

APPENDIX 1

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL

2026 CLIMATE CHANGE ANNUAL UPDATE



OCTOBER 2026

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1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To report the annual summary of actions taken, and progress made, across the six-level framework guiding Stevenage's climate action, spanning global commitments, national frameworks, regional and county-wide collaboration, town-wide data, Council initiatives across the eight strategic themes set out in the 2020 Climate Change Strategy, and community-level engagement.
- 1.2 This report highlights how the Council is embedding resource efficiency, tackling fuel poverty, lowering emissions, and driving measurable sustainability outcomes through local delivery, despite financial constraints and structural transitions such as Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). These local actions directly benefit residents and local businesses by making homes warmer and cheaper to heat, improving air quality, protecting environmental health, supporting SMEs, and expanding accessible green spaces and assets for community wellbeing, urban cooling, and climate resilience.
- 1.3 To note that while Stevenage continues to make progress towards its sustainability objectives, achieving its 2030 net-zero target will require ongoing legislative and financial support from central Government to ensure local living standards and energy efficiency continue to rise.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Following the declaration of a Climate Emergency¹ by Stevenage Borough Council (hereafter, the Council) in June 2019, a commitment was established to work toward net-zero emissions by 2030, recognising that this transition is deeply intertwined with building a sustainable future, a thriving local economy, and an improved quality of life for residents. Resource efficiency, environmental protection, and public wellbeing remain central to all activities undertaken by the Council.
- 2.2 To guide this path, the Stevenage Climate Change Strategy² was released in September 2020, identifying eight strategic themes that lead the action plan. Furthermore, "Tackling Climate Change" has been formally embedded as a core strategic priority within the Council's Corporate Plan³ to build long-term community resilience.

¹ Available at: [Climate Change Emergency - Motion to Council](#)

² Available at: [Stevenage Climate Change Strategy](#)

³ Available at: [Corporate Plan: Making Stevenage Even Better \(2024-2027\)](#)

- 2.3 This 2026 Climate Change Annual Update marks an evolution in the Council's approach to climate reporting. Building upon the previous years' reports and appendices, a transition has been made to a streamlined 6-level structure designed to be more focused on delivery at a local level.
- 2.4 Following an extraordinary year marked by extreme summer heatwaves, severe water supply constraints, and drought conditions, the Council's local delivery is actively prioritising building long-term community and environmental resilience while safeguarding residents' wellbeing.
- 2.5 This report marks an evolution in the Council's approach to climate reporting. Building upon the previous year's reports, a transition has been made to a streamlined 6-level structure designed to be more focused on delivery at a local level.
- 2.6 Tangible actions taken by the Council that directly impact residents, businesses, and the natural environment are prioritised, recognising that the most effective climate action is achieved within the town, neighbourhoods, and communities. This report is structured to reflect this hierarchy of impact, transitioning from the broad context to the primary area of influence:



Figure 1. Stevenage Borough Council's Updated Approach: 6 Levels for Climate Action.

- 2.7 A critical advancement integrated into this year's reporting is the adoption of a structured internal Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Accounting Framework. By implementing this standardised methodology aligned with the GHG Protocol⁴, the transparency and accuracy of organisational emissions accounting have been significantly enhanced, ensuring that progress toward the 2030 target is guided by verified data.
- 2.8 Climate action in Stevenage is cutting emissions while improving residents' lives by lowering energy bills, tackling fuel poverty, and making homes warmer and more comfortable. Cleaner air, healthier travel choices, enhanced green spaces providing shade and urban cooling, and greater resilience to extreme weather also contribute to better wellbeing and a more sustainable town.

⁴ Further information at: [GHG Protocol](#)

- 2.9 In February 2024, the Council launched the Stevenage's Climate Action Plan Tracker⁵ on the Kausal platform. This supports effective delivery of the Strategy and Action Plan by capturing detailed progress on 54 actions linked to the Strategy and its priorities.
- 2.10 While navigating the transition toward Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) alongside ongoing economic and financial constraints, commitment to a more sustainable future remains in place, ensuring the Council delivers value for money and manages resources prudently.
- 2.11 The actions detailed in the following sections demonstrate that while achieving the climate targets requires continued legislative and financial support from central Government, clear and measurable progress is being made in Stevenage.

1 LEVEL 1: GLOBAL CONTEXT

- 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 levels⁶.
- 1.2 The Agreement supports global mechanisms, including climate finance, technology transfer, and capacity-building frameworks. It also establishes a ratchet mechanism, requiring signatories to outline national targets through Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)⁷ on five-year cycles.
- 1.3 At COP29 (Baku, Azerbaijan, 2024), the UK announced a new national target to cut GHG emissions⁸ by at least 81% by 2035 (relative to 1990). This represents an upgrade from the previous pledge of a 68% cut by 2030⁹.
- 1.4 Despite pledges, 2025 ranked globally as the third-warmest year on record (following 2024 and 2023), with global surface air temperatures reaching approximately 1.47°C above pre-industrial levels. Furthermore, data indicates that the past 11 consecutive years (2015 to 2025) officially rank as the 11 warmest years on record globally¹⁰.
- 1.5 Furthermore, the report Limiting Overshoot¹¹ by UNEP, published in September 2026, established that under current policies and alternative near-term trajectories, exceedance of 1.5 °C of global temperature is now widely assessed as unavoidable.
- 1.6 Beyond emissions reduction, international focus has turned to structural climate resilience and adaptation. Over recent UN Climate Change COPs, key global frameworks (such as the Baku Adaptation Road Map and the Belém Adaptation Indicators) have been established in this regard, shaping

⁵ Available at: [Stevenage Climate Action Plan](#)

⁶ Further information at: [The Paris Agreement \(UNFCCC\)](#)

⁷ Further information at: [Nationally Determined Contributions \(NDCs\)](#)

⁸ Excluding international aviation and shipping,

⁹ Further information at: [UK shows international leadership in tackling climate crisis \(GOV.UK\)](#)

¹⁰ Further information at: [Global Climate Highlights 2025 – Insights from the Copernicus Climate Change Service](#)

¹¹ Available at: [UNEP - Limiting Overshoot](#)

the domestic mandates needed to protect communities against extreme weather, water stress, and rising temperatures.

- 1.7 Furthermore, outcomes from COP30 in Belém (Brazil) reinforce the critical global shift from target-setting to real execution through the "Belém Political Package", which emphasises practical economic resilience, energy security, and localised adaptation.

2 LEVEL 2: NATIONAL CONTEXT

- 2.1 The UK has committed to reducing GHG emissions by at least 68% by 2030 and 81% by 2035 (both relative to 1990 levels), maintaining its legally binding 2050 target¹².
- 2.2 Provisional figures for territorial GHG emissions¹³ estimate national net territorial emissions at 367 MtCO_{2e} for 2025. This is 2% below 2024 levels and 54% lower than in 1990.
- 2.3 The long-term trend in UK territorial GHG emissions from 1990 to 2025 is shown in Figure 2.

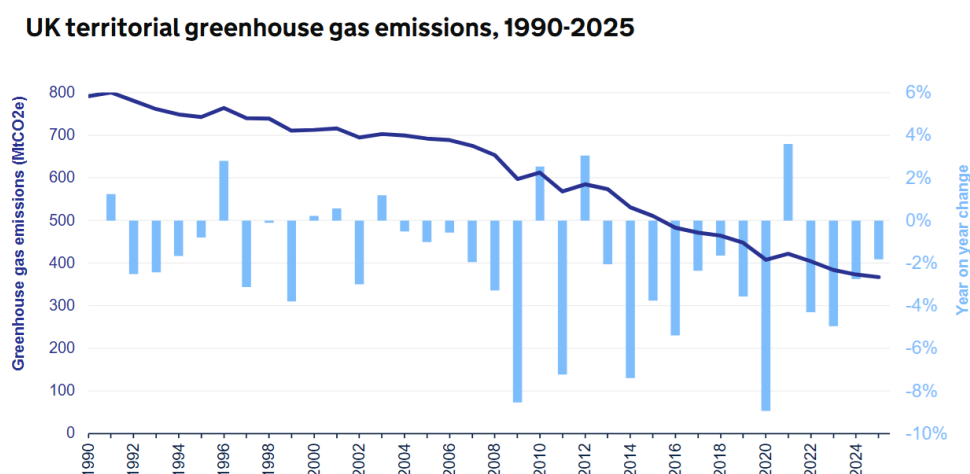


Figure 2. UK territorial GHG emissions, 1990-2025 (provisional figure for 2025).
Source: DESNZ, National Statistics.

- 2.4 The long-term emissions decline continues to be driven by structural shifts in the energy system, including the power grid transition from fossil fuels to renewables and improved energy efficiency.
- 2.5 Domestic transport remained the UK's largest emitting sector in 2025, accounting for 31% of total net emissions. National net territorial emissions by sector in 2025 are detailed in Figure 3.

¹² As outlined in its Net Zero Strategy, available at: [UK Net Zero Strategy](#)

¹³ Further information at: [2025 UK Greenhouse Gas Emissions \(Provisional Figures\)](#).

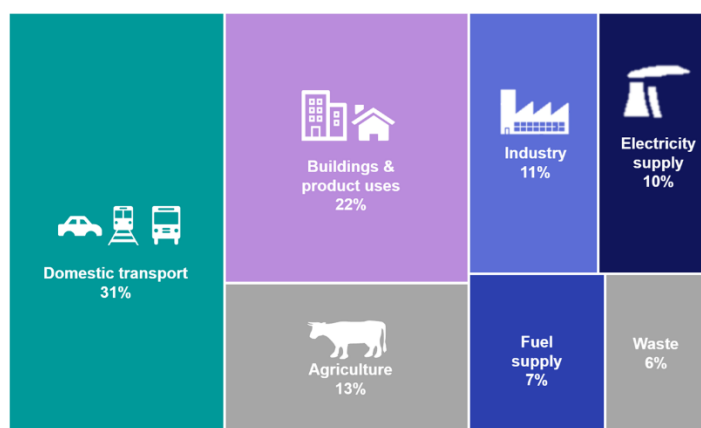


Figure 3. UK net territorial GHG emissions by sector, 2025 (provisional figures).
Source: DESNZ, National Statistics

- 2.6 At the national policy level, emphasis has been placed on building a "clean energy superpower" to protect the UK from volatile international fossil fuel markets and insulate households from energy price shocks. National priorities include establishing Great British Energy (GBE)¹⁴, decarbonising the power grid, and upgrading planning frameworks to fast-track low-carbon technologies.
- 2.7 To tackle household emissions and secure energy affordability, the government launched the Warm Homes Plan¹⁵, a £6.6 billion national investment over the current parliament to upgrade 5 million homes through enhanced insulation, fabric retrofitting, and low-carbon heating to lower energy bills and lift families out of fuel poverty.
- 2.8 Complementing this, the Local Power Plan (LPP)¹⁶ seeks to decentralise energy generation by partnering GBE with local authorities and community energy groups, providing funding and support to deliver small- and medium-scale renewable projects.
- 2.9 Alongside mitigation, accelerating climate risks have made adaptation a critical priority. All ten of the UK's warmest years on record have occurred since 2000 (with 2025 ranking the warmest, followed by 2022 and 2023). Moreover, February 2024 was the wettest February since records began in 1836, while formal droughts were declared in 2022, 2025, and 2026.
- 2.10 Addressing these growing vulnerabilities, the Climate Change Committee (CCC)'s A Well Adapted UK 2026¹⁷ Report identifies heat, flooding, and drought as the most critical climate risks. In response, the Government aims to set stronger adaptation objectives in the upcoming National Adaptation Programme (NAP)¹⁸, planning for a minimum 2°C temperature rise by 2050.
- 2.11 The CCC has warned that while the UK is making progress, delivery paces, particularly regarding domestic building retrofits, heat pump deployment, and

¹⁴ Further information at: [Great British Energy](#).

¹⁵ Further information at: [Warm Homes Plan](#).

¹⁶ Further information at: [GBE - Local Power Plan](#).

¹⁷ Available at: [CCC - A Well-Adapted UK](#).

¹⁸ Further information at: [UK Government - Understanding climate adaptation and the NAP3](#).

industrial electrification, must accelerate significantly to keep national targets within reach.

- 2.12 Overall, to ensure efficient local delivery, national frameworks stress the importance of long-term support for local authorities. In this context, the Government has committed to awarding local authorities multi-year funding and ending competitive bidding.

3 LEVEL 3: REGION & COUNTY

- 3.1 Collaborative regional partnerships are a key aspect of the Council's climate action as they enable it to attract investment, build strong business cases, share back-office resources, and eliminate administrative duplication, ensuring that local actions deliver maximum value for money.
- 3.2 Alignment across local, county, and regional initiatives is essential to ensure climate action is both effective and efficient.

Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)

- 3.3 Following ongoing structural discussions and recent national announcements regarding Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), Hertfordshire continues to navigate a potential transition from its current two-tier system toward a new unitary structure.
- 3.4 Neighbouring authorities across the area, including partner Councils such as North Herts and Welwyn Hatfield, share a 2030 target to achieve net-zero emissions for their own operations, closely aligning with Stevenage Borough Council's organisational goals.
- 3.5 Regardless of the final structural outcome, the ongoing focus on administrative reorganisation provides an important context to streamline governance, integrate local services, and leverage collaborative opportunities to support sustainable ambitions, resilience, and green economic growth.

Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership (HCCSP)

- 3.6 Launched in January 2020, HCCSP¹⁹ is a member-led partnership delivering joint climate and sustainability initiatives across Hertfordshire. Members include all 10 districts, Hertfordshire County Council (HCC), and Hertfordshire Futures²⁰.
- 3.7 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.

¹⁹ Further information at: [Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership](#)

²⁰ Further information at: [Hertfordshire Futures](#)

3.8 Key initiatives undertaken via HCCSP include:

- Solar Together²¹ – A group-buying scheme for domestic PV panels and batteries. Round 4 launched in January 2025 and closed in June 2025. According to the 2025 End of Scheme Report, Stevenage received 143 interested registrations (138 for PV, 5 for batteries) from homeowners and businesses. Of these, 24 accepted installation offers, 19 paid deposits, and 12 solar PV installations were completed (consisting of 121 panels with a 0.05 MW capacity, £82,596 in private investment, 10,065 kg of annual CO₂ reduction, and 10 batteries totalling 0.08 MWh).
- Your Tree, Our Future²² – A scheme distributing thousands of trees to residents for planting. In 2025, Stevenage residents planted 2,329 trees. For the upcoming December 2026 distribution, the Council contributed £1,000 to secure an additional 2,000 trees for Stevenage residents, complementing the 3,000 funded by HCC (bringing the total to 5,000). Backed by targeted communications, Stevenage residents have claimed over 7,600 trees alongside more than 1,000 metres of hedgerow packs. The map below shows where the trees given away during the first four years of the scheme have been planted in Stevenage, by postcode area.

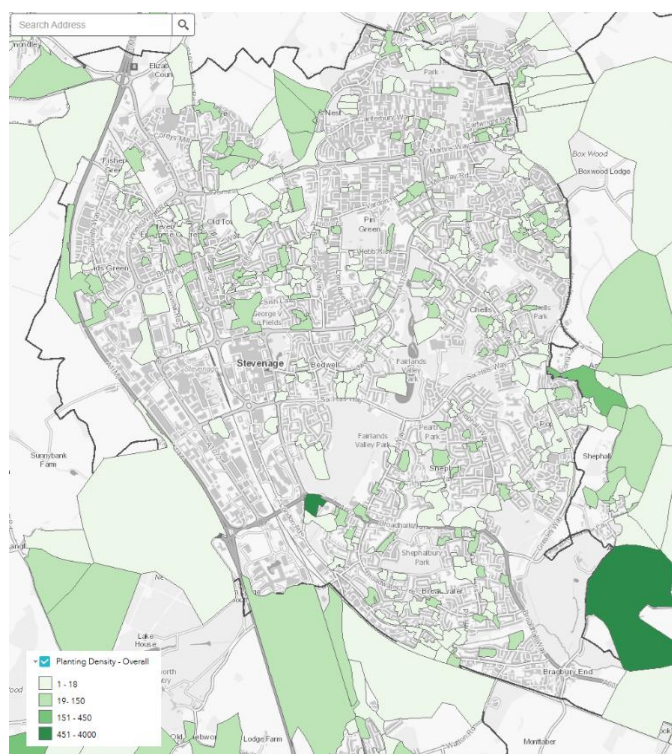


Figure 4. Your Tree Our Future giveaway trees planted locations in Stevenage²³.

- Hertfordshire Local Retrofit Strategy²⁴ – Endorsed by the Council in July 2025, this strategy was developed through the Local Area Retrofit Accelerator (LARA) led by HCCSP. Moving into its delivery phase, the

²¹ Further information at: [Group-Buying for Solar - Solar Together](#)

²² Further information at: [Your Tree, Our Future](#)

²³ Further information at: [HCC - Your Tree Our Future](#)

²⁴ Further information at: [Hertfordshire Local Retrofit Strategy 2025 to 2028](#).

Council has contributed £2,000 to support strategy implementation, and a dedicated HCCSP officer has been appointed to the role. Designed as a three-year, evidence-based roadmap, the strategy seeks to accelerate domestic retrofit by 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.

- 3.9 Through HCCSP, the Council has also delivered training and capacity-building for councillors and officers on sustainability, adaptation, retrofitting, political awareness, and planning.
- 3.10 More recently, HCCSP has also developed a dedicated workstream to support officers in navigating LGR, helping to shape optimal outcomes for future sustainability services across the new structures.

Other County-Wide and Regional Climate Collaboration Initiatives

- 3.11 Through HCCSP, the Council continues to collaborate with the Hertfordshire Growth Board (HGB)'s²⁵ Sustainable County Mission²⁶, supporting a prosperous low-carbon economy and thriving natural environment, maximising the benefits of sustainable growth and meeting long-term reduction goals through joint action on carbon reduction, climate adaptation, and behavioural change.
- 3.12 The Council and HCCSP also contribute to Climate Forum East (formerly the Regional Climate Change Forum)²⁷, led by Local Government East²⁸ (formerly EELGA). This forum brings together eight climate partnerships across the region, covering over 50 local authorities across the region.
- 3.13 Local Government East also organises the East of England Net Zero and Climate Resilience Conference, a key annual event advancing the region's climate agenda. The 2026 conference²⁹, scheduled for October, will continue to engage the Portfolio Holder (PH) for Environment, Transport and Planning and officers.

4 LEVEL 4: STEVENAGE (THE TOWN)

- 4.1 Central government data for Stevenage's 2024 territorial emissions³⁰ has been released³¹. These figures are based on detailed energy and resource

²⁵ Further information at: [Hertfordshire Growth Board](#).

²⁶ Further information at: [HGB - Vision and Missions](#) under the section "Sustainable County".

²⁷ Further information at: [East of England Climate Change Forum \(RCCF\)](#).

²⁸ Further information at: [Local Government East](#).

²⁹ Further information at: [Climate East 2026](#).

³⁰ Territorial GHG emissions are those that occur within Stevenage's geographical borders, including all our residents, businesses, and activities.

³¹ The full dataset can be consulted at: [UK local authority and regional GHG emissions statistics](#).

use. Because borough-level data is published with a standard two-year lag, 2025 figures will be available in the next 8-9 months.

- 4.2 The latest DESNZ update (30 June 2026) shows the trajectory of territorial GHG emissions within the scope of local authority (LA) influence (see Figure 5).

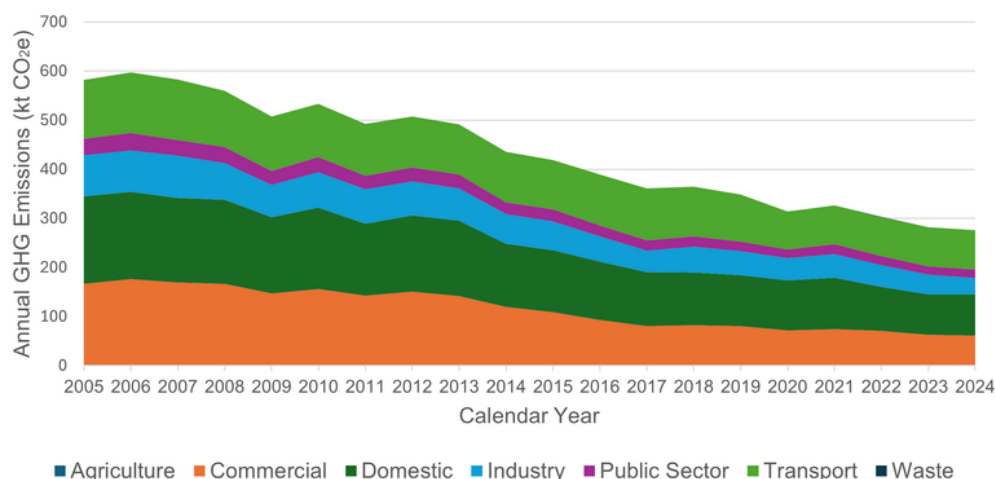


Figure 5. Stevenage territorial GHG emissions within the scope of influence of LAs, estimates 2005-2024 (ktCO_{2e}). Source: Based on DESNZ data³².

- 4.3 Emissions within the LA's scope of influence represent a practical subset of emissions over which the Council exercises realistic oversight, excluding national-level industry and regional infrastructure. This subset provides a clearer picture of emissions the Council can meaningfully impact to protect environmental quality.
- 4.4 In 2024, Stevenage recorded its lowest emissions within LA influence at 275.7 ktCO_{2e}, a 2.2% drop from 2023 (281.8 ktCO_{2e}), and 52.6% lower than in 2005 (582.0 ktCO_{2e}).
- 4.5 The reduction from 2022 to 2023 was primarily driven by drops in industrial (-17.6%) and commercial (-2.7%) emissions, with a slight increase in transport (+0.3%), domestic (+2.5%), and public sector (+1.0%) emissions.
- 4.6 Over the long term since 2005, sectoral emissions have consistently decreased. Residential emissions dropped by 52.6%, from 178.7 ktCO_{2e} in 2005 to 84.7 ktCO_{2e} in 2024. The public sector, including the Council, reduced its emissions by 49.6% over the same period, whereas commercial and industrial emissions decreased by 63.9% and 60.2%, respectively. Transport emissions also decreased by 33.2%, from 119.9 ktCO_{2e} in 2005 to 80.1 ktCO_{2e} in 2024.
- 4.7 Crucially, ongoing monitoring is essential to ensure these reductions are sustained and not simply a by-product of high energy costs affecting households or businesses.
- 4.8 Stevenage's 2024 per capita emissions within LA influence (3.0 tCO_{2e}) were below Hertfordshire (3.1 tCO_{2e}), and the East of England (3.6 tCO_{2e}).

³² Available at: [UK local authority and regional GHG emissions](#).

- 4.9 Stevenage's total territorial GHG emissions within LA influence by sector in 2024 are presented in Figure 6.

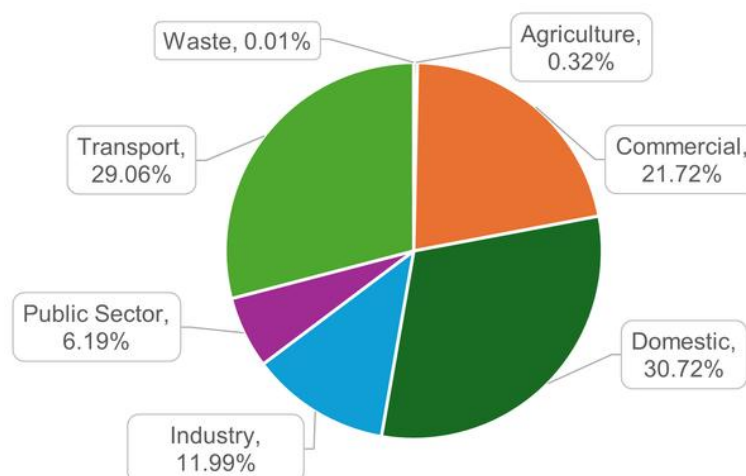


Figure 6. Stevenage territorial GHG emissions within LA influence, estimates in 2024 by economic sector. Source: Based on DESNZ data³³.

- 4.10 In 2024, domestic emissions were the highest (84.7 ktCO_{2e}, primarily from gas heating), followed by transport (80.1 ktCO_{2e}), commercial (59.9 ktCO_{2e}), and industry (31.1 ktCO_{2e}). The public sector, including the Council, accounted for just 17.1 ktCO_{2e}.

5 LEVEL 5: THE COUNCIL

- 5.1 In June 2019, the Council established a target to work toward net-zero emissions by 2030, making resource efficiency, energy reduction, and sound asset management central priorities for Council services and operations to safeguard public wellbeing and long-term community resilience.

Council's New Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions Accounting Framework

- 5.2 To ensure robust, consistent, and transparent tracking toward its climate goals, the Council has implemented a new internal GHG Emissions Accounting Framework aligned with the GHG Protocol³⁴.
- 5.3 The core methodology and data inventories are detailed in the "GHG Reporting Framework Main Report" background document, establishing a comprehensive baseline and multi-scope methodology across Scopes 1, 2, and 3.
- 5.4 Based on the GHG Protocol, Scope 1 emissions come from sources directly owned or controlled by the Council (e.g., fuel burned in 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. Scope 3 emissions arise from activities up and down its value chain for which the

³³ Available at: [UK local authority and regional GHG emissions](#).

³⁴ Further information at: [GHG Protocol](#).

Council is indirectly responsible. A summary of GHG emissions scopes is shown in Figure 7.

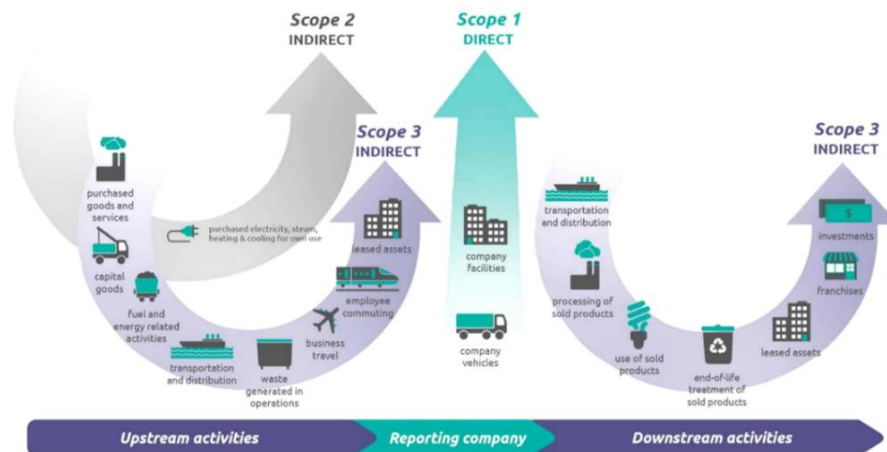


Figure 7. GHG emissions scopes for a reporting organisation.

Source: GHG Protocol, Corporate Value Chain Accounting and Reporting Standard.

- 5.5 In July 2020, CLS Energy established an initial 2018 emissions baseline for the Council at 3,399 tCO_{2e} (covering Scope 1 and 2 emissions, with limited Scope 3 considered). However, this baseline was not comprehensive, covering only 12 locations and omitting key sources like water and upstream emissions, and lacked full data granularity.
- 5.6 While previous reports tracked progress against this initial figure, indicating a 39% reduction by 2023 and projected reductions up to 61% following Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) fleet adoption, these figures have been comprehensively re-evaluated.
- 5.7 Under the new framework, the Council updated its baseline to the 2023/24 financial year to incorporate over 700 buildings and facilities alongside expanded indirect emission sources, including transmission and distribution (T&D) losses, well-to-tank (WTT) upstream energy impacts, water supply, and fugitive emissions.
- 5.8 On a market-based approach, the updated baseline stands at 4,710.12 tCO_{2e}, with natural gas heating remaining the Council's primary operational emissions challenge and reduction priority.
- 5.9 The Council reports electricity emissions on a market-based approach to reflect its energy procurement choices. While the location-based method reflects average local grid intensity, the market-based method accounts for contractual instruments such as the Council's EDF Zero Carbon for Business tariff. This allows the Council to accurately measure and report the direct emissions benefits of sourcing zero-carbon electricity. A comparison between both approaches for the FY 2023/24 under the new GHG Accounting Framework can be found below.

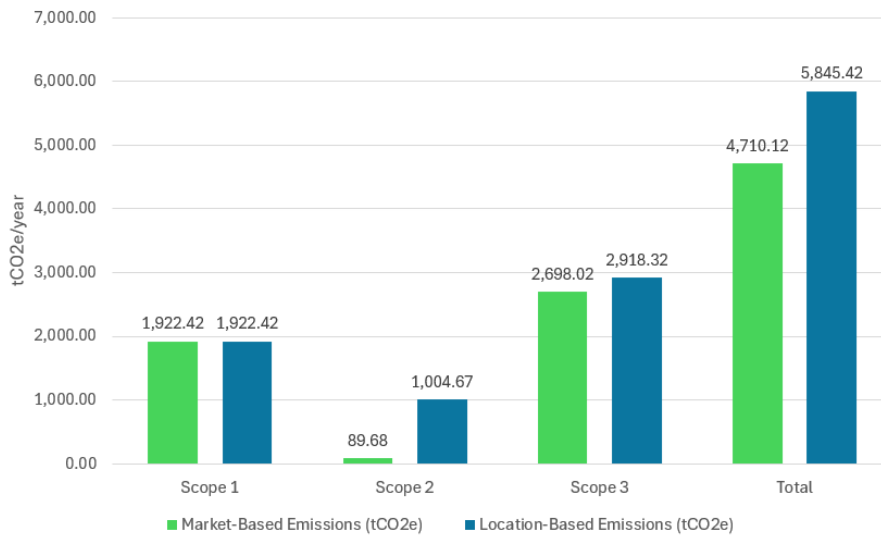


Figure 8. Total Council's emissions for FY 2023/24, market-based and location-based.

- 5.10 For the 2024/25 financial year, the Council's total market-based emissions were recorded at 4,458.44 tCO_{2e} (a 5.3% reduction from the previous year), as detailed below.

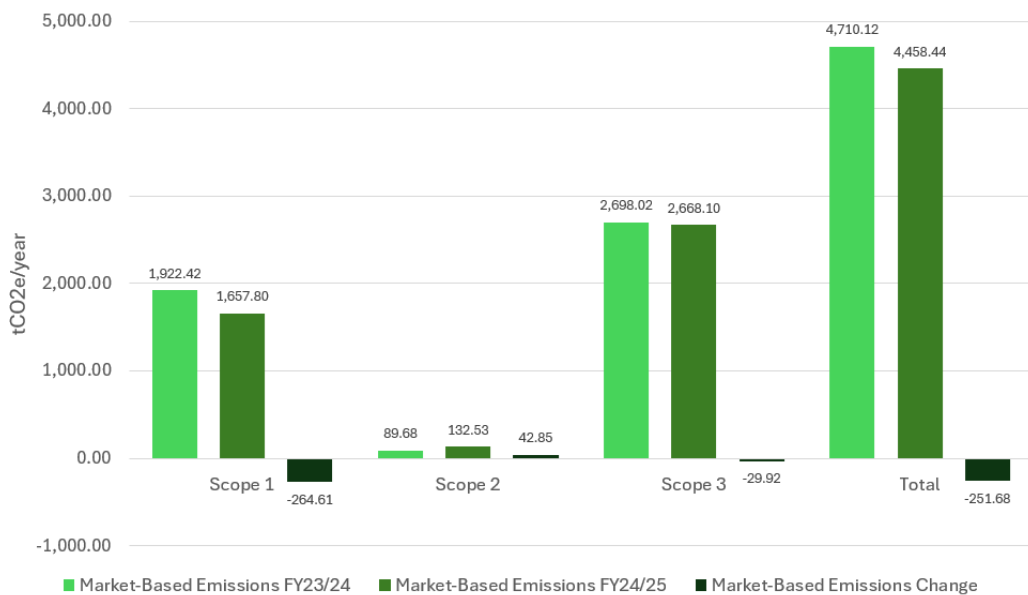


Figure 9. Total Council's emissions per scope (market-based) for FY 2023/24 and FY 2024/25.

- 5.11 Formal progress tracking against the 2030 target utilises a dedicated target-tracking boundary comprising market-based Scope 1 and 2 alongside a selected subset of significant Scope 3 assets (such as major leisure facilities like the Stevenage Arts and Leisure Centre and the Swimming Centre), standing at 2,714.46 tCO_{2e} for FY24/25. This specific boundary design provides crucial continuity with the Council's historic published emissions position while maintaining operational visibility over large, Council-owned assets that remain essential to the town's carbon profile, even though they are technically classified as Scope 3 indirect emissions.

5.12 The market-based target-tracking emissions for financial years 2023/24 and 2024/25 can be seen below. An overall 9.50% of emissions reductions can be attributed mainly to decreases in Scope 1 and 3 emissions.

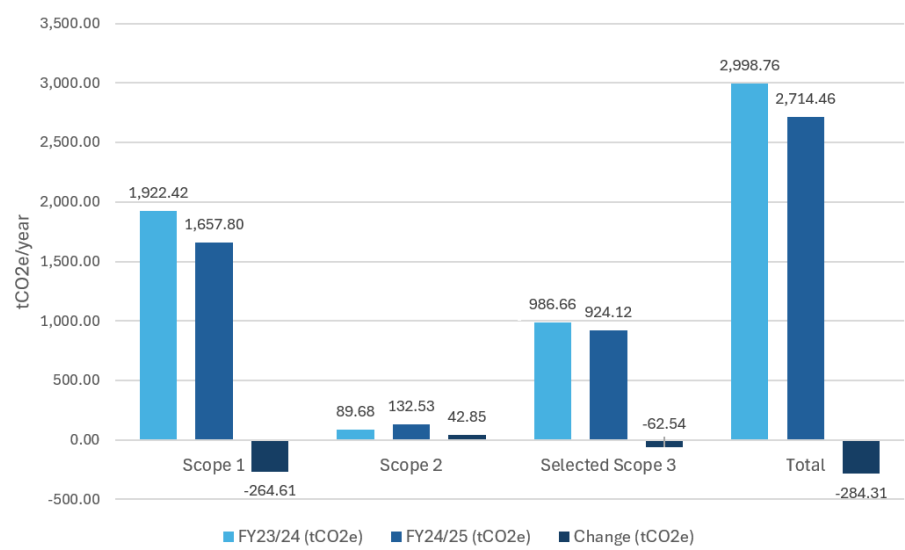


Figure 10. Total Council's target-tracking emissions (market-based) for FY 2023/24 and FY 2024/25.

- 5.13 Figures for the 2025/26 financial year are currently in development as part of ongoing framework implementation.
- 5.14 Ultimately, this GHG Accounting Framework implementation transitions the Council from a limited legacy baseline to a comprehensive multi-scope inventory, positioning it to prioritise reduction measures, particularly around building heating, and ensure transparent, accountable progress toward its long-term goals.

Climate Action Plan Tracker & Climate Scorecards

5.15 In September 2020, the Council released its Stevenage Climate Change Strategy³⁵, built around eight strategic themes guiding the action plan to net-zero.

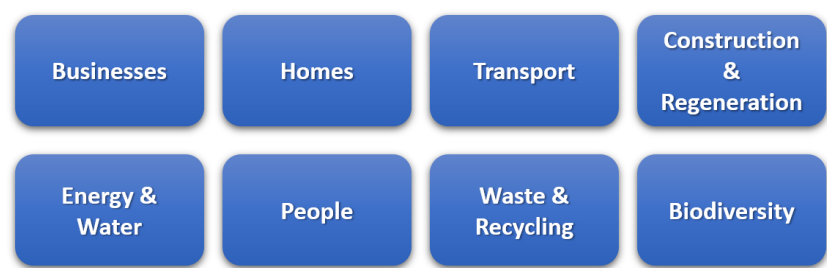


Figure 11. Stevenage Climate Change Strategy's 8 strategic themes leading the action plan.

³⁵ Available at: [Stevenage Climate Change Strategy](#)

- 5.16 In February 2024, the Council, in partnership with Kausal³⁶, launched the Stevenage Climate Action Plan Tracker³⁷, an online portal showcasing over 50 actions across the eight strategic themes.
- 5.17 Throughout 2025 and into 2026, officers continued refining the tracker structure and contents to align with the Climate Scorecards³⁸ assessment by Climate Emergency UK. In the June 2025 results, the Council scored 35%, an increase of 8 percentage points from its 2023 score of 27%. Notable improvements were seen in Waste Reduction & Food (+19%), and 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.

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
Total score	35%	▲ 8

Table 1. Climate Scorecards 2025 – Stevenage Borough Council Results³⁹.

- 5.18 The following sections highlight the main actions taken by the Council during 2025/26 across the eight strategic themes.

6 LEVEL 5 – STRATEGIC THEME: BUSINESSES

- 6.1 Positioned within the UK's high growth "Golden Triangle", Stevenage hosts prominent international corporations (such as Airbus, GSK, MBDA, Fujitsu, and the Stevenage Bioscience Catalyst) driving innovation across aerospace, biotechnology, ICT⁴⁰, and defence. Through ongoing collaboration, the Council works alongside these key employers to share best practice, boost local economic resilience, and accelerate emissions reductions.
- 6.2 The Council support initiatives focus on empowering local SMEs⁴¹, individual companies, and the VCSE⁴² sector to navigate climate obligations, lower operating costs to ease financial pressures, and build sustainable business models.

³⁶ Further information at: [Kausal - Turn Climate Goals into Actions](#)

³⁷ Available at: [Stevenage Climate Action Plan Tracker](#)

³⁸ Further information at: [Council Climate Action Scorecards - Climate Emergency UK](#)

³⁹ Further information at: [Stevenage Borough Council - Climate Action Scorecards](#)

⁴⁰ Information and Communication Technology

⁴¹ Small and Medium Sized Enterprises

⁴² Voluntary, Community, and Social Enterprise

- 6.3 Since 2022, the Council has funded 200 Gold Memberships for Wenta's Action Zero Programme⁴³, helping local SMEs tackle climate change, identify operational efficiencies, lower utility overheads, and reduce footprint by setting targets and developing Carbon Reduction Plans (CRPs), monitoring and reporting progress and achieving accreditations. To date, 155 local businesses have joined.
- 6.4 Between 2023 and March 2026, the Council delivered the Small Business Sustainability Support Programme⁴⁴ via Sustainable X⁴⁵ using UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)⁴⁶. This initiative provided workshops, audits, and tailored 1:1 consultancy to help local businesses cut running costs, enhance workplace comfort, improve efficiency, boost market competitiveness, and adopt clean technologies.
- 6.5 Introduced in late 2024 with a £70,000 fund, the Stevenage Green Business Grant⁴⁷ helped seven local SMEs and charities implement energy-saving measures and clean technologies following completed CRPs, directly lowering their running costs. Throughout 2025/26, the Council provided ongoing support to the awarded entities to assist them in implementation.



Figure 12. SPS Training Solutions' Solar PV installation funded by the Green Business Grant.

- 6.6 Building on these foundations into 2026/27, the Council is fostering local green and technical skills (benefiting local residents and youth employment) by supporting the opening of North Hertfordshire College's New Town Centre Campus for engineering and construction courses from September 2026 and continuing the Pioneering Young STEM Futures programme to ensure young people can access sustainable career pathways.
- 6.7 To address supply-chain emissions while driving local value, the Council continues to apply Social Value⁴⁸ via the Social Value Portal⁴⁹ using the

⁴³ Further information at: [Wenta Action Zero Programme & BTC Stevenage - Action Zero](#)

⁴⁴ Further information at: [Sustainable Business Programme](#)

⁴⁵ Further information at: [Sustainability Programmes by SBC and Sustainable X](#)

⁴⁶ UK Shared Prosperity Fund. Further information at: [UK Shared Prosperity Fund: Prospectus](#)

⁴⁷ Further information at: [Stevenage Green Business Grants Summary](#)

⁴⁸ Social Value is the UK's statutory approach to embedding sustainable procurement. Further information at: [LGA District Councils Social Value Toolkit](#)

⁴⁹ Further information at: [Social Value Portal](#)

national TOMs framework⁵⁰, maintaining a minimum 10% weighting in contract awards. Updated in May 2025⁵¹, these metrics now include reducing Scope 1 & 2 emissions, increasing Zero Emission Vehicles (ZEVs) adoption, supporting certified carbon offsets, and cutting plastic waste.

- 6.8 Furthermore, the Council's Co-operative Procurement Strategy 2025–2028⁵² came into effect in June 2025. This strategy embeds sustainability to support net-zero goals while championing local wealth building, reducing waste, and promoting circular economy and biodiversity enhancements.

7 LEVEL 5 – STRATEGIC THEME: HOMES

- 7.1 The Council has committed to achieving a minimum Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)⁵³ Band C for all 8,000 of its homes by 2030⁵⁴, ensuring safe, warm, and lower-cost living for tenants to protect households against rising energy costs and health risks associated with cold housing. Currently, around 66% of the Council's housing stock meets or exceeds EPC Band C, as shown below.

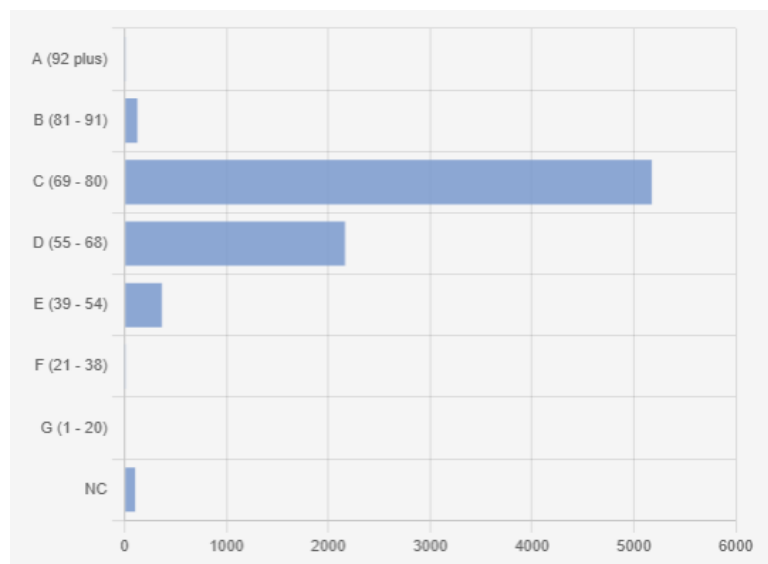


Figure 13. Distribution of the Council's housing stock by EPC band.

- 7.2 Central government funding and co-funding remain critical to tackling retrofitting challenges across both social and private housing stock to lift vulnerable families out of fuel poverty.

⁵⁰ Further information at: [Measurement - Social Value TOM System™ - Social Value Portal](#)

⁵¹ 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.

⁵² Available at: [Co-operative Procurement Strategy 2025-28](#)

⁵³ Further information at: [Energy Performance of Buildings Certificates in England and Wales](#)

⁵⁴ 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.

- 7.3 Following a £2.62 million grant award alongside a £3.97 million Council contribution, the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF)⁵⁵ Wave 2.1 project successfully concluded in July 2025. This initiative retrofitted 237 properties (comprising 16 flat blocks and 100 houses) using a fabric-first approach (installing wall and loft insulation, double glazing, energy-efficient lighting, and solar panels) to lift the Council's least efficient homes to EPC Band C or B, directly cutting tenants' bills, improving indoor comfort, safeguarding health, and lowering emissions. Aico Environmental Sensors were also installed in selected homes to monitor temperature, humidity, and damp/mould risks.



Figure 14. SHDF Wave 2.1 retrofitting works.

- 7.4 The town-wide Major Refurbishment Contract (MRC)⁵⁶ continues through 2026, building on work from previous years. While focused on structural maintenance, communal repairs, and fire safety across low- and mid-rise blocks, it integrated vital energy upgrades like wall and loft insulation, energy-efficient lighting, and new windows and doors, significantly lowering energy bills, alleviating cost-of-living pressures, and improving thermal comfort for residents.
- 7.5 Building on these efforts, the Council commenced the three-year delivery of the Warm Homes: Social Housing Fund ⁵⁷ (Wave 3) following a £3.85 million grant award alongside Council co-funding (£3.15m). Partnering with Equans Regeneration Ltd, this project will upgrade 379 Council homes by 2028 with insulation, windows, doors, solar panels, and ventilation upgrades, aiming to achieve at least EPC Band C, reducing emissions, tackling fuel poverty, lowering household utility bills, and improving tenant well-being.
- 7.6 Running alongside dedicated decarbonisation funds, the ongoing Decent Homes⁵⁸ programme continues to upgrade energy efficiency across Council-owned homes through targeted window, door, and heating replacements to ensure homes remain safe, warm, and affordable.

⁵⁵ Further information at: [Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund](#)

⁵⁶ Further information at: [SBC Current Major Works](#)

⁵⁷ Further information at: [Warm Homes: Social Housing Fund Wave 3](#)

⁵⁸ Further information at: [Decent Homes Works](#)

- 7.7 The Council is also promoting schemes to decarbonise private homes, building on regional collaboration via HCCSP through the Hertfordshire Retrofit Strategy and Solar Together scheme (as noted in 3.8 - Level 3) to extend financial and comfort benefits across the wider community.
- 7.8 Partnering with the National Energy Foundation (NEF), the Council helped eligible homeowners and private tenants access funding for energy efficiency measures under the Energy Company Obligation⁵⁹ Round 4 (ECO4) and Great British Insulation Scheme (GBIS)⁶⁰. Supporting 48 households to permanently lower bills, improve home warmth, and reduce emissions, this NEF-managed scheme (now closed to new applications) operates until 31st December 2026 to finalise any remedial works.
- 7.9 In 2025, the Council secured £1.5m from the Warm Homes: Local Grant (WHLG) to provide energy upgrades and low-carbon heating to approximately 100 low-income privately owned households⁶¹, from 2025 to 2028. Delivered in partnership with NEF, it funds insulation, solar panels, Air-Source Heat Pumps (ASHPs), and low-carbon heating systems for EPC Band D-G properties. 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 need⁶².



Figure 15. Warm Homes Local Grant – Stevenage Leaflet. The scheme is open until 2028.

⁵⁹ Further information at: [Help from your energy supplier: the Energy Company Obligation](#)

⁶⁰ Further information at: [Apply for support from the Great British Insulation Scheme](#)

⁶¹ Based on average retrofit costs per property.

⁶² Further information at: [Stevenage - Warm Homes Local Grant](#)

- 7.10 Addressing record housing demand in Stevenage, the Council is also delivering sustainable new homes through the Make Stevenage Even Better (MSEB)⁶³ Corporate Plan. All new Council housing developments follow a 5-star quality approach⁶⁴ with sustainability as a key criterion. Following award-winning schemes like Helston House and the Kenilworth Close (Phase 1), recent developments like the 27-home Dunn Close integrate advanced low-carbon features such as ASHPs, solar panels, and heat recovery systems, underpinned by a fabric-first approach to maximise energy efficiency and minimise heating costs for residents.

8 LEVEL 5: STRATEGIC THEME: CONSTRUCTION & REGENERATION

- 8.1 The building and construction sector is a major contributor to GHG emissions, making its transformation essential for tackling climate change and protecting the built environment for future generations.
- 8.2 Stevenage's regeneration programme⁶⁵ seeks to create a vibrant, mixed-use town centre that reflects the aspirations of residents and businesses while respecting its New Town heritage and enhancing community life.
- 8.3 As a leader in regeneration, the Council has significant influence to deliver sustainably designed, climate-resilient buildings and public spaces that benefit the entire community by improving public health, comfort, and local environmental quality.
- 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 flagship regeneration project is the new Sports & Leisure Centre on St George's Way, which will combine facilities from the Arts & Leisure Centre and Swimming Centre, two of the Council's highest energy-consuming buildings. Following formal planning permission granted in September 2025, main construction works have commenced with completion expected in late 2027.
- 8.6 Designed as a fully electric, fossil-fuel-free building, the new Sports & Leisure Centre will feature a 25-metre 10-lane pool, teaching pool, splash pad, soft-play, six-court sports hall, fitness suite, multi-purpose studios, and a café. Engineered for high energy efficiency, it features an estimated annual energy use of 1,246 MWh (182.5 kWh/m²), supported by on-site solar PV generating 14.8 MWh annually; ASHPs for heating, cooling, and pool water; high insulation levels; LED lighting; and smart energy management systems. Furthermore, the project commits to a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and provides a sustainable transport hub equipped with EV charging and extensive cycle parking, delivering a modern, low-cost community facility.

⁶³ Available at: [Corporate Plan: Making Stevenage Even Better \(2024-2027\)](#)

⁶⁴ Further information at: [Housing Development – On the Right Road](#)

⁶⁵ Further information at: [Stevenage Even Better - Stevenage Regeneration](#)



Figure 16. New Sports & Leisure Centre proposal.

- 8.7 Furthermore, the Stevenage Indoor Market has been relocated to a prominent, bespoke, and modern facility on the ground floor of Boston House in Park Place. Designed with an all-electric energy supply, the bright, welcoming, and flexible trading space secures the market's long-term future for local traders and shoppers.



Figure 17. New Stevenage Indoor Market in Boston House, Park Place.

- 8.8 Additionally, works have started to repurpose the former Indoor Market building into a new Engineering and Construction Campus for North Hertfordshire College, funded through the Government's Towns Fund, providing modern, high-tech training and career facilities for students, apprentices, and adult learners to foster local green skills and employment pathways.

Stevenage's Local Plan Partial Review

- 8.9 One of the crucial tools the Council uses to lead climate action is the Stevenage Borough Local Plan (SBLP)⁶⁶, which integrates strategies translating climate goals into practical mitigation and adaptation measures.
- 8.10 The Council successfully completed a partial review⁶⁷ of the SBLP, which was finalised and adopted in July 2026 following extensive public consultation and viability processes.
- 8.11 The partial review prioritises climate policies within its strategic approach, balancing low-carbon housing and development with the provision of new jobs and infrastructure, and the protection of green and cultural assets for residents.
- 8.12 The updated planning framework incorporates upgraded policies across key areas:
- Contribution to mitigating and adapting to climate change, reducing emissions, providing carbon sequestration, and securing sustainable resource use.
 - Major developments should aim to achieve net-zero regulated operational emissions by reducing overall energy demand, supplying energy efficiently, and adopting ultra-low or zero-carbon energy generation, with whole-life carbon net-zero proposals strongly supported.
 - Developments must prioritise active travel and public transport by integrating necessary infrastructure.
 - Developments should minimise air conditioning demand where appropriate by balancing solar gain and shading, managing internal heat, and providing passive ventilation to protect occupants from extreme heat.
 - New dwellings must restrict water consumption to a maximum of 110 litres per person per day. Proposals should provide rainwater harvesting (for new dwellings) or grey water recycling (for non-residential developments where appropriate) and encourage water neutrality.
 - Strong support is given for decentralised/district heat networks, intelligent energy systems, ultra-low or zero-carbon CHP⁶⁸ systems, and local renewable generation with surplus fed into the national grid.
 - Urban greening is encouraged, with support for incorporating green roofs, blue-green roofs, bio-solar roofs, or green walls.
 - Proposals that align with circular economy principles, local green jobs provision, local food-growing spaces (allotments, orchards, and food markets) enhancements, and sustainable waste disposal are strongly supported.

⁶⁶ Further information at: [Stevenage Borough Local Plan](#)

⁶⁷ Further information at: [Stevenage Borough Local Plan Partial Update 2026](#)

⁶⁸ Combined Heat and Power

- All developments should use Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to prevent increased peak run-off rates and follow the surface water disposal hierarchy. Development must also protect adjacent flood defences, maintain watercourses buffer zones, and re-naturalise culverts.
- 8.13 The adoption of these enhanced policies is expected to make a significant contribution toward achieving the town's sustainability objectives while protecting community infrastructure against climate risks and securing healthier, safer environment for residents.

9 LEVEL 5: STRATEGIC THEME: WASTE & RECYCLING

- 9.1 The waste sector significantly impacts climate change, making waste reduction, reuse, repair, recycling, and recovery central to the Council's management approach.
- 9.2 The Council is a member of the Hertfordshire Waste Partnership⁶⁹ (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, driving Council-led initiatives to cut waste and boost recycling.
- 9.4 HWP targets zero waste to landfill by 2030, aiming for 100% of Hertfordshire's residual waste to be processed at energy-from-waste (EfW) facilities. While April 2024 10-year HCC's ended directed landfill disposal, some rejected recycling may still reach landfill indirectly⁷⁰.
- 9.5 The Council handles regular bin and bulky waste collections⁷¹ alongside 13 recycling banks across the town⁷². In June 2025, eight neighbourhood recycling sites were upgraded with new signage and infrastructure, funded via the UKSPF and the Council's Climate Change Community Fund (CCCF)⁷³ to make recycling more accessible and cleaner for residents.
- 9.6 The Council operates an in-house recycling collection service, separating materials into paper & card, glass, plastics, and cans, with private arrangements for onward processing.
- 9.7 In 2025/26, the Council collected 29,562.09 tonnes of household waste from kerbside collections and 11,072.01 tonnes of recycling. Stevenage residents produced an average of about 321 kg of waste (recycled and residual) per person annually⁷⁴, compared to the Hertfordshire average of 378 kg⁷⁵. The

⁶⁹ Further information at: [Waste Aware Hertfordshire Partnership](#)

⁷⁰ Further information at: [HCC - New contracts to end landfill for Hertfordshire waste](#)

⁷¹ Further information at: [Stevenage Household Waste Management Policy](#)

⁷² Further information at: [Stevenage Recycling Banks](#)

⁷³ As described in paragraph 14.4.

⁷⁴ Based on a population estimate of 90,508 inhabitants in Stevenage.

⁷⁵ Further information at: [Hemel Today - Average of 378kg of waste thrown away by every Hertfordshire resident in 2025](#)

Council targets a 60% recycling rate by 2035⁷⁶; however, the 2025-26 figures indicate Stevenage's recycling rate stands at 37.5%, the lowest in the county, prompting targeted action in this regard.

- 9.8 The Council promotes recycling across corporate, residential, and commercial sites. Following Cabinet approval in July 2025⁷⁷, Phase 2 of the flat-block recycling pilot concluded by December 2025. Building on Phase 1, which increased flat-block recycling by 185% across six blocks, Phase 2 expanded to around 41 blocks, integrating resident engagement, surveys and educational materials alongside a custom three-wheeled bin designed for easier use on stairs. Backed by £719k of Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) funding, the project provides opportunities for residents to recycle plastics, glass, cardboard and food to ensure equal access to recycling services across all housing types. Based on the pilot results, an overall 4% increase in the borough's recycling rate is anticipated if similar performance is achieved across all flats, with monitoring currently underway.



Figure 18. Three-wheeled bin tailored for Flat-Blocks Recycling Project⁷⁸.

- 9.9 The Council provided free glass, tins, and plastic recycling services to local schools, alongside paid paper collections, while promoting recycling awareness to approximately 3,000 children through 11 school assemblies.
- 9.10 In March 2026, the Council successfully launched separate weekly food waste collections across 38,000 properties (deploying 77,000 new caddies) in line with national Simpler Recycling⁷⁹ legislation. Promoted via a school children competition to design recycling superheroes (such as Captain Carrot), the service reduces GHG emissions and is expected to boost recycling rates by around 5%.

⁷⁶ Further information at: [Stevenage Climate Action Plan – Action WR 1. Increase Recycling Rates](#)

⁷⁷ Further information at: [SBC Items at Meetings - Flat Block Recycling Improvements](#)

⁷⁸ Further information at: [BBC - Multi-wheeled bins introduced in recycling trial](#)

⁷⁹ Further information at: [Simpler Recycling in England: Policy Update](#)



Figure 19. One of the selected Stevenage's food recycling superheroes: *Captain Carrot*.

- 9.11 Furthermore, the Council launched a commercial food waste collection service for businesses and schools on 31 March 2025, meeting statutory deadlines.
- 9.12 Under the Recycle Your Cycle⁸⁰ scheme, the Council collected 240 unwanted, abandoned or fly-tipped bikes in 2025/26 for refurbishment, reuse, and community benefit.
- 9.13 Finally, partnering with HWP, the Council continues to promote the Herts Sustainable Families⁸¹ initiative, which includes Herts Reusable Nappies, Herts Sustainable Periods, and Herts Confident Continence, aiming to stimulate reusable alternatives to single-use products to help local families lower household expenses and reduce plastic waste.

10 LEVEL 5: STRATEGIC THEME: PEOPLE & AWARENESS

- 10.1 Stevenage can only achieve its sustainability objectives if everyone plays their part to build a healthier, cleaner, greener, more resilient town. 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 **Level 6** of this report. Some internal awareness and governance actions are highlighted below to emphasise fostering a sustainable culture within the Council.
- 10.3 As part of embedding this commitment into high-level governance, "Tackling Climate Change" has been incorporated as a core priority of the Council's Corporate Plan, Making Stevenage Even Better (2024-2027)⁸², cementing the net-zero target and climate response as one of the organisation's primary focuses.

⁸⁰ Further information at: [Recycle Your Cycle](#)

⁸¹ Further information at: [Herts Sustainable Families - Hertfordshire County Council](#)

⁸² Further information at: [Corporate Plan: Making Stevenage Even Better \(2024-2027\)](#)

- 10.4 In November 2023, the Council acknowledged the “*Pathway 3 - People and Processes*” report, identifying that Council’s people-related emissions arise mainly from ways of working: commuting, business travel, waste production, water use, and resource consumption. To drive behavioural change, a Staff Climate Champions Group (SCCG) of 28 members from across departments has been established to raise awareness and strengthen engagement.
- 10.5 Priority topics (as shown below) were selected for 2025-26 (with continuing work into 2026-27). To address them, working sub-groups have been established to focus on challenges and opportunities linked to ways of working and organisational emissions.



Figure 20. Stevenage Climate Champions – Topic-specific working sub-groups for 2025-26.

- 10.6 Key deliverables from these sub-groups include analysing staff commuting and business travel incentives, producing an active travel induction pack for officers, upgrading recycling infrastructure and signage at Daneshill House and Cavendish, and conducting sustainability reviews of Council-led events like Stevenage Day.
- 10.7 Climate literacy is critical to raising environmental awareness and enabling informed decision-making. The Council continues to promote free carbon literacy opportunities for officers and members via the Local Government Association (LGA) and the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE), of which it is a member.

Climate Adaptation

- 10.8 Climate adaptation is a vital part of building resilience. The Global Centre on Adaptation⁸³ defines it as the “*means to act to prepare for and adjust to the current and projected impacts of climate change*”.
- 10.9 Adaptation aims to reduce vulnerability and ensure that Council’s operations and policies can withstand climate impacts.
- 10.10 Recent extreme weather events affecting Stevenage and the wider Hertfordshire area indicate the increasing need for effective climate action, both to reduce emissions and to strengthen local resilience.
- 10.11 In June and August 2025, periods of extreme heat resulted in Amber Heat-Health alerts across the East of England, with temperatures exceeding 30°C and increased risks identified for older people and other vulnerable groups. In July 2025, heavy thunderstorms and intense rainfall caused flash flooding in Stevenage, with significant surface water reported along Station Road and Eastbourne Avenue. The severe winter weather in December 2025 and January 2026 brought snow and extreme cold, disrupting travel and local

⁸³ Further information at: [Global Center on Adaptation](https://www.adaptationcentre.org/).

activities (e.g., football and hockey). Together, these events illustrate the range of extreme weather-related pressure on communities, infrastructure, services, and vulnerable residents.

- 10.12 As part of its ongoing work, in June 2025, the Council updated its Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA)⁸⁴, in line with DEFRA's⁸⁵ guidance (noting that adaptation reporting is voluntary for local authorities). This review assessed climate risks for Council services and assets across multiple climate scenarios (current, +2°C and +4°C), ensuring a robust understanding of future vulnerabilities.
- 10.13 The updated CCRA identifies about 50 climate-related risks across five sectors: natural environment, infrastructure, health and communities, business and industry, and international dimensions. While most risks are currently rated low to medium, medium-to-high risks increase under future warming scenarios.
- 10.14 The CCRA enhances preparedness by helping the Council understand and plan for potential climate risks. To increase service resilience, the Council began working with its risk lead in early 2026 to incorporate these climate risks directly into relevant operational and corporate risk registers.
- 10.15 The Council acknowledges the importance of climate adaptation and remains committed to building long-term operational resilience.
- 10.16 Looking through 2026, the Council is finalising a 5-Year Climate Adaptation Plan to provide a structured framework for medium-term preparedness, strengthening service resilience, prioritising monitoring impacts, safeguarding vulnerable infrastructure, enhancing emergency preparedness, broadening stakeholder engagement, and supporting residents.

11 LEVEL 5: STRATEGIC THEME: 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 act as vital carbon sinks. Protecting and enhancing biodiversity is crucial to tackling climate change.
- 11.2 Tree planting plays a key role in Stevenage 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.
- 11.3 The Council has committed to planting over 4,000 trees by 2030⁸⁶ and increasing the town's canopy cover to 19%, in line with the Woodland Trust's

⁸⁴ 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.

⁸⁵ Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs.

⁸⁶ Further information at: [Stevenage Climate Action Plan – Action BI3: Plant 4,000 Trees in Stevenage by 2030](#)

Emergency Tree Plan (2020)⁸⁷ and its Amenity Tree Management Policy⁸⁸. A 2024, i-Tree Canopy⁸⁹ assessment found existing canopy cover at 22%, though ward-levels coverage varies, dropping to 13% in some areas⁹⁰.

- 11.4 As part of its ongoing commitment, the Council plants around 100 mature trees annually, adding 121 new street trees in 2025/26. During this period, the Council also maintained 30,103 trees, 18 woodlands, 399 ha of grass, and 24 ha of shrub beds. Additionally, CIL⁹¹ funding has been allocated for two major projects: £80,000 funded across 2025/26 and 2026/27 to plant 80 trees across Stevenage (with planting scheduled for completion by January 2027), and £30,000 allocated for woodland management works at Lanterns Lane woods.
- 11.5 Following three Miyawaki micro-woods⁹² planted by the Council in 2024/25 using DEFRA's Coronation Living Heritage Fund (at St Nicholas Park, Hampson Park and Shephalbury Park, with 5,000 saplings), the Council created three more micro-woods in 2025/26 using 3,000 whips planted at Peartree Park, Chells Park, and Symonds Green.
- 11.6 A further rollout of new Miyawaki micro-woods is planned for 2026/27, backed by £30,000 in CIL funding for two micro-woods at Donkey Park and Broadhall Way. Species include beech, cherry, elder, hawthorn, hazel, holly, hornbeam, lime, field maple, and oak. These extend existing woodland, improve wildlife corridors, and connect wooded areas with grassland meadows. Monitoring confirms the Miyawaki technique has been highly successful in Stevenage.



Figure 21. Stevenage's Miyawaki micro-wood at Chells Park.

- 11.7 These initiatives complement the "Your Tree, Our Future" scheme detailed in 3.8.

⁸⁷ Available at: [Emergency Tree Plan - Woodland Trust](#)

⁸⁸ Available at: [Stevenage Amenity Tree Management Policy](#)

⁸⁹ 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](#).

⁹⁰ Further information at: [Stevenage Tree and Woodland Strategy](#)

⁹¹ Community Infrastructure Levy

⁹² Further information at: [Council secures funding to plant new trees in Stevenage](#)

- 11.8 Following public consultation, the Council adopted the Tree & Woodland Strategy (2025-2035)⁹³ in June 2025. It sets out 59 targeted actions to manage, protect, and enhance the borough's trees, woodlands, and ancient hedgerows across 10 key themes to strengthen Stevenage's climate resilience. It highlights the role of trees in carbon capture, air quality, and urban cooling, prioritising tree species with high carbon storage potential and targeting areas with low canopy cover.
- 11.9 While tree planting is vital, supporting biodiversity also requires a diverse range of habitats, including woodlands, grasslands, wetlands, and hedgerows.
- 11.10 Following public consultation, the Cabinet adopted Green Spaces Strategy (2025–2035)⁹⁴ in June 2025. This 10-year framework outlines how parks, woodlands, and wildlife areas will be protected and enhanced to support biodiversity, climate resilience, and community well-being by providing accessible, high-quality green spaces for residents. Early initiatives, including ecological surveys, are underway to balance development, ecology, and resident needs.
- 11.11 The Council also adopted the Biodiversity Action Plan (2024-2028)⁹⁵ as a strategic framework to guide local conservation efforts. Progress is driven by implementing targeted conservation across five priority habitats and tracked now via a dedicated online portal⁹⁶. 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 and sustainability.
- 11.12 The Council is also implementing Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)⁹⁷, now mandatory for all developments and requiring at least 10% biodiversity increase. The Council has transitioned to a full BNG monitoring framework via Exacom⁹⁸, integrated into development management procedures (using Uniform⁹⁹) to screen qualifying planning applications. Priority delivery sites have been identified, and work is underway at Chells Park, Canterbury Way Playing Fields, and Fishers Green.
- 11.13 Several of the above-mentioned initiatives rely on volunteers. In 2025-26, Green Space Volunteers¹⁰⁰ contributed over 1,700 hours to improving open spaces, carrying out woodland coppicing, pond improvements, tree planting, and butterfly surveys. Additionally, Council-led bulb planting at Hampson Park, Edmunds Drive, and Trent Close enhanced seasonal colour and boosted community pride and local environmental stewardship.

⁹³ Available at: [Stevenage Tree and Woodland Strategy](#)

⁹⁴ Available at: [Stevenage Green Space Strategy](#).

⁹⁵ Further information at: [Stevenage Biodiversity Action Plan](#).

⁹⁶ Available at: [Stevenage Biodiversity Action Plan: A Wilder Stevenage 2024-2028](#).

⁹⁷ Further information at: [Biodiversity Net Gain](#)

⁹⁸ Further information at: [Exacom - Products \(Biodiversity Net Gain Module\)](#)

⁹⁹ Further information at: [Uniform - Local Authority Case Management Software](#)

¹⁰⁰ Further information at: [Stevenage Green Space Volunteers](#)

- 11.14 In addition, work is also underway to expand a town-wide network of grassland meadows, with ongoing identification of new sites to increase coverage and ecological value. This includes a CIL-funded “Meadow Grassland - Town Wide” project (£20,000 funded for 2026/27) to identify existing meadow and rough grassland in autumn/winter 2026 and seeding completed by February 2027. Moreover, two new wildflower meadow areas were established in Fairlands Valley Lakes and St Nicholas Park to support biodiversity, improve habitat connectivity, and boost pollinator populations.

12 LEVEL 5: STRATEGIC THEME: 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 and improving local air quality.
- 12.2 In the Climate Change Strategy, the Council committed to decarbonising its fleet by 2030 to lead by example in cutting operational 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)¹⁰¹ in October 2024 as a low-carbon transitional solution, covering all road and non-road vehicles as well as machinery.
- 12.4 FY 25/26 marked the first financial year the Council's road fleet operated on 100% HVO. According to Renewable Fuel Declarations, issued as part of the Renewable Fuels Assurance Scheme by Zemo Partnership¹⁰², during this year the Council used about 300,000 litres of HVO to power its road fleet, resulting in just 10.7 tCO_{2e} of direct (tank-to-wheel) emissions, and avoiding c. 760 tCO_{2e} of direct emissions compared to standard diesel use, reducing direct road fleet emissions by 98.6% against FY 23/24 levels.
- 12.5 In line with Pathway 1, since August 2023, the Council has incorporated seven electric vans and small vehicles into its fleet, with plans to add more through a fleet replacement plan in the short- and mid-term. This rollout is supported by ongoing charging infrastructure assessments for a fully electrified fleet.

¹⁰¹ 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.

¹⁰² Further information at: [Renewable Fuels Assurance Scheme | Fuels | Zemo Partnership](#)



Figure 22. Stevenage Borough Council's small 100% Electric Vehicle (EV).

- 12.6 The Council recognises active travel as vital to meeting climate targets, cutting emissions, supporting healthier lifestyles, improving public health, and easing congestion. This is further supported by the Stevenage Heart Trails¹⁰³, launched in March 2026, which span over 27 miles of traffic-free routes connecting communities with local art and heritage while encouraging outdoor physical activity.
- 12.7 In October 2024, partnering with Beryl Bikes¹⁰⁴, the Council launched a town-wide Cycle Hire Scheme¹⁰⁵, featuring 45 bays and 150 e-bikes, funded via the UK Government's Towns Fund and Section 106 contributions¹⁰⁶. In June 2025, the scheme was successfully re-launched following a temporary pause to address vandalism. As of mid-2026, most bikes have been repaired, and all 45 parking bays are operational. Between the scheme's launch and mid-May 2026, users completed over 90,000 journeys on Beryl Bikes, cycling a total distance exceeding 239,000 km, demonstrating a strong community uptake in active travel.

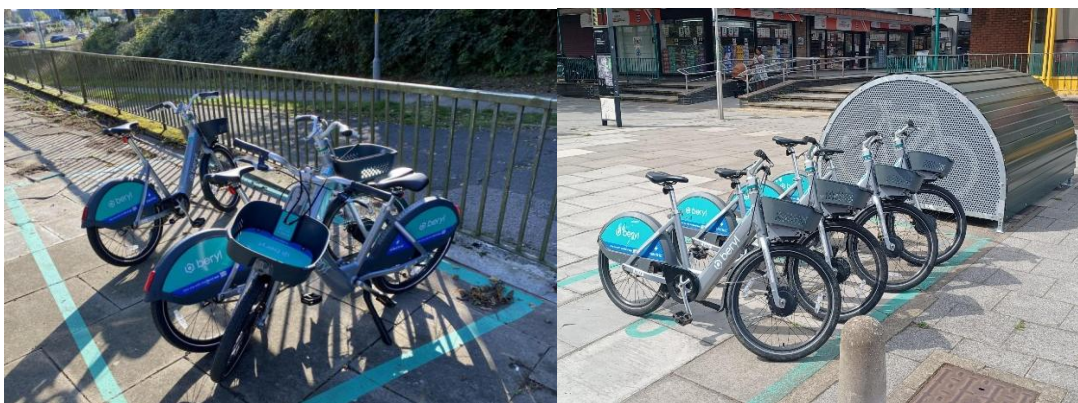


Figure 23. Stevenage's Cycle Hire Scheme in partnership with Beryl Bikes.

¹⁰³ Further information at: [Stevenage Heart Trails](#)

¹⁰⁴ Further information at: [Stevenage Bike Share - Beryl](#)

¹⁰⁵ Further information at: [Cycle Hire Scheme - Part I Report & Cycle Hire Scheme - Report and Public Consultation Feedback](#)

¹⁰⁶ GHG savings are tracked and reported to Council members and officers by Beryl.

- 12.8 The Council also introduced a staff cycle hire scheme allowing employees to use Beryl bikes during work hours (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 and supporting staff wellbeing.
- 12.9 Through a Climate Champions working sub-group, the Council has promoted sustainable travel benefits for staff (including a Sustainable Travel Induction Pack included in starter pack). Staff benefits include the Enterprise EV Car Club¹⁰⁷, SmartGo Stevenage¹⁰⁸ (with discounted rail and bus tickets and passes, and railcards), and the Green Commute Initiative¹⁰⁹ Cycle-to-Work scheme (enabling staff to obtain bikes and e-bikes, and accessories up to £3,600 via gross salary deductions over up to 36 months).
- 12.10 The Council expanded the provision of lockable bike shelters by installing seven cycle hangars¹¹⁰ across the town to provide a secure storage alternative for residents living in flats or homes with limited space. Additionally, secure cycle parking has been identified as a potential Phase 2 CIL project (£40,000 allocated to deliver 6 standalone facilities).



Figure 24. Cycle hangar at South Gate, Town Centre, Stevenage.

- 12.11 Furthermore, the Council has delivered and progressed a programme of underpass upgrades, improving key walking and cycling links with safety and public realm enhancements for year-round use to ensure active travel routes are safe, welcoming, and accessible for residents.
- 12.12 While private cars remain essential, they must also transition, driving the Council's commitment to expanding public EV charging infrastructure across the town to support residents in shifting toward cleaner vehicles.
- 12.13 The Council is expanding provision through LEVI¹¹¹ funding. In September 2023, HCC secured funding to expand EV charging across the county. Under

¹⁰⁷ Further information at: [Enterprise Car Club Launches in Stevenage](#)

¹⁰⁸ Further information at: [SmartGo Stevenage](#)

¹⁰⁹ Further information at: [Cycle to Work Scheme - Green Commute Initiative](#)

¹¹⁰ Cycle hangar locations available at: [Lockable Bike Shelters](#)

¹¹¹ Low Emission Vehicle Infrastructure – further information at: [Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure funding](#).

a partnership agreement with HCC, the Council carried out initial feasibility studies identifying up to 50 potential sites across parkland, leisure locations, and garages. Following a tender process in July 2025, the contract was awarded by HCC in December 2025, appointing Urban Fox as the Charge Point Operator (CPO) for Stevenage. Site assessments and resident engagement are underway, with physical rollout scheduled for late autumn 2026.

- 12.14 Moreover, under its Garages Asset Management Plan (2025–2035)¹¹², the Council is also exploring opportunities to convert underutilised garage sites into EV charging spaces, subject to suitability and local demand to improve neighbourhood infrastructure.
- 12.15 Finally, following a review of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy¹¹³, the Cabinet approved a two-tier licensing fee discount structure in October 2025 (effective January 2026 through 2030). To promote cleaner vehicles in line with net-zero targets and national policy, the policy offers a 50% discount for Zero-Emission Vehicles (ZEVs) and a 25% discount for Ultra-Low Emission Vehicles (ULEVs)¹¹⁴.

13 LEVEL 5: STRATEGIC THEME: 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 the Council's operational emissions and overhead costs while easing budget pressures.
- 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 electricity and gas consumption across its sites, aiming to introduce decarbonisation measures and reduce natural gas dependency.
- 13.4 The Council continues with its Zero Carbon for Business (ZCB)¹¹⁵ tariff with EDF Energy for corporate electricity supply. This guarantees zero-carbon electricity and zero Scope 2 emissions under GHG Protocol best practice. The Council is working to consolidate its multiple accounts into a single zero-carbon tariff contract procured corporately to secure efficiency savings.
- 13.5 The Council completed Phase 1 of the Gordon Craig Theatre lighting project, installing infrastructure for a new LED control system and replacing all auditorium house fittings from tungsten to high-efficiency LED units to lower theatre maintenance and energy expenses.

¹¹² Further information at: [Stevenage Climate Action Plan - HO4](#)

¹¹³ Further information at: [Stevenage Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Policy](#)

¹¹⁴ Further information at: [Stevenage Climate Action Plan - TR6](#)

¹¹⁵ Further information at: [EDF Zero Carbon for Business](#)



Figure 25. Gordon Craig Theatre auditorium lights.

- 13.6 Following this, the Council awarded Phase 2 for stage lighting equipment at the Gordon Craig Theatre, aiming to further cut running costs and energy use by transitioning from tungsten and incandescent sources to modern LEDs.
- 13.7 Leisure facilities, managed by Everyone Active (EA), are among the Council's top energy users. Since April 2023, EA has introduced energy efficiency measures across the facilities, including LED lighting, Building Management Systems (BMS) upgrades, and insulation works. For example, at Ridlins Athletic Stadium, more energy-efficient boilers were installed in January 2026, whereas internal LED lighting upgrade at the Stevenage Arts & Leisure Centre was completed in May 2025.
- 13.8 In 2025, the Town Centre Clocktower lighting system was also replaced with an LED system, reducing energy consumption and maintenance costs while enabling multi-colour displays to mark days of national significance.

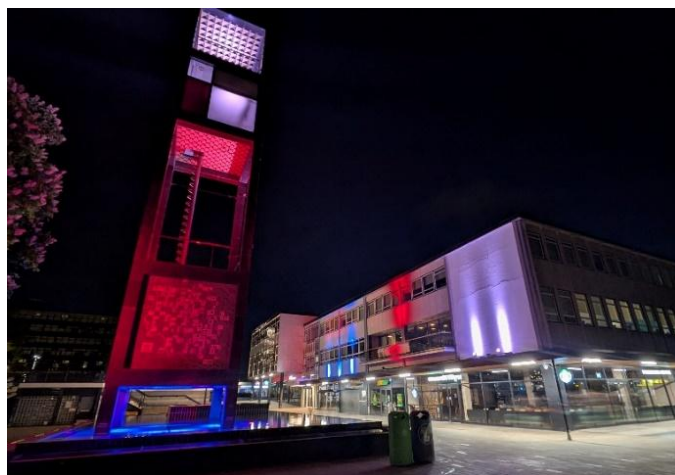


Figure 26. New Town Centre Clocktower LED lighting system.

- 13.9 The Council also upgraded lighting at St George's and Westgate Multi-Storey Car Parks (MSCPs) to full efficient LED systems with motion sensors (completed in summer 2025 and late 2025, respectively) to improve car park safety, visibility, and energy efficiency.



Figure 27. St George's MSCP new efficient LED lighting system.

- 13.10 Natural gas remains the Council's primary direct operational emissions source, accounting for approximately 73% of total Scope 1 emissions in FY24/25 (see "GHG Reporting Framework Main Report" in the background documents), with top consumption concentrated in a small number of assets. Phasing out natural gas for space heating and hot water remains the main challenge for building decarbonisation and long-term financial resilience.
- 13.11 As part of the Council's GHG Accounting Strategy (as described from paragraph 5.2 onwards), the top 10 emitting Council sites have been identified on a market-based approach (where corporately procured electricity emissions count as zero due to the zero-carbon tariff option). These comprise the target-tracking buildings (covering Scope 1, Scope 2, and selected Scope 3 assets), against which the Council measures its progress towards net-zero. To actively target and address emissions across priority sites, a dedicated building decarbonisation group of officers is currently being established.

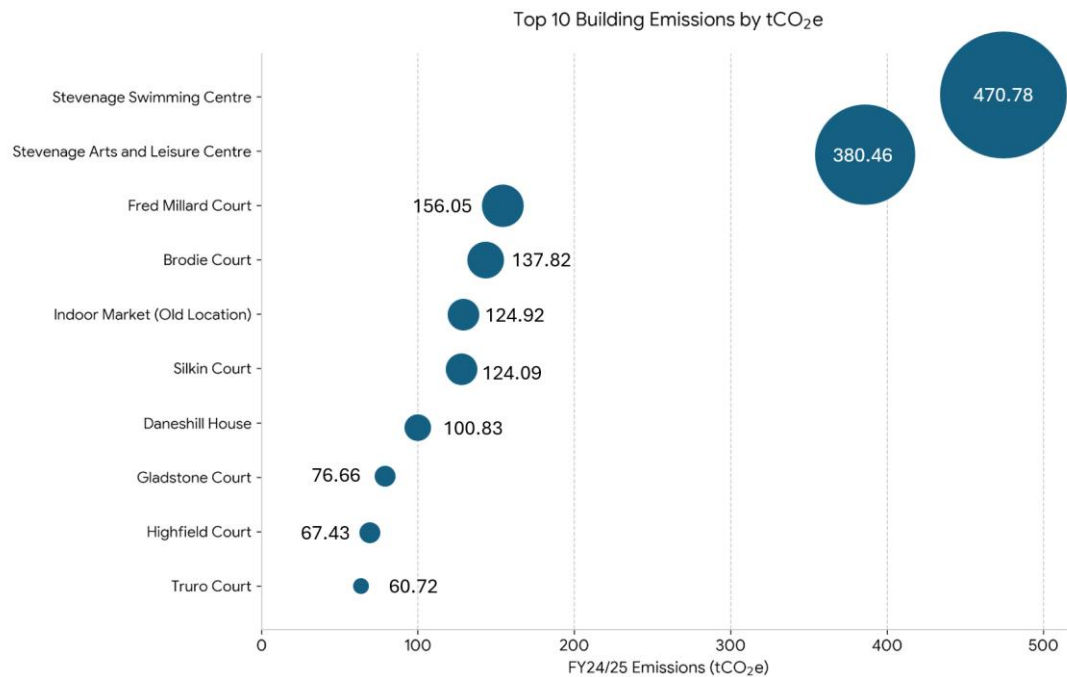


Figure 28. Top 10 GHG emitting Council sites identified on a market-based approach.

- 13.12 The Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS)¹¹⁶, and Low Carbon Skills Fund (LCSF)¹¹⁷, which previously supported energy efficiency and low-carbon projects in public buildings, lack UK Government funding for 2026/27¹¹⁸¹¹⁹. If this persists, it will constrain the Council's ability to phase out natural gas, requiring alternative financing options.
- 13.13 Addressing these emissions is critical for environmental targets and generating substantial financial savings on Council energy bills that can be reinvested into frontline services. In addition, the Council is improving energy billing and payment processes to reduce inefficiencies and costs.
- 13.14 Internal scoping work on Community Energy began in 2025/26. Still in its early stages, it aims to enhance understanding of the community energy landscape through training, expert insights, and collaboration. Additionally, Council officers have attended Great British Energy (GBE) webinars to provide local authority input on emerging GBE local funding instruments (part of the Local Power Plan delivery), partnership grants, and shared ownership models ahead of GBE's definitive funding announcements in autumn/winter 2026.

Water

- 13.15 Alongside energy, water is central to Stevenage's sustainability and climate resilience. As UK summers get hotter and drier, Stevenage's water supply is increasingly constrained, and Hertfordshire remains among the driest parts of the UK.
- 13.16 In 2025, the Council began working with Telex Water¹²⁰ as its new portfolio manager, moving sites to Source for Business¹²¹ to secure 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 is also benefitting 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.
- 13.17 Following the adoption of the Local Plan Partial Update¹²² in July 2026, enhanced policies have been established to improve water efficiency, flood prevention, and sustainable water management across Stevenage.
- 13.18 Specific policies for Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) promote their use in developments to manage surface water runoff, reduce flood risk, enhance

¹¹⁶ Further information at: [Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme](#)

¹¹⁷ Further information at: [Public Sector Low Carbon Skills Fund](#)

¹¹⁸ Further information at: [Low Carbon Skills Fund - Salix Finance](#)

¹¹⁹ Further information at: [Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme - Salix Finance](#)

¹²⁰ Further information at: [Water supplier for businesses - Telex Water](#)

¹²¹ Further information at: [Source for Business](#)

¹²² Further information at: [Stevenage Local Plan Partial Update 2026](#)

infiltration, incorporating rainwater harvesting, and reduce mains water demand to safeguard local water supplies.

- 13.19 Updated flood management policies aim to ensure new developments withstand flooding without transferring risk elsewhere, while protecting adjacent flood defences, maintaining watercourse buffer zones, and re-naturalising culverts.
- 13.20 The Local Plan Partial Update also encourages water-saving technologies to reduce consumption and improve efficiency, with a water use target of 110 litres per person per day in new developments.
- 13.21 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.
- 13.22 Practical community-level projects have also been delivered, including the Roebuck Community Rainwater Harvesting initiative completed in March 2026, which involved installing a water butt to collect roof rainwater for watering outside shop planters and reducing mains water demand.
- 13.23 Furthermore, the Greydells Allotments Rainwater Harvesting project was completed in May 2026, featuring gutter repairs and the installation of a 1,000-litre rainwater harvesting tank on a robust concrete base with a raised support frame, debris-prevention filter, and overflow pipe to capture runoff from neighbouring garage roofs and facilitate filling watering cans to support local food-growing and community resilience.



Figure 29. Greydells allotments rainwater harvesting project.

14 LEVEL 6: LOCAL COMMUNITY

- 14.1 Engaging communities at the neighbourhoods and ward level remained a priority in 2025/26. While many initiatives across the previous themes directly benefit residents or involve them as volunteers, this section highlights broader engagement, communication efforts, and the delivery of the Climate

Change Community Fund (CCCF), which relies on active participation from residents, businesses, community groups, and charities.

- 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 Tracker¹²³, described in 5.16, allows residents and viewers to provide direct feedback to the Council regarding climate actions, enabling further engagement and participation and ensuring accountability to the community.
- 14.4 Community events provide excellent engagement opportunities. In June 2026, the Climate Change participated in Stevenage Day for the fourth consecutive year, hosting a Climate Action Stall in the STEM Village to promote sustainable living, renewable energy, home energy efficiency, recycling, and carbon footprint reduction through interactive and educational activities. The event also provided an opportunity to promote Council's climate change initiatives such as the CCCF and WHLG.



Figure 30. 2026 Stevenage Day's Climate Action stall.

- 14.5 In terms of the sustainability of Stevenage Day itself, several measures were incorporated into the event planning and delivery: encouraging sustainable transport via the provision of free secure cycling parking, reducing energy consumption by using energy efficient generations and stage equipped with LED lighting, and promoting proper on-site recycling.
- 14.6 The Council continues to promote awareness through online resources, including the Stevenage Sustainability Newsletter for Schools and Colleges¹²⁴. Shared at the start of each term, the newsletter supports environmental education by providing educational institutions with information on funding opportunities, upcoming events, and available sustainability-related resources.

¹²³ Available at: [Stevenage Climate Action Plan Tracker](#)

¹²⁴ Available at: [Stevenage Sustainability Newsletter June 2026](#)



Figure 31. Stevenage Sustainability Newsletter for Schools and Colleges (Summer 2026).

Climate Change Community Fund (CCCF)

- 14.7 The Council continues to deliver the Climate Change Community Fund (CCCF)¹²⁵, now in its fourth year of implementation during 2026/27.
- 14.8 To boost delivery, streamline resident engagement, and align with corporate priorities, administrative oversight of the £97,500 fund was formally transferred to the Community Development team in 2026, integrating it directly into the Cooperative Neighbourhoods (CN) Programme¹²⁶ to ensure grassroots projects closely match local community priorities.
- 14.9 The CCCF provides 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 while enhancing neighbourhood liveability.
- 14.10 Funded by the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), £7,500 remains available per ward, per year for potential CCCF projects, maintaining a guaranteed allocation of £97,500 to support environmental initiatives across the borough. From 2026, any funds remaining unspent at the end of the financial year will be returned to the CIL pot to be earmarked for strategic green energy projects.
- 14.11 The CCCF accepts rolling applications from various groups and individuals within the community, including schools, charities, clubs and societies, faith

¹²⁵ Further information at: [Climate Change Community Fund \(CCCF\)](#)

¹²⁶ Further information at: [Stevenage Cooperative Neighbourhoods](#)

groups, and businesses. The Council aims to empower these groups to act against climate change and create local value. Under the updated administration, Community Development officers actively co-design project proposals with residents and partners, focusing on under-represented areas to ensure effective resource use and equitable community benefit.

- 14.12 Successful applications must be endorsed by a local Councillor, be infrastructure-based, and provide sustainability and environmental benefits.
- 14.13 In its third year of CCCF implementation (FY 2025/26), 10 projects were approved across Stevenage wards, totalling £28,370, as detailed below.

Table 2. CCCF approved projects in 2025/26.

Project Name	Ward	Description	Applicant	£ Approved
Bowling Green Tree Planting	Old Town	A new cherry tree has been planted to replace a diseased tree at Bowling Green while commemorating the 80th anniversary of VE and VJ Day. The tree enhances the local landscape, increases biodiversity, stores carbon, and provides shade to help the area adapt to a changing climate.	Stevenage Old Town Business and Community Partnership	450
Millennium Garden Tree Planting	Old Town	Seven carefully selected trees have been planted to celebrate the Millennium Garden's 25 th anniversary while minimising the future impact on the nearby bowls greens or the footpath. The new trees enhance biodiversity, increase carbon absorption, improve resilience to climate change, and provide long-term seasonal interest.	Stevenage Old Town Business and Community Partnership	3150
St Nicholas Health Centre Community Garden Upgrade	St Nicholas	Co-funded project to transform an outdoor NHS space into an accessible community garden for therapeutic gardening and wellbeing activities. Newly planted plants, rainwater collection and decked area will enhance biodiversity, improve climate resilience, and create a greener space that supports both people and wildlife.	St Nicholas Community Centre	6000
St Nicholas Community Centre Outdoor Nature Area	St Nicholas	A new outdoor nature and learning area is being created to provide opportunities for environmental education, recreation and community activities. The project will increase biodiversity, create new wildlife habitat, and improve resilience to climate change through additional planting and green infrastructure.	St Nicholas Community Centre	1000
Roebuck Community Rainwater Collection	Roebuck	Rainwater harvesting system is being installed to collect and reuse rainwater for watering plants. This reduces demand on the public water supply, supports sustainable water management, and helps communities adapt to increasing drought and hotter summers.	Roebuck Shops Business Owners	1650
Highcroft Secured Cycle Hangar	Roebuck	A secure cycle hangar is being installed to enable residents without suitable storage to store their bike more easily. The project encourages sustainable travel, helping to reduce carbon emissions, improve air quality, and support healthier lifestyles.	Local Resident	5000
Trafford Close Bulb Planting	Old Town	Spring-flowering bulbs have been planted to create seasonal colour and provide an early food source for bees and other pollinators. The project enhances biodiversity, supports local wildlife, and creates a more attractive green space for residents.	Local Resident	2700

Project Name	Ward	Description	Applicant	£ Approved
Buckthorne Avenue Tree & Bulb Planting	Bedwell	New trees and spring bulbs are being planted to replace those lost to disease and improve the local streetscape. The planting will increase biodiversity, capture carbon, provide shade, support pollinators, and strengthen resilience to climate change.	Local Resident	4620
Vardon Road Bulb Planting	Martin's Wood	A mix of spring-flowering bulbs are being planted to provide continuous colour and food source for pollinators from February to May. The project enhances biodiversity, supports local wildlife, and creates a more attractive and climate-resilient neighbourhood.	Stevenage Muslim Community Centre	1500
Greydells Allotment Rainwater Collection	Almond Hill	Installing a 1000 Litre rainwater harvesting tank to capture runoff from the neighbouring garage roofs. The utilisation of rainwater harvesting will help reduce mains water usage and supply costs. Rainwater is also ideal for garden/allotment irrigation, as it is softer and free from chlorine, encouraging healthy plant growth.	Stevenage Gardens and Allotments Association (SGAA)	2300

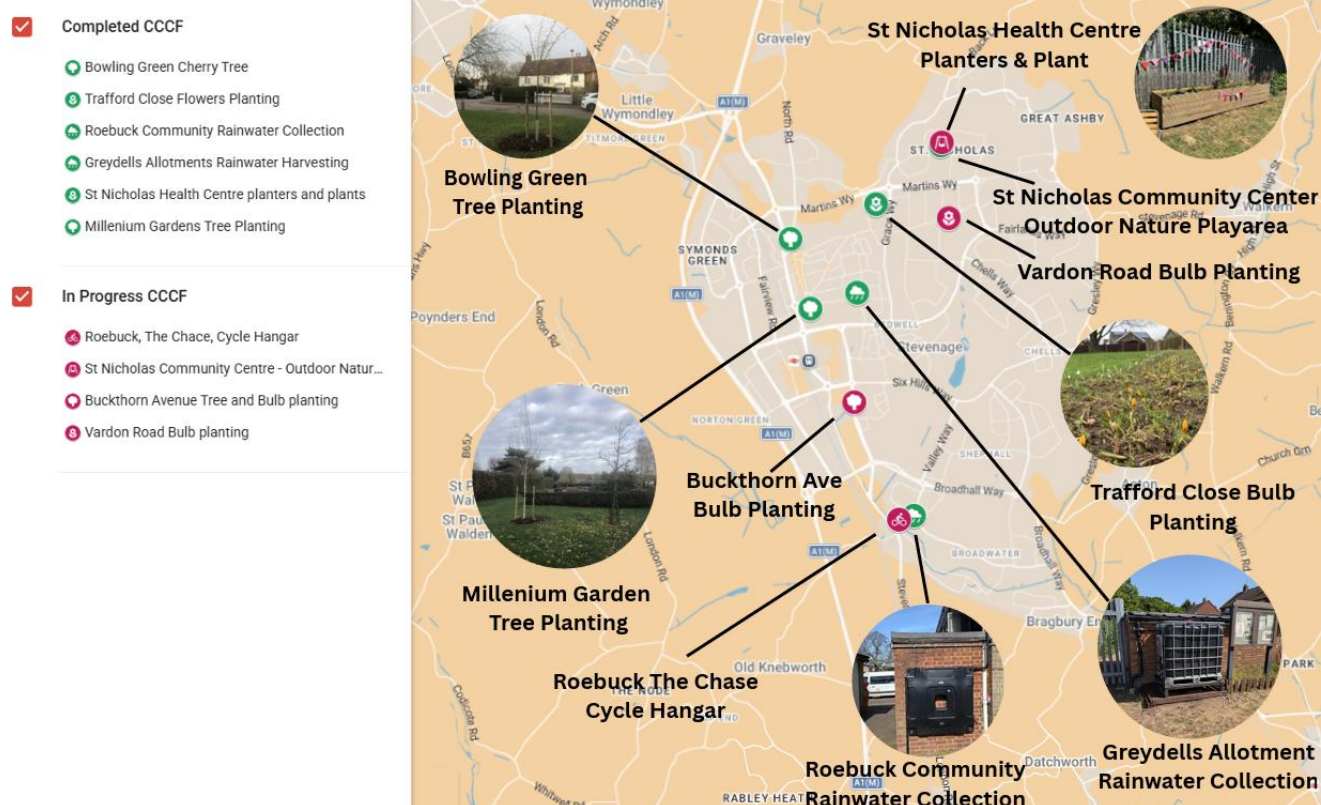


Figure 32. Location and progress status of the CCCF projects approved during the FY 2025/26.



Figure 33. St Nicholas Community Centre & Old Town Tree Planting CCCF Projects.

- 14.1 Ultimately, the success of Stevenage's climate action relies on grassroots empowerment. Through the CCCF and active local engagement, the Council is enabling residents and community groups to lead practical green projects, ensuring the journey to net-zero is built from the ground up to benefit people and the local environment.

15 STRATEGIC CLASSIFICATION OF CLIMATE ACTIONS

15.1 To transparently demonstrate how the Council delivers value, the following matrix evaluates Stevenage's climate-related interventions according to their strategic delivery mechanisms, funding streams, influence pathways, and operational impact boundaries.

Stevenage Borough Council Climate-Related Actions	Collaborative effort with other LAs	External Grant / Funding Secured (inc. CIL, S106, etc.)	Council Capital, Revenue or Resources Allocated	Direct Delivery / Council-led	Influencing Others / Leading by Example	Wider-Town & Community Benefits	Community Participation	Council's Operations - GHG Emissions Reductions
Solar Together	☒		☒		☒	☒	☒	
Your Tree, Our Future	☒	☒	☒		☒	☒	☒	
Hertfordshire Local Retrofit Strategy	☒	☒	☒		☒	☒		
Climate Action Portal			☒	☒				
Wenta Action Zero Programme			☒		☒	☒	☒	
Small Business Sustainability Support Programme		☒	☒		☒	☒	☒	
Green Business Grant			☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	
Social Value			☒	☒	☒	☒		
Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Wave 2.1		☒	☒	☒		☒		☒
Warm Homes Social Housing Fund		☒	☒	☒		☒		☒
Major Refurbishment Contract (MRC)			☒	☒		☒		☒
Decent Homes Programme			☒	☒		☒		☒
ECO4 & GBIS		☒	☒			☒	☒	
Warm Homes Local Grant	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	
New Sports & Leisure Centre		☒	☒	☒	☒	☒		☒
New Indoor Market Location		☒	☒	☒		☒		☒
Stevenage Local Plan Partial Review			☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	
Recycling Banks Improvements		☒	☒	☒	☒	☒		

Stevenage Borough Council Climate-Related Actions	Collaborative effort with other LAs	External Grant / Funding Secured (inc. CIL, S106, etc.)	Council Capital, Revenue or Resources Allocated	Direct Delivery / Council-led	Influencing Others / Leading by Example	Wider-Town & Community Benefits	Community Participation	Council's Operations - GHG Emissions Reductions
Flat Block Recycling Project (Phase 2)		☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	
Recycling Awareness Promotion at School Assemblies			☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	
Weekly Food Waste Collections		☒	☒	☒		☒	☒	
Recycle your Cycle Scheme	☒	☒	☒		☒	☒	☒	
Herts Sustainable Families Initiative	☒	☒	☒		☒	☒	☒	
Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA)	☒		☒	☒	☒	☒		
5-Year Climate Adaptation Plan			☒	☒	☒	☒		
Mature Tree Planting		☒	☒	☒		☒		☒
Tree & Woodland Management		☒	☒	☒		☒		
Grass and Shrub Beds Management		☒	☒	☒		☒		
Miyawaki Micro-Woods		☒	☒	☒		☒		☒
Tree & Woodland Strategy (2025-2035)		☒	☒	☒		☒	☒	☒
Green Spaces Strategy (2025-2035)		☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	
Biodiversity Action Plan (2024-2028) & Online Tracker		☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	
Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)		☒	☒	☒		☒		
Green Space Volunteers			☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	
Meadows Network Works		☒	☒	☒		☒		☒
HVO Transition & Monitoring			☒	☒	☒	☒		☒
EVs Fleet Integration			☒	☒	☒	☒		☒
Fleet Electrification Alternatives Assessment		☒	☒	☒	☒	☒		☒
Stevenage Heart Trails		☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	
Cycle Hire Scheme (Beryl Bikes)		☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	
Sustainable Travel Induction Pack			☒	☒	☒			
SmartGo Stevenage			☒		☒			
Green Commute Initiative - Cycle to Work Scheme			☒		☒			

Stevenage Borough Council Climate-Related Actions	Collaborative effort with other LAs	External Grant / Funding Secured (inc. CIL, S106, etc.)	Council Capital, Revenue or Resources Allocated	Direct Delivery / Council-led	Influencing Others / Leading by Example	Wider-Town & Community Benefits	Community Participation	Council's Operations - GHG Emissions Reductions
Cycle Hangars Installations		☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	
Underpass Upgrades Programme		☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	
LEVI Funding EV Charging Deployment	☒	☒	☒			☒		
Garages Asset Management Plan			☒	☒		☒		☒
Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Licensing Policy			☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	
Zero Carbon for Business Tariff (EDF Energy)			☒	☒				☒
Gordon Craig Theatre Lighting Project			☒	☒	☒	☒		☒
Leisure Sites Energy Efficiency Measures (Everyone Active)		☒	☒		☒	☒		☒
Town Centre Clocktower Lighting Project			☒	☒	☒	☒		☒
MSCPs Lighting Upgrades Programme			☒	☒	☒	☒		☒
SBC Building Decarbonisation Group			☒	☒				☒
Energy Bills & Payment Processes Improvements			☒	☒				☒
Energy Bills Consolidation & Transfer			☒	☒				☒
Telex Water Portfolio Manager Contract			☒					☒
Water Bills Consolidation & Transfer			☒					☒
Telex Water Data Insights Portal & High-Usage Water Site AMR Trial			☒					☒
Rainwater Harvesting Projects		☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒
Stevenage Day - Climate Action Stall			☒	☒	☒		☒	
Sustainability Newsletter for Schools & Colleges			☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	
Climate Change Community Fund (CCCF)		☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	

List of Acronyms

AMR:	Automatic Meter Reading.
APSE:	Association for Public Service Excellence.
ASHP:	Air Source Heat Pump.
BAP:	Stevenage Biodiversity Action Plan.
BMS:	Building Management System.
BNG:	Biodiversity Net Gain.
CCC:	Climate Change Committee.
CCCF:	Climate Change Community Fund.
CCRA:	Climate Change Risk Assessment.
CIL:	Community Infrastructure Levy.
COP:	UNFCC Conference of the Parties.
COP21:	21 st UNFCC Conference of the Parties, Paris, France, 2015.
COP29:	29 th UNFCC Conference of the Parties, Baku, Azerbaijan, 2024
COP30:	30 th UNFCC Conference of the Parties, Belem, Brazil, 2025
Council:	Stevenage Borough Council.
CPO:	Charge Point Operator.
CRP:	Carbon Reduction Plan.
DEFRA:	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.
DESNZ:	Department for Energy Security and Net Zero.
EA:	Everyone Active.
ECO:	Energy Company Obligation.
EELGA:	East of England Local Government Association.
EfW:	Energy from Waste.
EPC:	Energy Performance Certificate.
EPR:	Extended Producer Responsibility.
EV:	Electric Vehicle.
GBE:	Great British Energy.
GBIS:	Great British Insulation Scheme.
GHG:	Greenhouse Gas.
ha:	Hectares.
HCC:	Hertfordshire County Council.
HCCSP:	Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership.
HGB:	Hertfordshire Growth Board.
HRA:	Housing Revenues Account.
HVO:	Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil.
HWP:	Hertfordshire Waste Partnership.
ICT:	Information and Communication Technology.
ktCO₂e:	Thousands of tonnes (kilo-tonnes) of Carbon Dioxide Equivalent.
LA / LAs:	Local Authority / Local Authorities.
LARA:	Local Area Retrofit Accelerator.
LCSF:	Low Carbon Skills Fund.
LED:	Light-Emitting Diode.
LEP:	Local Enterprise Partnership.
LEVI:	Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure.
LGA:	Local Government Association.
LGR:	Local Government Reorganisation.
LP:	Local Plan.
LPP:	UK Government's Local Power Plan.

LULUCF:	Land Use, Land Use Change, and Forestry.
MRC:	Major Refurbishment Contract.
MSCP:	Multi-Storey Car Park.
MSEB:	Make Stevenage Even Better.
MtCO₂e:	Millions of tonnes of Carbon Dioxide Equivalent.
MW:	Megawatt.
MWh:	Megawatt-hour.
NAP:	National Adaptation Programme.
NDC:	Nationally Determined Contribution.
NEF:	National Energy Foundation.
Net-Zero:	Balance in the amount of GHG emitted with the amount removed from the atmosphere, resulting in no net increase in these gases.
ORR:	Operational Risk Register.
PH:	Portfolio Holder for Environment, Transport, and Planning.
PSDS:	Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme.
PV:	Photovoltaic.
RCCF:	East of England Regional Climate Change Forum.
SBC:	Stevenage Borough Council.
SBLP:	Stevenage Borough Local Plan.
SCCG:	Staff Climate Champions Group.
SHDF:	Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund.
SLT:	Senior Leadership Team.
SME:	Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise.
STEM:	Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics.
SuDS:	Sustainable Drainage System.
tCO₂:	Tonnes of Carbon Dioxide.
tCO₂e:	Tonnes of Carbon Dioxide Equivalent, a standard unit used to measure the impact of different greenhouse gases on global warming.
The Council:	Stevenage Borough Council.
T&D:	Transmission and Distribution.
TOMs:	Themes, Outcomes and Measures (Social Value).
UK:	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.
UKSPF:	UK Shared Prosperity Fund.
ULEV:	Ultra Low Emission Vehicle.
UN:	United Nations.
UNEP:	United Nations Environment Programme.
UNFCC:	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.
VCSE:	Voluntary, Community, and Social Enterprise.
WHLG:	Warm Homes Local Grant.
WHS:	Warm Homes Social Housing.
WNWN:	Waste Not Want Not.
WTT:	Well-to-Tank.
ZCB:	Zero Carbon for Business Tariff.
ZEV:	Zero Emission Vehicle.