Sustainability Strategy 2022-2030

Rochford

Foreword


Cllr. Simon Wootton - Leader

Our world is already changing around us, with increasing temperatures, extreme weather and risks to property, health, wildlife habitats, and food production. Climate change affects us all, but we also all have the power to do something about it. This will mean making changes to the way we all live our lives. New technology will help us to enjoy our lives without emitting carbon but this will need to be accompanied by changes in the way we do things. Research shows us that a bright future, fuelled by clean energy, is achievable and affordable. However, we need a commitment to achieving this goal and we need to put actions in place now and as individuals we need to play our part.

Rochford District Council's Sustainability Strategy is our vision to create a district which embraces innovation, creates high quality jobs and recognises it has a vital role in tackling the global challenges of climate change. The purpose of this strategy is to highlight key areas that we in Rochford District can focus on in the next eight years as well as setting out some important context on policy and emissions data.

The Council has already begun the journey towards carbon neutral by 2030. We have put forward ambitious development plans for the new Council Offices that will have a BREEAM rating of 'Excellent' indicating that we are following the current best practise to address sustainability issues faced in constructing and operating new buildings. The Council has developed policy to promote EV and hybrid vehicle leasing scheme ;and introduced hybrid and flexible working policies to minimise travel. We have recently employed a recycling officer to engage with residents and promote the new Council's Waste Strategy to prevent and reduce waste. The 'parks for nature' scheme now underway will see the re-wilding of 40 acres of open-space and 10,000 trees planted.

> "Climate change affects us all, but we also all have the power to do something about it"
>
> Cllr. Simon Wootton
> Leader, Rochford District Council

We are ambitious for the future of Rochford District and recognise that being a truly sustainable district will require us to work cooperatively with our customers, businesses and partners, while setting pioneering but achievable goals with a clear framework on how to accomplish them. The Council will strive for the district to be carbon neutral by 2030, while creating truly sustainable economies and models for growth.

Contents

Introduction

87,627 people live in the Rochford District[1]. It has several major towns including Rayleigh, Rochford, and Hockley, together with smaller parishes.
It is rural district with around 14% of people living in rural town and fringe. The District has vast areas of green space and is home to the RSPB Wallasea Island Nature Reserve, considered best practice nationally for flood management, habitat restoration and cirular economy approaches.

The climate change nature crisis is the greatest threat that we face. It is a threat that impacts on all of us and on future generations. It is a threat that we need to respond to now, tomorrow and the days that follow with an unrelenting focus on preventing the emergencies. This plan explains how Rochford District Council will contribute towards Rochford District becoming carbon neutral. We want to be ambitious, but we must also be realistic about what the council can and cannot do. We need everyone to come together to play their part if we are going to meet the ambitious target of becoming Net Zero by 2030.

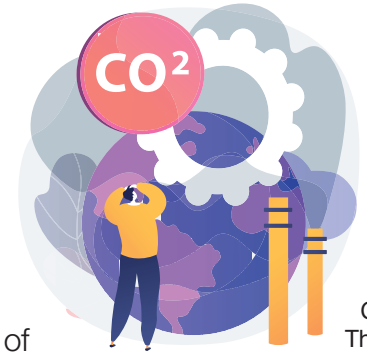
Please support our plan, we will only be able to tackle these emergencies if we work together. Every action that we can take, no matter how small can help. Let us all do what we can to respond to this global problem.

1 Understanding the wider determinants of health | Rochford Council

Global warming and climate change

Global warming is the rise in global mean temperature due to the rampant release of heat trapping gasses like carbon dioxide and methane. The atmosphere acts like a blanket that surrounds the earth. When we burn oil, coal, or natural gas for energy, the carbon dioxide released acts like thickening the blanket that envelops our planet. This disrupts the balance of incoming and outgoing solar radiation, and creates a warming system that cannot naturally repair itself in the span of the coming centuries.

Air temperatures on Earth have been rising since the Industrial Revolution. While natural variability plays some part, the evidence indicates that human activities - particularly emissions of heat-trapping greenhouse gases - are mostly responsible for making our planet warmer.



According to ongoing temperature analysis led by scientists at NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies (GISS), the average global temperature on Earth has increased by at least 1.1° Celsius (1.9° Fahrenheit) since 1880*. The majority of the warming has occurred since 1975, at a rate of roughly 0.15 to 0.20°C per decade.

Climate Change

Climate change is a more general term that refers to changes in many climatic factors (such as temperature and precipitation) from the global to the local scale. These changes are happening at different rates and in different ways in response to global warming. As a large scale example, the United States has overall become wetter over the 20th century, while the Sahel region of central Africa has become drier. Locally, the timing and amount of rainfall is changing, which is generally resulting in less frequent but more severe storms. As a result the climate is becoming more extreme in response to global warming.

*https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/world-of-change/global-temperatures#:~:text=According%20to%20an%20ongoing%20temperature,1.9%C2%B0%20Fahrenheit)%20since%201880.

Global impacts of climate change

What are the impacts of Climate Change?

***Rising sea levels -** Rising temperatures cause glaciers and ice sheets to melt, increasing runoff resulting in global sea level rise. Seas and oceans absorb 90% of the extra heat from global warming: warmer water expands taking up more space.

***Flooding of coastal regions -** Coastal towns and cities are at greater risk from flooding as sea levels continue to rise.

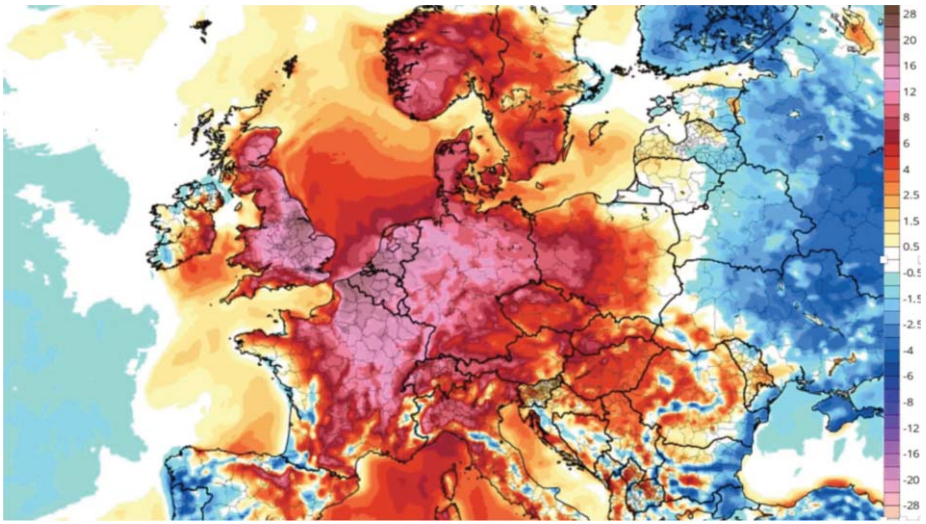
***Extreme weather events -** Climate changes causes extreme weather events to become more intense and frequent, such as heatwaves, droughts and floods

***Food insecurity -** High temperatures, extreme weather events, flooding and droughts damage soils and reduce biodiversity affecting crop yields year on year

***Damage to marine ecosystems -** Rising ocean temperatures, ocean acidifi cation and ocean anoxia (lack of oxygen) are damaging to marine life such as fish and coral reefs. al reefs.

***Ocean acidification -** occurs when the ocean absorbs carbon dioxide and becomes more acidic, a damaging side effect from more carbon in the atmosphere.

***Conflict and climate migrants -** Climate Change is a stress multiplier - it can take existing problems, such as lack of food or shelter and make them worse. This can cause people to compete or fight over scarce resources (food, water, and shelter), or to migrate.



Tue, July 19, 2022 (noon GMT) temperatures were transcending average values for the time of day and season by 12 to 24 degrees Celsius

Local impacts of climate change

Local impacts of climate change in the District can be broken down by sector transport networks, the built environment, business & industry, the natural environment & agriculture, water (flood risk & drought) and health and wellbeing.

TRANSPORT NETWORKS

- Disruption to transport networks from extreme weather events, (flood and heat) impacting on local economy, health & wellbeing
- Flood risk to transport infrastructure
- Heavy rain/high winds leading to more accidents, treefalls, road closures and delays
- Risk of slope/ embankment failures
- Overheating/failure of signalling & comms
- Risk of rails buckling, cables sagging and roads softening in heat
- Discomfort on public transport

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

- Overheating risks in housing, offices, schools, hospitals and social care settings
- Damage to buildings and infrastructure from extreme weather events
- Need to retrofit buildings to build resilience
- New design standards needed for drainage, insulation and building fabric etc Increased flood risk
- Increased water stress
- Disruption to power and communication networks

BUSINESS & INDUSTRY

- Costs to reduce emissions and adapt infrastructure to Climate Change
- Disruption to transport, energy and communications
- Risks to supply chains both local, national and global
- Increased prices for raw materials, goods, and other imported commodities
- Reduced comfort in buildings impacting on productivity
- Changes to markets and demand

THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT & AGRICULTURE

- Risk to vulnerable species and habitats
- Impacts on 'eco-system services' enjoyed by people
- Impacts of increased drought
- Damage to natural habitats from water stress
- Pests and disease risk of invasive/non-native species colonising
- Changes to growing seasons
- Heat stress on livestock
- Damage to crops & landscapes from flooding

WATER (FLOOD RISK & DROUGHT)

- Increase risk of coastal, pluvial and fluvial flooding
- Increased flash flood risk from extreme weather events
- Further stress on already under pressure water resources
- Increased competition for water between agriculture, industry, households and the needs of the natural environment
- Drought impacts on water quality and supply

HEALTH & WELLBEING

- Increase in heat-related illness and death
- Risk to the elderly and very young with heart and respiratory disease
- Disrupted access to services and facilities from extreme weather events
- Flooding impacts on health, wellbeing and livelihoods
- Air quality impacts exacerbated

The South Essex Surface Water Management Plan spans the administrative areas of Basildon, Castle Point and Rochford District Councils. The study area is ranked highest within the county in terms of properties at risk of surface water flooding and is also recognised nationally as a Flood Risk Area (FRA) by the Environment Agency.

The Paris Agreement and UK Commitment

The Paris Agreement is an agreement within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) on climate change mitigation, adaptation, and finance, signed in 2016. The Paris Agreement's long-term temperature goal is to hold the increase in global average temperature to well below 2 °C above pre-industrial levels, and to pursue efforts to limit the increase to 1.5 °C,recognizing that this would substantially reduce the risks and impacts of climate change. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) special report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels was issued in October 2018.

This report stated that, in order to remain within a 1.5 °C increase, governments must cut emissions of greenhouse gases (globally) by 45% by 2030.

UK COMMITMENT

The Climate Change Act 2008 introduced the UK's first legally binding target for 2050 to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 80% compared to 1990 levels. On 27th June 2019 the UK government amended the Climate Change Act and set a legally binding target to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions from across the UK economy by 2050 with five yearly carbon budgets to set actions and review progress. The achievement of this target will bring to an end the UK's contribution to climate change. There is also a requirement under the Climate Change Act to produce a 5 yearly national climate change adaptation programme. In April 2021, responding to growing evidence of the impact of climate change, the UK government upped its ambitions further by committing to set into law a more ambitious UK climate change target. Its policy now is to **reduce UK emissions by 78% by 2035**, compared to 1990 levels and net zero carbon by 2050.

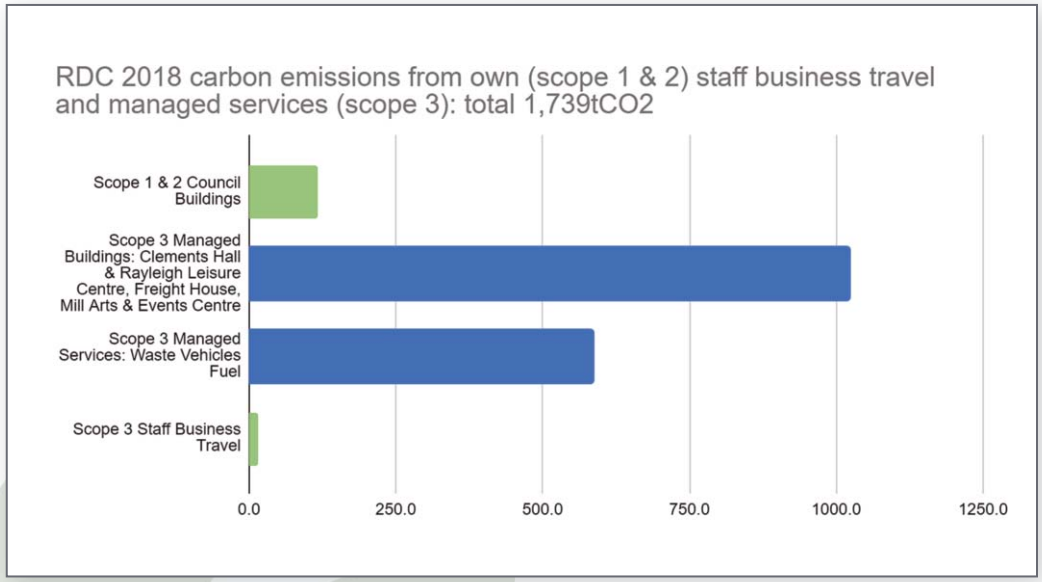
NET ZERO/CARBON NEUTRAL
Carbon neutral means that the amount of carbon that is emitted (released) is the same as that absorbed from the atmosphere. To achieve net zero emissions, all worldwide greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions will have to be counterbalanced by carbon sequestration (removal or offset)

Rochford Net Zero Carbon Commitment - Rochford District Council aims to become a net zero carbon district with respect to carbon from its own, managed and those emissions under its influence by 2030

Own Estate and Services Emissions (Scope 1,2 and part Scope 3)

The carbon footprint for Rochford District Council own estate and managed services emissions has been calculated based on the gas, oil and electricity consumption of buildings (Scope 2) business mileage and fuel data for waste services (Scope 3). 2018 is the (Scope 1) baseline year using UK government emissions factors which equates to 1,739tCO2e.

The Rochford DC own estate, and thus emissions, are relatively small when compared to managed buildings (mainly leisure centres and the waste contract fuel use).



1,790tCO2e

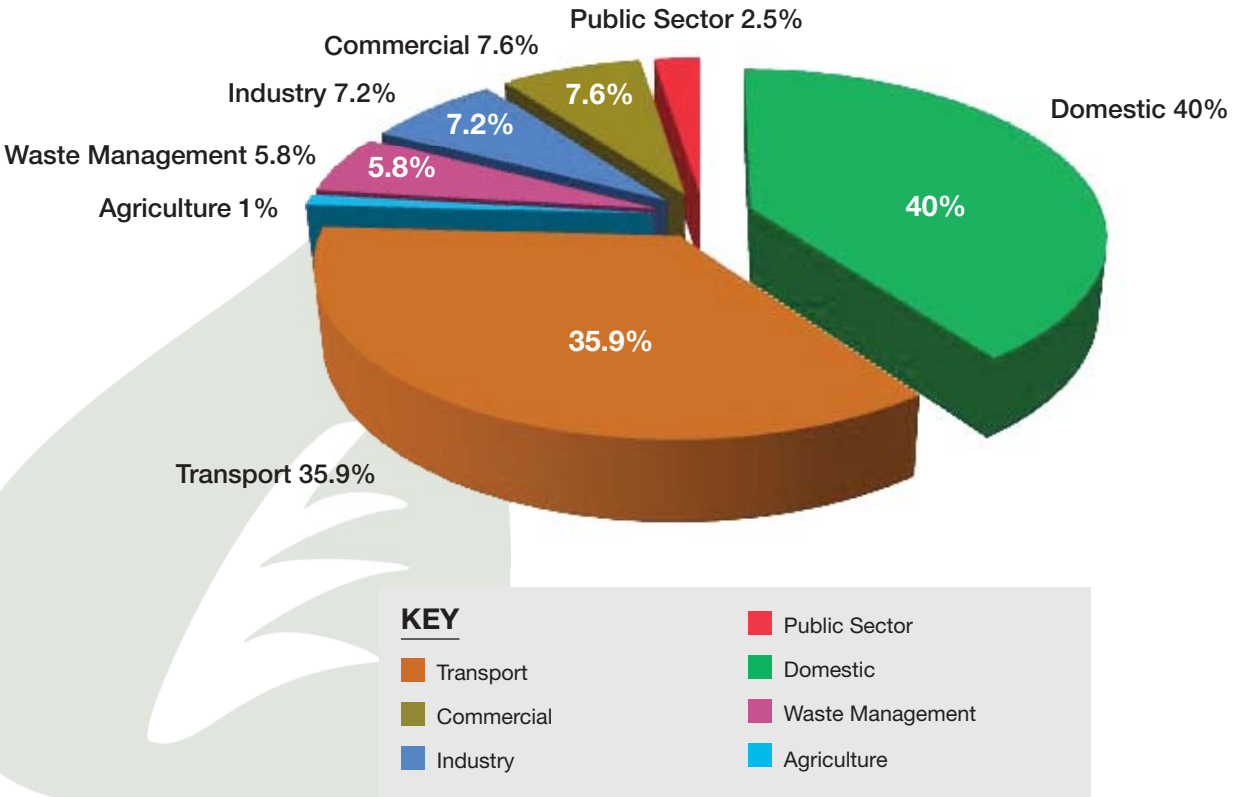
Rochford DC own estate Services Emissions were 1,494.5tCO2e

District Wide Emissions Carbon Footprint

Annual Source of Carbon Emissions (tCO2e) in the Rochford District (based upon data from 2018-19)

The Governments Department for Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) publishes an annual data set of data for CO2e emissions under the influence of local authorities.

The baseline year data set is for 2018 which as a pre covid year reflects better the emissions impact. Rochford district carbon emissions were 320,500tonnes carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO_2e).



320,500tCO_2e

Rochford district carbon emissions were 320,500tonnes carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO_2e)

tCO_2e

tCO_2e refers to tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalents, a unit that summarises all greenhouse gas emissions as one figure.

Since 2005 CO2e emissions in the district have fallen. The decarbonisation of electricity supplies has played a significant part in this

Built Environment and Energy

District wide, the built environment (domestic housing, commercial, industrial & public sector) and its associated use of gas & oil for space heating & electricity is the most significant source of carbon emissions at 57.3%.

As the power grid decarbonises with more renewable energy capacity the focus is to improve the energy efficiency of our buildings and move away from gas to low carbon electric heating such as air source heat pumps and generate more local renewable energy. A focus for the council will be to signpost sources of grant funding to improve the energy efficiency of households experiencing fuel poverty.

Rochford DC are using its planning powers, primarily through their Local Plans, to ensure low emission new buildings and homes, as well as ensuring new developments are built to minimise their environmental impact. This section also covers renewable energy generation in the area as well as climate adaptation measures.

Aim

- To improve the energy efficiency of all domestic properties in the borough to EPC rated C or better
- Support organisations to achieve net zero through nondomestic gas reduction and efficient use of electricity
- Council owned and managed buildings to be net zero by 2030
- Increase renewable energy generation
- Place Making Charter: Achieve carbon-neutrality and, where possible, carbon negativity throughout the lifetime of buildings
- To ensure that new homes built in the district meet the net zero emissions standard
- As the Local Planning Authority, new development should preferably be located in areas that are not at risk from flooding.
- Work with Environment Agency to support households and businesses in flood risk areas using nature based solutions

Transport and Air Quality

Transport, mainly personal car ownership represents the 2nd most significant source of carbon as well as nitrous oxide emission (effecting air quality) at 35.9%. RDC has adopted the Essex Climate Commission Strategic Approach:

Avoid: Encourage residents to avoid or reduce unnecessary private car journeys.
Shift: Embrace a shift in attitude towards active and sustainable modes of transport such as walking, cycling, and taking the bus or train to encourage their use and reduce pollution and congestion.
Improve: Where road journeys are essential, we want to improve vehicle efficiency by making alternatively fuelled options, such as electric vehicles, easier to run for both personal and professional use.

Nitrous Oxides (NOx) are as significant indicator of poor air quality as well as being a potent green house gas (273 times that of CO2) is also a major public health issue with clear evidence that particulate matter (human made air pollution) is having a significant contributory role in a range of poor health outcomes including respiratory disorders and cardiopulmonary mortality. NOx pollution is emitted by automobiles, trucks and various non-road vehicles (e.g., construction equipment, boats, etc.) as well as industrial sources such as power plants, industrial boilers, cement kilns, and turbines.

116,500tCO_2e
(2018-2019) under the influence of RDC

Cycling to the station is a great way to reduce car use for short journeys - especially with the new Elizabeth Line

Rochford has relatively low transport emissions of other Essex districts given its rural nature

Rochford district has 21 pubic EV charging points

Aim

- To invest in zero and low-carbon vehicles across the Council fleet
- Encourage a modal shift in transport from personal car use to local cycling, walking, use of public transport and street car clubs
- To improve the public Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure across the Borough

Natural Environment

The climate crisis is deeply connected to the ecological emergency. This section looks at what Rochford can do to protect and increase biodiversity in the area, the management of their green spaces, and biodiversity net gain requirements for developers.

Wallasea Island rewilding project sits within a Special Protection Area which covers the Crouch and Roach estuaries, and which is special for overwintering waders and wildfowl including brent geese as well as improving sea defences.

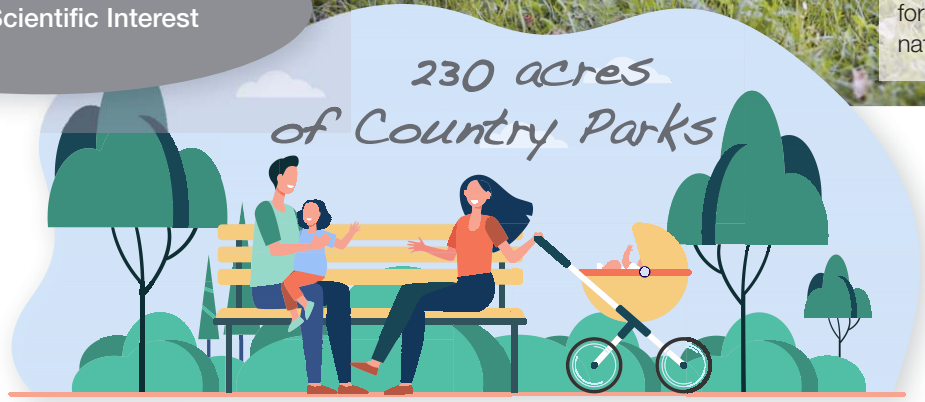
Wallasea Island
www.rochford.gov.uk/wallasea-wetlands-project

RSPB Wallasea Island is a stunning landscape of marshland, lagoons, ditches and sea. The landscape has been restored through a managed realignment project. This ambitious project used more than three million tonnes of earth from the tunnels and shafts created by the Crossrail project in London. The 1,850-acre reserve is pioneering an approach that could be taken up around the world as a model for coastal habitat creation and natural flood risk management

Aim

- To increase biodiversity and ecosystem functioning across the district, eg net gain from new developments
- Implement the measures from the 2021 Biodiversity Topic paper and commissioned wildlife sites review to support the new local plan to 2040
- Support the The Essex Forest Initiative committed to plant £1million worth of trees over the course of five years

2 Sites of Special Scientific Interest



Waste

Waste management requires energy use, and as such emits carbon emissions which contribute to climate change. The disposal of waste can also emit other greenhouse gases such as methane which has a greater greenhouse effect than carbon dioxide, as well as causing other environmental impacts.

18.7ktCO2e
from waste management in the district = approx 5.8% of borough emissions

Rochford District Council collects: 8,200 tonnes of recyclables, 11,600 tonnes of compostables10,800 tonnes of non-recyclable waste annually from 35,800 households across the District.

This section looks at the influencing role the Council plays in supporting sustainable food production on their land and circular economy initiatives locally. the Council also have an important role to play in waste and recycling locally and improving this.

RDC procured a new waste collection vehicle fleet in 2022 which will be more fuel efficient and trials with Hyrogenated Vegetable Oil (HVO) renewable diesel to be investigated in 2023

Aim

- Work with residents to reduce the amount of waste created supporting ECC circular economy initiative
- The Council to consider whole lifecycle of materials purchased and when procuring services to minimize waste
- Improve the current dry recycling rate of 61% and offer food waste collection to the majority of households
- Update our external event policies to ensure food and packaging etc is sustainable with low carbon impact
- Increase sustainable food production practices in the district to encourage more fruit and veg is grown locally rather than imported

Governance & Finance

This section aims to understand to what extent climate action has been incorporated and embedded across the whole of the council in all its activities and services in its decision making, forward planning and structures. This section also looks at how councils are raising funds for climate action and whether the councils' investments are sustainable or supporting high carbon infrastructure and industries.

Rochford District Council has a number of key strategies that relate to policy, planning and financial forecasting all of which have an influence in embedding its net zero carbon ambition.

The schematic below demonstrates how RDC will embed our net zero carbon ambition into our governance, financing and policies which includes embedding staff carbon literacy

Governance & Finance Road Map

Immediate 2023–24	Short Term 2025-2027	Medium-Long Term 2027-2030
Review process to align current RDC strategies and policies with net zero carbon (NZC) 2030 ambition	RDC strategies and policies have NZC response at core	RDC strategies & policies have NZC/carbon neutrality as BAU
Alignment of governance structures with NZC (inc carbon reduction budget)	All governance structures recognise NZC as a key priority	NZC/ carbon neutrality key priority for governance structure
Improve our performance management process in line with NZC	All performance management aligned with NZC objectives	Performance management delivers NZC/carbon neutrality
Improve our procurement process to accommodate NZC	All procurements support deliver of NZC objectives	All procurements include NZC / offset
Staff engagement / communication on net zero carbon 2030 objective		
Organisational and behaviour change programme to embed net zero carbon 2030		

Collaboration & Engagement

This section addresses how the Council can collaborate with others to improve their own climate action and to support other organisations in the area to decarbonise. More than half of the emissions cuts needed to reach net zero rely on people and businesses taking up low-carbon solutions and we will work with those in their local area to enable those solutions.

reba
Rochford Environmental Business Alliance

162 businesses signed up

**85%
of RDC residents concerned or very concerned about climate change

Aim

- Support residents and businesses to understand and implement net zero principles
- Support and engage with local environmental and community groups to achieve net zero
- Encourage schools in the borough to become eco-schools and take part in the “Schools Streets” Scheme
- Develop the local green economy and skills base, to create more low carbon and renewable energy jobs

In Rochford it is estimated that 838 low carbon & renewable energy jobs needed by 2030*

The charity Trust Links Rochford eco-building is designed to be environmentally friendly and fully accessible, enabling classes and workshops to people with physical disabilities. Notable for its solitary bee habitats, which provide a valuable refuge for pollinating insects.

*https://tiny.one/low-carbon-jobs

**1335 members of the public responded to the councils’ “Sustainability Strategy 2022-2027” consultation held between June 2022 and September 2022

Behavioural Change

The Council only has direct control over less than 1% of emissions from the District, but has the capability to influence all of its population.

We all have a part to play in tackling climate change. We see our role as a district council to encourage people, businesses and other organisations to do what they can to reduce their carbon footprint and make it easier, where we can, for those changes to happen. A full list of behavioural change approaches can be found in Appendix 1.

House of Commons Public Accounts Committee 2021, Achieving Net Zero

"As much as 62% of the future reduction in emissions will rely on individual choices and behaviours, from day to day lifestyle choices to one off purchases such as replacing boilers that use fossil fuels or buying an electric vehicle".

Climate Change Committee 2020, The Sixth Carbon Budget The UK's path to Net Zero

"The public need to be involved over half the missions reductions we identified to reach Net Zero actively involve people, whether by choosing to purchase low- carbon technologies like electric cars, or by making different choices, for example on their travel and diets".

Monitoring

In order to know whether our actions are helping to reduce our environmental impact, there must be a baseline set and regular monitoring.

To ensure a baseline is produced and consistent monitoring undertaken, the Council aims to:

- Establish cost and feasibility of introducing Automated Meter Reading (AMR) across the Council's property estate
- Undertake an internal audit of energy and water usage across all the Councils assets
- Deliver on 2030 net zero carbon targets for its own estate and managed services including leisure centres and waste collection

Key Performance Indicators

CATEGORY	KPI
Transport	% reduction in transport CO2 emissions, from 2018 levels
Built Environment	% reduction in domestic CO2 emissions, from 2018 levels
	% reduction in commercial and industrial CO2 emissions, from 2018 levels
	% reduction in council own estate and services CO2 emissions
Air Quality	% reduction in CO2 emissions from transport
Natural Environment	Area of space in District managed exclusively for biodiversity
	Number of trees planted per year
Waste	% reduction of CO2e emissions, from 2018 levels
	% of waste recycle, reused or composted
	Waste production per average household, per year
Energy	Total electricity generated from renewable energy projects
Behaviour	Number of businesses committed to reducing their environmental impact through working with REBA

Rochford Sustainability Action Plan 2022-2030

Transport and air quality: Encourage more residents to cycle, walk and use public transport and if they must travel by car to support car clubs and facilitate shift to electric vehicles through improvements in EV charging infrastructure

AIMS	ACTION BY RDC	CLIMATE (CARBON)	PARTNER ACTION	DESIRED OUTCOME
To invest in zero and lowcarbon vehicles across the Council fleet	Develop a Council fleet replacement plan, by June 2023, seeking to replacing council vehicles with electric/hydrogen and exploring low carbon fuels such as Hydrogenated Vegetable Oil (HVO) by June 2023 Develop business case for renewable diesel by Feb 2023 with aim to roll out across fleet by 2024, if acceptable	Less than 1% total emissions reduction	Energy Saving Trust	Near Net Zero vehicle fleet by 2030 net zero by 2040
To encourage modal shift in transport away from car use across the District.	Support and deliver the development of local cycling/walking infrastructure (LCWIP) by September 2023. Support Active Essex active travel plans for schools. Promote the national Walk to School & work week. Seek to Promote/Develop local car clubs (pay as you go car hire). Support and promote more “School Streets” schools	High – approx. 75.2kCO2 per annum on minor roads in Rochford	ECC Active Essex, SE Essex Health Alliance, Essex Climate Commission	10% reduction by in local vehicle traffic by 2030; 20% 2040.
To improve the public Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure across the District.	Oversee installation of 6 EV charging points on Rochford Estate In 2023. Develop EV charging strategy for district with Energy Support Trust by October 2023. Seek to amend taxi licensing guidance towards hybrid & electric vehicles by April 2024. Identify funding for EV charge points and help with siting	Medium	Energy Saving Trust	Clear EV charging strategy for District.
To promote zero-carbon fleet alternatives across the District	To investigate and signpost funding opportunities to establish hydrogen-powered vehicles technology in the district	High	Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Trust	Funding secured for a hydrogen distribution plant pilot project in the vicinity of the district

Rochford Sustainability Action Plan 2022-2030

Built Environment and Energy: Improve the energy efficiency of buildings in our district with an aim to transition to low carbon heat sources and develop local renewable energy capacity

AIMS	ACTION BY RDC	CLIMATE (CARBON) IMPACT	PARTNER ACTION	DESIRED OUTCOME
To improve the energy efficiency of all domestic properties in the district to EPC rated C or better	Work with Energy Savings Trust to promote simple EE measures and help promote grant schemes by Feb 2023. Engage with local adult education and social housing partners to develop low carbon apprenticeship opportunities by April 2025	High: gas heating = 75% of carbon emissions from homes (99ktCO2e). Electricity emissions declining with decarbonisation of grid	EST, Essex Climate Commission	Near Net Zero emissions from domestic housing 2040
To support industrial and commercial organisations to achieve non-domestic gas reduction and efficient use of electricity	Continue to support and grow the Rochford Environmental Business Alliance for net zero services and funding opportunities	High: non domestic (industry & commercial) gas and electricity emissions equate to 47.9ktCO2e	REBA Colbea	Near Net Zero emissions from commercial & industrial sites 2040
That all Council owned, and managed buildings are net zero by 2030	Develop council procurement policy to support net zero/low energy lighting, equipment and buildings October 2023 Seek and secure funding bids for Government Decarbonisation fund to support retrofitting of Council stock	Low: accounts for lessthan 2% of district emissions	LGA Net Zero Energy Hub/Salix	All council owned and managed services buildings achieve net zero by 2040 Street lighting & communal areas in housing stock is energy efficient eg lighting
To maximise opportunities for renewable energy generation in the District	Investigate suitability of bulk buy solar schemes eg KCC, with a view to registering and promoting in the District. Consider suitability of Heat Networks and Community energy schemes in new builds. Undertake feasibility studies for council properties for: on site renewables, by December 2023	Medium	Net Zero energy Hub	Hub Renewable energy capacity reaches 100MW in Rochford by2030 (Currently in 2022 - 17.3MW, in 2025 projected - 67.3MW) Target -100MW

Rochford Sustainability Action Plan 2022-2030

Biodiversity & Natural Environment: Key outcomes carbon sequestration, improved air quality, improved biodiversity, adaptation and wellbeing				
AIMS	**ACTION BY RDC**	**CLIMATE (CARBON) IMPACT**	**PARTNER ACTION**	**DESIRED OUTCOME**
To increase biodiversity and eco system functioning across the District	Develop and implement management plans for all council owned parks and spaces to maximise biodiversity by December 2025. Continue to promote opportunities for conservation volunteering for schools, residents and businesses Implement the measures from the 2021 Biodiversity Topic paper and commissioned wildlife sites review to support the new local plan to 2040	Low	Essex Nature Recovery Network (ENRN), ASELA	Targets to be set once biodiversity/wildlife review baseline established and incorporated into the new Local Plan
To continue to increase tree cover across the district	Supportng the Essex Forest Initiative committed to plant £1million worth of trees over the course of five years.	Limited mitigation – medium adaptation	Essex Forest Initiative	Improvements in air quality, urban greening and reduction in flooding events

Governance & Finance: Embedding across the whole of the council net zero carbon 2030 in all its activities and services, in its decision making, forward planning and structures as well as funding and investment strategies				
AIMS	**ACTION BY RDC**	**CLIMATE (CARBON)**	**PARTNER ACTION**	**DESIRED OUTCOME**
To embed net zero carbon (NZC) 2030 in Council policies, strategies, forward planning and investment strategies.	Review all current policies, strategies, forward planning and investment strategies with an aim of embedding in NZC 2030 ambition	Medium	Internal processes	All RDC policies, strategies, forward planning and investment strategies are aim of embedded/BAU and aligned with NZC 2030 by 2030
Council staff are carbon literate and understand how their service area and individual actions can support net zero.	Roll out the SMT carbon literacy training to all staff at the council	Low	Internal comms/ staff induction	Workforce are carbon literate by 2025

Rochford Sustainability Action Plan 2022-2030

Waste Reduction & Food:
Reduce waste at source, move towards a circular economy and increase sustainable food production in the district

AIMS	ACTION BY RDC	CLIMATE (CARBON) IMPACT	PARTNER ACTION	DESIRED OUTCOME
To reduce non-recyclable waste levels and to increase recycling rates to 70% and offer food waste collection to the majority of households	To participate and support county and national recycling campaigns by September 2023. To deliver the 2021 Waste Collection Strategy for District.	Medium	Community engagement	5% improvement in recycling by 2025, 10% by 2040
External events on council land, ensure food and packaging etc is sustainable with low carbon impact	Update external events policy to ensure sustainable food, packaging etc	Low	Internal policy and working with suppliers	All external events on council land have sustainable food and packaging 2025
The Council to consider whole life cycle of materials purchased and when procuring services to minimise waste	Include waste minimisation in Council contract specifications by October 2023	Low	Suppliers	Reduction in waste disposal costs for Council Contracts 90% reduction by 2030.
To support elimination of waste and the over exploitation of our natural resources.	Support and participate in County cross-border project called 'Blueprint to a Circular Economy'	Medium	ECC	Circular economy principles embedded in the district.
Increase sustainable food production in the district	Support rural agricultural businesses to take advantage of and raise awareness of UK Govs Agricultural Transition Plan	Low 3.4kt CO2e associated with agriculture 1% district emissions	NFU Local Farming Groups REBA	All Rochford farmers are taking advantage of and adopting sustainable food and practicesthat support net zero ambition

Rochford Sustainability Action Plan 2022-2030

Planning, Land Use & Adaptation				
AIMS	**ACTION BY RDC**	**CLIMATE (CARBON) IMPACT**	**PARTNER ACTION**	**DESIRED OUTCOME**
Achieve carbon-neutrality and, where possible, carbon negativity by promoting the use of renewables	Implement the place making charter as proposed in the local plan consultation https://rochford.oc2.uk/document/207/28281 Continue to support large scale renewable energy projects such as 50MW Fambridge Solar Park	Medium	Planning Economic Developmen	New developments are low zero carbon and future proofed for low carbon transport 2024 Renewable energy capacity reaches 100MW in Rochford by 2030?
To ensure that new homes built in the district meet the current net zero emissions standard	Seek to incorporate net-zero requirement in local Plan Review (2024) Utilise existing planning powers (see also Future Homes) to align with Essex Design Guide by December 2024 (nzcbuildings.co.uk)	Low: prevent lock-in of future emissions and need to retrofit in 15-20 years.	Essex Planning Officers Association New net zero homes standard due 20203	All new housing achieves net zero status 2030
As the Local Planning Authority, new development should preferably be located in areas that are not at risk from flooding.	Ensure that new planning takes into consideration flood mapping from the environment agency	Low	EA	Minimise new build in flood risk areas
To support elimination of waste and the over exploitation of our natural resources.	Support and participate in County cross-border project called 'Blueprint to a Circular Economy'	Medium	ECC	Circular economy principles embedded in the district.
At risk properties are identified in the district and supported with adaptation and mitigation measures	Work with Environment Agency to support adaptation & mitigation of households and businesses in flood risk areas, using nature based solutions	Low	Housing EA	Flooding and damage to households and business is minimised in the district

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Collaboration & Engagement:
supporting businesses, communities, charities and schools to achieve net zero

AIMS	ACTION BY RDC	CLIMATE (CARBON) IMPACT	PARTNER ACTION	DESIRED OUTCOME
To support residents and businesses to understand and implement net zero principles	To continue to provide workshops and resources for residents and local businesses on how to save energy, waste & water use	Medium	BEBA Colbea	Reduction in business and domestic carbon emissions
To support and engage with local environmental and community groups to achieve net zero	Ensure the council is involved with and engaged in the work of local environmental and community groups	Low	Comms. Third sector CVS	Third sector CVS working together on net zero District
To encourage schools in the district to become eco-schools and similar schemes	Identify those schools keen to become eco schools encourage to take part in schools streets scheme by Sept 2023.	Low	ECC	25% of schools enrolled by 2030
To create more low carbon and renewable energy jobs	Engage with local adult education and social housing partners to develop low carbon apprenticeship opportunities by April 2025	Medium	ECC Colleges RSL's	Developing the local green workforce to deliver net zero projects 800 low carbon jobs created by 2030

Appendix 1: Changes we can all make to tackle climate change

What can I do?

You can eliminate waste, reduce your carbon footprint and start making an impact right away by committing to some or all of the following actions. This isn't a list of everything that you can do but we hope it gives you some ideas.

Food

- Set a goal of reducing the food waste in vour home from its current levels.
- Commit to only buy ring what you need and eat what vou buy.
- Avoid air-freighted food when they are put of season.
- Buy local food and support the local economy.
- Don’t leave the house without a reusable cup.

Electricity

- Take basic steps that cast nothing: turn lights off, hang washing out to dry, wash at a lower temperature and keep showers short.
- Wear a jumper rather than turn the heat up, turn the thermostat down and turn radiators off in empty rooms (if you can without risking your health).
- Seek help if you are struggling to keep warm.
- If you can afford to invest an your home, prioritise the carbon cutting measures that have the biggest impact: insulation (starting with drafts then the loft windows and walls), smart heating (efficient boilers, remote controls that include radiators) and lastly considering solar panels or heat pumps.
- Consider options for buying electricity from a green energy provider if they can demonstrate that your bill goes entirely towards additional renewable power.

Transportation

- Aim to fly less and support your local economy through staycations.
- Cut car emissions by walking, cycling, using public transport, car sharing or working from home.
- Consider buying an electric or plug-in hybrid if you can and only if you need a new car.

Purchases

- Consume less.
- Consume wisely. Consider the supply chain and think about the carbon footprint, fair livelihoods and all other sustainability criteria.
- Buy local.
- Buy high quality things where you can and make them last, buy things that are designed to be repairable and sell on or give away when you have finished with them.
- Choose the most energy-efficient white goods.

Investments

- Use any money you have to help create the future you want to see.
- Look at options for investing in pension and saving schemes that don't support fossil fuel companies and prioritise those that invest in the things we urgently need, such as renewables and reforestation.

"Very few of us are squeaky clean in carbon terms. You don't have to become so overnight but most of us do need to make serious changes over the next few years. It's important to keep moving in the right direction and enjoy the process of cutting carbon out of our lives. Don't beat yourself up, but don't let yourself off the hook either"

Professor Mike Berners-Lee,
Lancaster University

This strategy will be reviewed on an annual basis

Rochford

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