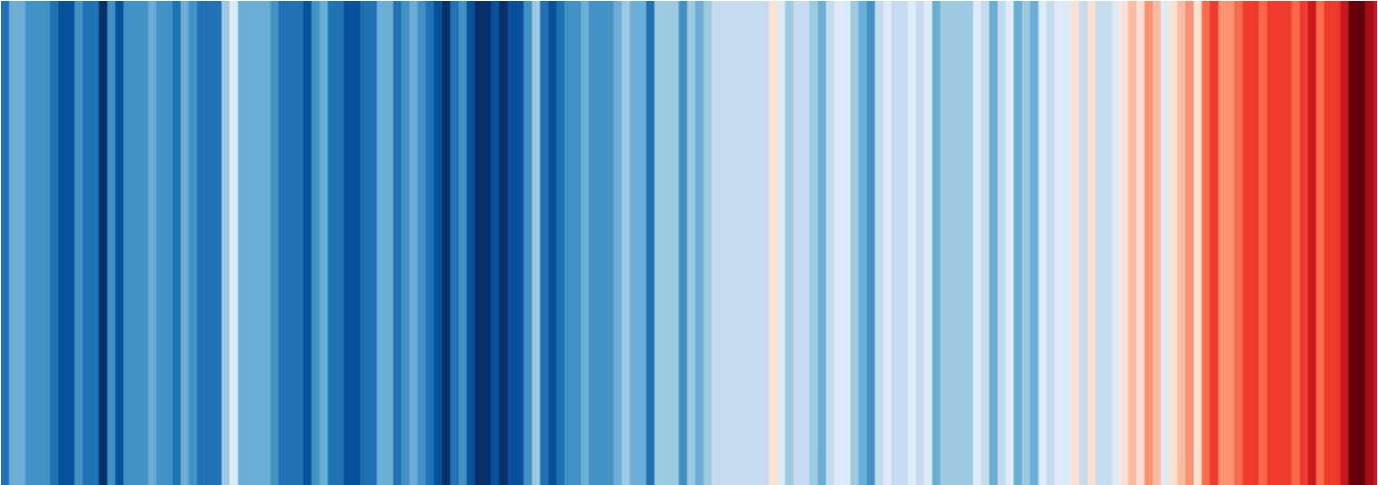
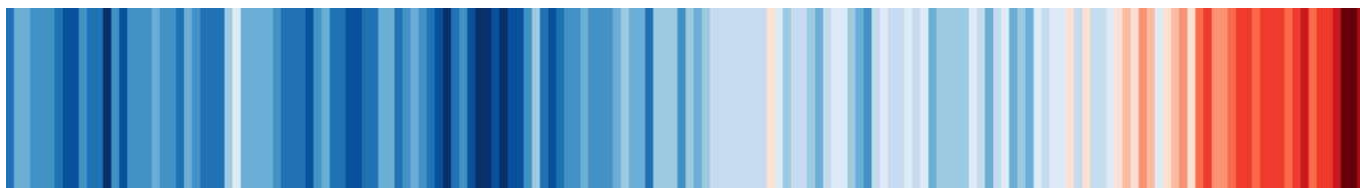


West Devon Borough Council Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy





(‘Warming Stripes – Global’ Ed Hawkins, National Centre for Atmospheric Science, University of Reading)

Contents

<i>(‘Warming Stripes – Global’ Ed Hawkins, National Centre for Atmospheric Science, University of Reading)</i>	1
Executive Summary	1
PART ONE	2
1. Introduction	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2. The Local Picture	3
3. Our Influence	8
4. How West Devon Borough Council will be changing and what we will be doing directly	9
PART TWO	10
5. West Devon Borough Council Climate Change and Biodiversity Action Plan Framework.....	10
6. Implementation and Monitoring	12
PART THREE– The Action Plan	12
Objective 1 - Energy	13
Objective 2 - Sustainability	16
Objective 3 - Land Use and Biodiversity.....	19
Objective 4 - Capability and Engagement	23
Appendix A – Council Resolution.....	27

Executive Summary

We are facing an unprecedented challenge in dealing with Climate Change; anthropogenic emissions have resulted in runaway heating of our atmosphere, illustrated by the ‘warming stripes’. These emissions, coupled with rapid biodiversity and ecosystem loss, are combining to create a mass extinction event that threatens all life on our planet. In West Devon, people are likely to experience rising sea levels, more frequent flooding, stronger storms, and more frequent heatwaves as a direct result of Climate Change. This will also adversely affect our wildlife and their habitats. In response to this West Devon Borough Council declared a Climate and Biodiversity Emergency on 21st May 2019, and has been working with partners to develop a set of aims and an action plan.

This strategy was developed during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic which has demonstrated just how quickly we can all adapt to new ways of working, living, and thinking. During this time we saw how unmanaged verges and natural space can burst with life, providing a much-needed boost to local wildlife and we saw the biggest work from home experiment the nation has ever seen. As a result, we’ve witnessed a glimpse of what a world would look like with less traffic and more people taking up cycling and spending time walking in their local areas for exercise. Clearly, this didn’t come without its challenges and we will emerge into a very different economic landscape that will have direct impacts on the community that we serve. However, we must now take some of these lessons to drive a more environmentally friendly recovery and renewal. Because of this, this Strategy will sit alongside, and be complementary to, the Council’s emerging Recovery and Renewal Plan.

The Council has committed to the following aims;

1. That the Council aim to reduce its organisational carbon emissions to net-zero by 2030;
2. That the Council commit to working with partners through the Devon Climate Emergency Response Group to aim to reduce the Borough of West Devon’s carbon emissions to net-zero by 2050 at the latest;
3. That the Council aim for a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain in the habitat value of its green and wooded public open space by 2025;

Forward by Cllr Neil Jory, Leader of West Devon Borough Council

"It is important for us to stay focused and break this down into manageable pieces of work. We have decided to break our challenge into two parts, we have the Council's internal carbon footprint, the CO2 emissions that we are responsible for and then we have those of the Borough, some of which are within our control but most of which are not."

"In the short time since we agreed to create a plan, we have brought together a set of ideas that will point us as an organisation in the right direction. We aim to be a carbon neutral organisation by 2030 and to have improved the habitats in our green and wooded open spaces by up to 10% by 2025"

"For those things that are outside of our direct control, we have joined forces with the Devon Climate Emergency Response Group to support the creation of a Devon-wide plan, with the aim of Devon becoming carbon neutral by 2050."

"There is already a call for evidence, asking the public to make comments and add suggestions and we have supported the group with the themed discussions that have already taken place."

"West Devon Borough Council remain fully committed to working with communities and stakeholders, to share knowledge, experience and ideas, and have made a commitment to working with partners."

Mike Davies, Chair of West Devon Borough Council's Climate Change and Biodiversity Working Group said: *"This is our planet and we are in this together. We know that we cannot solve this on our own, but by working together and helping each other we can make a difference."*

"As your Borough Council we have multiple roles in this, and a key role will be in supporting and signposting you, our residents and businesses, to the latest information and enabling you to do all that you can."

PART ONE

1. Introduction - A Global Issue and a Local Challenge

We are facing an unprecedented challenge in dealing with Climate Change, anthropogenic (originating from human activity) emissions have resulted in runaway heating of our atmosphere, illustrated by the 'warming stripes'. These emissions, coupled with rapid biodiversity and ecosystem loss, are combining to create a mass extinction event that threatens or severely impacts all life on our planet.

The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5 degrees Celsius was published in October 2018 and describes the enormous harm that a 2 degrees Celsius rise is likely to cause compared to a rise of 1.5 degrees. The report went on to say that limiting Global Warming to 1.5°C may still be possible with ambitious action from national and sub-national authorities, civil society, the private sector, indigenous peoples and local communities. It is estimated that, globally, humans need to reduce our CO₂eq (carbon equivalent) emissions from the current 6.5 tonnes per person per year to less than 2 tonnes as soon as possible.

The recent Intergovernmental Panel for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) stated that around 25% of the world's species are now at threat of extinction due to habitat loss and the effects of climate change. The Committee on Climate Change recently reported that for the UK to reach 'carbon net zero' by 2050, there will have to be a quadrupling of low carbon electricity, major scale carbon capture, and storage.

Organisations, Governments, and Local Councils around the world are responding to this by declaring a 'Climate Emergency' and committing to address this emergency. After Devon County Council declared a Climate Emergency on 21 February 2019, the Devon Emergency Response Group was formed, which will facilitate effective action across a broad partnership and culminate in the production of the Devon Carbon Plan. West Devon Borough Council declared a Climate Change and Biodiversity Emergency and signed up to the Devon Climate Declaration, alongside a wide range of partners in 2019.

During the opening statement at COP25, Secretary-General António Guterres had a stark warning: "The point of no return is no longer over the horizon. It is in sight and is hurtling towards us."

We recognise the brevity of this challenge and whilst this all may seem daunting we still have time to limit catastrophe and even at a local level, we can do our bit to help meet this aim. It cannot be underestimated what the

scale of the challenge means, it is not clear if the goal is achievable, however, the Council is committed to pursuing this the best it can.

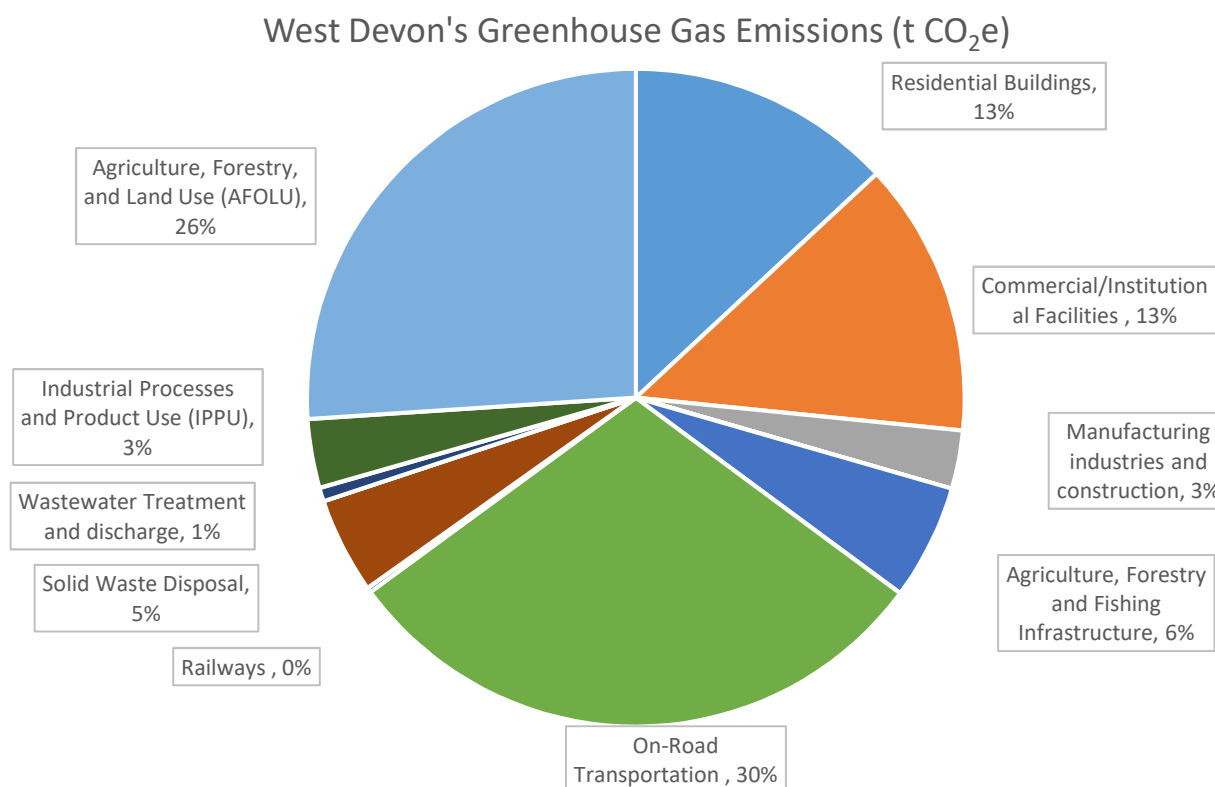
The Council does not have all the answers or have the means to provide all the solutions, the response to climate change demands a linked up approach across sectors, agencies, government, business, and local residents. However, the Council does recognise that our position in leadership can prove invaluable in galvanising a collective approach and facilitating effective partnership working in the Borough and across Devon.

2. The Local Picture

In developing a Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy for how we can become net-zero by 2050, we must first understand broadly where our emissions come from to direct plan actions more efficiently. West Devon covers an area of 1,161 km² sq. km, our area contains several towns, villages, and hamlets which provide homes for 55,528 people. West Devon is one of the most sparsely populated local authority areas in England ranking 316th out of 326 with a population density of 47 people/km². This means our residents are spatially disconnected with many people relying on private transport to get around, this is reflected in the carbon dioxide emissions associated with transportation shown in Graph 1 below.

A key issue impacting on the economy of West Devon is the relatively low wage rates of those who work within the area, contrasting with higher resident wage rates and high skills levels amongst people who live in the area. Consequently, our area experiences significant levels of out-commuting to work and below national average employment levels. This again raises a significant challenge in responding to Climate Change in our administrative area arising from connectivity and transportation and the carbon impacts associated with it.

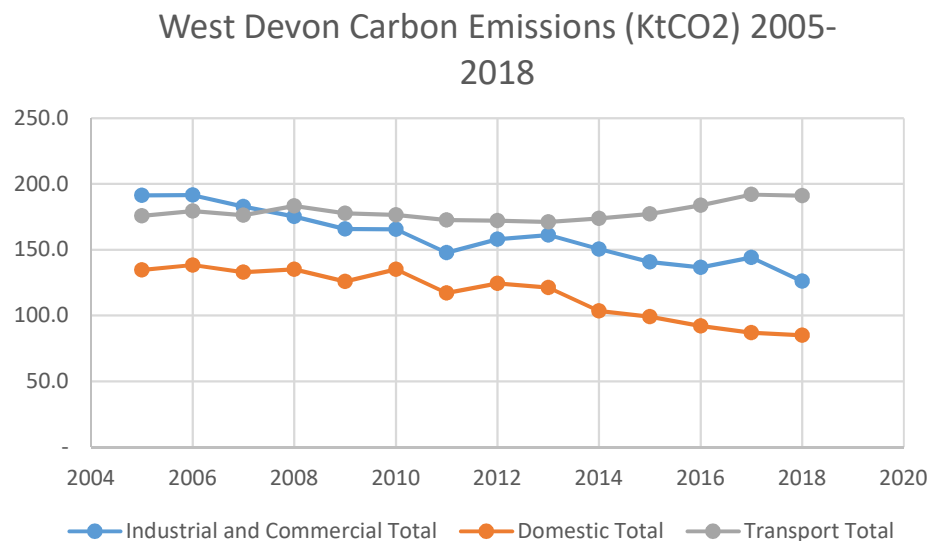
As a snapshot of total Greenhouse Gas Emissions for West Devon by sector, Exeter University was commissioned to undertake a study of all Greenhouse Gas Emissions in Devon as part of the Devon Carbon Plan process¹. Within that study, the data is displayed for each local authority area in the County and the West Devon Greenhouse Gas Emissions chart is below, unlike the yearly data provided by Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, this data includes other greenhouse gases such as methane and nitrous oxide.



As part of the monitoring of the Joint Local Plan, the Council produces an annual monitoring report (AMR) to review the effectiveness of our planning policies. Whilst this is heavily directed towards housing and employment figures, the Plymouth and South West Joint Local Plan sets a policy objective to half the 2005 carbon emissions levels by

¹ [Mitchell, T \(2017\) Greenhouse Gas Report, University of Exeter Centre for Energy and Environment](#)

2034 (this is the life of the development plan). The Council reports carbon emissions levels for West Devon obtained from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, their emissions statistics do not at this time provide non-CO2 emissions data at the regional level. However, this data can be tracked from 2005, meaning monitoring trends over time is possible. New data was published in June 2020 to contain 2018 estimates; graph 1 below illustrates this data and the trajectory of CO2 emissions since 2004.



(Graph 1: sector emissions for West Devon between 2005 and 2017, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy 2017 estimates, 2019)

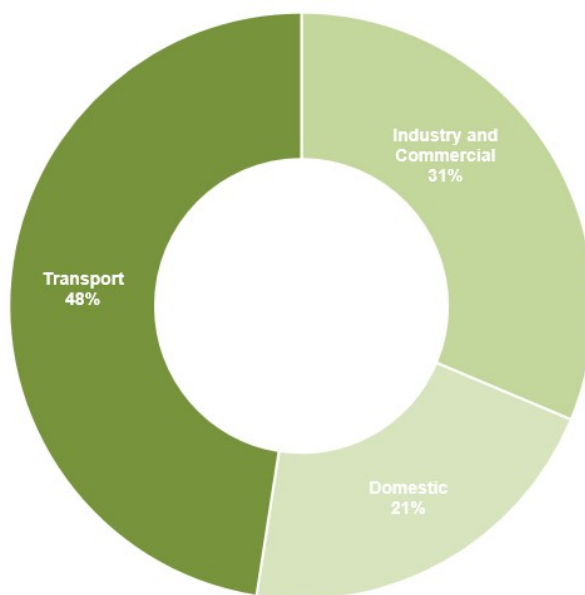


Figure 1 – Sources of CO2 in West Devon (Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy 2018 estimates, 2020)

In West Devon, whilst the trend has continued to decline, there was a rise between 2016 and 2017 resulting from an increase in road transport on both ‘A’ and minor roads, and also Industry and Commercial electricity and Transportation as a whole. The most polluting sectors continue to be Industry and Commercial electricity and Transportation. Since 2010 (The IPCC baseline²) West Devon has reduced its CO2 emissions by 23.15%.

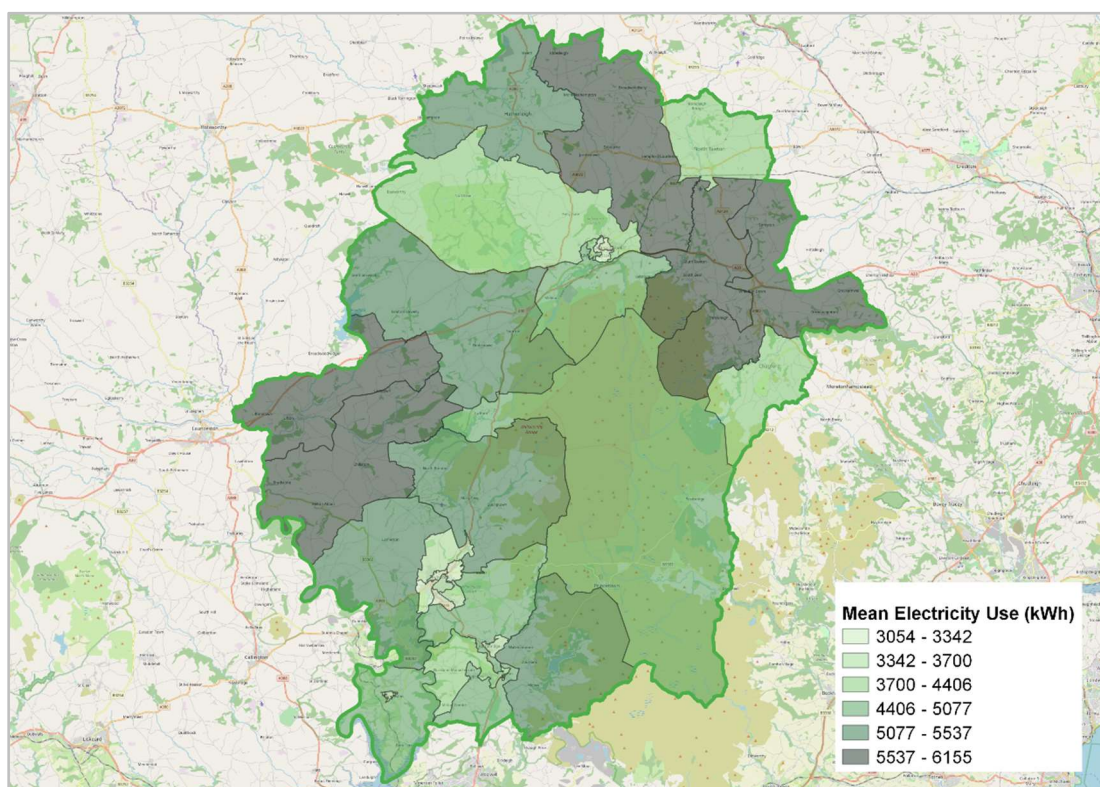
The CO2 emissions data produced by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy show that whilst carbon emissions continue to decline, there remains a challenge with tackling emissions across all sectors to

² 2010 was the most recent year for which emission statistics on all gases as well as assessment of uncertainties were essentially complete at the time of data cut-off for the IPCC Fifth Assessment report

bring these down at a much faster rate than has happened to date. Clearly then, the Council will need to help facilitate, and create the conditions which will enable business and residents to reduce their carbon emissions. This can be achieved through regulatory systems such as planning, as well as through engagement and collaborative working.

Unlike Transport and Industry, the Council does have a level of influence relating to domestic energy use through grant funding that is occasionally made available to tackle poor performing homes. Despite domestic emissions showing a downward trend, it continues to decline slowly. Data was obtained from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy to ascertain the spatial distribution of energy use in the Borough. The data is captured at lower super output area (LSOA) which are automatically generated to be as consistent in population size as possible, the data was published on 28th February 2020³. There are some caveats regarding how this data is captured, primarily that electricity and gas meters that have not successfully been assigned to a geography, due to insufficient address information, are counted in an 'Unallocated' category and therefore not captured on this map, this is further explained within the government methodology for this data set.⁴

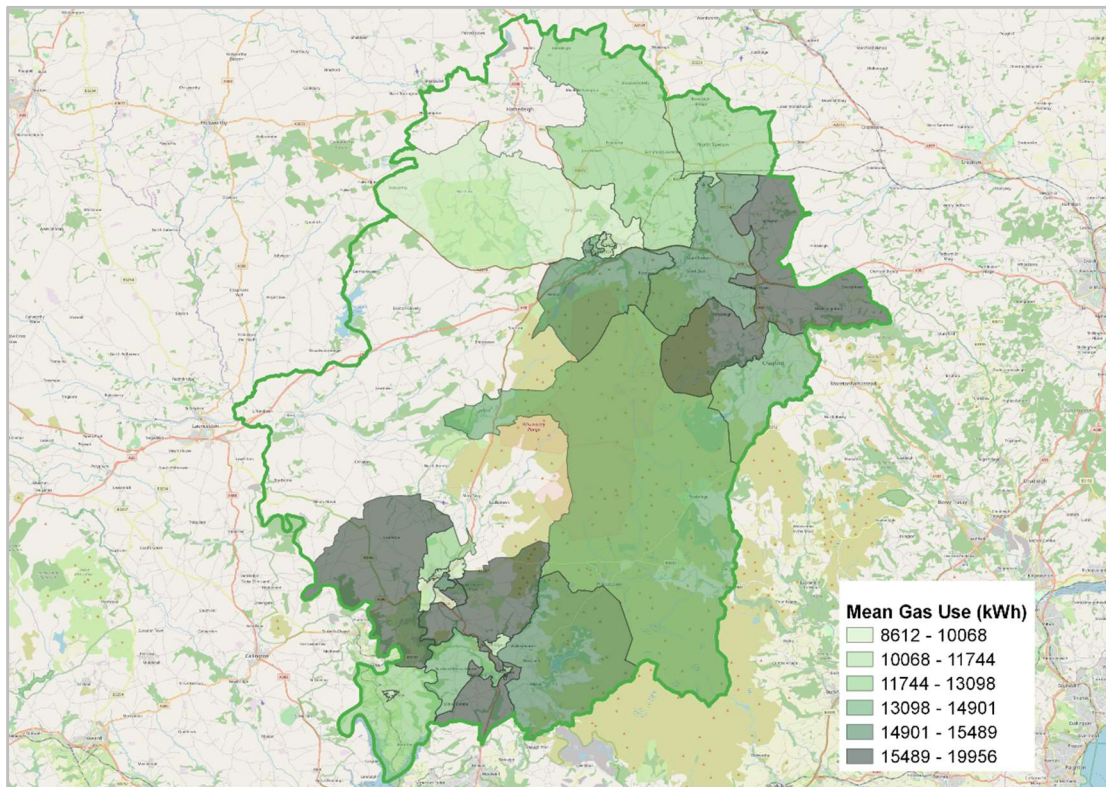
Nonetheless, the data provides a useful illustration of electricity and gas consumption. In terms of electricity use, the most energy appears to be used in the north east of the Borough and to the west. The map below shows 2018 mean electricity usage by LSOA and each band of energy use is equally distributed.



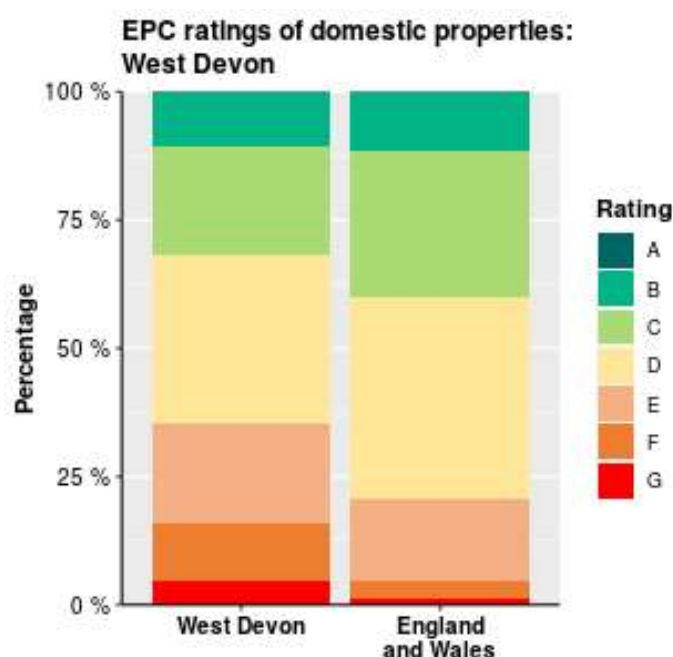
The gas usage on the other hand appears to be low aside from areas around the outside of Tavistock, Okehampton and to the east. The uncoloured areas had no data recorded for it, this could be explained by the accompanying dataset note which explains that meters with poor address information are 'unallocated'. Of further note, the number of gas meters recorded in each LSOA often much lower than those recorded for electricity. This indicates that many domestic properties are not connected to mains gas and when comparing with the spatial distribution of electricity use, indicates that home heating and cooking in the north eastern areas for example may be done by electricity.

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/lower-and-middle-super-output-areas-electricity-consumption>

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/regional-energy-data-guidance-note>



What these two data sets can tell us are areas where efforts could be directed to continue reduced gas usage but equally be able to heat their homes in a much more sustainable way, whether this is through future retrofit schemes or through district energy. To illustrate the level of domestic energy performance in the Borough, the graph below shows the percentages of EPC certificates for domestic properties in West Devon⁵



West Devon has a large number of difficult to treat housing with a larger proportion of properties having EPC ratings of D and below. Research by the Energy Saving Trust⁶ suggests that with the current (at the time) grid electricity emissions factor, heat pumps are most suitable for well-insulated properties off the gas grid or in new developments with high performance building fabric. However, many of the poor performing domestic properties in the Borough likely also have issues with the building fabric. As such, innovative solutions to tackle the scale of the

⁵ MHCLG, 2019. Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) ratings of domestic properties in England and Wales [obtained online at www.domesticenergymap.uk]

⁶ [Exeter University, 2011, A Review Of Renewable Energy Resource Assessment And Targets For Devon](#)

retrofit challenge are required and the Council will not be able to influence this fully alone, requiring the use of Government grants where possible. Of course, the more the electricity grid is decarbonised, the lower carbon impact heat pumps will have on properties off the gas grid. Equally, bigger uptake of heat pumps will also put more pressure on the grid, so a combination of lower grid emissions factors and on-site renewable electricity could deliver the best outcome in these areas.

In terms of our natural assets, West Devon is home to a rich tapestry of heritage landscapes, key wildlife and habitat sites, and important marine environments.

Existing Designations and Green Infrastructure Assets

- Western half of Dartmoor National Park, part of Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape WHS and part of Tamar Valley AONB.
- Part of UNESCO North Devon Biosphere Reserve and part of Northern Devon Nature Improvement Area.
- Part of Tamar Estuary Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ).
- Part of four Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), (including part of one Inshore SAC with a marine component) and part of a Special Protection Area (SPA) with a marine component.
- Whole of twenty-seven and part of four Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) for biodiversity and geological conservation.
- Two National Nature Reserves (NNRs), four Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and numerous County Wildlife Sites (CWSs), Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGSs), Other Sites of Wildlife Interest (OSWIs) and Unconfirmed Wildlife Sites (UWSs).
- River corridors including the Tamar and its tributaries, the Thrushel, the Lyd and the Lew; the Tavy and its tributary the Walkham; the West and East Dart, meeting at Dartmeet; the West and East Okement Rivers meeting in Okehampton; the River Taw; and the River Lew, a tributary of the Torridge.
- 2,408 hectares (ha) of ancient woodland (2.07% land cover compared with a Great Britain average of 2.4%).
- A large number of ancient, veteran and notable trees, approximately 500 of which are protected under Tree Preservation Orders.
- Two Devon Wildlife Trust (DWT) Reserves.
- Greater Horseshoe Bat maternity roost near the Tamar Trails Centre and associated sustenance zone (feeding area).
- Identified Strategic Nature Areas.

Maps of these key sites can be found here

<https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/WestDevonGreenInfrastructureFrameworkAppendix1.pdf>

What issues are the Borough likely to face?

West Devon has several flood risk zones along its waterways and coastal areas, particularly in the North and around Tavistock. Although it's more difficult to quantify, it's generally accepted that in the UK, Climate Change will bring about more frequent and heavy rain. When combined with tidal surges associated with increased storm activity and rising sea levels, many of our residents will experience more frequent flood events.

The consequences of climate change extend beyond physical impacts on the environment, it also has health impacts on the population. Poor air quality, for instance, can lead to numerous cardiovascular diseases and increasing temperatures can lead to heat related mortality, and rising energy prices can result in increased fuel poverty. These health impacts can also become mentally harmful, those directly affected by flooding can have their lives upended, and needing months sometimes years to recover.⁷ Many people are already feeling anxiety, fear, and grief due to the changes that are happening now across the world and psychologists are seeing a rise in 'Eco-anxiety'.⁸

The loss of habitats and wildlife reduces the opportunity to commune with nature; the benefits of this to the health and well-being of society is well documented. The WWF Living Planet report of 2020⁹, states that over two-thirds of wildlife has been lost globally since 1970.

The changes to the seasons and local temperatures due to climate change are impacting wildlife species as this disruption affects feeding and breeding and their ability to thrive and survive. Bee and other pollinator numbers are already in serious decline and combined with fewer insect predators and pollinators to assist farmers food production is likely to worsen. Similarly, their decline is affecting species higher up the food chain which depends on them for food.

⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/prepare-for-flooding-to-reduce-impacts-on-mental-health>

⁸ [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanph/article/PIIS2542-5196\(20\)30081-4/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanph/article/PIIS2542-5196(20)30081-4/fulltext)

⁹ <https://www.worldwildlife.org/publications/living-planet-report-2020>

More widely, West Devon is likely to face issues from impacts in other countries which may impact on global supply chains, resulting in more pandemics and increase migration pressures

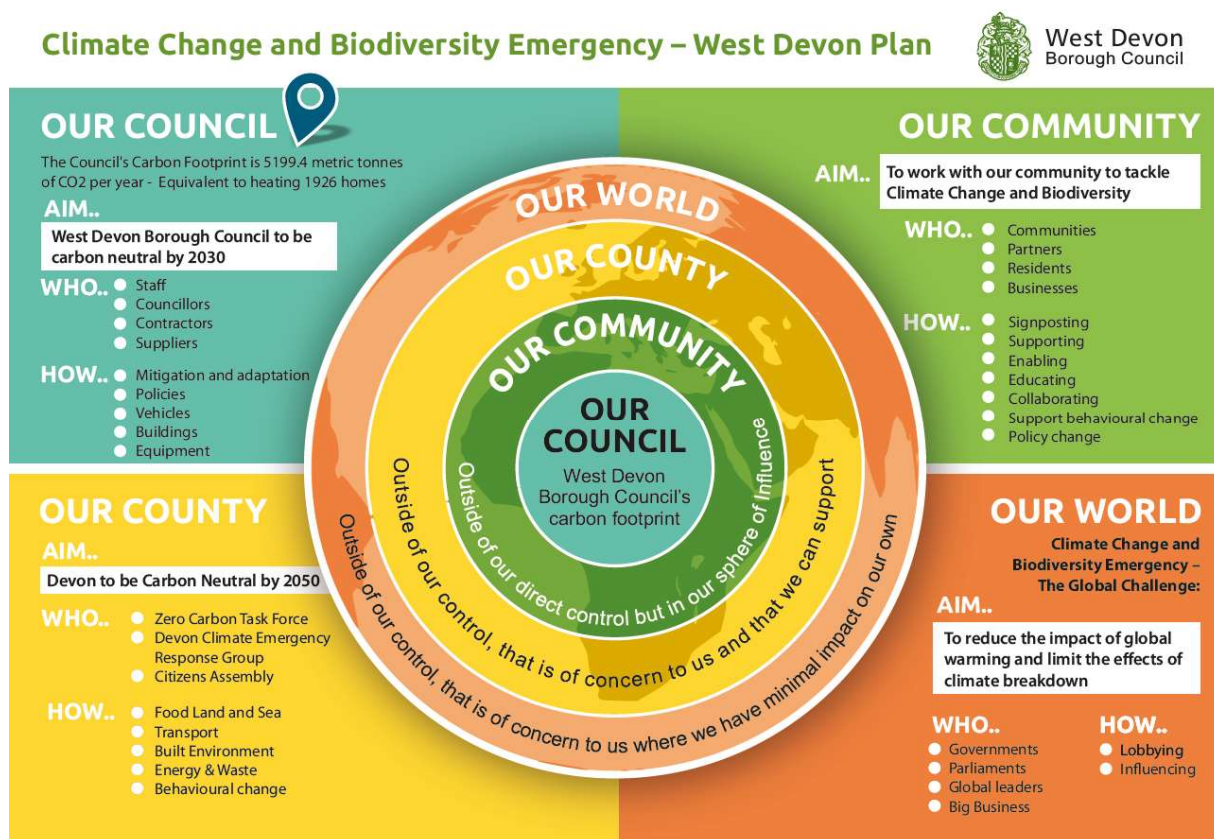
3. Our Influence

A Local Authority has many opportunities and powers to address Climate Change & Biodiversity loss but it is important to recognise these powers are not unlimited. We have very few powers to raise finance directly and instead we must capitalise on our ability to develop partnerships, provide leadership and enable a collective approach by galvanizing our residents and to encourage and support flourishing eco businesses, third sector bodies, and community groups.

The Committee on Climate Change (CCC) recommends that local authority plans should include a high level of ambition for emissions reduction, in the case of West Devon, we aim to reduce carbon emissions to net-zero by 2050 at the latest. The CCC recommends that plans should then focus on emissions drivers and adaptation activity over which local authorities have control or influence.

There are distinct areas of action the council can act on, and these are;

- Areas we can directly control/guide
- Areas we can enable through funding
- Areas we can enable through policy and regulatory systems
- Areas we can influence locally
- Areas we can influence nationally through request and lobby



The CCC 2019 Progress Report to Parliament¹⁰ points to several priorities for the Government is stepping up their delivery approach to responding to Climate Change, whilst directed at central Government the same aims can apply to us too, these were;

1. Embed net-zero policy across all levels and departments of government, with strong leadership and coordination at the centre
2. Make policy business-friendly

¹⁰ CCC, 2019, 2019 Progress Report to Parliament

3. Put people at the heart of policy design

4. Support international increases in ambition and celebrate the UK ambition

These four strands can be supported by West Devon both in its operational and its externally facing work. The authority has an opportunity to show leadership and help foster collective action through a new climate aware implementation of policies, investment, and engagement. The decisions we make can have long lasting environmental impacts and also shape the way we live. There are some key strategies and programmes being developed or altered which align with this Climate Action Plan and will be critical to ensuring success, such as:

- Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan (including future Plan revisions)
- The Devon Carbon Plan
- Our emerging Recovery and Renewal Plan
- Housing Strategy

This Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy represents the culmination of this work to date, there is no such thing as a 'final' version as this will be constantly reviewed as demands change. We expect that this Strategy will be reviewed and refined based on continuous feedback and further engagement.

4. How West Devon Borough Council will be changing and what we will be doing directly?

West Devon Borough Council has committed to reducing operational carbon emissions to Net Zero by 2030, our operational emissions are broken down into Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions;

Scope 1 - Direct emissions

Activities owned or controlled by your organisation that release emissions straight into the atmosphere. They are direct emissions.

Examples of scope 1 emissions include emissions from combustion in owned or controlled boilers, furnaces, vehicles; emissions from chemical production in owned or controlled process equipment.

Scope 2 - Energy indirect

Emissions being released into the atmosphere associated with your consumption of purchased electricity, heat, steam and cooling. These are indirect emissions that are a consequence of your organisation's activities but which occur at sources you do not own or control.

Scope 3 - Other indirect

Emissions that are a consequence of your actions, which occur at sources which you do not own or control and which are not classed as scope 2 emissions. Examples of scope 3 emissions are business travel by means not owned or controlled by your organisation, waste disposal, or purchased materials or fuels.

In summary we will be;

- Reducing the resources we use such as paper and water and improvements in the energy efficiency of our buildings, to improve comfort, lower bills and prepare for a switch to low-carbon heating.
- Supporting the public and the Council for a move away from natural gas heating.
- Promoting Heat Pumps to be seen as an established part of the solution.
- Looking to support an end to biodegradable waste streams going to landfill after 2025.
- Preparing for an increase in the market share of Electric Vehicles (EVs) during the 2020s with an expansion of EV charging.
- Looking to increase the tree canopy cover on our owned land and looking to redesign parks to become carbon neutral.
- Supporting improvements in diet and increased walking and cycling among our staff, increasing support for remote working.

- Ensuring that our suppliers have the lowest carbon impact possible.
- Promoting virtual meetings rather than travelling, where appropriate.
- Fully supporting remote working to reduce staff commuter mileage to continue working practices deployed during the COVID-19 lockdown.
- Supporting the introduction of carbon/environmental impact and climate risk assessments procedures to guide Council decision making to be included in the report template.
- Taking carbon and ecological footprint into consideration in procurement policy.
- Supporting understanding of climate and biodiversity issues through briefings for Members and Officers and sharing information through online newsletters

There are more actions and the details of these are found within our 'Operational Carbon Reduction Plan' and in terms of what we have done and what we are seeking to do, the story so far is....

OUR COUNCIL - West Devon
Reducing our Carbon Footprint and increasing Biodiversity
 The Council's total carbon footprint is estimated at 5199.4 metric tonnes of CO2 per year.

The story so far
 What we have already done to reduce our carbon footprint:

- At our Offices**
 - Electric car charging points
 - Energy efficient bulbs
 - Paperless offices
 - Meeting agendas accessed electronically
- For our Residents**
 - Promote Eco grants for homes
- In our Policies**
 - Good EP ratings on new developments
 - Policy to buy goods and services sustainably
 - Joint Local Plan – reduce carbon footprint and encourage walking and cycling friendly developments
- Cars and transport**
 - Electric pool car
 - Reduced business miles
 - Skype meetings instead of travel
 - Saved a million miles in officer travel
- For our Biodiversity**
 - Tree planting on new developments
- In our Leased Assets**
 - Solar panels on our offices

What Next
 Some of our ideas to help us reach carbon neutral:

- At our Offices**
 - Webinar training to reduce travel
 - More sophisticated thermostats
 - Water saving taps and wc's
- For our Residents**
 - New waste service – more recycling
 - Stream council meetings – reduce travel
 - More information on how to reduce carbon footprint
 - Litter, packaging and waste are key messages
- For our Biodiversity**
 - Woodland planting
 - Plant trees in open spaces
 - Grow saplings
 - Wildlife corridors
 - Cut hedges, trees and grass less often
 - Reduce use of weed killer on hard surfaces
 - Help communities to help us look after their bio-diversity
 - Build nature into new developments, e.g. Bat boxes
- In our Leased Assets**
 - Improve the energy efficiency of our buildings
 - Secure more renewable energy installations
- Fuel consumption and energy generation**
 - Create a Green Energy Company
 - Alternative heat system for Kilworthy Park
 - Buy truly renewable fuel
- In our Policies**
 - Invest in Green Banks
 - Identify land for renewables
 - Rain water harvesting on new developments
 - Implement sustainable procurement policy
 - Buy local wherever possible
 - Developer contributions go towards low carbon schemes
- Cars and transport**
 - Electric car charging points in carparks
 - Car share scheme
 - Electric powered machinery
 - Salary sacrifice for electric car scheme
 - Fully Electric fleet
 - Electric bike hire in towns, tourist hotspots
 - Higher parking charges for polluting vehicles
 - Promote electric vehicles through tax licensing

Our Aim is to be Carbon Neutral by 2030

Moving forward, Part Two is the framework for our strategy, which will then lead into our action plan which will form a basis for how the council will assist the area in becoming net-zero by 2050

PART TWO

5. West Devon Borough Council Climate Change and Biodiversity Action Plan Framework

Soon after we declared a Climate Change and Biodiversity Emergency we began the process of understanding our own emissions as an Authority. What followed was the Council working in partnership with the University of Exeter to complete Green House Gas inventory to work out our current carbon emissions and then a collective effort from

all our services to pull together a list of actions that could ultimately form our Action Plan. This was presented to Council in December 2019.

Our work began with establishing subject areas that reflect the priorities of the residents and business within West Devon. These subject areas form the basis of the approach to the delivery of the Action Plan and can be grouped into four objectives that align strongly with the themes of many other leading cities and we believe will help us meet our two primary goals.

Objective 1 - Energy

- Energy Supply
- New Developments
- Existing Buildings

Objective 2 - Sustainability

- Walking Cycling and Public Transport
- Strategic Transport Planning
- Air Quality
- New Developments
- Greening the Economy
- Waste and Resources

Objective 3 - Land Use and Biodiversity

- Agriculture
- Land Use Change for Carbon Sequestration
- Biodiversity

Objective 4 - Capability & Engagement

- Behaviour Change & Communication
- Community Engagement
- Individual and Collective Action
- Partnerships and Projects

These 4 objectives and the actions associated with them will help us to meet our targets, namely to reduce operational carbon emissions to net-zero by 2030 and reduce Borough wide carbon emissions to net-zero by 2050. But what does this mean for our Borough and what should be our primary aims?

Aim 1 – reach net-zero carbon emissions as soon as possible and increase habitat value and wooded public open space

The council has committed to working with partners through the Devon Climate Emergency Response Group to;

- a. Aim to reduce the Borough of West Devon's carbon emissions to net-zero by 2050 at the latest;
- b. Aim for a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain in the habitat value of West Devon Councils own green and wooded public open space by 2025.

Aim 2 – Creating a resilient West Devon

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown the ability of communities to come together to tackle a common issue on a large scale. Even if we do meet our target to reach net zero emissions by 2050, there will be some inevitable impact arising from the carbon dioxide already in the atmosphere. We are experiencing Climate Change and Biodiversity loss right now and this will continue. With this in mind we need to adapt and mitigate the best we can as we experience

- a. frequent and longer heatwaves
- b. warmer and wetter winters
- c. stronger and more frequent storms bringing about more flooding

6. Implementation and Monitoring

The delivery of this Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy will require input from across the Council and collaboration with its partners, residents and businesses. Given the fast pace required to assist with the lowering of emissions, the intention for the Action Plan in Part Three is for this to be a living document which can be amended and change as progress changes, technology emerges and Government initiatives are introduced.

We will monitor and report progress on this strategies actions throughout every year, however as this will be a living document, it's important to keep communities and stakeholders involved. We intend to develop a Community Forum which will comprise a fair representation of people throughout West Devon and introduce a quarterly officer facilitated discussions which will be focused around one of the four objectives set out in this strategy to deliver ambitious co-operative working alongside our residents to collaborate on the delivery of the action plan.

We will use the following data sources as a basis for measuring the outcomes of the plan as actions and tasks develop over time

Objective	Indicator	Baseline 2020	Date of most recent data
Borough Net 0 by 2050	West Devon Greenhouse Gas Emissions ¹²	648,403 tCO ₂ e	2017
	Percentage reduction in West Devon CO ₂ ¹³ since 2010	23.15%	2020
1. Energy	Amount of renewable energy generated ¹⁴	55,941 MWh	Sep-19
	Number properties with an Energy Performance Certificate of D – G ¹⁵	13,415	Jun-20
	£ of investment secured for retrofit	Data to be collected	
	Proportion of households in fuel poverty ¹⁶	12.3%	2018
2. Sustainability	Number of EV points installed by West Devon Borough Council	2	2020
	Percentage of Household waste recycled ¹⁷	51.60%	16 September 2020
	Proportion of residents who do any cycling, for any purpose, at least once per month ¹⁸	14%	10 November 2012
	Number of ultra-low emission vehicles registered in the Borough ¹⁹	153	Q2 2020
3. Land Use and Biodiversity	Carbon sequestered in improved habitat in Devon from 2020	Data to be collected as	

¹¹ Met Office, 2020 - State of the UK Climate 2019 <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/research/climate/maps-and-data/about/state-of-climate>

¹² Mitchell, T (2017) Greenhouse Gas Report, University of Exeter Centre for Energy and Environment

¹³ BEIS (2020), UK local authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics: 2005 to 2017

¹⁴ BEIS (2019) Renewable electricity by local authority

¹⁵ MHCLG (2020) Energy Performance of Buildings Data England and Wales. Available at: <https://epc.opendatacommunities.org>

¹⁶ BEIS (2020), Sub-Regional Fuel Poverty, 2018 data. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/sub-regional-fuel-poverty-data-2020>

¹⁷ Defra (2020), Local authority collected waste generation from April 2000 to March 2019 (England and regions) and local authority data April 2018 to March 2019. Table 1: Local Authority Collected and Household Waste Statistics 2014-15 to 2018-19, England

¹⁸ DfT (2012), How often people cycle, for any length or purpose (at local authority level) (CW011)

¹⁹ Calculated from DfT (2020), Data on all licensed and registered vehicles [online]. URL: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/all-vehicles-veh01>

		work on the actions progress	
	£ of investment secured and spent on nature intervention	Data to be collected as work on the actions progress	
4. Capability and Engagement	Number of people subscribed to the Climate Change and Biodiversity Newsletter	149	Oct-20
	Percentage of the community feeling informed and supported to reduce their own carbon emissions	Data to be collected with using a yearly survey to newsletter subscribers and through social media channels.	
	Number of Community Organisations tackling climate and biodiversity related issues	Data to be collected	

PART THREE – The Action Plan

This action plan represents a starting point for the Council and contains small updates and refinements to the action plan that was adopted by the Council in December 2019.

The intention for this action plan is to be reviewed continuously and supported by a wider delivery plan to capitalise on new initiatives, emerging projects, changes in legislation and engagement activity with the public, including through the Council's Climate Change and Biodiversity Community Forum.

This action plan will go through a full update once the Devon Carbon Plan is adopted to capture actions emerging from that process to ensure our plans have a level parity and continuity.

Objective 1 - Energy

Energy is essential, it supports our society, keeping the heat in our homes, powering our hospitals and schools and fuels transportation. We know our natural resources are finite, and it's because of this we need to transition to using much less, or none at all. A significant challenge arises in meeting this need whilst also meeting current demand.

According to data from the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, in 2019 of all the new EPC certificates lodged in West Devon, only 35% were rated above C or above, and 38% in 2018. Meaning many of our homes continue to be energy inefficient resulting in higher greenhouse gas emissions.

Fuel Poverty is also a related issue, inefficient homes can lead to excess energy bills for some of the poorest in our society and the health impacts of living in a cold or damp home can lead to cardiovascular and respiratory ill health as well as poor mental health.²⁰ This illustrates how dealing with climate change represents a scientific challenge as well as a social and ethical one and that a response to climate change must be fair and just.

We must also encourage and facilitate increased renewable energy infrastructure, renewable energy in the West Devon produced 55,914 MWh in 2018²¹

²⁰ https://www.cse.org.uk/downloads/file/fuel_poverty_social_impact_bonds.pdf

²¹ BEIS, 2019. Renewable electricity by local authority

The UK continues to move towards the legally binding commitment of reducing our national carbon emissions to "net-zero" greenhouse gases by 2050 (Climate Change Act 2008, 2019 Amendment). West Devon Borough Council has a commitment to reduce its own emissions to net-zero by 2030. We have an important role in seeking developments that are well designed and which support the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy, help people make more conscious energy choices, support the transition to renewable energy across the borough and improve the energy efficiency of existing developments.

What have we already done?

- Installed Solar Panels on some of our assets
- EV charging points installed at our Kilworthy Park offices
- Procured an Electric Vehicle for staff use
- Secured over £200,000 to help improve older homes' energy efficiency as part of a plan to save households money and to cut carbon emissions

What we propose to do

Id	Action	Activity	Expected to Start	Estimated Completion Date (subject to continuous review)
1.1	Investigate procuring truly renewable energy.	a. Council to discuss with community energy providers and aid and support them in developing their renewable sites. b. The Council to discuss with Western Power Distribution to determine the actions required to increase local network resilience to increase renewable energy capacity in West Devon.	2021	Ongoing
1.2	Explore forming a non-profit green energy company and understand the capacity of renewable energy generation in the area.	a. The Council to discuss with Western Power Distribution and other stakeholders to determine the actions required to increase local network resilience to increase renewable energy capacity in West Devon as a basis of forming a green energy company or advising on network resiliency or as a vehicle to supporting seed funding.	2021	2022
1.3	Review strategic scale solar, wind and hydro energy for both commercial and	a. Investigate the allocation of land for renewable energy production within the Joint Local Plan Area.	2021	2024

	community energy development.	This work will require a call for sites which could take place alongside the plan review due to begin in 2021.		
		b. Investigate the issues and capacity for Hydropower in West Devon. Discuss main issues with the Environment Agency and Dartmoor National Park Authority	2021	Mid 2022
1.4	Identify options for how smart renewable heat, power generation and storage could be considered when the Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan are reviewed.	a. Appraise the potential for low carbon heat networks, heat pumps, and hybrid boilers, including identifying current potential funding models and barriers to uptake.	2021	Mid 2022
		b. West Devon to monitor funding opportunities to commission and collaborate on future appraisals.	Ongoing	Ongoing
1.5	Aim for a higher result in the energy performance certificates.	a. Continue to apply the new guidance on Policy DEV32 contained within the 2020 Joint Local Plan Supplementary Planning Document.	Ongoing	2024
		b. Review policy DEV32 at Plan Review Stage	Subject to Joint Local Plan Review Timescales	2024
		c. Set up a monitoring scheme for new development (measuring yearly EPC data provided by BIES)	2021	Report update at the end of 2021
1.6	Promote and administer grants for home insulation, efficient heating systems and sustainable energy sources for owner occupied and tenanted properties.	a. Raise awareness for grant schemes and the Solar Together scheme as part of a Climate Change communication strategy involving newsletters, web and social media.	Ongoing as part of communications activity	Review communications activity each year
		b. Continue to administer funding as and when it arises	Ongoing	Ongoing – review yearly

Objective 2 - Sustainability

In 1987, the United Nations Brundtland Commission defined sustainability as **“meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”** Today, there are almost 140 developing countries in the world seeking ways of meeting their development needs, but with the increasing threat of climate change, concrete efforts must be made to ensure development today does not negatively affect future generations.²²

Six common challenges were highlighted in 1987; Population and Human Resources, Food Security: Sustaining the Potential, Species and Ecosystems: Resources for Development, Energy: Choices for Environment and Development, Industry: Producing More with Less and The Urban Challenge.

In essence, sustainability is about living within our means, doing the same or more with less and ensuring that needs of the present can be met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

We aspire to create these conditions the best we can by encouraging residents and businesses to make more sustainable choices in their day to day lives. We will aid in these aims by using our legislative system to create more sustainable developments and work collaboratively with external bodies.

What have we already done?

1. The Joint Local Plan contains a carbon reduction target of 50% of 2005 by the end of the plan period, which is 2034
2. Adopted a Supplementary Planning Document, which among other things, provides clarity and re-enforcement as to how our low carbon policies are to be applied and what they are seeking to achieve
3. Adopted a Sustainable Procurement Policy

What we propose to do

Id	Action	Activity	Expected Start	Estimated Completion Date (subject to continuous review)
2.1	Investigate the Introduction of differential changes to parking permits and in car parks e.g. Higher carbon emission vehicles pay more.	a. Investigate the method and systems needed to introduce (with a view to trialling) the system in selected car parks and/or streets.	Investigate through 2021	Report outcomes and update at the end of 2021
2.2	Ensure new housing developments are much more walking and cycling friendly.	a. Major development sites to consider the inclusion off-road cycle routes to link between other cycle routes where connections exist https://www.traveldevon.info/cycle/cycle-routes/cycle-maps/	Ongoing	Collate outcomes by monitoring permissions yearly
2.3	Better bus provision and strategic park and ride facilities to reduce traffic in towns.	a. Investigate the potential for park and ride facilities in the main towns.	Subject to Recovery and Renewal Plan, revisit timescales at adoption	To be completed pending the completion of the Recovery

²² <https://academicimpact.un.org/content/sustainability>

				and Renewal Plan
2.4	Increase uptake of cycling in West Devon <i>((Draft R&R Plan ref 2.12)</i> & Take a lead in encouraging people to maintain the positives from lockdown – less travel, more exercise etc. <i>(Draft R&R Plan ref 2.10)</i>	a. Investigate electric bike hire in towns & and key tourist areas in summer to start to change culture. b. Increase cycle parking at key locations in towns and villages. c. Development of a bespoke business support offer 'Go Green' grants to reduce carbon footprints. <i>(Draft R&R Plan ref 2.10a)</i>	2021 On-going - reliant on external funding Subject to Recovery and Renewal Plan, revisit timescales at adoption	Report first update at the end on 2021 Report updates yearly To be completed pending the completion of the Recovery and Renewal Plan
2.6	Promote the use of Recycled and Sustainable construction materials through input at planning stage for new developments.	a. Continue to apply recently adopted Joint Local Plan Policies and Supplementary Planning Guidance. b. Review Joint Local Plan to investigate options for policies amendments to further incentivise or force the use of recycled and sustainable construction materials.	Monitor Planning Permissions and highlight exemplars each year Subject to Joint Local Plan Review Timescales	On-going 2024
2.7	Monitor and review policies to reduce the carbon footprint of new developments (Policies DEV32, DEV33, DEV34)	a. Continue to apply recently adopted Joint Local Plan Policies and Supplementary Planning Guidance. b. Review policies DEV32, DEV33 and DEV34 at Plan Review Stage. c. Reconsider a Low Impact Development Policy ('One Planet Living Principles')	Monitor Outcomes (EPC's Policy DEV32 Checklists from Planning submissions etc.) each year Subject to Joint Local Plan Review Timescales Subject to Joint Local Plan Review Timescales	Review position at Plan Review stage. 2024 2024
2.8	Investigate adaption and resilience methods for new developments.	a. Joint Local Plan Review - this will either form a new policy or a new revision to policy DEV32	Joint Local Plan Review	2021-2024
2.9	Review the potential for Borough Energy Networks and invest in	a. Review internal processes to create a flow of investment from developer contributions and government grants	Subject to Joint Local Plan Review Timescales	2024

	housing energy saving measures.	related to carbon reduction. For example, invest directly into energy saving measures to help improve the efficiency of the existing housing stock		
		b. Commission an appraisal of the Borough's capacity for local District Energy networks.	2021	Provide update at the end of 2021
2.10	As part of the JLP review, consider an Article 4 Direction that removes permitted development rights on class Q barn conversions.	a. Review the Annual Monitoring Report evidence whether or not there is too much housing delivery in tier 4 settlements (those areas not included in JLP policy TTV1.1-3) If the evidence continues to show more housing delivery in Tier 4 settlements then an Article 4 direction can be proposed and submitted.	Monitor yearly AMR and report update in 2022	2021-2024
2.11	Allocate sites for renewable energy, in particular strategic scale solar and wind for both commercial and community energy development.	a. Conduct a call for sites during the Joint Local Plan review process. b. Commission an appraisal of the Borough's capacity for more large scale renewable energy.	Subject to Joint Local Plan Review Timescales Work with Plymouth City Council on a brief to set the scope of the work and commission the work	2024 Provide update at the end of 2021
2.12	Lobby for changes to the National Planning Policy Framework or any such replacement to prioritise carbon reduction target over housing targets.	a. Respond and input into the proposed changes to the Planning System. b. Continue to engage in national changes to the Planning system	Completed Ongoing	Completed Ongoing
2.13	Maximise local and closed-loop recycling to minimise transport impacts and valorise waste materials.	a. Continue to monitor the recycling uptake	Ongoing	Ongoing, report yearly
2.14	Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans to ensure provision of EV charging points where parking spaces are provided in new developments.	a. Continue to condition EV charging on major developments.	Review EV requirement on Minor Development at Plan Review Stage subject to plan review timescales.	2024
2.19	Explore installing electric car charging points in the Borough.	a. West Devon Borough Council has joined the Devon Low carbon Energy and Transport Technology Innovator (DELETTI) project which is a partnership with other local authorities and being led by Devon County Council to install electric vehicle	There is a further potential to consider additional car parks in phase two which could be:	Review after Phase 1 and 2 or by 2022 whatever is sooner

	charging points (EVCP) in the Council owned car parks.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chagford car park, Chagford • Hatherleigh car park, Hatherleigh • Market Street car park, Okehampton 	
	It has committed to delivering electric charging points in the following car parks in phase one subject to the necessary surveys being carried out:			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tavistock – Bedford car park • Okehampton – Mill Road car park 		Continue to monitor project through 2021 and investigate the scope to extend into other areas after phase 1 and 2	
2.20	Make use of funding opportunities to provide employment and community assets across the Borough, particularly where the market is unlikely to provide this, to minimise the need to travel for access to services.	a.	Access UK Shared Prosperity Fund if and when it's established and reinforce COVID recovery support grants and initiatives.	Review Action once the UK Shared Prosperity Fund is established and review what funding is available and how it's allocated. TBC
2.22	Investigate the creation of a new EP policy to ensure the correct use of litter bins potentially reducing collection need.			
2.23	The Council will support the principles proposed through the English Waste Strategy regarding the Extended Producer Responsibility. The principles support a circular economy approach which will be funded by producers and will lead to better packaging design, improved recycling and better consumer awareness of what can be recycled.	a.	Raise awareness as part of a Climate Change communication strategy involving newsletters, web and social media.	Climate Change Communication Strategy developed and frequent newsletters, web and social media activity underway now - 2050

Objective 3 - Land Use and Biodiversity

The UN defines Biodiversity as “the variety of life forms in any given habitat, from large animals to plants to fungi to the smallest of organisms”. The international Convention on Biological Diversity notes that “The Earth's biological resources are vital to humanity's economic and social development”. As a result, there is a growing recognition that biological diversity is a valuable asset to present and future generations. Equally, the threat to species and

ecosystems has never been as great as it is today and is threatened like never before. We are on the verge of a mass extinction: within the next 10 years, around 1 million species may be wiped off the surface of the planet. That's one out of every four known species.²³ A functioning ecosystem is critical to supporting humanity's needs which rely on a relatively stable climate. Flows of freshwater, agricultural pest and disease-vector control and pollination for crops are interrelated facets of a functioning eco-system.²⁴ The continued decline of mammal, reptile, avian, vertebrate and amphibian species loss over time will lead to a continued defaunation. This will be a primary driver in global ecological change.²⁵

Appropriate land use and protecting biodiversity also has significant social, health and wellbeing value. We recognise the value in being able to see, smell and touch a rich tapestry of natural spaces both on private and publically owned land. For example, this is evident through reduced intervention from a land management perspective and reduced usage of herbicides and pesticides. Increased access to nature and thriving natural spaces within our towns and villages can help foster empathy for the environment which can lead to people making more environmentally conscious choices.²⁶

The Council can lead by example through the reduced cutting of our greenspaces. There is often a pressure for spaces to 'look tidy' but this often comes at a cost. With frequent grass cutting, wildflowers have little chance to bloom which then impacts on insect population, which then has a knock-on effect on flora and fauna. Here is what we will aim to do;

What have we already done?

- Committed to contributing to the baseline mapping for the emerging Devon Nature Recovery Network Mapping project. This will be critical in guiding funding and developer contributions towards offsite compensation to help a Devon wide Nature Recovery Network to establish, ensuring the right projects and interventions are targeted in the right areas.
- Committed to helping fund the Ancient Woodland Inventory review, the outcomes of which are expected in 2022.
- We produce wood chip each year for use on shrub beds and under hedge lines and we also have a bio shredder producing compost that we also use on beds.
- Eliminated the use of fertiliser and weed killer on plant beds.

What we propose to do

Id	Action	Activity	Expected Start	Estimated Completion Date (subject to continuous review)
3.1	Securing tree planting through development proposals and Biodiversity Net Gain from new development including pushing the new Defra Biodiversity Metric 2.0 at pre-app and for new applications.	a. Clear numbers now in a newly adopted Supplementary Planning Document for tree replacement. For new planting, this is tied to a 10% biodiversity net gain requirement as required by the	Continue to apply policy and Supplementary Planning Document requirements subject to Joint Local Plan Review timescales.	2021-2024

²³ <https://p.widencdn.net/bedxcl/WED-2020-Working-Brief>

²⁴ Ceballos G, Ehrlich P, Raven P (2020) Vertebrates on the brink as indicators of biological annihilation and the sixth mass extinction. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences Jun 2020, 201922686; DOI: 10.1073/pnas.1922686117

²⁵ R. Dirzo et al (2014), Defaunation in the Anthropocene. Science 345, 401–406

²⁶ Lumber R, Richardson M, Sheffield D (2017) Beyond knowing nature: Contact, emotion, compassion, meaning, and beauty are pathways to nature connection. PLoS ONE 12(5): e0177186. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0177186>

	Supplementary Planning Document using the DEFRA biodiversity metric.			
		b. Review process and method for spending 10% net gain developer contributions.	To review once the outcome of the Nature Recovery Network Project is finished.	2024
		c. Review metrics and policy requirements at Plan Review Stage.	Subject to Joint Local Plan Review Timescales	2024
3.2	Support more approaches by communities for tree planting on our land where there aren't any trees and is consistent with land use and not likely to lead to conflict with neighbours or conflict with the outcomes from the Devon Nature Recovery Network Mapping project (DNRN) (i.e. right trees in the right place)	a. Investigate the creation of a formal system whereby someone with an ability to pay for the upfront cost of planting and a contractual arrangement for West Devon to manage as part it's a new grounds maintenance scheme.	TBC - Develop project once the DNRN project is finalised (expected 2021)	Ongoing
3.3	Develop and adopt a more biodiversity/environmentally conscious Grounds Maintenance procedure.	<p>a. A new Grounds Maintenance procedure with a review of the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fix more carbon in vegetation cover (relaxing cutting regime) whilst managing community expectations and a level of complaint about 'unkempt/untidy' sites, lazy Councils, etc.) - Scrape sites, reseed with wildflower mix, annual cut, use mixes that increase soil carbon sequestration - Look to reduce/eliminate weed killer use on hard surfaces 	2021.	End of 2021

		- Assess potential to increase wildlife value balanced against amenity requirements (e.g. for short grass for dog walking/recreation, etc.)		
3.4	Pushing tree planting agenda within Neighbourhood Plans (allocating spaces for woodland creation and sustainable management) Supporting mapping of local ecological networks/corridors within Neighbourhood Plans.	a. Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy to be sent to Neighbourhood Plan groups to deliver on actions and provide advice on how to apply findings from the Devon Nature Recovery Network process.	Ongoing	Ongoing
3.5	Ring-fencing and promoting a % of Members grant schemes (SCLF/Localities Fund) towards tree planting schemes for community groups, Town and Parish Councils, or money towards a 'Tree Planting grant scheme' (we did this in 2010 for the International Year of Biodiversity)	a. Investigate options with a view to developing a formal process and framework	2021	Report update at the end of 2021
3.6	Aim to develop and adopt a Natural Environment Design Guide to support Development Management proposals – establishing the importance of street trees in urban/built environment proposals, trees in new hedge lines, and tree/woodland planting as part of on-site public open space provision.	a. Investigate and review during the Joint Local Plan Review stage and using the outcomes from the Nature Recovery Network Project.	TBC.	2024
3.7	Establish natural coastal and flood management approaches to increase carbon sequestration, reduce erosion, and deliver improved catchment management.	a. Investigate how the Council can influence this and establish what direct actions the Council can take and what actions the Council can contribute to, for example through partnerships	Scope a project brief in 2021 setting out the context, current understanding to inform potential actions.	Report update at the end of 2021
3.8	Investigate the potential to apply a % management fee to offsite compensation/Biodiversity Net Gain payments (via s106) to part-fund a new/existing role (there will be an additional pressure) in terms of findings sites to delivery	a. Review in 2021 once a fund of Biodiversity Net Gain Payments has built.	TBC	TBC

	<p>this offsite habitat creation (which the LA could either buy and manage or work in partnership with another, e.g. DWT, RSPB).</p>			
3.9	<p>New development led by West Devon Borough Council to aim to be exemplar (e.g. Building with Nature, bird and bat boxes, good design with GI, etc.).</p>		Ongoing	2020-2050
3.11	<p>Contribute to the creation of a Devon Nature Network and assist with the recovery of Devon's biosphere.</p>	<p>a. Enable landowners to express an interest in hosting biodiversity net gain initiatives related to development</p>	<p>Develop project once the DNRN project is finalised (expected 2021)</p>	Ongoing
		<p>b. Potentially allocate land for Carbon Sequestration as part of Joint Local Plan Review</p>	<p>Subject to Joint Local Plan Review Timescales</p>	2024
		<p>c. Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan reviews to incorporate the principles of the Land Use Framework when setting spatial planning policies and allocating land for development</p>	<p>In 2021, provide a point of contact for assistance (Neighbourhood Plan Team & Climate Change Specialist)</p>	Ongoing
		<p>d. Support community land ownership and management by engaging with communities to designate land/farms as community assets under the Community Right to Bid scheme.</p>		Ongoing
3.12	<p>WDBC engages with members of the public and farmers to look at alternatives to using herbicides and pesticides (in particular glyphosate).</p>	<p>a. To form part our communications and outreach work in the first instance</p>	2021	Ongoing

Objective 4 - Capability and Engagement

If we are going to meet our aim to become net-zero by 2050, 'collective action' is essential. Many people throughout the area are enthusiastic about rising up to the challenge of reducing carbon emissions and reversing the decline in biodiversity, but may not have the tools or knowledge to enable them to make lasting change.

By giving the community and businesses the tools, support and encouragement that they need, only then can collective action be truly unlocked to enable us to rapidly speed up the rate of change needed to address the pressing issues we face.

A recent study by the Centre for Research into Energy Demand Solutions (CREDS) demonstrated that household activities account for around two-thirds of global greenhouse gases. The Centre also identified some key areas where households can contribute most to reducing their carbon footprint.²⁷

There's no mistaking that achieving net-zero emissions requires people to do things differently. Residents need to be engaged in the challenge and policy and actions should be designed to reflect this to bring people on the journey through encouragement and collaboration. With a population of 55,528²⁸ and an area containing 3155 businesses²⁹, there remains a significant potential to reduce carbon emissions collectively in collaboration with one another. Part of our engagement work will involve the creation of Community Boards to align our plans with the Borough and have positive engagement.

Research produced by the Behavioural Insights Team and Center for Behavior & the Environment³⁰ highlighted an important facet to environmental engagement. Guilt-based messaging, which is often common in environmental campaigns, causes defensiveness and disengagement. Positive emotions, building rapport and having shared values can be more effective at eliciting engagement. Therefore, the approach we will take will be to continually promote sustainable norms in the work we do, to effectively reach as many people to create a 'new normal', to motivate and ease the change.

What have we already done?

- We have set up a new Climate Change and Biodiversity bulletin which was first issued in August 2020
- Employed a Climate Change Specialist who is to act as a point of contact for interested people and organisations
- Improved our social media activity on Climate and Biodiversity related issues

What we propose to do

Id	Action	Activity	Expected start	Estimated Completion Date (subject to continuous review)
4.1	Raise awareness of Climate Change and Biodiversity issues as part of a communication strategy involving newsletters, web updates and social media activity.	a. A new engagement scheme to inform and advise our residents on the following issues; - Encourage individuals to plant wildflowers and maintain environments which encourage pollinators, such	Climate Change Communication Strategy adopted with frequent newsletters, web and social media activity.	Newsletter to continue monthly, encourage more sign-ups each year. Otherwise, objectives to continue yearly and progress/feedback to be monitored when the strategy is reviewed.

²⁷ Ivanova, D., Barrett, J., Wiedenhofer, D., Macura, B., Callaghan, M. and Creutzig, F. 2020.

<https://www.creds.ac.uk/creds-study-uncovers-best-ways-to-change-consumption-to-cut-carbon-footprint/>

²⁸ ONS, population Estimates for UK, England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland: mid-2018-April-2019-geography

²⁹ ONS, 2020. UK business: activity, size and location

³⁰ [Rare and The Behavioural Insights Team. \(2019\). Behavior Change For Nature: A Behavioral](#)

as bees, to thrive.

- Encourage individuals to look at the impact of their diet and consider reducing their meat consumption, and increase the proportion of in-season, locally grown food eaten across Devon.
- Support individuals to make better transport choices, this will require better infrastructure, however.
- Provide advice on choosing truly renewable energy electricity tariffs (rather than REGOS / greenwashing)
- Encourage reduced energy consumption at home – install greater insulation, use less hot water, use less heating, turn off electrical appliances when not in use, don't use unnecessary appliances like tumble dryer etc.
- Inform residents about how they can recycle. Link in more with recycle Devon and all of the other efforts that people are going around the Borough.
- Promote roof and window gardening for

		those without traditional garden spaces (Draft R&R Plan ref 2.9).		
		- Involve residents about what we are doing with climate change.		
4.2	Volunteer/support collective action via community groups and provide time and resourcing to Town and Parish Councils.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Have a presence at community events. b. Develop a 'Community Forum' of stakeholders in the area to discuss actions and collaborate. c. Work with Town and Parish Councils over changes to their practices and activity they can do to contribute to local, borough and county action plans. 	Creation of a Community Forum.	By February 2021

Glossary

Anthropogenic - environmental pollution and pollutants originating in human activity

Annual monitoring report - In the town planning system in England and Wales, the Annual Monitoring Report is one of a number of documents submitted to Government by a local planning authority at the end of December each year to assess the progress and the effectiveness of its development plan policies

Biodiversity Net Gain - Biodiversity Net Gain is an approach to development that leaves biodiversity in a better state than before

Brundtland Commission - Formerly known as the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), the Brundtland Commission's aim is to unite countries to pursue sustainable development together

Carbon Sequestration - The capture and storage of carbon that would otherwise be emitted to, or remain, in the atmosphere.

Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019 - an Act of Parliament to set a target for the year 2050 for the reduction of targeted greenhouse gas emissions by 100%

Committee on Climate Change (CCC) - Independent advisory group to the government on building a low-carbon economy and preparing for climate change.

Convention on Biological Diversity - The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), known informally as the Biodiversity Convention, is a multilateral treaty. The Convention has three main goals including the conservation of biological diversity (or biodiversity); the sustainable use of its components; and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from genetic resources.

District Energy Network – District Energy is a process of heating, cooling, or powering a group of buildings from centralised source, such as solar thermal, geothermal heat or waste heat from another nearby source.

Ecosystem - a biological community of interacting organisms and their physical environment.

EPC – Energy Performance Certificate, these certificates are required for properties when they are constructed, sold or let. The Energy Performance Certificate provides details on the energy performance of the property and what you can do to improve it

Greenhouse Gas - An atmospheric gas that traps heat by letting sunlight pass through the atmosphere but preventing heat from leaving the atmosphere

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) - The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is an intergovernmental body of the United Nations

Indigenous - originating or occurring naturally in a particular place; native.

Joint Local Plan (JLP) – The adopted Planning Development Plan for Plymouth, West Devon and West Devon

Net-zero - Achieving a balance between the amount of greenhouse gas emissions produced and the amount removed from the atmosphere

Retrofit - The introduction of new materials, products and technologies into an existing building to reduce the energy need to occupy that building.

The Localism Act 2011 - The Localism Act 2011 (c. 20) is an Act of Parliament that changes the powers of local government in England. The act aims to facilitate the devolution of decision-making powers from central government control to individuals and communities.

Appendix A – Key Council Resolutions

Climate Emergency Declaration

West Devon Borough Council recognises that we have a ‘Climate Change and Biodiversity Emergency’ and that urgent steps need to be taken to address all matters within the Borough which may affect climate change and habitat loss.

That this Council recognises that the crisis is both global and local and that Local Government has a role to play in promoting environmentally friendly policies. To this end, it is recommended that a Working Group be established with cross-group membership to be decided by the Leader of this Council, in discussion with other political groupings. To report back within three months with initial recommendations.”

Full Council Update – 19th December 2019

That Council:

- 1. Adopt the Climate Change and Biodiversity Action Plan (as attached at Appendix 1);*
- 2. Note the content of the Councils first Greenhouse Gas Inventory (as outlined at Section 5);*
- 3. Aim to reduce the Councils organisational carbon emissions (Scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions) to net-zero by 2030;*
- 4. Commit to working with partners through the Devon Climate Emergency Response Group to aim to reduce the Borough of West Devon’s carbon emissions to net-zero by 2050 at the latest;*
- 5. Aim for a 10% Biodiversity Net Gain in the habitat value of its green and wooded public open space by 2025.*
- 6. Request that the Climate Change and Biodiversity Working Group develop a Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy to be brought back to full Council for approval on 22 September 2020;*
- 7. Request that an update on progress against the adopted aims be brought back to Council on an annual basis; and*
- 8. Actively lobby both Central Government and local MPs to improve the standards of infrastructure and new development and to introduce incentives to make our homes as energy efficient and clean as possible.*

