



WARWICKSHIRE
**SUSTAINABLE
FUTURES STRATEGY**
A SUMMARY

Introduction

Warwickshire County Council is committed to acting decisively to tackle climate change and the biodiversity crisis. Taking action now, so that Warwickshire is a County with a sustainable future, is one of our key strategic priorities. We have already started work towards our goals of reducing carbon emissions to net zero across the Council by 2030 and to support Warwickshire as a County to do the same by 2050 or earlier.

Climate change is one of the most important issues facing the world. The continued burning of fossil fuels is affecting weather patterns around the world as well as causing devastating extreme weather events more locally, leading to flooding, heatwaves, drought and wildfires. These events pose a direct risk to Warwickshire's communities and economy.

At the same time, more than two-fifths of UK species, including animals, birds and butterflies, have seen significant population declines in recent decades. With thousands of acres of habitats lost to development, and pollution affecting our natural environment, the decline in **biodiversity** is impacting directly on our wellbeing and economic prosperity.

Our Sustainable Futures Strategy establishes our direction and priorities to reduce carbon emissions, support biodiversity and promote economic growth across our County.

Our vision is for a Warwickshire that is low in carbon with vastly reduced energy bills, that has landscapes with plenty of wildlife that people can enjoy and farms that provide us with local food, supported by a thriving sustainable economy and resulting in communities that are happier, healthier and empowered.

And our goal is simple; to make Warwickshire sustainable now and for future generations.

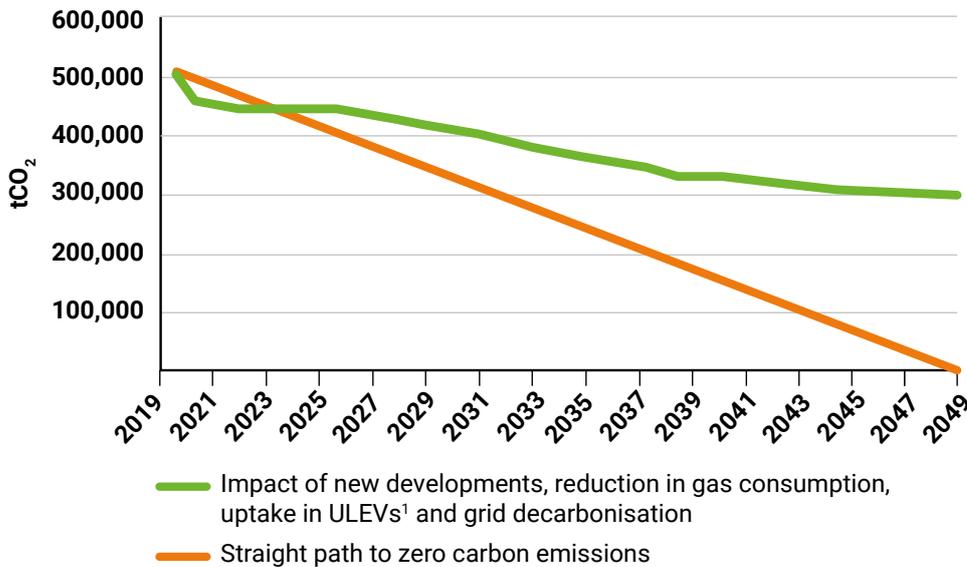
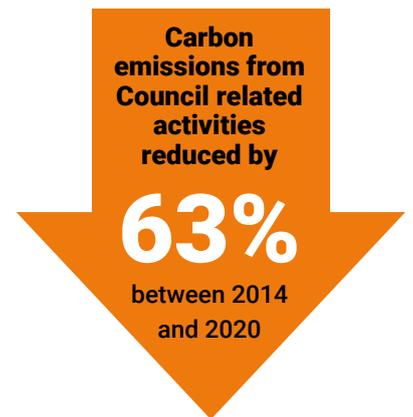
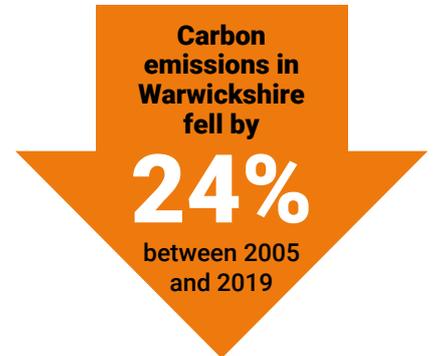


Heather Timms,
Portfolio Holder for Environment, Climate and Culture
Warwickshire County Council

The Story So Far

Carbon emissions in Warwickshire fell by 24% between 2005 and 2019, arriving at 5,140,000 tonnes of CO₂. Over this time, transport emissions have remained largely static, while emissions from buildings – industry, domestic and commercial - have steadily decreased. We will need to work with our partners to close the gap to net zero through a combination of activities to reduce emissions and nature-based or other forms of greenhouse gas removals. Even considering the various policies, plans and projects in place, we will still need to reduce emissions by around 3,000,000 tonnes of CO₂ between now and 2050.

In other words, if we are to achieve our net zero goals, we need to do more, and we need to do it faster.



Council related activities currently account for 19,500 tonnes of CO₂e per year. These have reduced by 63% between 2014 and 2020. However, to meet our net zero commitment, our emissions will have to be reduced by at least a further 29% by 2026 and 46% by 2030. We anticipate these reductions will come primarily from transport and building use. However, it would still need 10,500 tonnes of CO₂e per year to be offset by other activities.

1. Ultra Low Emissions Vehicles

Our Strategy

The aim of our Strategy is to set out a framework, key themes and principles for delivering on the Council's strategic priority of being a County with a sustainable future. The scale of the challenges ahead of us means that our Strategy is broad and diverse. It also goes beyond climate change mitigation, fully embracing the UN's Sustainable Goals of delivering peace and prosperity for both people and the planet, improving health and education, reducing inequality and encouraging economic growth alongside the reduction of carbon.

The pace required to meet the 2030, 2050 and targets beyond this is ambitious; business-as-usual activities within the Council and across the County are not going to be sufficient. This Strategy recognises that we need to do more and faster; it also challenges us to think outside the box, be innovative and to consider what powers of devolution we might need to enable us to deliver our objectives.

This Strategy is based on current evidence and data and is supported by comprehensive action plans. An example is our **Draft Action Plan** which sets out our first phase actions to deliver on our goal to reduce carbon emissions to net zero across the Council by 2030. We recognise that technology and UK policy are constantly evolving and as such, we expect our action plans to be adapted as new information emerges and as progress is made.

We will be using key performance indicators to track our progress against each of our six themes, and will continue to share this on our www.warwickshireclimateemergency.org.uk website.

2030
Council carbon
net zero

2050
Warwickshire
carbon net zero

2050+
Carbon
surplus

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We want to make Warwickshire the best it can be, sustainable now and for future generations.

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*Council Plan 2022-27
Warwickshire County Council*

There is much work to be done, which we've grouped into six key themes:



We want to have zero emissions surface transport across the County, increasing the use of sustainable modes of transport, with every resident having access to zero carbon private, public and active transport options.

Transport is the largest source of carbon emissions in the County. As the transport authority, Warwickshire County Council has a key role in enabling the County to reduce transport emissions. This includes prioritising options for more sustainable travel that can reduce private car use and inspiring behaviour change amongst residents and businesses. In choosing what we do, we need to take into account the different challenges and barriers for both rural areas and towns.



We want to live and work in a County that is powered entirely by clean fuel or renewable sources.

The UK's ambition is to move away from fossil fuels and instead generate electricity from renewable sources such as wind, solar and potentially nuclear. The current fuel crisis has also made it clear that we need to be able to provide ourselves with affordable energy and improve energy security within our borders. Warwickshire must therefore play our part in generating our electricity and clean heat.



Built Environment

We want to live and work in buildings that are energy efficient, powered by clean energy sources and connected to nature.

The built environment is the human-made space in which we live, work and play. It includes our homes, commercial buildings, roads, parks and general infrastructure that supports how we live. The main challenge is reducing emissions from heating and cooling, both in domestic buildings and for the commercial and industrial sectors.



Resources, Waste & Circular Economy

We want a County where all waste is diverted from landfill and there is a circular economy that provides commercial opportunities and new jobs.

We are the waste disposal and planning authority within Warwickshire. We have adopted the waste hierarchy to prevent, reduce, reuse, recover and only then, dispose of our waste. But we want to go much further and adopt the principles of a circular economy, where we minimise waste and pollution, keep products and materials in use for as long as possible, and support the regeneration and protection of natural resources.



Sustainable Communities & Green Economy

We want to have a County that is measured by prosperity and health, where people have the skills and access to new green jobs, and where all the industries contribute to sustainable, equitable and healthy communities.

A sustainable community is one where people are supported to live healthy, happy, equitable and independent lives, with access to healthy, local, affordable food that is grown sustainably. A green economy supports sustainable economic growth and is low-carbon, resource-conserving, diverse and circular, aiming for local access to goods and services. For Warwickshire, this will mean the development of new green jobs and technology.



Natural Capital and Biodiversity

We want a habitat-connected landscape for people to enjoy and wildlife to thrive.

Biodiversity is all the different kinds of life we find in one area – the variety of animals and plants that make up our natural world. Each of these species and organisms work together in ecosystems to maintain balance and support life. A natural capital approach views nature as an asset that should be protected because it is important to our own survival; some of these assets are tangible - like water and food - whilst others are intangible, like clean air, a stable climate and biodiversity.

Delivering Success

To deliver on our ambitions, we will need to embed sustainability in everything that we do. We will need to motivate and inspire our communities, businesses and public sector partners. In these uncertain times, we will also need to be able to adopt a flexible approach to influence and complement national, regional and local policy.

To do this, we've identified seven critically important enabling actions. The effective management of these, both individually and together, will be key to us making progress at pace and scale. They are supported by our eight delivery principles, which will underpin how we work. Broadly within Warwickshire County Council we have split into three main action types:

Direct Actions: actions WCC can take that will directly reduce emissions, particularly significant in areas where we have direct control such as Council buildings

Enabling and Showcasing Actions: actions that WCC can take that will allow others to directly reduce emissions that they have control over and actions that show others what can be done

Partnering and Engaging Actions: actions WCC can take to promote collaboration and support regional delivery of ambitions through partnerships

Strategic Enablers:

-  Effective change management
-  Changed behaviours
-  Adequate resource management
-  Adequate funding
-  Accountable governance
-  Appropriate engagement
-  The right policies

Delivery Principles

We will:

-  Be innovative in our thinking and lead others on the journey
-  Not accept the status quo; we will challenge and inspire
-  Address climate change and biodiversity justly and equitably
-  Be collaborative and work in partnerships
-  Take a community powered approach
-  Emphasise prosperity as a focus for sustainable growth
-  Share our successes and learnings
-  Deliver a strategy that is value for money

Working Together

Engagement and partnership are central to how our Strategy will work. The actions that will have the biggest impact on enhancing biodiversity, reducing emissions and providing equity across our communities are not always within the gift of the County Council to enact. Many of them will be the responsibility of the District and Borough Councils, Town and Parish Councils, central government, other public service providers or with businesses, landowners and residents.

Providing a partnership, supporting and coordinating role between the public sector organisations and a central forum for businesses and residents is going to be key for the County Council and we will commit whole-heartedly to this role. We will strengthen our activities in shared best practice, collaborate to realise efficiencies and build a sense of common ownership and shared responsibility, engaging closely with local climate and community groups as well as our neighbouring councils, the NHS, West Midlands Combined Authority and with central government.

We will be accountable and regularly share the progress we are making and expect to review this Strategy every three years. During the life of this Strategy, we will need to ensure we are using improved data as it becomes available and will also need to review the scope of the Council's net zero target to include our full Scope 3 footprint (i.e., the other sources of indirect emissions, such as those from our leased buildings and the goods and services that we purchase). As we have less control over these emissions, we will need to work with our contractors, suppliers and other partners to deliver reductions in these areas.

This is a draft Strategy. Public engagement is planned from November 2022 into early 2023, to give our residents, communities and businesses an opportunity to share their feedback before a final version is used for implementation.

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Climate change can no longer be seen as a concern specific to policy, service delivery area, or even just the council. It needs to be everyone's responsibility, underpinning council strategy and relationships with partners and the community.

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*Communities vs Climate Change,
The Power of Local Action
New Local*