

ENVIRONMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP

08 NOVEMBER 2022

REPORT – CLIMATE AND SUSTAINABILITY UPDATE – ANNEX A

Cabinet Member(s): Cllr C R Slade - Cabinet Member for the Environment and Climate Change.

Responsible Officer(s): Andrew Busby - Corporate Manager Property, Leisure & Climate Change. Jason Ball, Climate and Sustainability Specialist.

1.0 Performance

1.1. Monitoring the Council's Carbon Footprint.

1.1.1. The Council reports its 'Greenhouse Gas Inventory' or 'Carbon Footprint' which is an assessment of its climate change impact as an organisation, measured in tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂e). The tCO₂e is based on the Global Warming Potential (GWP) of different greenhouse gases over a 100-year period in comparison to carbon dioxide (CO₂).

1.1.2. Carbon Footprint reports, a progress chart and headline figures are published at <https://sustainablemiddevon.org.uk/our-plan> and updated annually.

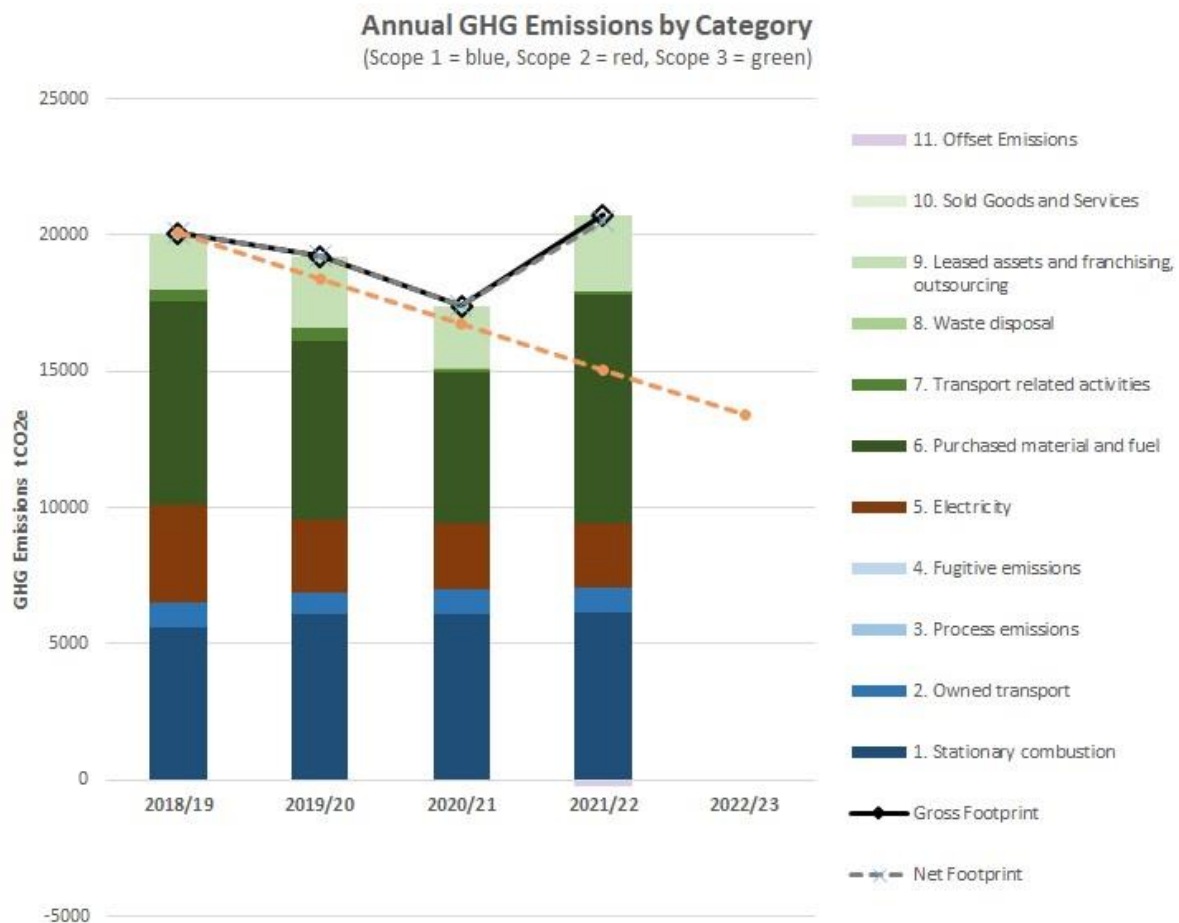
1.1.3. The reporting period inclusive of April 2018 to March 2019 was the 'baseline' year. Results for this and subsequent years are shown in Table 1 below.

1.1.4. Carbon Footprint assessments were carried out by the University of Exeter using internationally accepted methods, and cover Scopes 1, 2, and 3. Net emissions are calculated based on reductions in greenhouse gas emissions linked to e.g. renewable energy generation. Net emissions will be estimated in retrospect to ensure all financial years are covered.

Table 1 - Carbon Footprint Figures

Mid Devon District Council - Carbon Footprint		
Year	Gross (tCO ₂ e)	Nett (tCO ₂ e)
April 2018 - March 2019	20,078	20,078
April 2019 - March 2020	19,231	19,223
April 2020 - March 2021	17,414	17,406

Figure 1 - Carbon Footprint bar charts 2018-2019 to 2021-2022.



1.2. Performance Indicators

1.2.1. Progress on Performance Indicators (PI) is provided separately, on the Council's regular Performance and Risk Reports.

1.2.2. The tables below summarise actions and progress in achieving the Council's Corporate Plan *aims* and Climate Strategy *priorities*.

Table 2 - Corporate Plan Aims

ref	Relevant aims in the Corporate Plan (CP)	Notes on actions taken
	Environment	
env 01	Encourage retro-fitting of measures to reduce energy usage in buildings.	<p>The Climate & Sustainability Specialist (C&S Specialist) continues to support teams.</p> <p>Property. Solar PV generation on Council facilities. Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) Heat Decarbonisation Plan completed 2021 for Phoenix House and leisure centres. New £2.8m decarbonisation project has begun at 2 leisure centres, funded by PSDS. Previous £300k PSDS project complete. New £350k PSDS bid submitted for Culm Valley.</p> <p>Housing. Ongoing operational maintenance and improvement cycles. Roof solar PV generation.</p> <p>Revenues and Benefits. Teams will administer green rebates for carbon / energy reduction retrofit measures.</p>
env 02	Encourage “green” sources of energy, supply new policies and develop plans to decarbonise energy consumption in Mid Devon.	<p>Property. Aiming for 100% renewable power supply to main Council facilities; delayed due to energy market volatility. Currently around 50% of supply is REGO-backed renewable.</p> <p>The C&S Specialist has encouraged the Council investments in local renewable energy; also to support community renewable energy schemes.</p> <p>Housing. The Council has leased roof space on social housing to host Solar PV panels – these generate renewable power for tenants with substantial cost savings, which also reduces demand on the local network. Exported surplus power adds to local flexibility.</p> <p>Community. Solar PV for Mid Devon householders - the Council is part of the Solar Together Devon project.</p> <p>The Council promotes e.g. Green Homes Grant and community support e.g. energy saving advice and funding via Exeter Community Energy.</p> <p>Electric Vehicle chargepoints at Council sites use renewable energy to cut emissions; Council leisure centres each host a pair of chargepoints. New rapid charger installation at 5 Council car parks begin 2022. Liaison with Western Power to promote development of the local power infrastructure.</p>
env 03	Identify opportunities to work with landowners to secure additional hedgerow planting, biodiversity and reforestation.	<p>Outreach with stakeholders e.g. parishes and landowners to identify opportunities.</p> <p>The C&S Specialist worked to position the Council as strategic partners to deliver tree planting via the Devon County Council’s Emergency Tree Fund, a grant provided by The Woodland Trust.</p> <p>Options for investment report passed from Environment PDG to Cabinet; updating now.</p>
env 04	Consider promoting the designation of the Exe Valley as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).	Please refer to Corporate Plan mid-term review.

<p>env 05</p>	<p>Encourage new housing and commercial developments to be “exemplars” in terms of increasing biodiversity and reducing carbon use.</p>	<p>Housing. Zed Pods programme on target (Regional award winner.) Plans approved for the Council’s Passivhaus design affordable housing.</p> <p>Planning. Drafted the Non-Statutory Interim Policy Statement: Climate Emergency. Now out for consultation (closes Dec 2022). The Council’s Net Zero Housing Assessment Tool is now available for planners and developers. The Council has published a Net Zero Toolkit as guidance on retrofit and new-build.</p> <p>The C&S Specialist works with colleagues to promote the importance and benefits of Net Zero performance buildings, sustainable materials, biodiversity net gain, Natural Capital conservation, climate adaptation etc. Advising and supporting major infrastructure and development programmes such as CGV, HAZ, M5 J27, EUE e.g. input to Neighbourhood Plans, Masterplans.</p> <p>Growth and Economic Development. Teamwork to review Plans and Strategies. Promoting teamwork on rural business, local procurement etc.</p>
<p>env 06</p>	<p>Increase recycling rates and reduce the amounts of residual waste generated.</p>	<p>Systemic change to cut emissions associated with recycling and waste disposal e.g. <i>Bin It 123 is projected to save thousands of tCO₂e annually.</i> Teamwork to promote sustainability messages e.g. at Mid Devon Show, Devon County Show.</p>
<p>env 07</p>	<p>Explore large-scale tree-planting projects and re-wilding to enhance biodiversity and address carbon pressures.</p>	<p>The C&S Specialist worked to position the Council as strategic partners to deliver tree planting via the Devon County Council’s Emergency Tree Fund, a grant provided by The Woodland Trust. Over 600 trees planted 2021-2022. Community Orchard created by Tiverton Tree Team. Council land assessed for potential planting. The C&S Specialist proactively asked members, staff and parishes for planting proposals (ongoing).</p> <p>Officers seek external funding and partnership work to support nature recovery and habitat enhancements.</p>
<p>env 08</p>	<p>Promote sustainable farming practices in partnership with local farmers, district and county councils; including research into best practice re better soil management and animal husbandry.</p>	<p>Sustainable Farming report provided to Environment PDG. Farming discussed at State of the District Debate. The C&S Specialist has engaged with farmers and others about the Mid Devon situation and will support partnership work with land managers, and resource signposting.</p>
<p>env 09</p>	<p>Work with parish and town councils to promote the development and retention of parks and play areas across the district.</p>	<p>Outside the C&S Specialist role, but relevant to e.g. healthy lifestyles, green infrastructure, nature recovery, climate adaptation.</p>
<p>env 10</p>	<p>Support community activities that improve the environment</p>	<p>Ongoing outreach with groups, partnerships and at district, town and parish level to support activity. The new climate and sustainability website. The Housing team has given away free plug-in electricity monitors to social housing tenants.</p>
<p>Homes</p>		

h 01	Introduce zero carbon policies for new development.	Drafting the Non-Statutory Interim Policy Statement: Climate Emergency. Net Zero policies yet to be established, but we have identified that the climate change emergency is a material consideration in the planning process. The C&S Specialist worked with the Housing Strategy team to embed and respond to Council's aim for Net Zero and to help deliver on this priority.
h 02	Encourage the piloting of Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) and self-build opportunities.	Zed Pod modular housing with renewable energy installed; delivery going well. The Council is a supporter of the National Custom and Self Build Association and continues to invite proposals for custom and self-build projects.
h 03	Use new development as opportunities to help communities to become increasingly sustainable and self-sustaining at neighbourhood level (district heating, energy use, recycling/reuse systems etc.).	The C&S Specialist works with others e.g. Planning to help realise this aim. Provided input to help develop: Culm Garden Village Sustainability Strategy; Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan; Cullompton Heritage Action Zone ideas; Neighbourhood Plans.
Economy		
ec 01	Promote zero carbon exemplar sites within commercial settings.	The C&S Specialist will support others in the Property team and colleagues in Planning and Regeneration to realise this.
ec 02	Use car park pricing mechanism to effectively balance the needs of vehicular access with those of reducing car use.	Could be considered as next step after 2022 Electric Vehicle (EV) project.
ec 03	Promote the development of the farming economy and local food production.	Local sourcing and networks signposted on Sustainable Mid Devon website. (as above)
ec 04	Working in partnership with farmers to develop and grow markets on the principle of reducing carbon emissions and sustainability.	The C&S Specialist will work with others to seek funding, partnership work, and promote good practice exemplars.
Community		
c 01	Work with developers and DCC to deliver strategic cycle routes between settlements and key destinations.	Discussed at Net Zero Advisory Group (NZAG) at Environment PDG. Transport led at county level.
c 02	Secure decent digital connectivity for all of Mid Devon.	The C&S Specialist will work with others e.g. Planning and Regeneration to realise this.
c 03	Work with education providers to secure appropriate post-16 provision within the district to minimise the need to commute out for A/T level studies.	The C&S Specialist will work with others e.g. Planning and Regeneration to realise this.
c 04	Promote new, more integrated approaches to promoting good health and healthier living especially in the context of planned new developments.	The C&S Specialist will work with others e.g. Planning and Regeneration to realise this.

Table 3 - Climate Strategy Key Priorities

	Climate Strategy (CS) 2020-24 Key Priorities	Notes on actions taken
1	<p>Increase climate knowledge, literacy and capacity at Mid Devon District Council.</p> <p>Climate literacy training will be created and rolled out to staff and Councillors. This will take the form of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic online modules for everyone. • More in-depth training of key staff who can act as internal experts on particular activities. • In-person thematic briefings to relevant officers and Councillors. <p>Extra staff time will be brought in to drive and coordinate our climate work.</p>	<p>Net Zero Advisory Group (NZAG) active. C&S Specialist in post.</p> <p>C&S Specialist and learning manager are now trained as Carbon Literacy trainers. External training resources promoted via web and newsletters to Members and staff. Seeking online module resources.</p> <p>Thematic briefings to relevant Members have included: The need for urgent focus on the Net Zero by 2030 ambition; emissions targets; the Climate and Sustainability Programme; Sustainable Development and climate considerations; Plan Mid Devon – setting Climate as an overarching priority for the Local Plan; Sustainable Farming; the local electricity supply network.</p>
2	<p>Identify schemes that will put us on track for net zero carbon by 2030.</p> <p>Working with partners and residents, we will identify new initiatives and ways of working that will develop and progress our plan. This includes working with the Devon Carbon Plan, as it emerges.</p>	<p>Ongoing work to facilitate and manage the Council's Climate Action Plan (CAP). Costed items on the CAP considered by Corporate Management Team with regard to Medium term Financial Plan (MTFP), etc.</p>
3	<p>Enable and encourage the use of renewable energy locally.</p> <p>Including getting the hydroelectric scheme in Tiverton running to provide renewable energy to the Council offices.</p> <p>Roll out Electric Vehicle charging points - residential and commercial.</p> <p>Partner with Solar Together to support residential solar panel uptake.</p>	<p>Hydroelectric scheme Planning Application submitted; MTFP budget updated; need to address the key issues behind objections.</p> <p>Council hosting EV chargers.</p> <p>Solar Together project delivery almost completed (solar PV and battery installations).</p> <p>Regular liaison with Western Power for local infrastructure needs.</p>
4	<p>Create a 'Community Climate & Biodiversity Support Fund'.</p> <p>There are many local residents and community-led organisations that, with a bit of financial support, will work to reduce carbon emissions and increase local biodiversity. We see this as part of our partnership approach.</p>	<p>One of the options for investment passed from Environment PDG to Cabinet.</p>

5	<p>Identify cycling and walking priorities and opportunities.</p> <p>The Covid19 lockdown in the UK saw increased demand for cycling and walking infrastructure, and the Government committed funding for Active Travel schemes.</p> <p>Though Devon County Council is responsible for transport infrastructure, MDDC nonetheless wants to create partnerships and opportunities to improve active and public transport in Mid Devon.</p> <p>Transport is one of the biggest contributors to CO₂ in Devon.</p>	<p>The C&S Specialist will work with colleagues to seek funding and partnership opportunities. Must link into Devon level plans.</p>
6	<p>Review and update MDDC Procurement strategies.</p> <p>MDDC's supply chains are a significant contributor to emissions. There are various tools and frameworks that can improve the social and environmental value achievable through procurement.</p>	<p>The C&S Specialist initiated a review, ongoing.</p>

Contact for more Information: Andrew Busby - Corporate Manager Property, Leisure and Climate Change: Email ABusby@MidDevon.gov.uk Tel: 01884 255255. Jason Ball - Climate and Sustainability Specialist: Email: JBall@MidDevon.gov.uk Tel: 01884 255255.

Circulation of the Report: Cabinet Member for the Environment and Climate Change, Leadership Team.

List of Background Papers: The previous climate change and sustainability report was provided to the [Environment Policy Development Group](#) on [13 September 2022](#). Link to [Report](#). Link to [Appendix A](#).