

Environmental Strategy

2022 – 2024



Our commitment

The enormous challenge presented by climate change and biodiversity loss are felt across the globe. At Broadland District Council we know that we cannot solve these challenges alone, but we recognise that we are in a unique position to make a significant difference.

We know we must take a lead on projects and innovations which lessen the impacts of climate change and protect our amazing natural environment, so we will work in partnership with our communities, businesses, and individual residents to safeguard, enhance and improve our District for generations to come.

Our first Environmental Strategy was first published in 2020 and this revision sets out more ambitious environmental targets and the actions we are going to take in order to achieve them.

Alongside this revised Environmental Strategy sits our Delivery Plan. These documents work together and outline in simple terms our commitments to you, our key achievements to date, how we are going to measure success, and the steps we are going to take on our journey towards environmental excellence.

Our Key priorities for Broadland:

- Reduce carbon emissions from the council's activities and meet our ambitious target of net zero carbon emissions by 2030.
- Work together to reduce carbon emissions across the district and align to the Government's 2050 target for wider district decarbonisation.
- Ensure that our green spaces, streets and public places are biodiverse, clean and safe. Planting and protecting trees where appropriate.
- Help our residents to upgrade their properties to minimise demand for fossil fuels and grid electricity, reducing emissions and energy bills.
- Work with our residents, communities and businesses to support behaviour and lifestyle changes.
- Work with partners to deliver a local plan which protects the best of what we have and shapes the area's future to create sustainable communities
- Provide a comprehensive waste collection service and strive to increase recycling rates.



National and local policy context

National Strategy & Policy

The Environment Act, which became law in 2021, acts as the UK's new framework for environmental protection. It provides the Government with powers to set new binding targets, including for air quality, water, biodiversity, and waste reduction. The Act also established a new environmental watchdog, the Office for Environmental Protection (OEP), which will hold the Government and other public bodies to account, and ensure that environmental laws are complied with. In 2023 the government will publish new long term environmental targets.

Regional Strategy & Policy

In November 2019, Norfolk County Council adopted a new Environmental Policy building on the 25-year Environment Plan and their current business plan. The document sets out key policy aims of conserving and enhancing the local environment whilst exploring new ways to make the countryside and coast as accessible as possible to improve health and wellbeing. There is also a focus on increasing resource efficiency and reducing pollution and waste which we can support at a district level.

We will be working in partnership with Norfolk County Council on a number of projects including Tree Planting.

Our membership of the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership¹ allows us to participate in projects that cover Norfolk including Hydrogen Transport feasibility, local energy asset mapping and community energy feasibility work.

The Local Environment

The Government produces a National Atmospheric Emissions inventory, which assesses the emissions from Local Authority areas broken down by different sectors.

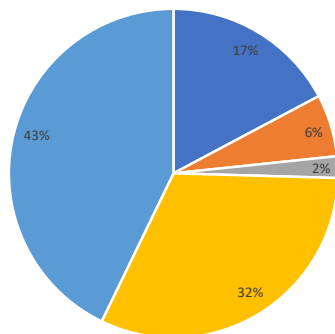
The charts below show that since 2005 there has been a 25% reduction in emissions in Broadland. There has been a decrease in all sectors except transport.

Broadland's per capita emissions are 4.7 tonnes per capita, compared to the national average for England in 2019 of 4.2 tonnes per capita and Norfolk average is 5.1 tonnes per capita.

There are a few key challenges for Norfolk, the rural nature of the county causes reliance on cars. There are also large numbers of properties which are of solid wall construction and reliant on heating oil and solid fuel due to limited gas connectivity, however - these are areas where we can support improvement.

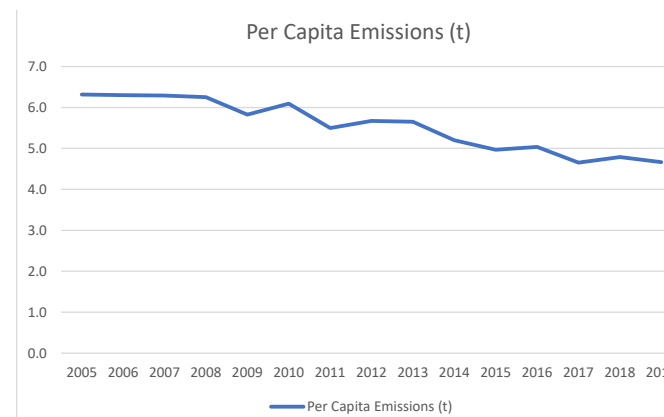
¹ The NCCP is a partnership of district and county councils, the Broads Authority, the New Anglia LEP and the UEA.

District emissions by sector - 2019



■ Industry Total ■ Commercial Total ■ Public Sector Total ■ Domestic Total ■ Transport Total

Per capita emissions over time



Broadland

Trends in emissions in key sectors

CO2 emissions (kilotons)	2019 ²	2014	Change over 5 years
Industry & Commercial	225.4	336.6	33% reduction
Domestic	193.5	229.9	15.8% reduction
Transport	263.7	222.7	18.41% increase
Total emissions	723.4	222.7	13.2% decrease

²Published as part of the national atmospheric emissions inventory by Government in 2022.

A note on the layout

This strategy sits alongside our Delivery Plan which sets out a series of near term targets as well as outlining our planned objectives, outcomes and timescales. The two documents, the Delivery Plan and the Strategy, are intended to work together as a companion documents.

This aim of this Strategy is to provide more detail and background for each of the objectives referenced within the Delivery Plan.

Each objectives with the Delivery Plan has been given a reference number, for example NzC1. These are referred to throughout this Strategy. This ensures accountability, meaning each objective can be easily monitored, whilst also supporting with the overall delivery of the Strategy and Delivery Plan.

The Environmental Strategy and Delivery Plan will be updated annually.

Throughout the Strategy and Delivery Plan we have focussed our activities into 7 key areas. These are :

- Net Zero 2030 Council
- Net Zero 2050 Broadland
- Warm Energy Efficient Homes
- Sustainable Communities
- Biodiversity and Greenspace
- Clean and Safe Environment
- Waste minimisation and recycling

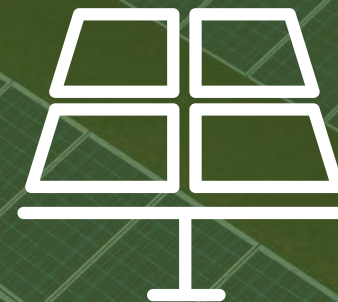
Net Zero 2030 Council – leading by example

The council is committed to achieving net zero emissions by 2030. We have committed to this to lessen our impact as an organisation on the environment. Reducing emissions is key to reducing the impacts of climate change.

The emissions reductions are based on our published carbon footprints, these include emissions from our buildings, waste fleet, staff business travel and streetlights.

We are developing a decarbonisation plan which sets out the key actions that we need to take to reduce our carbon footprint. Our approach will be to follow the widely accepted hierarchy of avoiding emissions, upgrading properties, onsite renewables, renewable energy tariffs and finally carbon offsetting.

This section of our strategy sets out our objectives and outcomes to enable us to achieve our net zero by 2030 emissions. Through this work we will adopt a whole council approach to reducing emissions. Decarbonising our estate will allow us to be an exemplar, leading by example and encouraging others in the district to do the same.



NzC1 – our objective

Provide clear data and information regarding the actions the council is taking to reduce its carbon emissions.

We are committed to producing a carbon footprint report for our organisational activities each year. We have used 2018-19 as our baseline year.

Our emissions have remained stable since the baseline year, but this analysis of our carbon footprint has enabled us to determine where the majority of our carbon emissions come from.

Achievements to date

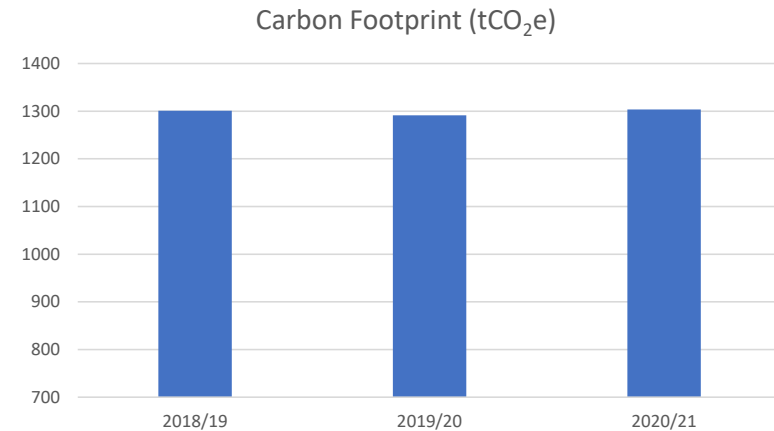
We have made improvements to Thorpe Lodge (our main office site) that have reduced emissions by: upgrading lighting to LEDs, more efficient IT equipment and automatic light switches in meeting rooms. A significant reduction in heating times and temperatures have reduced emissions from gas use.

We have decided to move our main office base to the Horizon building with South Norfolk Council, this building is well insulated, has LED lighting and a significant solar array. It is estimated that this move will reduce our carbon emissions from office accommodation by 84%.

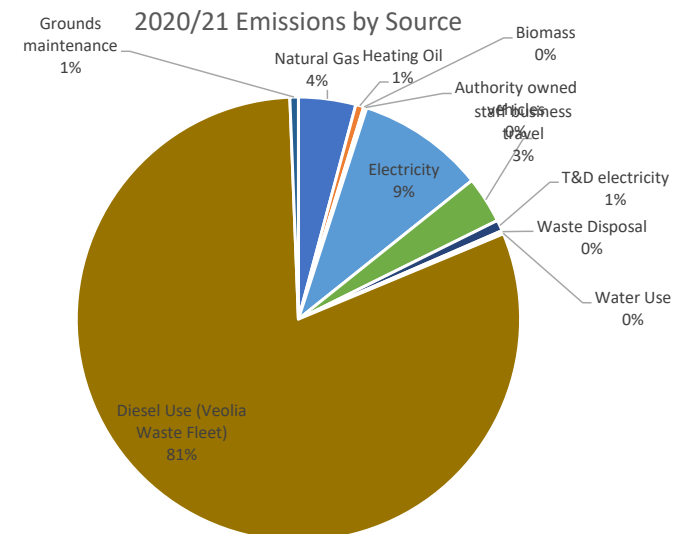
Outcomes

We have published our baseline carbon footprint for 2018-19 and subsequent years on our website. We will continue to publish these each year.

Our organisational carbon footprint



Our emissions by source



NzC2 – our objective

Create a pathway to achieve net-zero emissions by 2030 across the council's estates and operations.

We are producing a decarbonisation plan for all our buildings and activities. This will set out the actions and upgrades needed to reach net zero. This will allow us to plan the upgrades needed to reduce our emissions.

Actions from the decarbonisation plan will include:

- Behaviour change
- Upgrades to improve energy efficiency
- Switching to different energy sources
- Renewable generation
- Offsetting residual emissions

Outcomes

Publish a decarbonisation plan and net-zero 2030 route map.

NzC3 – our objective

To embed a 'whole council' approach to reducing carbon emissions by ensuring that all decisions take into consideration the issues presented by climate change.

Policies and decisions in all departments of the council will affect our carbon emissions therefore it is important for us to make sure that our councillors and staff are knowledgeable about climate change and understand the impact of our policies.

Outcomes

For all Cabinet Members and all staff within the council's Corporate Leadership Team to attend carbon literacy training sessions.

Run a series of carbon literacy courses open to all staff and councillors within the council - align these sessions to other staff CPD opportunities such as 'Learn-Fest'

Develop a tool or mechanism to embed environmental considerations into council decision making processes.

NzC4- our objective

Providing low carbon travel options for council staff including sustainable travel planning, cycle to work scheme, electric pool cars and lift sharing.

Staff travel makes up 3% of our annual carbon footprint. This has decreased recently with more online meetings. We will continue to encourage our staff to use online meetings where possible and explore more sustainable travel options.

At present we are not able to calculate staff commuting emissions and include them in our carbon footprints but we will work with partners to enable us to do this.

Outcomes

- Provide a sustainable travel planning service for staff with a partner organisation.
- Offer a lift sharing opportunity for staff based at the Horizon building
- Provide EVCP at council offices
- Investigate if electric pool cars are a suitable option for staff

NzC5 – our objective

Reduce emissions and improve air quality by phasing out diesel use within all council operated Refuse Collection Vehicles (RCVs).

The emissions from the miles travelled by the waste fleet forms the largest proportion of the council's carbon emissions. Therefore, reducing these emissions is a key priority.

Achievements to date

In 2020/21 83% of emissions came from the waste depot, mainly from the diesel use in the refuse collection vehicles. Since April 2022 these vehicles use HVO (hydrotreated vegetable oil), this has significantly lower in scope emissions³ than diesel. We expect to see this reduction in our carbon footprint for 2022/23 which will be published in summer 2023.

Outcomes

Adoption of HVO fuels for all council operated RCVs.

³Reduction of in scope greenhouse gas emissions, as currently calculated by Defra. Biofuels have net zero carbon emissions since the fuel source itself absorbs an equivalent amount of CO₂ during the growth phase as the CO₂ that is released through combustion

NzC6 – our objective

All new council assets will be highly energy efficient and design standards will promote environmental excellence.

Our decarbonisation plan will cover the buildings that we currently have, but we also need to consider any new builds. By committing to all new buildings meeting BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) excellent standards, we will ensure that these buildings have lower emissions. BREEAM considers reduced carbon emissions, low impact design, adaption to climate change, ecological value and biodiversity protection. Key achievements to date.

The Food Innovation Park has been built to a BREEAM excellent standard.

Outcomes

All council led non-domestic projects shall meet high energy efficient standards and include renewable generation where possible.

NzC7 – our objective

Reduce scope 2 (from grid electricity) emissions from council buildings.

Through our decarbonisation plan we will reduce the electricity used in our buildings by behaviour change and installing energy saving measures. We can also reduce our emissions by using renewable technologies to generate electricity. However we will still require grid electricity in our buildings. We intend to switch our electricity supply to a certified renewable electricity tariff. This will also mean that we can remove electricity emissions from our carbon footprint, which will help us reach our net zero by 2030 target.

Outcomes

Move to a certified renewable electricity contract for all assets.

NzC8 – our objective

Ensure that the procurement of goods and services considers environmental impacts and assists in reducing the council's carbon emissions.

Buying products or contracting for services can have significant environmental impacts.

Sustainable procurement is a process whereby organisations meet their needs for goods, services, works and utilities in a way that achieves value for money on a whole life basis in terms of generating benefits not only to the organisation, but also to society and the economy, whilst minimising damage to the environment.

Sustainable procurement can ensure that these impacts are lessened, and associated carbon emissions reduced. Additionally, it increases environmental awareness and sets an example.

Our new sustainable procurement policy will consider the options when selecting goods and services; is the service required, could recycled/reclaimed products be used, does the product have an impact on depletion of natural resources and biodiversity, is it provided by a local company – this can reduce emissions from travel and does the supplier have an environmental policy.

We have a shared procurement service with other local authorities in Norfolk, so this work will be as a partnership.

Outcomes

Develop a new sustainable procurement strategy

NzC9 – our objective

Understanding the carbon offsetting options available to the council.

To achieve net zero emissions by 2030 we will need to offset our residual emissions. There are different ways to do this, we will investigate the options available and develop a set of options to choose from.

Outcomes

To develop a set of offsetting options.

Net Zero Broadland – enabling and encouraging our residents, businesses and communities.

Our per capita carbon emissions for the district of Broadland have been decreasing gradually since 2005 in all sectors except transport. The UK government has set a target of being net zero by 2050. The council cannot achieve this alone so we will work with others in our district to reduce emissions. This section of the strategy looks at actions that we will take on a wider district level beyond our organisational boundaries.



NzB1 – our objective

Create a clean growth and sustainability strategy that considers district wide emissions.

Reducing emissions in the district will require a coordinated approach from many partners. The council has direct influence over a small number of sources, and can enable and encourage other organisations in the district. To bring this work together we will create and publish a 'Clean Growth and Decarbonisation Strategy'. This will use a targeted approach to tackling the key emitting sectors within Broadland (primarily the transportation sector and domestic and industrial emissions, respectively).

Outcomes

Adopt a 'Clean Growth and Decarbonisation Strategy'.

NzB2 – our objective

Support the ongoing work of the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership (NCCP).

The NCCP is a partnership of district and county councils, the Broads Authority, the New Anglia LEP and the UEA. The aim of this partnership is to help develop Norfolk into an exemplar in tackling climate change and protecting and enhancing its natural environment.

Achievements to date

The Norfolk Climate Change Partnership (NCCP) has commissioned a Green Hydrogen Feasibility Study and a Community Energy Kickstarter feasibility study and will develop a plan to implement the recommendations following the final reports.

Outcomes

Attend all Norfolk Climate Change Partnership meetings (both portfolio holder and officer groups) and provide leadership on the Community Renewal Fund, 'Net Zero Norfolk' project.

NzB3 - Our objective

To assist our residents and communities to make the switch to electric vehicles by increasing the provision of Electric Vehicle Charging Points (EVCP) within the district.

Number of publicly available EV charging points



Data Source

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/electric-vehicle-charging-device-statistics-july-2021>

Vehicles in the UK are predominantly petrol or diesel powered, producing greenhouse gases and other air pollutants. Switching to a zero-emission capable vehicle can save money on fuel costs, reduce harmful vehicle emissions and improve local air quality.

For this reason, we will encourage a move from combustion engine vehicles to more sustainable ones such as electric or hydrogen.

The uptake of electric vehicles has surged over the last four years. In 2021 there were over 900,000 electric and plug in hybrid cars on the road in the UK

There are over 32,000 public charging points across the UK supporting the switchover to electric vehicles. Local authorities have a key role to play in expanding the electric vehicle infrastructure network, supporting local groups to install and manage public charging points.

Achievements to date

It has been agreed by the Council that all newly licensed taxi vehicles will be powered without hydrocarbons by 1 April 2030.

Outcomes

- We will install EVCP at our council owned car parks
- The council will work with taxi drivers to help them to meet the 2030 deadline⁴.

⁴ In 2021 the council's licensing committee agreed that all newly licensed vehicles from 1 April 2030

NzB4 – Our Objective

Identify and work alongside the largest emitters in Broadland to identify ways in which they can reduce their carbon emissions.

Industry accounts for 17% of emissions in Broadland. We will work with the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to engage with the largest emitters in the district. We will work alongside these organisations to support them in developing their own net-zero plans - we will share best practice and experience from our own decarbonisation work.

Outcome

Engage with the top five largest emitters within Broadland and establish a joint approach to working towards net-zero 2050.

NzB5 – Our Objective

Support businesses to reduce their carbon emissions to align with the net zero carbon emission 2050 target.

As we move towards Net Zero by 2050, organisations will need to consider their carbon emissions. Our Economic Growth team works with local businesses offering a range of advice and support, we will ensure that advice on reducing emissions is added to this.

We will promote schemes that help businesses to calculate and reduce their carbon footprints, we can also use our decarbonisation work as best practice.

We will commission a series of training sessions and events at our training centre, designed to give businesses the knowledge and tools needed to reduce their emissions.

Outcome

Develop 'Net-Zero Go' training sessions and events at Carrowbreck Training Centre.

NzB6 – Our Objective

Promote the businesses within Broadland who are taking steps to reduce their carbon emissions and encourage others to follow their lead.

Continue to promote the Norfolk Carbon Charter accreditation scheme to encourage businesses to have their environmental credentials recognised and receive expert advice on how to improve.

We have engaged with the Norfolk Carbon Charter certification scheme and some Broadland businesses have become members. The scheme has three certification levels; bronze, silver and gold, it helps businesses to improve their environmental performance, and the certification is good for publicity with customers.

Outcome

Promote the Norfolk Carbon Charter to businesses.

NzB7 – our objective

Improve understanding and raise awareness of climate change and environmental issues to drive positive behavioural changes.

Engaging and educating our communities and residents is essential in the journey towards net zero. As a council we can provide information and expertise to encourage people to take positive actions in their communities. We will work with communities to help to become more aware of climate change and how their actions have an influence.

We will provide carbon literacy training to parish councils and community groups – and use this time to help them to consider the makeup of their parish footprint.

Outcome

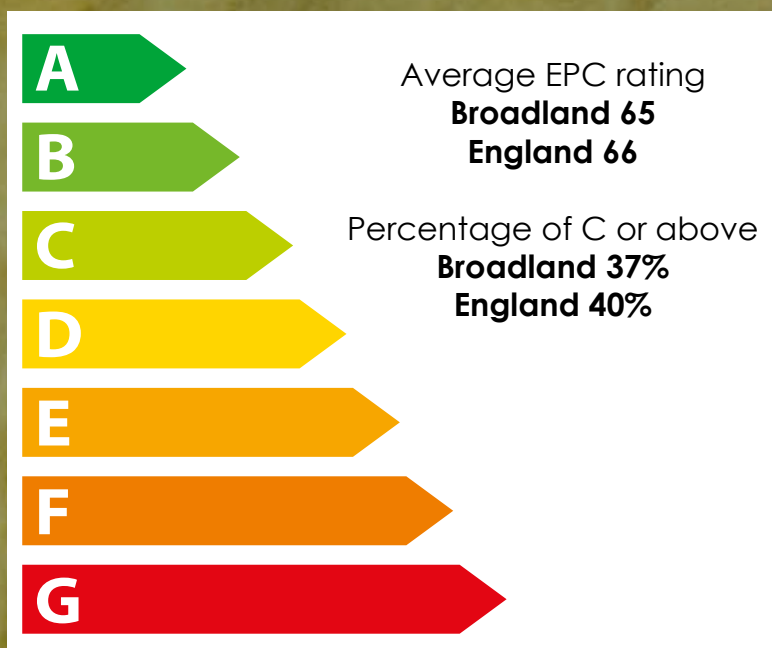
10 sessions of carbon literacy training for town and parish councils.

Monthly communications on climate awareness messages on social channels.

Warm Energy Efficient Homes - enabling and encouraging



Reducing emissions from energy used in buildings is an essential part of our environmental strategy. This can be achieved by reducing energy demand through efficiency measures and behaviour change and using renewable energy. This is combined with rising energy costs which are taking an increasing proportion of household incomes, so retrofitting homes is necessary to protect the health, welfare and prosperity of our residents.



32% of Broadland district's emissions come from the domestic sector (BEIS 2019). The overall emissions from domestic properties have reduced significantly since 2005.

To reduce emissions from the domestic sector we must consider decarbonising heat, insulating properties and renewable generation.

This is a sizeable challenge and Broadland has an above average proportion⁶ of hard-to-treat homes (those with solid walls and off the gas grid). On 31st March 2021, 37% of properties in Broadland with an Energy Performance Certificate were rated as C or above. The national ambition is for all properties to be rated as C or higher by 2035. Approximately 48% of Broadland's households have an EPC.

The Council's role in tackling fuel poverty focusses on assisting residents on low incomes who cannot heat their homes at reasonable cost.

As a council we must ensure that our support for residents to tackle both carbon emissions and fuel poverty.

⁵ Approximately 48% of homes in Broadland have an EPC. EPCs have been required for homes that are sold since 2008, for rented properties and through participation in energy efficiency and renewable schemes.

⁶ 3.6% of homes in the UK are hard to treat - https://www.cse.org.uk/downloads/reports-and-publications/insulation-and-heating/building-performance/analysis_of_hard-to-treat_housing_in_england.pdf and 7.4% in Broadland – Home Analytics dataset

Wh1 - our objective

Seek funding to continue the proactive enforcement of 'Private Rental Sector Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards'.

In 2020 the minimum energy efficiency standards in the private rented sector⁷ came into effect, making it illegal for a landlord to let a domestic property⁸ with an EPC rating of F or G.

Achievements to date

Our Housing standards team have participated in a funded project on proactive enforcement of this regulation. This has resulted in 157 homes being improved. This means that the tenants will have a property that is warmer and more energy efficient.

Outcome

Investigate and apply for funding to continue the proactive enforcement action on the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards in the private rented sector.

Wh2 - Our objective

**Encourage residents to switch to clean energy
Renewable generation of electricity using solar panels is popular amongst residents. It is key in our journey to net zero. It is also of benefit to the residents as it reduces electricity bills.**

Achievements to date

The council promotes the Solar Together scheme, this is a collective buying scheme which allows residents to install solar panels at a discounted cost. Solar together schemes have helped 109 households to install solar PV panels, and 24 households install battery storage in 2020 and 2021.

We will continue to offer this scheme annually, and promote it to our residents. We have also launched a solar loan scheme, this sits alongside the Solar Together scheme. We are able to offer a small number of interest free loans to residents to help with the upfront costs of the solar panels. We intend to expand this offer if our pilot project is successful.

Outcome

Delivery of a 'Green Loan' pilot scheme to support residents with the purchase and installation of solar panels
Increase of residents signed up to the 'Solar Together' promotion, based on 2021 scheme.

⁷ Data from 2016 shows that there are 4,916 privately rented domestic properties in Broadland.

⁸ Please note holiday rentals are not included in this legislation.

Wh3 – Our Objective

Apply for external funding to run projects to improve energy efficiency in homes.

We have been part of the Norfolk Warm Homes programme team, working on externally funded projects to improve the efficiency of resident's homes. The projects have been targeted at fuel poor households and have helped to install central heating, air source heat pumps and insulation. We will continue to bid for funding to deliver similar projects in the future and will continue to work through the Norfolk Warm Homes partnership.

Outcomes

There are two BEIS project currently running. We aim to fully utilise all funding from these projects. We will apply for new funding streams as they open.

Wh4 – Our Objective

Advise and support households in fuel poverty, helping them to maximise their incomes and achieve the most suitable energy tariffs and heating types.

Background/rationale

Achievements to date

Through the Norfolk Warm Homes project, our support officers have worked with households in fuel poverty. They have provided advice and support to these households with reducing bills, applying for extra assistance from energy suppliers and applying for benefits to maximise income. Through these interventions an additional £1,247,947 has been brought into these households since 2018.

Outcome

Assist grant applicants with energy saving advice and income maximisation.

Work alongside the Early Help Hub to develop a support financial package for the most vulnerable residents in the District.

Sustainable Communities - enabling and encouraging

To create sustainable communities we need to plan for housing and economic growth in a way that protects celebrates our natural environment. Our local plans need to take a proactive approach to mitigate and adapt to climate change. We must continue our work to develop inclusive, resilient and safe communities.



Sc1 – Our Objective

Council officers to support the development of neighbourhood and community led plans which encourage a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change by considering issues such as, flooding, water supply and biodiversity.

Sustainable communities are places where people want to live and work, now and in the future. They meet the diverse needs of their residents, are sensitive to their environment, and contribute to a high quality of life. They are safe and inclusive, well planned, and offer equality of opportunity and good services for all.

Much of our work will involve local communities and will help them to become more sustainable by helping them to appreciate and protect the local environment.

Extreme weather events such as rain, storms, drought and heat waves are becoming more frequent and intense. These have the potential to damage property and infrastructure and have health implications through increased sun exposure, air pollution and insect-borne diseases.

We must ensure our local plans take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change considering the long-term implications for flood risk, water supply, biodiversity, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures.

This might be via;

- The use of sustainable drainage systems in new developments
- Rainwater conservation and re use
- Enhancement of greenspace to promote greater biodiversity
- Rewilding and tree planting

Outcome

5 new, or updated, neighbourhood and community plans developed by parish and town councils which consider the impacts of climate change and mitigation.

Sc2 – Our Objective

Celebrate buildings that have a really low environmental impact e.g. PassivHaus or BREEAM standards.

Create positive news stories to encourage others to build to these high standards.

A PassivHaus is built to very high energy standards; they have very insulation standards, an airtight building fabric and a mechanical ventilation heat recovery system. Therefore they hardly require any heating if at all.

BREEAM sets the standard for best practice in sustainable building design, construction and operation. BREEAM assessment uses recognised measures of performance to evaluate a buildings specification, design construction and use across; energy and water use, pollution, transport, materials, waste and ecology.

Outcome

Publish annual case studies on the most sustainable development in the District.

Sc3 – Our Objective

Ensure suitable greenspace and green infrastructure is provided to support new growth.

The Greater Norwich Growth Board is creating a new green infrastructure strategy and action plan, we will be participating in the development of this. This piece of work will also include baseline surveys to assess the current levels of biodiversity, this allows us to follow progress and target particular areas.

Achievements to date

Drayton to Horsford Greenways – a project is being developed in partnership with Norfolk County Council and Broadland Country Park to improve the walking and cycling access from and to the two parishes. Creating safe crossing points, creating new paths and links into the cycle network along the Broadland Northway, Marriott's Way, Drayton Drewry Woods, Felthorpe Common and into the Country Park. This will encourage more residents to use the country park and to travel there sustainably.

Outcome

Delivery of new nine Green Infrastructure projects across the district.



Biodiversity and Greenspace - enabling and encouraging

Ecosystems like wetlands and woodlands help to minimise flood risks, regulate the local climate and support in maintaining the supply of clean water.

Biodiversity supports sustainable communities and benefits not only by providing us with clean air, water, food, energy, medicine and building materials but also provides jobs and places for recreation and employment. Biodiversity conservation is not just about protecting those species that are rare or we find especially attractive; it is about enhancing species and bringing benefits to local communities.



Broadland
Canopy cover is

19.8%

England Canopy cover is 14.5%

BaG1 – Our objective

Plant trees to increase biodiversity, community wellbeing and engagement and carbon sequestration.

Trees have a positive impact on biodiversity, carbon sequestration and community wellbeing. We will plant trees on our own land, and support residents, communities and businesses to plant trees with financial support and advice. We must always make sure that the land is suitable for planting and the right tree goes in the right place.

Achievements to date

Tiny forests

We are working with Norfolk County Council to create tiny forests in Sprowston and Hellesdon. These tiny forests are a trial of the Miyawaki planting technique, which has prepared soil and plants very densely. Initial monitoring of these sites have shown that the Miyawaki method leads to stronger growth than the conventional planting. These tiny forests will become a hotspot for biodiversity, and have had positive reactions from local residents using the recreation grounds.

Community Tree Grant case study

In 2021, hundreds of trees were planted by volunteers using our community tree grants. Orchards, hedging and single trees were planted throughout the district enhancing our natural environment and increasing biodiversity by providing habitats and food for wildlife.

In Old Catton, volunteers of all ages came together to plant a community orchard in the heart of the village. Thirty trees, a mix of apple, plum, cherry and pear, were planted by volunteers. They also planted an edible, native hedgerow around the boundary of the orchard with lots of gaps to make it welcoming to people and accessible for wildlife.

The project was funded by the Broadland District Council's Community Tree Grant. The project has been such a success that the community is hoping to add spring bulbs and wild flowers to further increase its biodiversity and amenity value.

In Sprowston our funding helped 60 volunteers including children and their families helped to plant a new hedgerow in Diamond Field.

270 whips were planted to soften the appearance of a chain link fence and provide screening for the sports field users. As well as the practical purpose, the hedge adds to the biodiversity of the area with much needed bird and insect habitat. As with Old Catton's orchard, the community are eager to carry on planting.

Outcome

Engage with community groups, partner organisations and town and parish councils to plant 130,000 new trees within the district.

BaG2 – Our Objective

Improve the biodiversity of council owned woodland and greenspace sites.

We own and manage a number of sites, from small areas of amenity grassland to Broadland Country Park. If carefully managed these can be diverse landscapes. We will work with residents and partners to ensure that these sites are well managed for biodiversity.

Outcome

Adopt a 'Biodiversity Plan' for council owned woodlands and green spaces.

BaG3 – Our Objective

Encourage residents within the district to think about their natural environments and to promote biodiversity action at a local level.

Broadland Country Park is a beautiful 140 acre mosaic of heath, woodland and marshy grassland, nestled between Horsford and Felthorpe it is perfect for walkers, horse riders and cyclists to explore and enjoy.

Achievements to date

We have purchased the land and set up the country park. We are managing the country park in the best way for the wildlife, and are working to encourage residents to visit and volunteer. We are also working to attract further funding to develop the visitor provision and access to the country park. We have a regular volunteering group and have organised family events in school holidays.

We are working to increase external funding into the country park to allow us to expand the visitor provision, improve sustainable travel options and for good habitat management.

Outcome

'Biodiversity for Broadland' - a series of events held at Broadland Country Park where residents can find out more about the habitats and species found in Broadland. This information will help residents to take action in their neighbourhoods or gardens.

BaG4 – Our Objective

Work alongside suppliers to phase out the use of peat products in council owned land management.

Healthy peatlands trap carbon helping to tackle climate change. They also play an important role in preventing flooding, and host an array of plant and animal life.

Peatlands lose these functions if the peat is damaged, for example by being dug up and removed for sale, and emit carbon instead.

Broadland Country Park is being actively managed to preserve peat and we use peat free compost across all council owned and managed sites.

We are going to continue to purchase peat free compost and use bare root trees which are not grown in peat. As a council we still purchase some plants and trees that may have been grown in peat as there are not always options to use our own compost or bare root plants.

Working alongside our residents and community groups, we will encourage others to phase out the use of peat. We will do this through promotional campaigns and when we are working with parishes and community groups on planting and biodiversity projects.

Outcome

Become a 'peat free' council.

BaG5 – Our Objective

Explore opportunities for nature-based solutions within Broadland considering issues such as Biodiversity Net Gain, carbon sequestration and Nutrient Neutrality.

The Environment Act of 2021 introduced the requirement for developments to achieve a 10% increase in biodiversity, this is based on a metric calculator produced by Natural England. In some cases it will be possible to achieve the 10% gain on site, where this isn't possible it must be delivered elsewhere.

One of the many ways our waterways are being polluted is through rising nutrient levels, caused by the way nearby land is being used, either because of sewage or agricultural run-off. Wastewater and sewage from new housing developments adds to this pollution. The pollution raises levels of nutrients like phosphorus and nitrogen which can speed up the growth of algae in water. This process, called 'eutrophication', degrades the quality of the water and harms wildlife. Natural England issued advice making it clear that no developments should be permitted near these sites unless it can be proved that they are 'nitrate and phosphate neutral'.

Through the carbon footprints for our organisation we can track our reductions in carbon emissions. However there will be emissions that we can't reduce these need to be offset, we could use a nature based solution such as tree planting to sequester our remaining emissions.

Outcome

To understand if a feasible project exists within Broadland to deliver on Biodiversity Net Gain, carbon sequestration and Nutrient Neutrality.

BaG6 – Our Objective

Increase re-wilded areas on council owned amenity land.

The UK's pollinators are in trouble: 50% of bumblebee, 66% of moth and 71% butterfly species are in decline. The most significant factors leading to their decline are habitat loss, pesticides and climate change. Pollinators need food, shelter and nesting areas. Gardening and managing land in the right way can help provide these for pollinators. We are considering pollinators with our land management techniques and are encouraging residents to do the same.

Achievements to date

In 2020/21 30 council managed sites had a rewilded area. In 2021/22 31 council managed sites will have a rewilded area. At present 20% of regularly cut grassland is being managed as meadows.

Outcome

Increase the area managed as long meadows from 20% (2022) to 25%

Clean and Safe Environment - enabling and encouraging

We all want to live in a neighbourhood in which we feel happy, healthy and safe. Our streets matter. If we look after them well, we can create clean, safe and vibrant districts that people are proud to call home. Well-designed and well-maintained streets can encourage people to be more active, improve health and well-being, reduce pollution, bring neighbours together and discourage crime. They create a better environment in which to run a business and reduce pressures on public services.

Protecting and enhancing the environment for future generations is a key priority for us. This ambition must drive our work to promote growth of the local economy, attract visitors, create jobs and provide opportunities for businesses and communities to develop sustainably and to prosper.



CsE1 – Our Objective

Reduce the amount of litter within the district.

Keeping our streets free of litter has a positive impact on our communities. Therefore we will encourage and support social action to keep streets clean and tidy and work with parish councils, town councils and businesses to improve our urban streets, high streets and market towns.

Outcome

Carry out 30 community litter pick events across Broadland, co-ordinating these with a social media campaign to raise awareness of the issue which litter causes.

CsE2 – Our Objective

Reduce occurrences of fly tipping.

Environmental crime has a negative impact on our communities as well as costing the taxpayers (both communities and businesses) a lot of money each year to clean up. We have a wide remit and deal reactively and proactively to issues including littering, fly tipping and dog fouling.

We will increase enforcement action against waste crimes such as fly tipping, littering, graffiti and dog fouling. We will continue to work with local stakeholders to increase intelligence to tackle environmental crime including fly tipping, littering, graffiti, and dog fouling.

Outcome

A decrease in number of fly tips, no more than 500 per year.

CsE3- Our Objective

To reduce the impact of oil spillages by proactively reaching out to oil users in vulnerable locations and providing advice on fuel security and spill prevention.

Over the last few years there have been a number of serious domestic heating oil pollution incidents. Incidents of oil pollution can, by their nature, cause serious environmental damage, through the pollution of rivers and groundwater, threatening drinking water supplies, fish and other aquatic life, not to mention potentially harming health and property. The investigation and clean-up costs can also be very expensive.

Outcome

Direct advice issued to all residents and businesses who are considered to be in 'oil vulnerable' locations. Information and guidance on the council website which provides guidance on fuel security and spill prevention.

CsE4 – Our Objective

To raise awareness of air quality issues and promote understanding of new legislation, such as a wood burning.

To maintain our record zero Air Quality Management Areas⁹ on our annual report to government.

Clean air is a basic requirement of a healthy environment for us all to live in. District Councils have a statutory obligation to monitor Air Quality and work with partners where a breach of national standards is identified.

Through working with our partners there are no areas that are above the national objectives. However, there are areas where air quality is poorer than is desirable and there is still plenty we can do to improve air quality and enable residents and businesses to make informed choices.

Outcome

Bi-annual social media campaigns which provide tips and information on how residents can reduce air pollution.

Use National 'Clean Air Days' to raise awareness in schools.

⁹ An Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) is declared for an area where the local air quality is unlikely to meet the Government's national air quality objectives.

CsE5 – Our Objective

Conserve water resources by promoting knowledge of rainwater re-use and conservation.

Residents and communities can take action by conserving water and re-using rainwater. This will become increasingly important as climate change increases water scarcity issues.

We are raising awareness of drought and water security with private water supply users. We will promote rainwater reuse and water conservation.

Outcome

Bi-annual social media campaigns which provide tips and information on how residents can conserve water.

CsE6 – Our Objective

To work alongside the planning department to ensure that all new developments consider ‘clean and safe’ environmental issues such as litter, air quality, water usage, land quality and fly tipping.

The environmental protection team are assessing and responding to planning applications to mitigate impact on air quality, land quality, water quality and flooding. We are going to improve the guidance by providing pre-planning support for more applications. We will develop planning guidance on these topics which will be available as part of the planning process.

Outcome

Environmental protection officers will provide comment, guidance and advice, where applicable, on all planning applications and will provide comments when consulted on all planning applications.

Waste minimisation and recycling - leading by example

Our recycling rate puts us among the top performing authorities in England but we are striving to meet a recycling rate of 60% by 2025.

To achieve this we need to work with resident to reduce waste produced and ensure that recycling and food waste collections are well utilised.



WmR1 – Our Objective

Address issues created by plastic waste.

We are committed to reducing the waste produced in our buildings and recycling what is collected. We have set a target of becoming a single use plastic free authority by 2024. We know that plastic waste is something our residents feel very strongly about, and we intend to intend to address this issue locally.

Achievements to date

We have removed plastics from the hot drink provision at the council.

We are working on a plan to remove all unnecessary single use plastics from our council buildings. We are conducting an audit of our sites and will start to look at alternative options to these plastics. We are working with our events team to remove the use of single use plastics from all council events.

There are some aspects of recycling and waste minimisation that we don't have direct influence over, but we can still work with communities to encourage residents for example by promotion of the Refill scheme and Plastic Free Communities.

Achievements to date

There are already two plastic free communities in Broadland in Acle and Lingwood and three Refill schemes.

Outcome

Promoting the Refill scheme across the district to residents and businesses.

Become a single use plastic free council and publish a 'how to guide' to support other companies and organisations wishing to do the same.

Support parish/town plastic free communities in the district.

WmR2 – Our objective

We are striving to meet a target of 60% recycling rate by 2025.

Educate residents on the recycling system to help them to make the right recycling choices.

Support and encourage the uptake of schemes and services which increase take up of food waste and garden waste collections.

Launch initiatives on waste minimisation

Our recycling rates put us among the better performing local authorities in England, however, we are determined to recycle even more in the lifetime of this strategy. We are committed to ensuring that materials with proven markets are collected for recycling and that wherever practicable, waste is sent to facilities within the UK for treatment or disposal¹⁰.

Achievements to date:

- Food Waste: In April 2021 we expanded the food waste service to a further 1,700 households. We have rolled out food waste collections across the whole district from October 2022.
- We have organised promotional campaigns to encourage those with access to the food waste service to use it.
- Waste Minimisation: We have trialled waste prevention in 3 areas of Broadland encouraging residents to produce less rubbish through leaflets, bin stickers, Facebook adverts, social media posts and prize draws.

- Expanded kerbside collection: We have expanded our kerbside collection service to include small electricals, textiles, and batteries. The first month of April 2022 was very successful with 10 tonnes of small electricals, 7 tonnes of textiles and 971kg of batteries collected. Much of this would have gone into residual waste.
- Our new bins are made from recycled materials and when the supplier takes back unusable bins these are recycled. We provide starch-based bags to use with the food waste caddies.

We are striving to meet a target of 60% recycling rate by 2025.

To achieve this, we need to reduce waste produced and increase the amount recycled.

Outcome

Achieve a 60% recycling rate

- Increase participation rate of food waste collection - target 75%
- Increase gross tonnage of garden waste collected and recycled
- Reduce residual waste per household
- We will release an App to help residents find out current information about recycling and collection services

