planting in December.
  - LEVI<sup>33</sup> Funding - In September 2023, HCC secured funding to expand EV charging across the county. Under a collaboration agreement with HCC, the Council is supporting this deployment across the town. The Council identified up to 50 potential sites across the borough based on layout, land ownership, and grid capacity. The Charge Point Operator (CPO) contract is currently out to tender, with the Council assisting in bid

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<sup>26</sup> Further information at: [Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership](#)

<sup>27</sup> Further information at: [Hertfordshire Futures](#)

<sup>28</sup> Local Enterprise Partnership

<sup>29</sup> Further information at: [Local Nature Recovery Strategy](#)

<sup>30</sup> Further information at: [Hertfordshire Nature Recovery Partnership \(HCC\)](#)

<sup>31</sup> Further information at: [Group-Buying for Solar - Solar Together](#)

<sup>32</sup> Further information at: [Your Tree, Our Future](#)

<sup>33</sup> Low Emission Vehicle Infrastructure – further information at: [Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure funding](#).

evaluation, and appointment expected by September 2025 via a concession contract<sup>34</sup>.

- Carbon Offsetting and Insetting Boilerplate – Adopted in July 2025 and developed with input from HCCSP partners and the University of Hertfordshire, it provides guidance for LAs on offsetting their own emissions. While not intended for development proposals, it may also inform future planning policy. Key principles include:
    - Prioritise mitigation over offsetting.
    - Favour local projects.
    - Strategic use to maximise mitigation and create revenues and investments opportunities.
    - Co-benefits delivery (social, economic, environmental).
    - Additionality<sup>35</sup>, long-term storage, and leakage prevention.
    - Avoidance of double-counting.
    - Robust verification, governance, and management.
  - Hertfordshire Local Retrofit Strategy<sup>36</sup> – In July 2025, the Council endorsed this strategy, developed through the Local Area Retrofit Accelerator (LARA) led by HCCSP. While there were no direct financial implications at that stage, future delivery phases may require identifying and securing funding. Designed as a three-year, evidence-based roadmap, the Strategy seeks to accelerate domestic retrofit by fostering cross-sector collaboration, strengthening supply chains, ensuring equitable access, and coordinating delivery. Its vision is supported by key goals: increasing uptake and demand for retrofit measures; maximising social, economic, and environmental co-benefits; boosting local supply chain capacity and quality; and establishing a trusted delivery model and governance. To move from strategy to implementation, the following steps have been recommended:
    - Establish a governance and delivery structure.
    - Develop a financial roadmap aligning funding with priorities.
    - Launch targeted pilot projects to test delivery models and scale successful approaches.
    - Continue cross-sector stakeholder coordination.
- 4.7 Through HCCSP, the Council has also delivered training and capacity-building for councillors and officers on sustainability, adaptation, political awareness, and planning.
- 4.8 Finally, HCCSP has helped members navigate a complex policy landscape while fostering networking, joint funding, officer development, and best-practice exchange.

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<sup>34</sup> A contract where the operator also owns the equipment.

<sup>35</sup> Showing that the GHG reductions from the offset activity would not have happened without the funding provided

<sup>36</sup> Further information at: [Cabinet Report - Hertfordshire Local Retrofit Strategy](#) and [Hertfordshire Local Retrofit Strategy Appendix](#). Final version of the strategy, as adopted by HCCSP, available at: [Hertfordshire Local Retrofit Strategy 2025 to 2028](#).



## **Hertfordshire Growth Board (HGB): Sustainable County Mission**

- 4.9 The Hertfordshire Growth Board (HGB)<sup>37</sup> is a collaborative initiative driving sustainable growth across the county, enhancing the economy, infrastructure, and quality of life.
- 4.10 Its Sustainable County Mission<sup>38</sup> aims to transform Hertfordshire into a prosperous low-carbon economy with a thriving natural environment, maximising the benefits of sustainable growth while meeting net-zero by 2050.
- 4.11 HCCSP has been identified as the key partner for this mission, ensuring climate change and sustainable growth are addressed jointly and effectively.
- 4.12 In July 2024, HCCSP presented its plan for the mission, highlighting shared priorities, resource gaps, and opportunities for joint action. HGB endorsed the approach and appointed HCCSP as lead on carbon reduction, climate adaptation, and behavioural change.
- 4.13 In its May 2025 Annual Progress Report<sup>39</sup>, HGB highlighted key achievements in this regard, including Hertfordshire selected as a pilot area for the LARA project, stakeholder engagement on a Strategic Action Plan for Adaptation, a county-wide energy baseline and map (via Herts Insight<sup>40</sup>), and drafting of the LNRS.

## **East of England Regional Climate Change Forum (RCCF)**

- 4.14 The Council and HCCSP also contribute to the Regional Climate Change Forum (RCCF)<sup>41</sup>, led by the East of England Local Government Association (EELGA). RCCF brings together eight climate partnerships across the region, covering over 50 local authorities.
- 4.15 The RCCF action plan is structured around eight priorities as shown in Figure 3.
- 4.16 Hertfordshire leads the adaptation workstream (Priority 5) and collaborates with Suffolk and Cambridgeshire on Priority 7. In addition, under Priority 6, The Council contributed to the Sustainable Procurement Sub-Group 2024/25, supporting peer collaboration on climate-focused procurement.
- 4.17 EELGA-RCCF also organises the East of England Net Zero and Climate Resilience Conference, a key annual event advancing the region's climate agenda. The 2025 conference<sup>42</sup>, held on 16 July in Chelmsford, was

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<sup>37</sup> Further information at: [Hertfordshire Growth Board](#)

<sup>38</sup> Further information at: [HGB - Vision and Missions](#) under the section "Sustainable County".

<sup>39</sup> Available at: [Annual HGB Progress Report 2024/25](#)

<sup>40</sup> Available at: [Herts Insight](#)

<sup>41</sup> Further information at: [East of England Climate Change Forum \(RCCF\)](#)

<sup>42</sup> Further information at: [East of England Net Zero and Climate Change Conference](#)

attended by the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Climate Change, members and officers.



Figure 3. RCCF Action Plan: Eight Priorities.

## 5 LEVEL 6: STEVENAGE LEVEL

- 5.1 Central government data for Stevenage's 2023 territorial emissions<sup>43</sup> has been released<sup>44</sup>. These figures, based on detailed energy and resource use, are typically published with a two-year lag at borough level. Data for 2024 will be available in the next 8-9 months.
- 5.2 The latest DESNZ update (3 July 2025) shows the trajectory of the territorial GHG emissions within the scope of influence of the local authority (see Figure 4).

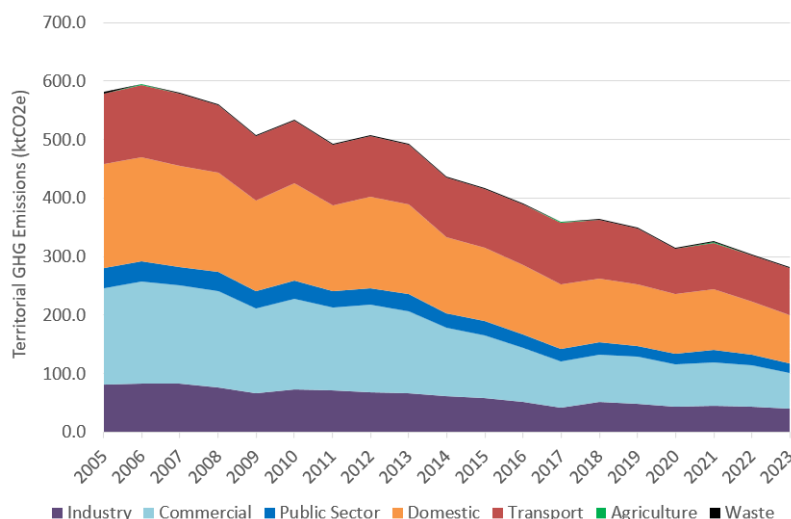


Figure 4. Stevenage territorial GHG emissions within the scope of influence of LAs, estimates 2005-2023 (ktCO<sub>2e</sub>). Source: Based on DESNZ data<sup>45</sup>.

<sup>43</sup> Territorial GHG emissions are those that occur within Stevenage's geographical borders, including all our residents, businesses, and activities.

<sup>44</sup> The full dataset can be consulted at: [UK local authority and regional GHG emissions statistics](#).

<sup>45</sup> Available at: [UK local authority and regional GHG emissions](#).

- 5.3 Emissions within LA's scope of influence represent a subset of emissions over which councils have realistic control or influence, excluding sectors such as national-level industry and regional infrastructure. This subset provides a clearer picture of emissions the Council can meaningfully impact.
- 5.4 In 2023, Stevenage recorded its lowest emissions within LA influence at 282.3 ktCO<sub>2e</sub>, a 7.2% drop from 2022 (304.1 ktCO<sub>2e</sub>), 22.6% lower than the 2018 baseline (364.6 ktCO<sub>2e</sub>), and 51.4% lower than in 2005 (581.2 ktCO<sub>2e</sub>).
- 5.5 The reduction from 2022 to 2023 was mainly due to decreases in commercial (-13.6%), industrial (-9.5%), public (-9.1%), and domestic (-8.1%) emissions, with a slight increase in transport (+0.9%).
- 5.6 Since 2005, most sectoral emissions have consistently decreased. Residential emissions dropped by 53.8%, from 178.3 ktCO<sub>2e</sub> in 2005 to 82.3 ktCO<sub>2e</sub> in 2023. The public sector, including the Council, reduced its emissions by 51.2% over the same period, whereas commercial and industrial emissions decreased by 63.2% and 51.2%, respectively. Transport emissions also decreased by 33.0%, from 119.6 ktCO<sub>2e</sub> in 2005 to 80.2 ktCO<sub>2e</sub> in 2023.
- 5.7 Continued monitoring is essential to ensure reductions are sustained and not simply a by-product of high energy costs affecting households or businesses.
- 5.8 Stevenage's 2023 per capita emissions within LA influence (3.1 tCO<sub>2e</sub>) were below Hertfordshire (3.2 tCO<sub>2e</sub>), the East of England (3.6 tCO<sub>2e</sub>) and England (3.3 tCO<sub>2e</sub>).
- 5.9 Stevenage's total territorial GHG emissions within LA influence by sector in 2023 are presented in Figure 5.

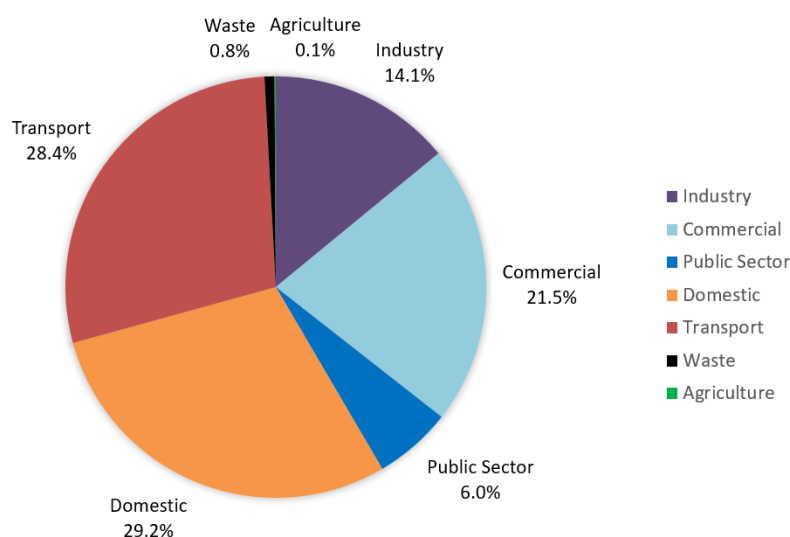


Figure 5. Stevenage territorial GHG emissions within LA influence, estimates in 2023 by economic sector. Source: Based on DESNZ data<sup>46</sup>.

- 5.10 In 2023, domestic emissions were highest (82.3 ktCO<sub>2e</sub>, primarily from gas heating), followed by transport (80.2 ktCO<sub>2e</sub>), commercial (60.7 ktCO<sub>2e</sub>), and

<sup>46</sup> Available at: [UK local authority and regional GHG emissions](#).

industry (39.7 ktCO<sub>2e</sub>). The public sector, including the Council, accounted for just 6.0%.

- 5.11 In June 2019, the Council declared a Climate Emergency, setting a net-zero target by 2030. Tackling climate change and embedding sustainability must therefore be central to all Council, business, and community activities.
- 5.12 Scope 1 emissions come from sources directly owned or controlled by the Council, like fuel burned in the fleet vehicles or gas used for heating buildings. Scope 2 emissions are indirect, from the production of energy that the Council purchases and uses, like electricity generation. Scope 3 emissions are not produced by the Council itself or its controlled assets, but from activities up and down its value chain for which it is indirectly responsible. A summary of GHG emissions scopes is shown below.

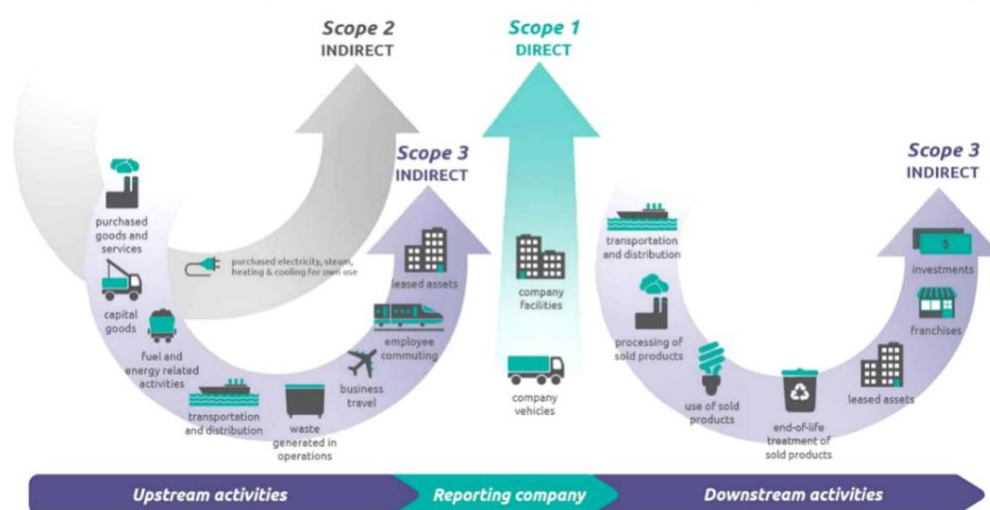


Figure 6. GHG emissions scopes for a reporting company/organisation.  
Source: GHG Protocol, Corporate Value Chain Accounting and Reporting Standard

- 5.13 In July 2020, CLS Energy established a 2018 emissions baseline for the Council (primarily covering Scope 1 and 2 emissions, with limited Scope 3 considered), estimating the total annual emissions for the Council at 3,399 tCO<sub>2e</sub>.
- 5.14 Previous reports tracked progress against this 2018 baseline and noted that emissions had reduced by 39%, with projections suggesting a 61% reduction by October 2024 following the adoption of Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) as the primary fuel for the Council's fleet, as shown in the figure below. While these figures reflected the best available data at the time, they are currently being re-evaluated as part of a more comprehensive approach to GHG accounting.

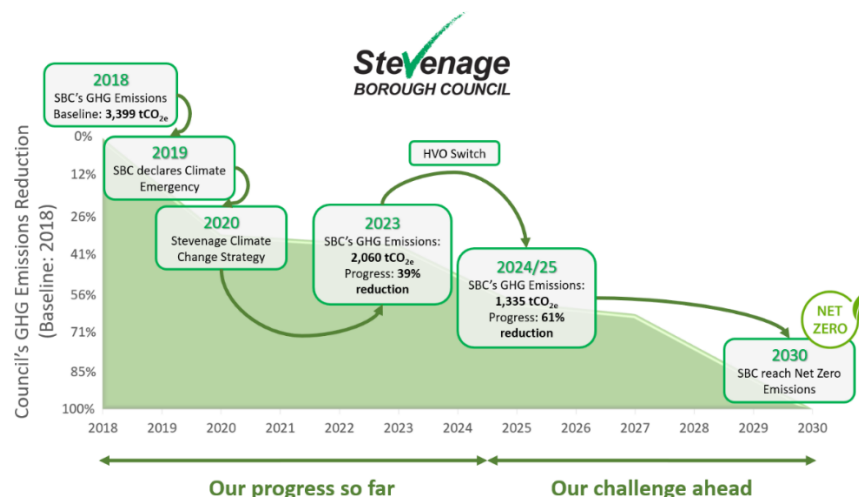


Figure 7. Council's emissions trajectory so far and expected challenge ahead.

- 5.15 The Council anticipates an amendment to our baseline year, in line with more accurate available data. This will ensure that progress is measured consistently and transparently across Scopes 1–3.
- 5.16 At present, figures for the current financial year are in development, as part of a structured programme of work to finalise a GHG accounting strategy and compile verified data for recent years. A dedicated officer is now leading this work to ensure reliable and comprehensive accounting.
- 5.17 In September 2020, the Council released its Stevenage Climate Change Strategy<sup>47</sup>, built around eight strategic themes guiding the action plan to net-zero.



Figure 8. Stevenage Climate Change Strategy's 8 strategic themes leading the action plan.

- 5.18 In February 2024, the Council, in partnership with Kausal<sup>48</sup>, launched the Stevenage Climate Action Plan Tracker<sup>49</sup>: an online portal showcasing over 50 actions across the eight strategic themes.
- 5.19 In 2025, officers continued refining the tracker structure and contents to align with the Climate Scorecards<sup>50</sup> assessment by Climate Emergency UK. In the 2025 scores (released in June), the Council achieved a score of 35%, an increase of 8 percentage points from its 2023 score of 27%. Notable improvements were seen in Waste Reduction & Food (+19%), and

<sup>47</sup> Available at: [Stevenage Climate Change Strategy](#)

<sup>48</sup> Further information at: [Kausal - Turn Climate Goals into Actions](#)

<sup>49</sup> Available at: [Stevenage Climate Action Plan Tracker](#)

<sup>50</sup> Further information at: [Council Climate Action Scorecards - Climate Emergency UK](#)

Governance and Finance (+23%). The highest-scoring categories were Buildings & Heating (55%) and Collaboration & Engagement (52%). The full scores can be seen in the table below.

Table 1. Climate Scorecards 2025 – Stevenage Borough Council Results<sup>51</sup>.

Questions	Stevenage Borough Council	
Category	2025 score	Versus 2023
Buildings & Heating	55%	--
Transport	13%	▲ 4
Planning & Land Use	14%	▼ -2
Governance & Finance	39%	▲ 23
Biodiversity	18%	▲ 3
Collaboration & Engagement	52%	▲ 7
Waste Reduction & Food	42%	▲ 19
<b>Total score</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>▲ 8</b>

- 5.20 Work will continue in 2025/26 to improve scores in weaker areas (Transport, Planning & Land Use, and Biodiversity), and to review and address specific penalties related to Air Quality Management, with the aim of improving future scores.
- 5.21 The following sections highlight the main actions taken by the Council during 2024/25 across the eight strategic themes.

## 6 LEVEL 6: STRATEGIC THEMES – BUSINESSES

- 6.1 Businesses are seeking the Council's guidance and support to meet climate obligations and achieve their own climate targets.
- 6.2 Since 2022, the Council has funded 200 Gold Memberships for Wenta's Action Zero Programme<sup>52</sup>, helping local SMEs<sup>53</sup> tackle climate change, identify risks and opportunities, recognise the benefits of net-zero, and reduce their carbon footprint. The service offers advice on setting reduction targets, developing Carbon Reduction Plans (CRPs), monitoring and reporting progress, and achieving environmental accreditation. To date, more than 147 businesses have joined.
- 6.3 Since 2023, the Council's Sustainable Business Programme<sup>54</sup>, funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)<sup>55</sup>, has supported local businesses and stimulated private investment in growth-enhancing activities such as innovation and the adoption of energy-efficient, low-carbon technologies. Delivered through Sustainable X<sup>56</sup>, it has offered workshops, bespoke one-to-one consultancy for CRPs, sustainability audits, guides, and tools, and Meet-the-Buyer events. These initiatives have helped businesses embed

<sup>51</sup> Further information at: [Stevenage Borough Council - Climate Action Scorecards](#)

<sup>52</sup> Further information at: [Wenta Action Zero Programme](#)

<sup>53</sup> Small and Medium Sized Enterprises

<sup>54</sup> Further information at: [Sustainable Business Programme](#)

<sup>55</sup> UK Shared Prosperity Fund. Further information at: [UK Shared Prosperity Fund: Prospectus](#)

<sup>56</sup> Further information at: [Sustainability Programmes by SBC and Sustainable X](#)



sustainable practices, boost competitiveness, cut costs, ensure compliance, and strengthen their appeal to customers and employees.

- 6.4 From September 2025, SMEs in Stevenage will have access to a fully funded, personalised support programme, including two hours of tailored one-to-one consultancy with specialist advisors. Support will cover tendering, operational efficiency, cost reduction, access to finance, communications, supply chains, social value, and certification preparation. Businesses will also benefit from practical tools and templates, plus a business-strengthening review using the “Sustainable Xplorer” tool to identify quick wins and long-term opportunities.
- 6.5 In addition, the Council has recently launched an online Sustainability Support Survey to gather feedback from local businesses, ensuring future support is practical, targeted, and responsive to business needs.
- 6.6 In November 2024, the Council also introduced the Stevenage Green Business Grant<sup>57</sup>, offering £70,000 in total (up to £10,000 per organisation) to help SMEs and charities implement greener solutions to reduce carbon footprint, water usage, and waste, improve energy efficiency, and lower energy costs. Eligible applicants had to have received support from the Sustainable Business Programme, Wenta’s Action Zero Programme, or another accredited scheme providing an independent CRP. Eight organisations (seven businesses and one charity) secured funding to reduce energy costs, progress towards net-zero, and build climate resilience.
- 6.7 One recipient, SPS Training Solutions Limited, a locally based independent training provider, received £10,000 in co-funding for a battery storage system alongside PV panels, supporting its transition to EVs.



Figure 9. SPS Training Solutions’ Solar PV installation funded by the Green Business Grant.

- 6.8 In 2023, the council acknowledged the “*Pathway 3 – People and Processes*” report to address some of its main Scope 3 emissions, recognising that up to

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<sup>57</sup> Further information at: [Stevenage Green Business Grants Summary](#)

96% of LAs<sup>58</sup> emissions come from supply chain, and highlighting sustainable procurement as essential.

- 6.9 The Council continues to implement Social Value<sup>59</sup>, as required by the Social Value Act, through the Social Value Portal<sup>60</sup>. It is underpinned by the national TOMs framework<sup>61</sup>, which identifies themes, outcomes, and measures for implementation. The Council updated its selected set of TOMs in May 2025<sup>62</sup>, reflecting the growing importance of sustainability. Measures include reducing Scope 1 & 2 emissions, increasing use of Zero Emission Vehicles (ZEVs), supporting certified carbon offset funds, and cutting plastic use.
- 6.10 An updated Co-operative Procurement Strategy<sup>63</sup> (2025-2028) was adopted by the Council in March 2025. Following public consultation, it came into effect in June 2025. The strategy makes sustainability one of its five core foundations, supporting net-zero goals by reducing GHG emissions, waste, and plastics while promoting biodiversity and clean air. It also embeds circular economy principles, favouring reusable, recyclable, durable, and energy-efficient products, while supporting SMEs, social enterprises, and community businesses that deliver social and environmental value.

## **7 LEVEL 6: STRATEGIC THEMES – HOMES**

- 7.1 The Council has committed to achieving a minimum Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)<sup>64</sup> band C for all 8,000 its homes by 2030<sup>65</sup>. This is essential to achieving net-zero status.
- 7.2 Central government funding and co-funding are critical for the Council to address retrofitting challenges across both private and social housing.
- 7.3 The Council has delivered UK Government-funded and co-funded initiatives to decarbonise its housing stock, including the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF)<sup>66</sup> and, more recently, Warm Homes: Social Housing (WHSH)<sup>67</sup>.
- 7.4 The current distribution of Council's housing stock by EPC band is shown in Figure 10.

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<sup>58</sup> Local Authorities

<sup>59</sup> Social Value is the UK's statutory approach to embedding sustainable procurement. Further information at: [LGA District Councils Social Value Toolkit](#)

<sup>60</sup> Further information at: [Social Value Portal](#)

<sup>61</sup> Further information at: [Measurement - Social Value TOM System™ - Social Value Portal](#)

<sup>62</sup> These are applied to procurements over £175,000 for services, and £250,000 for works that last 6 months or more. The Council is also exploring proportionate ways of embedding social value for mid-value procurements.

<sup>63</sup> Available at: [Co-operative Procurement Strategy 2025-28](#)

<sup>64</sup> Further information at: [Energy Performance of Buildings Certificates in England and Wales](#)

<sup>65</sup> While it is essential for the Council 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.

<sup>66</sup> Further information at: [Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund](#)

<sup>67</sup> Further information at: [Warm Homes: Social Housing Fund Wave 3](#)

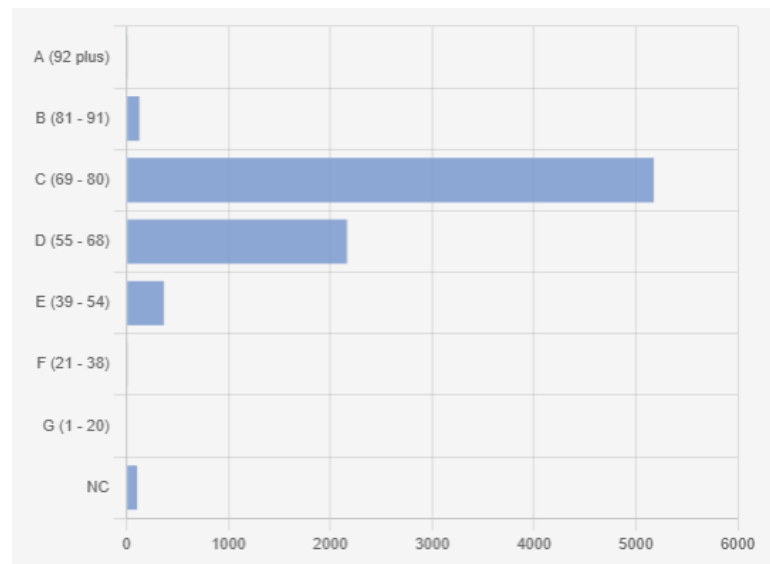


Figure 10. Distribution of the Council's housing stock by EPC band.

- 7.5 The SHDF was a national scheme providing warmer, energy-efficient social homes, reducing GHG emissions, and tackling fuel poverty. The Council used this fund to upgrade properties below EPC band C, reducing tenants' bills, improving comfort, and lowering emissions. Measures included wall and loft insulation, double glazing, energy-efficient lighting, and solar panels.
- 7.6 The Council secured funding through SHDF Wave 1 (completed in December 2023) and Wave 2.1. Wave 2.1<sup>68</sup> provided a £2.6m grant with a £3.9m Council's contribution, and ran from March 2023 to April 2025, retrofitting about 240 homes, including 16 flat blocks and 100 houses, targeting the least energy-efficient properties. The upgrades aimed to achieve EPC Band C, with some reaching EPC Band B, following a fabric-first approach, and measures such as wall and loft insulation, energy-efficient lighting, solar panels, and ventilation.
- 7.7 Works on town centre flats blocks were combined with MRC<sup>69</sup> works for a whole-block approach, as part of the Council's major five-year refurbishment programme<sup>70</sup> across social housing, including insulation, energy-efficient lighting, windows, and doors.

<sup>68</sup> The SHDF Wave 2.1 figures have been predicted in the bid for funding but could change slightly over the project.

<sup>69</sup> MRC, the Major Refurbishment Contract is taking place to all of Council's low and mid-rise flat blocks and includes a programme of refurbishment works to communal areas such as new roofs, windows, doors, decoration to internal and external areas, structural works, fire safety works, and electrical works.

<sup>70</sup> Further information at: [SBC Current Major Works](#)



Figure 11. SHDF Wave 2.1 retrofitting works (top) and external appearance post-works (bottom).

- 7.8 The Council also installed Aico Environmental Sensors in some Wave 2.1 homes to monitor humidity, temperature, heat loss, and damp/mould risk, helping assess SHDF benefits.
- 7.9 WSHS fund is the successor to the SHDF, rebranded during the 2024 Autumn Budget, with initial £1.29bn for 2025-2028. It continues SHDF objectives: upgrading social housing to at least EPC Band C, reducing emissions, tackling fuel poverty, improving tenant well-being, and supporting the retrofit sector.
- 7.10 The Council has been awarded a £3.86m WSHS (Wave 3) grant. Alongside Council co-funding, this will upgrade 379 homes in three years, with measures such as wall and loft insulation, ventilation upgrades, windows, doors, and solar panels. Procurement for a contractor is underway.
- 7.11 Additionally, the Decent Homes windows and doors programme will improve energy efficiency in around 300 Council-owned homes in 2025/26, by reducing heat loss and improving thermal comfort.
- 7.12 The Council is also promoting schemes to decarbonise private homes, supporting energy efficiency and emissions reduction.
- 7.13 One such scheme is Solar Together, detailed in paragraph 4.6.
- 7.14 The Council also supported the Home Upgrade Grant Phase 2 (HUG2)<sup>71</sup>, a government scheme offering free efficiency upgrades<sup>72</sup> to low-income, off-

<sup>71</sup> Further information at: [Home Upgrade Grant: Phase 2](#)

<sup>72</sup> Including insulation and ventilation upgrades, low-carbon heating and hot water systems, and solar PV installations, among others.



gas households (privately owned or rented). Over its two-year duration, until March 2025, it funded measures such as cavity wall and loft insulation, electric heating, solar PV, and ventilation. The Council promoted HUG2 to eligible residents through a consortium.

- 7.15 Through partnership with the National Energy Foundation (NEF), the Council is helping eligible homeowners and private tenants access funding for energy efficiency measures under the Energy Company Obligation (ECO)<sup>73</sup> and Great British Insulation Scheme (GBIS)<sup>74</sup>. Since August 2024, 16 referrals have been approved. The arrangement with NEF runs until March 2026, when ECO4 and GBIS end.
- 7.16 More recently, the Council secured £1.5m from the Government-funded Warm Homes: Local Grant (WHLG) to provide energy upgrades and low-carbon heating for low-income privately owned households, from 2025 to 2028. Delivered in partnership with NEF, the grant funds insulation, solar panels, Air-Source Heat Pumps (ASHPs), and low-carbon heating systems for EPC Band D-G properties (privately owned or rented). Eligible households include those with an income below £36,000, those in receipt of means-tested benefits, or those living in areas of high economic need. The Council expects to retrofit around 100 properties over three years.
- 7.17 All previous retrofit schemes are complemented by the Hertfordshire Local Retrofit Strategy described in paragraph 4.6.
- 7.18 The Council is also committed to greener developments, ensuring all new housing projects follow a 5-star quality approach<sup>75</sup>, with sustainability as a key criterion. This must be balanced against housing demand, with 2,000 families currently on the waiting list for Council housing.
- 7.19 Demand for housing is at record levels. Through the MSEB Corporate Plan<sup>76</sup>, the Council has strived to build a range of new and sustainable homes.
- 7.20 Following the award-winning Helston House<sup>77</sup>, Phase 1 of Kenilworth Close has been completed, comprising 31 houses, 57 flats, 88 independent living homes, seven shops, and a community space. Sustainability features include hybrid heating with ASHPs providing most of the heat, solar panels and batteries, Mechanical Ventilation with Heat Recovery (MVHR), and green roofs.

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<sup>73</sup> Further information at: [Help from your energy supplier: the Energy Company Obligation](#)

<sup>74</sup> Further information at: [Apply for support from the Great British Insulation Scheme](#)

<sup>75</sup> Further information at: [Housing Development – On the Right Road](#)

<sup>76</sup> Available at: [Corporate Plan: Making Stevenage Even Better \(2024-2027\)](#)

<sup>77</sup> Further information at: [Helston House, Scarborough Avenue](#)



Figure 12. Council-led Kenilworth Close residential development.

- 7.21 The Dunn Close scheme (27 homes) also benefits from ASHPs, solar panels, and heat recovery systems. A fabric-first approach ensures enhanced insulation and lower heating costs.
- 7.22 Finally, the partial review of the Stevenage Borough Local Plan (SBLP)<sup>78</sup>, recently submitted to the Secretary of State for Independent Examination on 15 August 2025, strengthens policies for sustainable, low-carbon, and zero-carbon homes. These cover energy efficiency, emissions targets, overheating prevention, green infrastructure, digital connectivity, water management, and circular economy principles.

## 8 LEVEL 6: STRATEGIC THEMES – CONSTRUCTION & REGENERATION

- 8.1 The building and construction sector is a major contributor to GHG emissions, making its transformation essential for tackling climate change.
- 8.2 Stevenage's regeneration programme seeks to create a vibrant, mixed-use town centre that reflects the aspirations of residents and businesses while respecting its New Town heritage.
- 8.3 As a leader in regeneration, the Council has significant influence to deliver sustainably designed, climate-resilient buildings and public spaces.
- 8.4 The Council continues to work with regeneration partners committed to zero-carbon operations and responsible development, promoting energy-efficient designs, sustainable construction practices, and materials reuse and recycling.
- 8.5 A key regeneration project is the new Sports & Leisure Centre, which will replace the Arts & Leisure Centre and Swimming Centre, two of the Council's highest energy-consuming buildings. The planning application has been submitted following three phases of engagement with residents and sports clubs. Completion is expected in late 2027. The centre will co-locate wet and dry leisure facilities for the first time and is designed as a fully electric, low-carbon building, avoiding reliance on fossil fuels. Estimated annual energy

<sup>78</sup> Further information at: [Stevenage Borough Local Plan Partial Update](#)



use is 1,246 MWh (182.5 kWh/m<sup>2</sup>), far more efficient than traditional leisure facilities of this scale. On-site solar PV will generate 14.8 MWh annually, saving roughly 3.4 tCO<sub>2</sub> per year and reducing operating costs. ASHPs will provide heating, cooling, hot water, and pool heating without gas, delivering more energy per unit of electricity than conventional boilers and chillers. High insulation levels, LED lighting, and smart energy management systems will further minimise consumption. Together, these measures ensure the centre will support both energy efficiency and the Council's net-zero ambitions.



Figure 13. New Sports & Leisure Centre proposal.

- 8.6 The Public Services Hub is another major regeneration project, aiming to create a modern, multifunctional space for public services and community facilities. Still in early design stages, the Council is working with future partners to ensure a low-carbon, cost-efficient, and adaptable building.
- 8.7 Furthermore, the current Stevenage Indoor Market will relocate to Boston House, Park Place, offering a more visible, accessible, and vibrant space. The new market will be light, modern, and compact, with an all-electric energy supply.
- 8.8 One of the crucial tools the Council uses to lead climate action is the Stevenage Borough Local Plan (SBLP)<sup>79</sup>, which integrates strategies that translate climate goals into practical mitigation and adaptation measures.
- 8.9 The current SBLP 2021-2031, adopted in May 2019, provides the strategic framework for sustainable development, ensuring new developments align with Stevenage's climate goals.
- 8.10 The Design Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)<sup>80</sup>, adopted in February 2025, sets out key sustainability and climate policies, serving as material consideration in planning decisions. These policies cover energy

<sup>79</sup> Further information at: [Stevenage Borough Local Plan](#)

<sup>80</sup> Available here: [Design Guide SPD - February 2025](#)

efficiency, low-carbon design, locally sourced and durable materials, sustainable construction, water management and Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), green infrastructure, biodiversity, and climate resilience.

- 8.11 The Council is currently undertaking a partial review of the SBLP to update existing climate policies and introduce new ones. The partial review<sup>81</sup> was submitted to the Secretary of State for Independent Examination on 15 August 2025, following several rounds of public consultation.
- 8.12 The partial review prioritises climate policies within the SBLP's strategic approach, seeking to balance low-carbon housing and development with the provision of new jobs and infrastructure, and the protection of green and cultural assets.
- 8.13 In terms of construction, the partial review incorporates upgraded policies on energy efficiency and emissions reduction targets. It also addresses overheating, water efficiency, and green infrastructure, among others. Under these climate-specific policies:
- Major developments<sup>82</sup> must demonstrate net-zero regulated operational emissions, supported by an energy statement and assessment.
  - Large-scale major developments<sup>83</sup> must demonstrate whole-life carbon net-zero, including construction emissions, also supported by an energy statement and assessment.
- 8.14 Furthermore, all new developments must show how they will reduce GHG emissions, embedding sustainable design and construction principles throughout.
- 8.15 Adoption of these policies is expected to make a significant contribution toward achieving the town's net-zero targets.

## **9 LEVEL 6: STRATEGIC THEMES – WASTE & RECYCLING**

- 9.1 The waste sector significantly impacts climate change. Reducing, reusing, repairing, recycling, and recovering must remain central to the Council's waste management approach.
- 9.2 The Council is a member of the Hertfordshire Waste Partnership<sup>84</sup> (HWP), a collaborative initiative bringing together all 10 district and borough councils alongside HCC.
- 9.3 HWP supports residents in reducing, reusing, and recycling waste through awareness campaigns and long-term strategies. Through it, the Council has launched various initiatives to cut waste and boost recycling.

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<sup>81</sup> Further information at: [Stevenage Borough Local Plan Partial Update](#)

<sup>82</sup> Defined in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2015 as: Residential: Development of 10 or more dwellings, or a site area of 0.5 hectares. Other uses: Where the floor space is 1,000 m<sup>2</sup> or more or the site area is 1 hectare or more.

<sup>83</sup> Those involving more than 150 dwellings or 15,000 m<sup>2</sup> of non-residential floor space.

<sup>84</sup> Further information at: [Waste Aware Hertfordshire Partnership](#)

- 9.4 HWP aims for 100% of Hertfordshire's residual waste to be processed at energy-from-waste (EfW) facilities, achieving zero waste to landfill by 2030. Since April 2024, HCC has implemented 10-year contracts directing all residual waste to EfW. While this ends direct landfill disposal, some rejected recycling may still reach landfill indirectly<sup>85</sup>.
- 9.5 The Council handles regular bin and bulky waste collections<sup>86</sup>. Besides kerbside recycling, the Council also provides recycling banks across the town<sup>87</sup>. Recently, eight neighbourhood recycling bring-bank sites were upgraded with new signage, bins, and infrastructure, funded through the UKSPF (four sites) and the Council's Climate Change Community Fund (CCCF)<sup>88</sup> (four sites).



Figure 14. Recently improved recycling banks across Stevenage.

- 9.6 The Council operates an in-house recycling collection service, separating materials into paper & card, glass, plastics, and cans, with private arrangements for their onwards journeys.
- 9.7 In 2024/25, the Council collected over 30,773 tonnes of household waste: 11,722 tonnes recycled or composted, and 19,000 tonnes as residual waste. On average, each Stevenage resident produced about 340 kg of waste (recycled and residual) per year<sup>89</sup>, compared to the UK average of 377 kg<sup>90</sup>. The Council has set a target to increase recycling rates to 60% by 2035<sup>91</sup>. However, according to the HWP 2024-25 Annual Report<sup>92</sup>, Stevenage's recycling rate of 38.1% is still the lowest in Hertfordshire.
- 9.8 The Council continues to promote recycling across its corporate sites, housing, and commercial buildings. Following Cabinet approval in July 2025<sup>93</sup>, the second phase of a flat-block recycling pilot is underway, due for completion in 2025-26. Phase 1 introduced enhanced recycling infrastructure

<sup>85</sup> Further information at: [HCC - New contracts to end landfill for Hertfordshire waste](#)

<sup>86</sup> Further information at: [Stevenage Household Waste Management Policy](#)

<sup>87</sup> Further information at: [Stevenage Recycling Banks](#)

<sup>88</sup> As described in paragraph 14.4.

<sup>89</sup> Based on a population estimate of 90,508 inhabitants in Stevenage.

<sup>90</sup> Further information at: [Local Authority Collected Waste Management - Annual Results 2022/23](#)

<sup>91</sup> Further information at: [Stevenage Climate Action Plan – Action WR 1. Increase Recycling Rates](#)

<sup>92</sup> Currently in draft version. The previous report is available at: [HWP Annual Report 2023-24](#)

<sup>93</sup> Further information at: [SBC Items at Meetings - Flat Block Recycling Improvements](#)

and signage at six flat-blocks, increasing recycling by 185%. It also included resident engagement, surveys and educational. Phase 2 will build on this approach at additional sites, supported by £719k of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) funding. It will deliver upgraded infrastructure and signage at around 74 flat blocks, many of which previously lacked facilities or level access, providing the necessary opportunities for residents to recycle plastics, glass, cardboard and food.

- 9.9 The Council provides free recycling services for glass, tins, and plastic to local schools, and paid collections for paper recycling. The Council also offers educational opportunities on recycling and sustainability.
- 9.10 The Council is preparing for a UK Government mandate requiring separate weekly food waste collections for all households, including flats, from March 2026<sup>94</sup>, under Simpler Recycling<sup>95</sup> legislation. Procurement of new vehicles and food waste containers for the service has been completed. The service is expected to increase recycling rates by around 5% while reducing GHG emissions. Additionally, the Council has also launched a commercial food waste collection service for businesses and schools across Stevenage, as required by Simpler Recycling.
- 9.11 Moreover, the Council continues to work with HWP on campaigns to reduce edible food waste by 20%, saving 10,000 tonnes of food<sup>96</sup>.
- 9.12 As part of the Council's Climate Champions Officers, a Reusing & Recycling working group has been established, to enhance recycling practices within the Council by providing training, toolkits, and new infrastructure. Actions taken by the group include designing and updating new leaflets, relocating bins within offices, adding extra recycling information, and posting intranet guidance.
- 9.13 As part of Recycle Your Cycle<sup>97</sup>, the Council has collected unwanted, abandoned or fly-tipped bikes for refurbishment and reuse. 133 bikes were collected and donated to this scheme in 2024/25.
- 9.14 Working with HWP, the Council continues to promote the Herts Sustainable Families<sup>98</sup> initiative, which includes Herts Reusable Nappies, Herts Sustainable Periods, and Herts Confident Continence, aiming to stimulate reusable alternatives to single-use products. In partnership with Hey Girls<sup>99</sup>, HCC provides free reusable period products, with Stevenage among the top districts for uptake.
- 9.15 The Council also organised Great British Spring Clean litter picks with seven schools, where 28 bags of rubbish were collected by 127 students and 23 adults. The top three waste items collected were disposable vapes, cigarette ends, and sweet and chocolate wrappers.

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<sup>94</sup> Further information at: [New £295m for Councils to introduce weekly Food Waste Collections](#)

<sup>95</sup> Further information at: [Simpler Recycling in England: Policy Update](#)

<sup>96</sup> Further information at: [#WorthSaving – Save Food, Save Money](#)

<sup>97</sup> Further information at: [Recycle Your Cycle](#)

<sup>98</sup> Further information at: [Herts Sustainable Families - Hertfordshire County Council](#)

<sup>99</sup> Further information at: [Hey Girls - Period Product Social Enterprise](#)





Figure 15. Great British Spring Clean activities in Stevenage, March 2025.

- 9.16 Finally, the Council continues to support the Stevenage Repair Café project in Bedwell, through the CCCF (see Levels 7-9 of this report).

## 10 LEVEL 6: STRATEGIC THEMES – PEOPLE

- 10.1 Stevenage can only achieve its net-zero targets if everyone plays their part. By educating, engaging, supporting, listening to, and communicating with residents from all backgrounds, the Council can encourage the behavioural changes needed.
- 10.2 Most resident-focused actions are outlined in Levels 7-9 of this report. Some internal awareness and governance actions are highlighted below to emphasise fostering a sustainable culture within the Council.
- 10.3 In November 2023, the council acknowledged the *“Pathway 3 – People and Processes”* report, which identified that Council’s people-related emissions mostly arise from ways of working: commuting, business travel, waste production, water use, and resource consumption. Addressing these requires behavioural change. To support this, a Staff Climate Champions Group (SCCG) of 24 members from across departments<sup>100</sup> was established to raise awareness, strengthen engagement, and drive positive change. In 2024-25, the group delivered regular sessions to share knowledge and generate ideas on climate action, including external guests presentations, covering the following topics:

<sup>100</sup> Teams represented are: Estates & Facilities; Technology; Digital & Transformation; Finances; Human Resources; Communications; Planning; Engineering Services; Climate Action; Environmental Health; Housing Development; Regeneration; Community Advice & Support; Corporate Policy & Performance; Direct Services (Operations, Environmental Policy, Green Spaces, Waste Management, Wellbeing & Leisure); Housing Investment; Democratic Services; and Community Development.



Figure 16. Stevenage Climate Champions Group – Topics prioritised during 2024-25.

- 10.4 From this programme, five priority topics (as shown below) were selected for 2025-26 (and potentially beyond). To address them, working sub-groups have been established to focus on challenges and opportunities, mainly linked to ways of working and organisational emissions.



Figure 17. Stevenage Climate Champions – Topic-specific working sub-groups for 2025-26.

- 10.5 The outcomes and progress of some of these sub-groups are referenced throughout the eight strategic priorities sections of this report.
- 10.6 Following the launch of the Council’s Events Sustainability Guidelines (July 2024)<sup>101</sup>, developed to provide advice on incorporating sustainable practices into event planning and delivery, one of the working sub-groups was established on “Events Sustainability”. Its focus is on enhancing the sustainability of Council-led events, both public and internal. Work so far has included mapping stakeholders involved in different types of events to improve coordination and shared learning. An in-depth sustainability review of Stevenage Day 2025 has also been carried out, covering energy, waste, transport, food, and water management.
- 10.7 Another working sub-group has been established on “Greening the Workplace”, aiming to design sustainable greening projects for Daneshill House and Cavendish. Early work has included staff surveys and selecting low-maintenance, low-allergy, air-purifying plant species. The initiative will support staff wellbeing while acting as a visible tool for sustainability engagement.
- 10.8 Climate literacy is critical to raising awareness, building understanding of environmental challenges, and enabling informed decision-making. In September 2024, the Council organised Carbon Literacy Training (via APSE) for 40 officers, followed in October by training on Sustainable Buildings Certifications. Over the past year, further training has been provided through HCCSP and LGA, including free Sustainability Masterclasses for members<sup>102</sup>.

<sup>101</sup> Available at: [SBC Sustainable Events Guide - Summer 2024](#)

<sup>102</sup> Further information at: [Sustainability Masterclasses - Local Government Association](#)



## Climate Adaptation

- 10.9 Climate adaptation is a vital part of building awareness and behavioural change. The Global Centre on Adaptation<sup>103</sup> defines it as the “*means to act to prepare for and adjust to the current and projected impacts of climate change*”.
- 10.10 Adaptation aims to reduce vulnerability and increase resilience and is a critical aspect of climate response to ensure that Council’s operations and policies can withstand climate impacts.
- 10.11 Council’s first Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA)<sup>104</sup>, completed in July 2024, has since been updated in line with DEFRA<sup>105</sup> guidelines. Key changes include categorising risks by affected sectors rather than climate factors and assessing impacts under two future climate scenarios: 2°C and 4°C warming. The updated CCRA identifies 46 climate-related risks across five key sectors: natural environment, infrastructure, health and communities, business and industry, and international dimensions. While most risks are currently rated low to medium, several require further investigation, and the medium-to-high risks increase under the 4°C scenario.
- 10.12 The CCRA improves adaptation awareness, helping the Council understand and plan for potential climate-related risks. It also aims to increase the Council services’ resilience by embedding climate risks into pre-existing Operational Risk Registers (ORRs), reviewed annually.
- 10.13 The Council acknowledges the importance of climate adaptation and is committed to becoming resilient and responsive to climate change risks
- 10.14 Looking ahead, the Council is also developing a Five-Year Climate Adaptation Plan to further strengthen resilience. The Plan will prioritise monitoring impacts, safeguarding vulnerable infrastructure, enhancing emergency preparedness, broadening stakeholder engagement, and supporting residents in sustainable living.

## 11 LEVEL 6: STRATEGIC THEMES – BIODIVERSITY

- 11.1 Biodiversity loss and climate change are closely linked. Climate change accelerates biodiversity loss, undermining nature’s ability to regulate GHG emissions, while ecosystems like woodlands and wetlands are significant carbon sinks. Protecting and enhancing biodiversity is crucial to tackling climate change.
- 11.2 Tree planting plays a key role in Stevenage’s in this context, reducing GHGs, mitigating climate impacts, improving air quality, providing wildlife habitats, cooling urban areas, lowering energy demand, and fostering healthier, more sustainable communities.

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<sup>103</sup> Further information at: [Global Center on Adaptation](#)

<sup>104</sup> A Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA) for local authorities involves evaluating the potential impacts of climate change on the local area and the services provided by the authority.

<sup>105</sup> Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs.

- 11.3 The Council has committed to planting over 4,000 trees by 2030<sup>106</sup> and to increasing the town's canopy cover to 19%, in line with the Woodland Trust's Emergency Tree Plan (2020)<sup>107</sup> and its Amenity Tree Management Policy<sup>108</sup>. In 2024, an i-Tree Canopy<sup>109</sup> assessment found existing canopy cover at 22%, though ward-levels cover varies, with the lowest at 13%<sup>110</sup>.
- 11.4 As part of its ongoing commitment, the Council plants around 100 mature trees annually.
- 11.5 In addition, three new Miyawaki micro-woods<sup>111</sup> were created in 2024-25 using DEFRA's Coronation Living Heritage Fund, at St Nicholas Park, Hampson Park and Shephalbury Park with support from residents and local schools. During winter, schools, residents and Green Space Volunteers helped plant 5,000 saplings to create the micro-woods (2000 at St Nicholas Park, 1500 at Hampson Park, and 1500 at Shephalbury Park). Species included beech, cherry, elder, hawthorn, hazel, holly, hornbeam, lime, field maple, and oak. This planting extended existing small woodland parcels and improved wildlife corridors by linking them with other wooded areas and grassland meadows. Monitoring shows the Miyawaki technique has been successful in Stevenage.



Figure 18. Stevenage's Miyawaki Microwood at Hampson Park.

- 11.6 These initiatives complement the "Your Tree, Our Future" scheme detailed in 4.6.
- 11.7 Currently, under the Amenity Tree Management Policy, trees removed from Council land or protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) must be replaced at a 1:3 ratio, whereas trees removed for health and safety reasons must be replaced with twice the number of trees.

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<sup>106</sup> Further information at: [Stevenage Climate Action Plan – Action BI3: Plant 4,000 Trees in Stevenage by 2030](#)

<sup>107</sup> Available at: [Emergency Tree Plan - Woodland Trust](#)

<sup>108</sup> Available at: [Stevenage Amenity Tree Management Policy](#)

<sup>109</sup> i-Tree Canopy is an online canopy cover assessment tool, which provides a scientifically robust and consistent approach to estimating canopy cover. Further information at: [i-Tree Canopy](#).

<sup>110</sup> Further information at: [Stevenage Tree and Woodland Strategy](#)

<sup>111</sup> Further information at: [Council secures funding to plant new trees in Stevenage](#)

- 11.8 The Council is currently updating its tree replacement policies for new developments. Through the Local Plan Partial Review, it is proposing a revised policy aimed at reducing net tree loss by setting clear standards for tree replacement, ensuring no net loss of tree cover, and supporting increases in canopy cover. Under this policy, replacement requirements will range from 2 to 21 trees per tree removed, depending on trunk diameter.
- 11.9 Following public consultation, the Council adopted the Trees & Woodland Strategy (2025-2035)<sup>112</sup> in June 2025. This comprehensive strategy sets out how Stevenage will manage, protect, and enhance trees, woodlands, and hedgerows. It highlights the role of trees in carbon capture, air quality, and reducing urban heat, and provides guidance on tree planting, maintenance, replacement, and biodiversity promotion. Specific actions include incorporating tree species with high carbon storage potential and prioritising tree planting in areas with low canopy coverage.
- 11.10 While tree planting is vital, supporting biodiversity also requires a diverse range of habitats, including woodlands, grasslands, wetlands, and hedgerows.
- 11.11 After public consultation, the Green Space Strategy (2025–2035)<sup>113</sup> was adopted by Cabinet in June 2025, emphasising the role of green spaces in health, biodiversity, climate resilience, and community well-being. It provides a policy framework for protecting, managing, and enhancing these spaces to preserve ecology, meet residents’ needs, and advance sustainability goals. With a 10-year vision for parks, gardens, and open spaces, it guides actions for carbon sequestration, urban cooling, flood mitigation, and habitat connectivity, making it key for biodiversity conservation and climate action. Early initiatives, including ecological surveys, are underway to balance development, ecology, and community needs.
- 11.12 The Council also adopted a new Biodiversity Action Plan (2024-2028) as a strategic framework to guide local efforts in protecting and enhancing biodiversity through targeted actions across the borough. The plan identifies a wide range of projects, including habitat restoration, woodland management, and volunteer initiatives. Though there is currently no dedicated budget for full delivery, ongoing coordination, seasonal work, and volunteer engagement are helping implement key actions. By strengthening ecosystems, increasing habitat connectivity, and supporting species diversity, the BAP contributes directly to climate resilience, carbon sequestration, and sustainability.
- 11.13 The Council is looking at innovative ways of speeding up the delivery of projects included in the BAP, Trees & Woodland, and Green Spaces strategies. This could include utilising currently unallocated monies collected from developers.
- 11.14 The Council is implementing Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)<sup>114</sup>, now mandatory for all developments and requiring at least 10% biodiversity increase. Priority

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<sup>112</sup> Available at: [Stevenage Tree and Woodland Strategy](#)

<sup>113</sup> Available at: [Stevenage Green Space Strategy](#)

<sup>114</sup> Further information at: [Biodiversity Net Gain](#)

sites for delivery have been identified, such as Chells Park, Canterbury Way Playing Fields, and Fishers Green sound barrier, with works already underway and management plans in place. Officers are also integrating Exacom<sup>115</sup>, the BNG monitoring system, with Uniform<sup>116</sup>, the planning applications system, to track BNG data, compliance, and effective delivery.



Figure 19. Delivery of BNG works at Chells and Canterbury Way Playing Fields.

- 11.15 Several of the above-mentioned initiatives rely on volunteers. In 2024-25, Green Space Volunteers<sup>117</sup> contributed over 1,600 hours to improving open spaces in Stevenage, carrying out woodland coppicing, pond improvements, tree planting, and butterfly surveys. A new training programme now also supports volunteers in managing Community Orchards.
- 11.16 The Council also supports community-led projects, including Friends of Hampson Park events, new benches at Millennium Gardens, and volunteer work at Town Centre Gardens.
- 11.17 In addition, work is underway to develop a town-wide network of grassland meadows, with ongoing identification of new sites to expand coverage and ecological value.
- 11.18 Finally, as part of a wider allotment strategy, the Council is updating allotment terms and conditions, following a recent survey. This strategy also includes digital transformation objectives.

## 12 LEVEL 6: STRATEGIC THEMES – TRANSPORT

- 12.1 Transport is one of the largest sources of GHG emissions in Stevenage, making action in this sector critical to achieving overall reductions.

<sup>115</sup> Further information at: [Exacom - Products \(Biodiversity Net Gain Module\)](#)

<sup>116</sup> Further information at: [Uniform - Local Authority Case Management Software](#)

<sup>117</sup> Further information at: [Stevenage Green Space Volunteers](#)

- 12.2 In the Climate Change Strategy, the Council committed to decarbonising its fleet by 2030. Noticeably, in 2018, the fleet accounted for about 23% of the Council's baseline emissions.
- 12.3 Following SLT's endorsement of "*Pathway 1 – Fuel and Fleet*" in 2023, the Council switched from diesel to Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO)<sup>118</sup> in 2024 as a low-carbon transitional solution. The switch for the entire diesel fleet was approved on 21 February 2024<sup>119</sup> and implemented on 1 October 2024, covering all road and non-road vehicles as well as machinery. HVO, a biofuel produced from waste vegetable oil, required no modifications to the existing vehicles. Looking ahead, the Council plans to explore definitive low-emissions alternatives, including electric vehicles (EVs) for cars and small vans from 2025, and for light-duty vehicles from 2027.
- 12.4 According to the Renewable Fuel Declaration (Oct-Dec 2024), issued on 30 April 2025 as part of the Renewable Fuels Assurance Scheme by Zemo Partnership<sup>120</sup>, the HVO supplied by New Era Fuels Ltd had a GHG emissions intensity of 14.82 gCO<sub>2e</sub>/MJ for the fuel supply chain. This represents an 84% reduction in emissions compared to conventional diesel (as shown in Figure 20). Regarding the renewable fuel feedstock, the supply chain is certified under the voluntary ISCC<sup>121</sup> sustainability scheme.

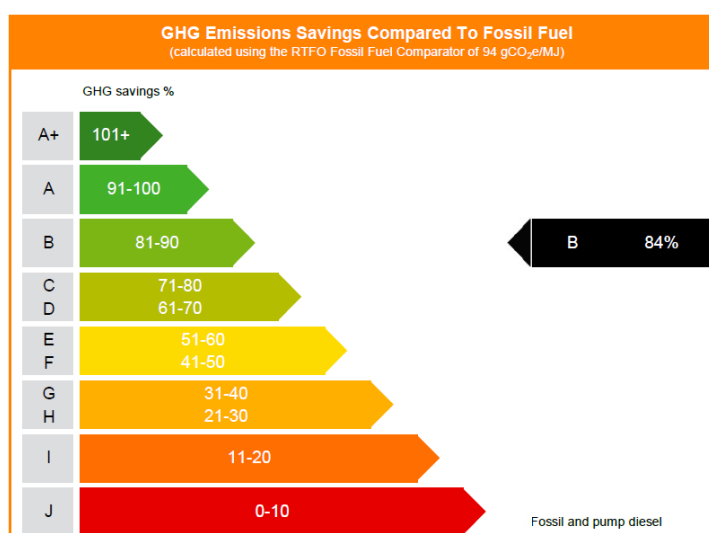


Figure 20. HVO's GHG emissions savings compared to fossil fuels (Zemo Partnership).

- 12.5 In line with Pathway 1, since August 2023, the Council has procured and incorporated the first six electric vans to its fleet, with more to follow through the fleet replacement plan. This rollout is supported by assessments of charging infrastructure and parking requirements for an electrified fleet.

<sup>118</sup> HVO is a synthetic, second-generation paraffinic biofuel produced from vegetable oil waste. Due to its production process, HVO has a longer shelf life than regular biodiesel. It is produced to conform to EN15940 & ASTM D975 standards for paraffinic & diesel fuels, and the EU Fuel Quality Directive (FQD) 2009/30/EC Annex 2. It was identified as a direct, drop-in replacement for diesel. It can be stored in the same fuel tank and be used in the same way as diesel, without modifications to the Council's fleet or machinery.

<sup>119</sup> Further information at: [GF - Appendix E - HVO Switch Executive Report February 2024](#)

<sup>120</sup> Further information at: [Renewable Fuels Assurance Scheme | Fuels | Zemo Partnership](#)

<sup>121</sup> Further information at: [ISCC PLUS - ISCC System](#)



- 12.6 The Council is cognisant of the importance of active travel to meeting climate targets. Encouraging walking, cycling, and public transport reduces emissions, supports healthier lifestyles, and eases congestion.
- 12.7 In October 2024, in partnership with Beryl Bikes<sup>122</sup>, the Council launched a Cycle Hire Scheme<sup>123</sup> across the town, featuring 45 bays and 150 e-bikes. The scheme aims to promote active travel and reduce transport-related GHG emissions<sup>124</sup>. It was partially funded by the UK Government's Towns Fund, awarded to Stevenage via the Stevenage Development Board, and Section 106 contributions from developers. In June 2025, the scheme was re-launched after a temporary pause to address vandalism. It initially resumed with a reduced fleet focused on the town centre, but the goal of reaching full operating capacity, including an expanded fleet and service area, is planned for autumn.

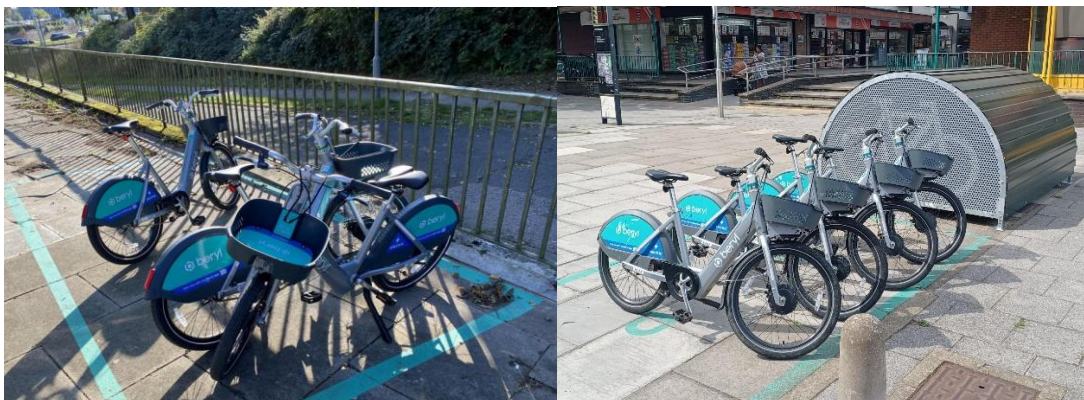


Figure 21. Stevenage's Cycle Hire Scheme in partnership with Beryl Bikes.

- 12.8 Importantly, the Council also partnered with Beryl Bikes to allow staff to use the bikes Monday to Friday, 9 AM - 5 PM, with individual journeys capped at 30 minutes, but unlimited journeys per day, providing an incentive for active and sustainable business travel.
- 12.9 Another Climate Champions working sub-group has been established to promote active and sustainable travel among staff. Its objectives include developing an induction pack for new officers, reviewing existing travel incentives, and proposing new ones to encourage sustainable commuting and business travel. The induction pack, now in its final review, outlines the benefits and incentives available to staff for commuting and business travel, including the Enterprise EV Car Club<sup>125</sup>, SmartGo Stevenage<sup>126</sup>, and the Green Commute Initiative<sup>127</sup>, among others.
- 12.10 The Council has installed four cycle hangars<sup>128</sup> across the town to provide a bike storage alternative for residents living in flats or small houses with

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<sup>122</sup> Further information at: [Stevenage Bike Share - Beryl](#)

<sup>123</sup> Further information at: [Cycle Hire Scheme - Part I Report & Cycle Hire Scheme - Report and Public Consultation Feedback](#)

<sup>124</sup> GHG savings are tracked and reported to Council members and officers by Beryl.

<sup>125</sup> Further information at: [Enterprise Car Club Launches in Stevenage](#)

<sup>126</sup> Further information at: [SmartGo Stevenage](#)

<sup>127</sup> Further information at: [Cycle to Work Scheme - Green Commute Initiative](#)

<sup>128</sup> Cycle hangar locations available at: [Lockable Bike Shelters](#)



limited or no space to store their bikes. Recently, the Council completed the installation of one hangar in the Daneshill House courtyard, and another at South Gate in the Town Centre. More installations are planned.



Figure 22. Cycle hangar at South Gate, Town Centre, Stevenage.

- 12.11 Six maintenance stands have also been installed in the town, providing cyclists with tools for on-the-go bike repairs.
- 12.12 While private cars will remain crucial for transportation, they must also transition. The Council is therefore committed to expanding public EV charging infrastructure across the town.
- 12.13 Following the installation of EV chargers at various locations funded by the On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme (ORCS)<sup>129</sup> from the Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV), the Council now plans to expand provision through LEVI funding, as detailed in 4.6.
- 12.14 Furthermore, the Council continues to work with InPost to install parcel lockers across the town<sup>130</sup>, reducing delivery van journeys and last-mile GHG emissions by up to 75%, while improving local air quality.
- 12.15 Finally, in April 2024, the Council adopted a new Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy, introducing stricter emissions standards and subsidised license fees for low-emission vehicles. The Council is currently exploring the best ways to implement these subsidised fees.

## 13 LEVEL 6: STRATEGIC THEMES – ENERGY & WATER

### Energy

- 13.1 The energy sector accounts for over two-thirds of global GHG emissions. Both the source and level of energy use present opportunities to significantly reduce Council's emissions.

<sup>129</sup> Further information at: [On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme Guidance for Local Authorities](#)

<sup>130</sup> Further information at: [Stevenage Climate Action Plan – TR11 – Installation of Parcel Lockers in the Town](#)

- 13.2 The UK aims to decarbonise its power grid by 2035. Heating, however, remains difficult to decarbonise and is still largely reliant on natural gas.
- 13.3 Different actions have been undertaken by the Council to monitor and better understand the electricity and gas consumption across its sites, aiming to introduce decarbonisation measures and reduce dependency on natural gas.
- 13.4 In early 2022, the Council switched to a Zero Carbon for Business (ZCB)<sup>131</sup> tariff with EDF Energy for its corporate electricity supply. This guarantees zero-carbon electricity, enabling it to report zero emissions for its electricity supply in line with the Greenhouse Gas Protocol best practice.
- 13.5 The Council continues to monitor its electricity use across 27 Council sites<sup>132</sup> using Grid Edge's<sup>133</sup> digital meter explorer, which identifies out-of-hours use and unusual consumption patterns, supporting further operational analysis.
- 13.6 Leisure facilities, managed by Everyone Active (EA), are among Council's top energy users and GHG emitters. Under the current leisure contract, since April 2023, EA has introduced energy efficiency measures across the facilities, including LED lighting, Building Management Systems (BMS) upgrades, and insulation works.
- 13.7 Furthermore, in 2024, the Council secured £36,000 from Sport England's Swimming Pool Support Fund to help decarbonise the Swimming Centre public pool. Works included lagging key pool plant equipment and installing a pool cover. Over 3 years, these measures are expected to cut emissions by over 292 tCO<sub>2e</sub> and decrease water use by 3,699 m<sup>3</sup>. The payback period for this investment is just over 3 years.



Figure 23. New pool cover at Stevenage's Swimming Centre funded by the Swimming Pool Support Fund.

<sup>131</sup> Further information at: [EDF Zero Carbon for Business](#)

<sup>132</sup> The sites being monitored through the Grid Edge meter explorer are: Railway North MSCP; Arts & Leisure Centre & Gordon Craig Theatre; Daneshill House; Swimming Centre; Business & Technology Centre (BTC); St George's Way MSCP; Cavendish Road Depot; Indoor Market; Harrow Court; Fairlands Valley Sailing Centre; Highfield Court; Brent Court; Golf & Conference Centre; New Bus Interchange; Westgate MSCP; Silkin Court; Shaftesbury Court; Wellfield Court; Grosvenor Court; Gladstone Court; Walpole Court; Pinewoods Lodge; Fred Millard Court; Hobbs Court; Ridlins Athletic Tracks; Truro Court; Fairlands Valley Aqua Park.

<sup>133</sup> Further information at: [Grid Edge](#)

- 13.8 In 2025, the Town Centre Clocktower lighting system was replaced with an LED system, reducing energy consumption and maintenance costs while allowing multi-colour displays to mark days of national significance by lighting it in specific colours.

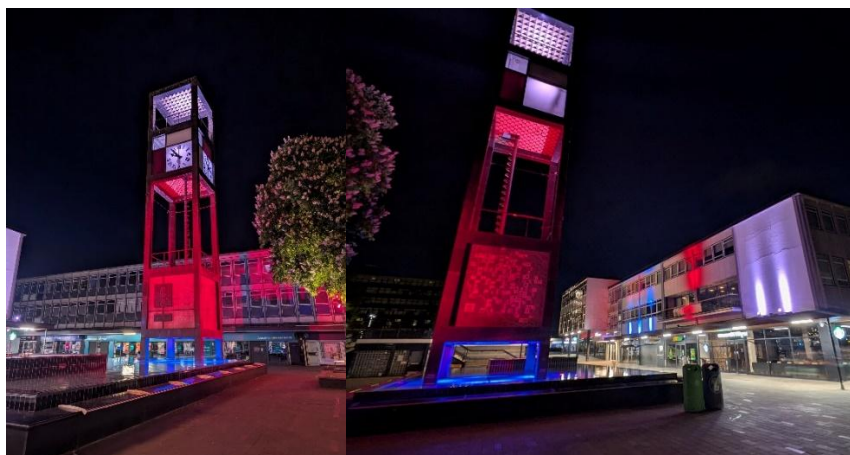


Figure 24. New Town Centre Clocktower LED lighting system.

- 13.9 Recent improvements and closures at Daneshill House have also been undertaken to enhance efficiency. These works included relocating the former CSC<sup>134</sup> to the ground floor and replacing uplighters on the ground floor and first-floor atrium with LED lighting. LED lights have also been installed in all staircases, the 6<sup>th</sup> floor Citizens Advice office, 50% of the 5<sup>th</sup> floor, the 4<sup>th</sup> floor new block, and the Civic Suite. Short-term measures were prioritised ahead of the building's planned replacement by the new Public Services Hub, as described in 8.6.
- 13.10 The Council has also upgraded St George's and Westgate Multi-Storey Car Parks (MSCPs) lighting. St. George's now features full efficient LED lighting and motion sensors to reduce electricity consumption, while approximately 80% of the lighting in Westgate MSCP has also been upgraded to LED.



Figure 25. St George's MSCP new efficient LED lighting system.

- 13.11 The main challenge for Council buildings' energy decarbonisation remains phasing out natural gas, primarily used for heating and hot water.

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<sup>134</sup> Customer Service Centre

- 13.12 The Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS)<sup>135</sup>, and the Low Carbon Skills Fund (LCSF)<sup>136</sup>, which previously supported energy efficiency and low-carbon projects in public buildings, no longer have UK Government funding for 2025/26<sup>137</sup><sup>138</sup>. If the situation persists, it will limit the Council's ability to phase out natural gas and reduce emissions, requiring alternative financing options to implement decarbonisation initiatives. The Government has suggested that other support mechanisms, through the Local Net Zero Hubs, may be available to public sector organisations.
- 13.13 Decarbonising Council buildings can drive wider town decarbonisation by setting an example and directly supporting emissions reductions across residential, commercial, and public sectors, as shown below.



Figure 26. SBS's building decarbonisation challenge and its synergies with broader town's targets.

- 13.14 The Council is currently developing a GHG Accounting Strategy, as described in 5.14, with a primary focus on understanding building emissions to help prioritise projects and future interventions. In addition, the Council is improving energy billing and payment processes to reduce inefficiencies, costs, and emissions.
- 13.15 Finally, a Climate Champions Community Energy working sub-group has been established in 2025. Still in its early stages, it aims to enhance understanding of the Community Energy landscape through training, experts' insights, and collaboration, while surveying residents and businesses to identify interest, challenges, and opportunities for energy projects.

## Water

- 13.16 Alongside energy, water is also central to Stevenage's sustainability and climate resilience. As the UK summers are getting hotter and drier, Stevenage's water supply is increasingly constrained. Hertfordshire is among the driest parts of the UK.

<sup>135</sup> Further information at: [Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme](#)

<sup>136</sup> Further information at: [Public Sector Low Carbon Skills Fund](#)

<sup>137</sup> Further information at: [Low Carbon Skills Fund - Salix Finance](#)

<sup>138</sup> Further information at: [Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme - Salix Finance](#)



- 13.17 In 2025, the Council began working with Telex Water<sup>139</sup> as its new portfolio manager, moving all sites from Castle Water to Source for Business<sup>140</sup>, which provide competitive rates. Beyond cost savings, Telex Water offers a data insights portal to track site-level consumption and identify potential leakages or inefficiencies. To simplify management and improve monitoring, the aim is to transfer all Council sites to the new supplier. As part of the partnership, the Council will also benefit from a free 15-month Automatic Meter Reading (AMR) trial at a high-usage site, enabling it to gather more precise data and inform future water efficiency initiatives.
- 13.18 Additionally, the Local Plan partial review<sup>141</sup> includes strengthened policies on water use, flood prevention, and wastewater management.
- 13.19 Specific policies for Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) promote their use to manage surface water runoff, reduce flood risk, and protect water quality. By enhancing water infiltration and incorporating rainwater harvesting, these measures can also reduce mains water demand.
- 13.20 Updated flood management policies aim to ensure new developments are designed to withstand flooding and avoid transferring risk elsewhere, thereby protecting the wider water system.
- 13.21 The SBLP partial review also encourages water-saving technologies in new developments to reduce consumption and improve efficiency, with a water use target of 110 litres per person per day in new developments. This addresses the area's severe water stress while encouraging sustainable practices.
- 13.22 Finally, wastewater policies ensure adequate infrastructure for new developments while protecting water quality. Together with the promotion of greywater recycling, these measures will strengthen the town's resilience and support sustainable water management.

## **14 LEVEL 7-9: LOCAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

- 14.1 Engaging communities at the neighbourhoods and ward level remained a priority in 2024/25. This section highlights efforts to raise awareness, foster participation, and strengthen relationships with residents.
- 14.2 Each year, the Council updates its Climate Change Communications and Marketing Plan, outlining objectives, target audiences, key messages, strategies, and specific campaigns.
- 14.3 The Climate Action Plan Tracker, described in 5.18, allows residents and viewers to provide direct feedback to the Council, enabling further engagement and participation.
- 14.4 Events provide excellent opportunities for resident engagement. In June 2025, Climate Action officers participated in Stevenage Day for the third

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<sup>139</sup> Further information at: [Water supplier for businesses - Telex Water](#)

<sup>140</sup> Further information at: [Source for Business](#)

<sup>141</sup> Further information at: [Local Plan Partial Review - Examination Library](#)



consecutive year, hosting a Climate Action Stall in the STEM Village. The stall featured educational displays and interactive games, helping residents learn about incorporating sustainability in daily life and understand different types of renewable energy. The event also provided an opportunity to promote the Council's climate change initiatives, including the CCCF and the WHLG. Residents also learned about the carbon footprint of everyday items and discovered no- and low-cost energy-saving measures they could apply in their homes.



Figure 27. 2025 Stevenage Day's Climate Action stall.

- 14.5 In terms of the sustainability of Stevenage Day 2025 itself, numbers of sustainable measures had been incorporated into the event planning and delivery: encouraging sustainable transport through the provision of free secure cycling parking and reducing energy consumption by using energy efficient generations and stage equipped with LED lighting.
- 14.6 The Council continues to promote awareness through online resources. These resources include the annually updated Environmental Days Calendar<sup>142</sup> for 2025, serving as a quick go-to resource for identifying important international and national environmental dates throughout the year, facilitating community awareness activities around these.

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<sup>142</sup> Available at: [2025 Environmental Days Calendar](#)



Figure 28. 2025 Environmental Days Calendar.

- 14.1 Additionally, the Council offers a Sustainable Event Handbook<sup>143</sup> that guides residents on organising eco-friendly events, including using renewable energy, reducing energy use, waste management, and sourcing local food.
- 14.2 The Council continues to engage in youth strategy group meetings with external partners. The Youth Mayor and Youth Council collaborate with the Council to ensure the voices of the borough's younger residents are heard and empowered.
- 14.3 Engaging with school-aged children on climate change and sustainability is essential to fostering long-term environmental awareness and responsibility. To support environmental education, the Council is producing a Stevenage Sustainability Newsletter for Schools and Colleges, shared at the start of each term. It provides information on funding opportunities, upcoming events, and available sustainability-related resources for educational institutions.

<sup>143</sup> Available at: [Stevenage Events Sustainability Guide](#)

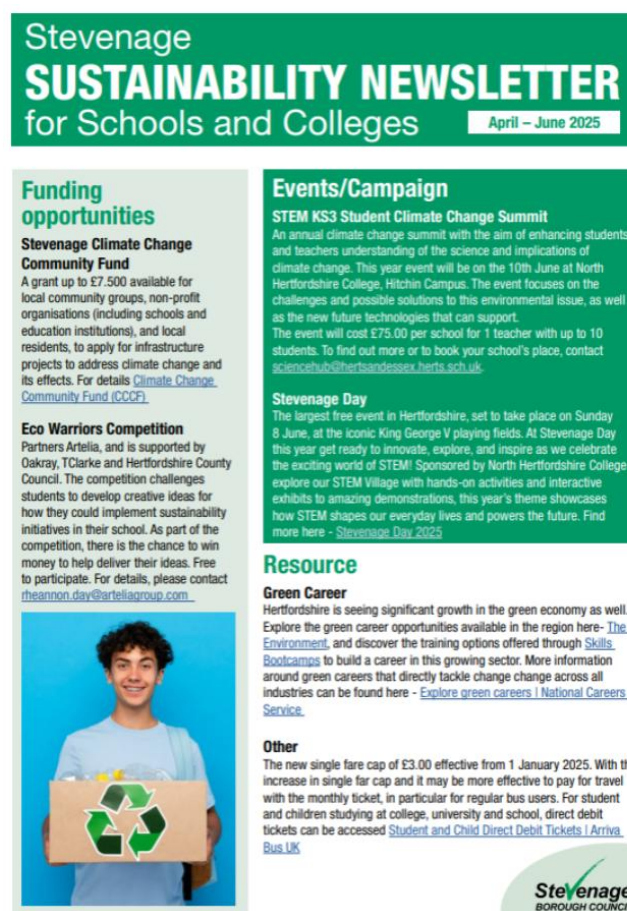


Figure 29. Stevenage Sustainability Newsletter for Schools and Colleges (April – June 2025).

## Neighbourhood and Street Level Work

- 14.4 The Council continues to deliver the Climate Change Community Fund (CCCF)<sup>144</sup>, now in its third year of implementation during 2025/26.
- 14.5 The CCCF aims to provide financial and technical support to community groups in Stevenage wishing to develop and implement 'green projects'. These projects must positively impact the local natural environment, aiding climate change mitigation or adaptation within Stevenage.
- 14.6 Funded by the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), £7,500 is available per ward, per year for potential CCCF projects, totalling £97,500 to support environmental initiatives across the borough.
- 14.7 The CCCF accepts applications on a rolling basis and is open to various groups and individuals within the community, including schools, charities, clubs and societies, faith groups, and local businesses. The Council aims to empower these groups to act against climate change and create local value.
- 14.8 Successful applications must meet a few requirements, including endorsement by a local Councillor, being infrastructure-based, and being designed to maximise sustainability and environmental benefits.

<sup>144</sup> Further information at: [Climate Change Community Fund \(CCCF\)](#)

14.9 The application process for the CCCF can be seen in the figure below.

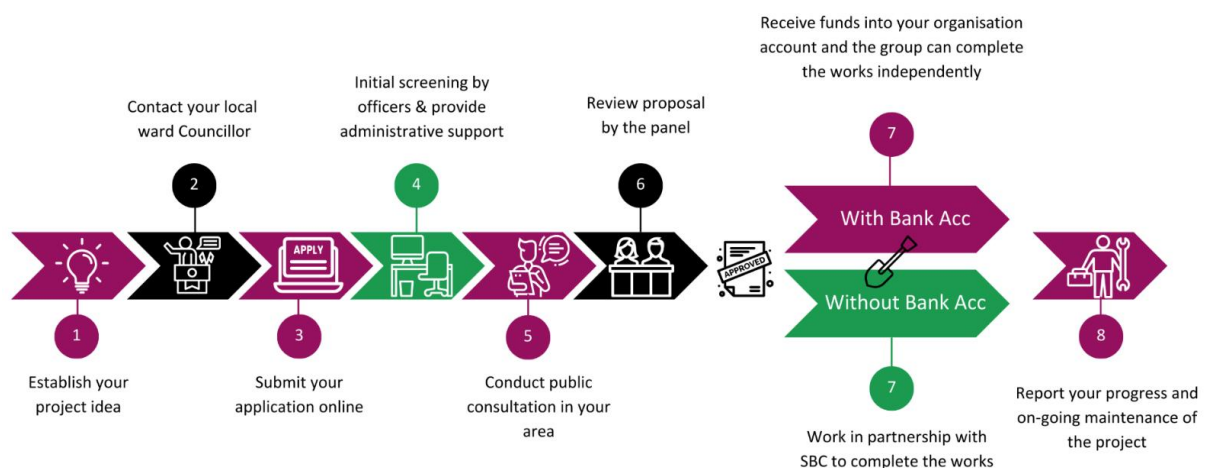


Figure 30. CCCF application process.

14.10 In its second year of CCCF implementation (FY 2024/25), 9 projects were approved across different Stevenage wards, totalling £ 37,652.

Table 2. CCCF approved projects in 2024/25.

Project Name	Stevenage Ward	Applicant
Repair Cafe	Bedwell	Bedwell Community Association
Woodfield Defibrillator Solar Cabinet	Woodfield	Individual resident
St Nicholas Bring Bank	St Nicholas	Local Community Group
Crossroad Community Hub Energy Efficiency Upgrade	Roebuck	Crossroads Caring for Life Ltd
Blenheim Way Community Garden	Longmeadow	The Longmeadow & Bragbury End Gardening Club
Filey Close Bring Bank	Symonds Green	Beaver & Cubs Club
Mobbsbury Way Bring Bank	Chells	Chells Community Association Time
Primett Road Bring Bank	Old Town	Stevenage Old Town Business and Community Partnership
Roundmead Cycle Hanger	Bandley Hill	Cycling UK

14.11 Additionally, three projects were completed during the 2024/25 financial year, having been approved in 2023/24. These include:

- Improvements to Silkin Court Garden (Bandley Hill & Poplars), led by Waste Not Want Not (WNWN) in collaboration with residents.
- The Hampson Park Orchard Extension and Tree Planting project (Almond Hill), led by Friends of Hampson Park.
- The installation of a new Old Town Christmas Tree, led by the Stevenage Old Town Business and Community Partnership.





Figure 31. Silkin Court Garden project funded by CCCF.

- 14.1 Two featured projects are detailed in the following paragraphs as example of recent projects approved and funded through CCCF
- 14.2 The Crossroads Community Hub provides day services for individuals with care needs, including those living with dementia. To enhance the comfort and sustainability of the building, a series of energy efficiency upgrades have been carried out. These include the installation of LED lighting with motion sensors, draft-proof doors, and cavity wall insulation. The new lighting system ensures that lights are only activated when a space is occupied, helping to reduce energy demand. LED lights also offer greater durability and lower maintenance costs. Cavity wall insulation has been installed to address heat loss, improving thermal retention, and contributing to an energy-efficient environment. The replacement of two external doors with draft-proof alternatives further enhances the building's insulation. These new doors help prevent cold air from entering, particularly during the winter months, making it easier and more cost-effective to maintain a comfortable indoor temperature. Although the exact savings in energy and cost have yet to be determined, as the upgrades were recently implemented, the improvements are expected to create a warmer, more comfortable setting for users and contribute to the long-term affordability and sustainability of the service. These improvements also demonstrate a commitment to leading by example in sustainable building practices and aim to inspire other organisations to adopt similar energy-saving measures.





Figure 32. Crossroad Community Hub project funded by CCCF.

- 14.1 The Hampson Park Community Orchard extension and tree-planting project, led by the Friends of Hampson Park, involved the planting of fifteen (15) additional fruit trees, including six apple, six plum, and three pear trees. The project enhanced the existing orchard, creating an improved green space for residents and strengthening opportunities for community connection, outdoor activity, and access to locally grown seasonal fruit. The expansion also delivered measurable environmental benefits, most notably through increased carbon sequestration, improved air quality, and the promotion of greater biodiversity. The additional trees provide vital habitats for pollinators and other wildlife, while also contributing to climate resilience by helping to mitigate urban heat effects.



Figure 33. Hampson Park Community Orchard extension and tree planting project funded by CCCF.

## List of Acronyms

<b>AMR:</b>	Automatic Meter Reading.
<b>APSE:</b>	Association for Public Service Excellence.
<b>ASHP:</b>	Air Source Heat Pump.
<b>BAP:</b>	Stevenage Biodiversity Action Plan.
<b>BMS:</b>	Building Management System.
<b>BNG:</b>	Biodiversity Net Gain.
<b>CCC:</b>	Climate Change Committee.
<b>CCCF:</b>	Climate Change Community Fund.
<b>CCRA:</b>	Climate Change Risk Assessment.
<b>CIL:</b>	Community Infrastructure Levy.
<b>COP:</b>	UNFCC Conference of the Parties.
<b>COP21:</b>	21 <sup>st</sup> UNFCC Conference of the Parties, Paris, France, 2015.
<b>COP29:</b>	29 <sup>th</sup> UNFCC Conference of the Parties, Baku, Azerbaijan, 2024.
<b>Council:</b>	Stevenage Borough Council.
<b>CPO:</b>	Charge Point Operator.
<b>CRP:</b>	Carbon Reduction Plan.
<b>CSC:</b>	Customer Service Centre.
<b>DEFRA:</b>	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.
<b>DESNZ:</b>	Department for Energy Security and Net Zero.
<b>EA:</b>	Everyone Active.
<b>ECO:</b>	Energy Company Obligation.
<b>EELGA:</b>	East of England Local Government Association.
<b>EfW:</b>	Energy from Waste.
<b>EPC:</b>	Energy Performance Certificate.
<b>EPR:</b>	Extended Producer Responsibility.
<b>EV:</b>	Electric Vehicle.
<b>GBE:</b>	Great British Energy.
<b>GBIS:</b>	Great British Insulation Scheme.
<b>GDP:</b>	Gross Domestic Product.
<b>GHG:</b>	Greenhouse Gas.
<b>HCC:</b>	Hertfordshire County Council.
<b>HCCSP:</b>	Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership.
<b>HGB:</b>	Hertfordshire Growth Board.

<b>HP:</b>	Heat Pump.
<b>HRA:</b>	Housing Revenues Account.
<b>HUG2:</b>	Home Upgrade Grant Phase 2
<b>HVO:</b>	Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil.
<b>HWP:</b>	Hertfordshire Waste Partnership.
<b>ICT:</b>	Information and Communication Technology.
<b>IT:</b>	Information Technologies.
<b>ktCO<sub>2</sub>e:</b>	Thousands of tonnes of Carbon Dioxide Equivalent.
<b>LA:</b>	Local Authority.
<b>LARA:</b>	Local Area Retrofit Accelerator.
<b>LCSF:</b>	Low Carbon Skills Fund.
<b>LED:</b>	Light-Emitting Diode.
<b>LEP:</b>	Local Enterprise Partnership.
<b>LEVI:</b>	Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure.
<b>LGA:</b>	Local Government Association.
<b>LGR:</b>	Local Government Reform.
<b>LNRS:</b>	Local Nature Recovery Strategy.
<b>LP:</b>	Local Plan.
<b>LPP:</b>	UK Government's Local Power Plan.
<b>LULUCF:</b>	Land Use, Land Use Change, and Forestry.
<b>MRC:</b>	Major Refurbishment Contract.
<b>MSCP:</b>	Multi-Storey Car Park.
<b>MSEB:</b>	Make Stevenage Even Better.
<b>MtCO<sub>2</sub>e:</b>	Millions of tonnes of Carbon Dioxide Equivalent.
<b>MVHR:</b>	Mechanical Ventilation with Heat Recovery.
<b>NDC:</b>	Nationally Determined Contribution.
<b>NEF:</b>	National Energy Foundation.
<b>Net-Zero:</b>	Balance in the amount of GHG emitted with the amount removed from the atmosphere, resulting in no net increase in these gases.
<b>ORCS:</b>	On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme.
<b>ORR:</b>	Operational Risk Register.
<b>OZEV:</b>	Office for Zero Emission Vehicles.
<b>PSDS:</b>	Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme.
<b>PPA:</b>	Power Purchase Agreement.
<b>PV:</b>	Photovoltaic.

<b>R&amp;D:</b>	Research and Development.
<b>RCCF:</b>	East of England Regional Climate Change Forum.
<b>SBC:</b>	Stevenage Borough Council.
<b>SBLP:</b>	Stevenage Borough Local Plan.
<b>SCCG:</b>	Staff Climate Champions Group.
<b>SHDF:</b>	Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund.
<b>SLT:</b>	Senior Leadership Team.
<b>SME:</b>	Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise.
<b>SPD:</b>	Supplementary Planning Document.
<b>STEM:</b>	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics.
<b>SuDS:</b>	Sustainable Drainage System.
<b>tCO<sub>2</sub>:</b>	Tonnes of Carbon Dioxide.
<b>tCO<sub>2</sub>e:</b>	Tonnes of Carbon Dioxide Equivalent, a standard unit used to measure the impact of different greenhouse gases on global warming.
<b>The Council:</b> Stevenage Borough Council	
<b>TOMs:</b>	Themes, Outcomes and Measures (Social Value).
<b>TPO:</b>	Tree Preservation Order.
<b>UK:</b>	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.
<b>UKSPF:</b>	UK Shared Prosperity Fund.
<b>UNFCC:</b>	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.
<b>WHLG:</b>	Warm Homes Local Grant.
<b>WHSB:</b>	Warm Homes Social Housing.
<b>WNWN:</b>	Waste Not Want Not.
<b>ZCB:</b>	Zero Carbon for Business Tariff.
<b>ZEV:</b>	Zero Emission Vehicle.