

North Devon Council Carbon, Environment & Biodiversity Plan

Second Annual Review, July 2024

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Progress with delivery of the Council's actions to meet its net zero by 2030 target have been assessed as green, amber or red. This is indicated by the coloured stripe at the right hand side of the table.

Progress with delivery of the Council's action to meet the UK's net zero by 2050 target can be found at the [Devon Climate Emergency](#) website.

Energy			
Commitment	2024 Update	Due for Completion	
<p>1.0 We will carry out a review of our energy consumption across our estate, develop an options appraisal plan for our sites, and where necessary put in place carbon targets and seek funding to implement improvements. This will include options for retrofit, smart energy controls and energy generation and storage opportunities. We will assess whether the council could generate all its energy needs from its own resources.</p> <p><i>This action links to the following Devon Carbon Plan actions: B7, B16, E1.2</i></p>	<p>We have energy surveys and heat decarbonisation plans for the majority of our owned/occupied and owned/tenanted properties.</p> <p>We secured Low Carbon Skills Funding to develop additional reports to enable us to apply for a grant bid to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme Phase 3c for Ilfracombe Pool and the Landmark Theatre in 2023. Unfortunately we were not successful.</p> <p>We have invested just under £100K to implement energy saving measures at a number of properties.</p> <p>We are investigating installation of solar panels at two of our owned and occupied properties, Brynsworthy Environment Centre and North Devon Crematorium.</p>	<p>Additional reports completed 2023.</p> <p>PSDS bid 2023.</p> <p>Progress of actions dependent on subsequent funding.</p>	
<p>1.1 We will review our energy tariff and investigate the feasibility of moving to a renewable energy supplier for all our energy needs, once energy efficiency and renewable energy measures are complete.</p> <p><i>This action links to the following Devon Carbon Plan actions: E5</i></p>	<p>Councillors agreed in 2023 we should invest in our own renewable energy generation on site in preference to investing in a renewable tariff.</p> <p>Note: NDC reports its carbon footprint in line with the UN Greenhouse Gas Protocol and aligns with the Science-based targets initiative. As such the purchase of renewable electricity does not reduce our Scope 2 emissions.</p>	<p>Complete.</p>	

Energy			
Commitment	2024 Update	Due for Completion	
1.2 Replaced with action 1.3 below			
1.3 We will work with tenants to deliver measures that improve energy efficiency or increase renewable energy generation, where funding allows.	<p>We are working with a number of our tenants to identify and get funding for measures that improve energy efficiency.</p> <p>We have secured £88k through the Swimming Pool Support Fund to install solar panels at Ilfracombe Pool.</p> <p>We have solar panels on a number of properties providing Temporary Accommodation and have bid for funding to install more.</p>	Target date to be determined but likely to be long-term aspiration.	
<i>This action links to the following Devon Carbon Plan actions: E1.2</i>			
1.4 Develop a Local Area Energy Plan for Devon.	The transition to net zero will use significant amounts of renewable electricity in Devon. A Local Area Energy Plan will set out how this can be delivered. A planning group was established in June 2023 and agreed a methodology (the Energy Systems Catapult guide). We have collected data to model the existing energy system in Devon and are working with the South West Net Zero Hub to address any gaps.	Dates TBC	
<i>This action links to the following Devon Carbon Plan actions: E1</i>			

Transport			
Commitment	2024 Update	Due for Completion	
<p>2.0 We will continually improve the efficiency of our vehicles across our fleet ensuring that our vehicle purchases meet the highest EURO engine emissions standards, and that these are maintained to a high standard. We will regularly review refuse fleet routes to maximise efficiency. At the purchase of any council vehicle we will review options for electric, ultra-low emission or hydrogen fuel cell vehicles.</p>	<p>This area continues to be a focus given the potential carbon savings involved. We have recently agreed to replace two of our diesel Parks vehicles with EVs. We continue to explore how our cars and small vans can be replaced.</p> <p>Viable options for replacement HGVs remain limited. Current electric HGVs are not able to service the needs of our Waste & Recycling fleet.</p> <p>We are working with partners to develop a green hydrogen economy in northern Devon. Hydrogen-powered HGVs may be a more viable alternative to replace our Waste & Recycling fleet, as is the industry expectation.</p>	<p>Target date to be determined but likely to be a long-term aspiration</p>	
<p><i>This action links to the following Devon Carbon Plan actions: C1, R1.4, R1.6, R5, R11, T35</i></p>			
<p>2.1 We will explore, implement and promote electric vehicle charging infrastructure, particularly utilising partnership working and external funding to develop schemes across North Devon for the benefit of our residents and businesses and supporting our sustainable tourism ambitions. This will include exploring energy generation and storage opportunities in our car parking facilities.</p>	<p>EV charging is in seven of our car parks: Cattle Market Barnstaple, Wilder Road Ilfracombe, South Molton Central, Belle Meadow Barnstaple, South Molton Sheep Pen, Upper Lyndale Lynmouth and Hillsborough Ilfracombe. We are installing additional charging in Barnstaple through our Future High Street Fund project. Queen St will have an EV hub with 6 charge points with capability to expand to 'future proof' the site.</p>		

Transport			
Commitment	2024 Update	Due for Completion	
<p>2.2 We will identify and develop active travel options across North Devon to create a safer environment for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders. This includes identifying rural cycle routes and electric cycle charge points in line with central Government recommendations. This will be progressed in partnership with a range of stakeholders including Devon County Council through the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.</p> <p>This action links to the following Devon Carbon Plan actions: T6, T7</p>	<p>We have developed a Local Cycle & Walking Infrastructure Plan for Barnstaple with Bideford and Northam with partners which will help us provide better routes. This plan will support development of our new Local Plan.</p> <p>Funding for improvements will be on a project by project basis.</p>	<p>Target date to be determined but likely to be a long-term aspiration</p>	
<p>2.3 We will carry out a review of our Taxi Licensing Policy and will use this as a basis to encourage our taxi operators to move to electric and ultra-low vehicles, including exploring the provision of dedicated taxi charging point(s) to support the trade.</p> <p>This action links to the following Devon Carbon Plan actions: T36</p>	<p>Our Taxi Licensing Policy was reviewed 2023; it includes measures to encourage operators to move to cleaner vehicles and to discourage engine idling.</p>	<p>March 2027</p>	
<p>2.4 We will investigate the use of alternative, low carbon fuels for our vehicles.</p> <p>This action links to the following Devon Carbon Plan actions: T42</p>	<p>We have discounted the use of hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) to fuel our vehicles due to significant concerns about its sustainability, cost and supply issues. A sustainability assessment of HVO is being carried out by the Environment Agency and we will review our decision once the findings are published.</p>	<p>Target date to be determined but likely to be a medium-term aspiration</p>	

Planning

Commitment	2024 Update	Due for Completion
<p>3.0 We will use the review of the local plan to embrace opportunities to deliver carbon reductions and improvements in sustainability and biodiversity making use of guidance, expert evidence and best practice to best deliver on a range of environmental matters. We will use best endeavours to maximise the potential of new developments to be highly efficient and incorporate low carbon heating and cooling solutions and support sustainable travel for future residents, customers and visitors. Through the plan review we will revisit and consider the opportunities to support on and offshore wind energy development.</p> <p>This action links to the following Devon Carbon Plan actions: C6, C7, E1.1, E1.2, E1.3, E4, B12, T12</p>	<p>Members have agreed to prepare a new joint Local Plan, in collaboration with Torridge District Council.</p> <p>Members have agreed to set up Thematic Working Groups to support this review, including a Climate and Environmental Emergency group, which will provide a forum for exploring opportunities to be incorporated within the plan.</p>	<p>Ambition for formal plan making process to begin Nov 24, subject to Government planning reforms coming into force, with new Plan submitted by Oct 26.</p>
<p>3.1 We will seek to take forward the relevant principles and actions of the Devon County Council’s Carbon Plan through the review of the local plan to ensure joined up direction of travel to meet our mutual carbon, environmental and biodiversity aims and targets.</p>	<p>Devon’s Carbon Plan published September 2022. The provisions of the Carbon Plan will be considered as part of the preparation of a new local plan as per 3.0 above, with actions incorporated as appropriate through that process. Local Plan Thematic Working Groups provide opportunity to explore the principles and actions in detail.</p>	<p>As 3.0</p>
<p>3.2 We will seek to take forward and build upon our pioneering work that seeks biodiversity net gain from development through the local plan review.</p> <p>This action links to the following Devon Carbon Plan actions: F14</p>	<p>Developers have a statutory requirement to deliver 10% Biodiversity Net Gain on the majority of development proposals. The potential to require additional BNG above the mandatory level in northern Devon will be considered through the preparation of a new Local Plan (see 3.0 above).</p>	<p>As 3.0</p>

Planning			
Commitment	2024 Update	Due for Completion	
<p>3.3 We will seek to engage with wider partners to develop local biodiversity off setting schemes to provide choice and assurance to developers obligated through the planning process within North Devon.</p> <p>This action links to the following Devon Carbon Plan actions: F17, F18</p>	<p>The Council has agreed a process for considering formal habitat bank proposals. It is working with providers to consider their proposals and to legally secure them as appropriate. The Council is engaged with the North Devon Biosphere to support the development and roll-out of their Natural Capital Marketplace through our UK Shared Prosperity Funding.</p>	As 3.0	
<p>3.4 We will lobby Government for improved building regulations for energy efficiency and making renewable energy sources compulsory for new builds.</p> <p>This action links to the following Devon Carbon Plan actions: E6</p>	<p>The Government launched a consultation on review of the National Planning Policy Framework and its role/ contribution to climate change mitigation and adaptation in December 2022. The Council responded to that consultation, providing, amongst other things, in principle support for onshore wind development. The Council will continue to respond to consultation opportunities as and when they arise.</p>	Ongoing	
<p>3.5 We will lobby Government and local providers for improved digital connectivity to order to promote further flexible and remote working patterns, enhancing access to services, supporting our isolated communities and reducing the need to travel.</p> <p>This action links to the following Devon Carbon Plan actions: T1</p>	<p>The government intends to deliver nationwide gigabit-capable broadband as soon as possible, and aims for the majority of the population to have 5G coverage by 2027. As progress in this area becomes clearer this will be kept under review.</p> <p>Our emerging Economic Strategy recognises the need for universal and reliable access to full fibre broadband.</p>	Ongoing	

Biodiversity

Commitment	2024 Update	Due for Completion
<p>4.0 We recognise the benefits of carbon sequestration and the value of tree planting to future offsetting needs, and so we will continue to develop our tree planting programme on land owned by the Council and will look to take full advantage of funding and schemes available to support this plan.</p>	<p>We have completed a 37 acre extension to our community woodland in Yeo Valley, Barnstaple. This has been funded through the Forestry Commission’s England Woodland Creation Offer.</p> <p>Over the woodland’s life, we will receive 3500 woodland carbon credits which we can offset against the Council’s carbon footprint.</p> <p>Opportunities for additional planting will be considered through our parks and grounds maintenance programme.</p>	<p>Target date to be determined but likely to be a medium-term aspiration</p>
<p>4.1 We will develop a Tree Strategy which will acknowledge the value of our Green Infrastructure including our approach to the management and protection of trees across North Devon, promote sustainability through the ‘right tree right place’ ethos, promote partnership working and lead by example with our communities.</p>	<p>Devon Tree Strategy published 2024. This action will be delivered through the Devon Local Nature Recovery Strategy, Biosphere Nature Recovery plan and our own Biodiversity Management Plan.</p>	<p>Target date to be determined but likely to be a medium-term aspiration</p>
<p>4.2 We will integrate our climate and biodiversity ambitions with our ground’s maintenance operations, developing sustainable options that can be implemented and maintained as part of this programme including developing ‘rewilded’ areas across our North Devon estate.</p>	<p>This is ongoing work for NDC. In total we now have 15.2ha in meadow management and are making good progress towards our target of 20ha by the end of 2025 (target from Biosphere Nature Recovery Plan).</p>	<p>2025</p>
<p>4.5 We will work with the North Devon UNESCO Biosphere Reserve to support delivery of their Nature Recovery Plan.</p>	<p>The Marine and Landscape pioneers feed into the Biosphere’s Nature Recovery Plan; NDC are working with the Biosphere and other partners to deliver this plan.</p>	<p>2030</p>
<p>This action links to the following Devon Carbon Plan actions: F14, F18, F23.2</p>		

Waste & Recycling			
Commitment	2024 Update	Due for Completion	
<p>5.0 We will fully participate in the review of the Resource and Waste Strategy for Devon and Torbay, and actively promote its aims to minimise the waste we create, to reduce the impact of resource and waste management on climate change by tailoring operations to reduce the waste carbon footprint, and to seek to preserve natural capital and practice resource efficiency.</p>	<p>Key milestones for 2023:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Roll out of a deposit return scheme for single-use drinks containers – delayed. ii) Legislation for mandatory separate food waste collections – North Devon already have separate food waste collections. iii) Extended producer responsibility for packaging comes into force – delayed. iv) Revision of the Resources and Waste Strategy for England (2023/24) – outcomes from Environment Act will be reviewed. 	As 3.0	
<p>This action links to the following Devon Carbon Plan actions: R2, R6, R13, R15</p>			
<p>5.1 We will promote and support the development of the circular economy and waste hierarchy and will review and be open to all options available to reduce the carbon footprint of our waste collection activities which may include, but is not limited to, maximising recycling and developing new waste recycling opportunities, promoting the waste hierarchy through review of the residual waste collection programme and exploring options to reduce, reuse and repair.</p>	<p>A ban on single-use plastic cutlery and plates was introduced in England in October 2023.</p> <p>In Jan-Mar of this year Waste & Recycling Advisers visited nearly 1500 households and spoke to 500 residents in North Devon, helping them to order containers etc and to recycle correctly.</p> <p>We are trialling use of nets on recycling containers to keep materials inside.</p>	No date set	
<p>This action links to the following Devon Carbon Plan actions: R1, R7, F23.5</p>			
<p>5.2 We will work with Plastic Free North Devon to support delivery of their Strategy.</p>	<p>Sustainability & Climate Officer works with Plastic Free North Devon on relevant issues.</p>	Target dates to be determined.	
<p>This action links to the following Devon Carbon Plan actions: C4, R1</p>			

The Council			
Commitment	2024 Update	Due for Completion	
<p>6.0 We will carry out an annual review of our carbon plan and will be transparent about our direction of travel, achievements and challenges in meeting our stated ambitions. This will be reported on annually to Full Council and is part of our wider commitment to making our climate and biodiversity ambitions central to the governance and operations of the Council.</p>	<p>This is the second annual review of our carbon plan.</p>	<p>Annually</p>	
<p>6.1 We will develop and approve a sustainable procurement policy to incorporate sustainability, the environment and corporate social responsibility into our financial procedures. We will guide and support smaller businesses who work with us to meet these ambitions. We will regularly review our sustainable procurement policy application and weighting to further develop this approach to maintain continual improvement and encouragement of the most sustainable suppliers to the Council.</p> <p>This action links to the following Devon Carbon Plan actions: R19</p>	<p>Following the departure of our in house Procurement Officer we are now working with Devon County Council's Procurement team which will provide procurement advice and support going forward. We are taking a new Procurement Strategy, consistent with that adopted by Devon County Council and its existing local authority partners across Devon, to our Strategy and Resources Committee for approval with a greater emphasis on sustainable procurement.</p>	<p>Procurement Strategy adopted 2024.</p>	
<p>6.2 We will integrate carbon, environmental and biodiversity ambitions into all our capital projects and ensure that stated standards and targets in these areas are included into those projects.</p> <p>This action links to the following Devon Carbon Plan actions: R19</p>	<p>We will review how this is working as part of a wider review of how carbon, environment and biodiversity are addressed through our project management and Committee processes.</p>	<p>Q4 23/24</p>	

The Council

Commitment	2024 Update	Due for Completion
<p>6.3 We will carry out a full audit of the Council’s carbon footprint to current Government guidance, ensuring parity of scope with Torridge District Council to provide future opportunities for comparing performance and best practice, in order to drive change and improvements across both Authorities.</p>	<p>The 2023/2024 update will be available autumn 2024.</p>	<p>Annually</p>
<p>6.4 We will review consumables purchased and used by the Authority and will seek to move to environmentally positive options. This will include areas such as cleaning materials, stationary usage, tools and machinery.</p> <p>This action links to the following Devon Carbon Plan actions: R11</p>	<p>Consumables will be reviewed as contracts are renewed.</p>	<p>Target date to be determined but likely to be a medium-term aspiration</p>
<p>6.5 We will support staff and members to reduce their carbon footprints by facilitating hybrid working models that support elements of home working and mobile working practices and promoting sustainable transport options such as mileage reduction methods, developing or promoting the use of electric and ultra-low emission vehicles for business purposes and encouraging cycling, walking, car sharing and public transport.</p> <p>This action links to the following Devon Carbon Plan actions: T4, T7, T26</p>	<p>NDC have a flexible working policy, and the majority of staff able to work flexibly take advantage of this.</p> <p>We operate a minibus service for staff to access our main site.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

The Council			
Commitment	2024 Update	Due for Completion	
6.6 We will review our treasury management policy and resources to determine feasibility of divestment and NDC including and developing ethical investment vehicles within its portfolio.	<p>Our Capital Strategy for 24/25, considers Environmental, Social and Corporate Governance investments. We have invested in sustainable alternative such as the Standard Chartered Bank Sustainable Fixed Term deposit.</p> <p>Pensions fall to DCC, and their commitment to a net zero portfolio is given here.</p>	Treasury Management Strategy reviewed on an annual basis.	
6.7 We will develop and maintain a communications plan integrated with all departments across the Council to showcase the work of the Authority in leading the response to the climate and biodiversity emergencies. This will include a community facing webpage of information, support and resources, as well as a staff and Member facing information source to internally promote our plans and achievements	<p>We have a communications plan in place.</p> <p>Our website has community facing pages.</p>	Ongoing	
This action links to the following Devon Carbon Plan actions: C4			
6.8 We will encourage staff participation in our carbon ambitions by including 'green' idea generation through training and the corporate appraisal process.	<p>Currently the appraisal system does not support the inclusion of these matters but we will keep this under review.</p> <p>An online climate change training module for officers is available and will be reviewed in Q2 2024.</p>	Ongoing Training reviewed Q2 2024	
This action links to the following Devon Carbon Plan actions: R19			

The Council

Commitment	2024 Update	Due for Completion
<p>6.9 We will support members on their role in championing, influencing and implementing positive climate change and biodiversity measures within NDC and the wider communities they represent.</p> <p>This action links to the following Devon Carbon Plan actions: C4</p>	<p>The Member Climate Action Team provides strategic input and oversight into a range of areas and reports their recommendations to S&R Committee.</p> <p>Expert speakers on a range of environmental matters report to various committees.</p> <p>An online climate change training module for members is available and will be reviewed in Q2 2024.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Training reviewed Q2 2024</p>
<p>6.10 We will seek to improve the quality and extent of the data in our carbon footprint, particularly for Scope 3 emissions.</p>	<p>Ongoing improvement in data quality and inputs.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>6.11 We will lobby Government and local providers to ensure grid capacity in northern Devon supports our low carbon ambitions.</p> <p>This action links to the following Devon Carbon Plan actions: E8</p>	<p>Ongoing discussions with National Grid.</p> <p>We are developing a Devon Area Energy Plan with Devon county Council and other partners.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>6.12 We will develop an offsetting strategy.</p> <p>This action links to the following Devon Carbon Plan actions: F18</p>	<p>Work on an offsetting strategy has begun, however a lack of credible local offsetting schemes mean we are unable to progress this.</p>	<p>2030</p>

Our Communities			
Commitment	2024 Update	Due for Completion	
7.0 We will support communities in adapting to climate change, sustainability and carbon reduction in community and emergency plans.	The Adaptation Strategy for Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly was published in autumn 2023 and has been endorsed by NDC. We will work with the Devon Community Resilience Forum and the Devon Climate Impacts Group to deliver relevant actions..	Ongoing	
7.1 We will support our towns, parishes and communities with information and support on carbon cutting and biodiversity enhancing projects, funding and opportunities. We will promote the development of local schemes around tree planting, allotments, community gardens and orchard provision.	<p>We run a series of volunteer events and schools education days at Yeo Valley woodland, Barnstaple and Bicclescombe Park, Ilfracombe.</p> <p>In 2023 we worked with award-winning photographer Gideon Mendel and local primary schools to highlight the impacts of climate change around the Taw Torridge Estuary, culminating in an exhibition held at Barnstaple Pannier Market.</p> <p>Officers attend talks, community events, schools etc as required.</p>	Ongoing	
This action links to the following Devon Carbon Plan actions: C2, C3, R1			
7.2 We will support households experiencing fuel poverty by working with partners to promote and implement energy efficiency measures through the adoption of a fuel poverty strategy. This will develop a multi-agency approach to tackling fuel poverty in the district from maximising leverage of existing options to creating enhanced services to residents on energy efficiency/ money management advice and retrofit options.	<p>Fuel Poverty group for Northern Devon under review to ensure it's still fit for purpose.</p> <p>We have a statement of intent for Ecoflex and the Great British Insulation Scheme.</p> <p>NDC have an Energy Efficiency grants & loan webpage (updated as appropriate).</p> <p>We have re-commissioned 361 Energy to provide a home energy advice service, prioritising vulnerable and low-income households.</p>	Ongoing	
This action links to the following Devon Carbon Plan actions: B2, B6			

<p>7.3 We will develop guidance for supporting and promoting sustainable events through licensing function and North Devon’s Safety Advisory Group.</p> <p>This action links to the following Devon Carbon Plan actions: C2</p>	<p>Guidance published 2022.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>7.4 We will seek opportunities for developing a low carbon economy, promotion of green entrepreneurship and investment through our new Economic Strategy. We will provide businesses with information and support on energy generation, improving energy efficiency and reducing their own carbon footprint. We will support North Devon employers, communities and organisations in declaring their own Climate and Biodiversity Emergencies and developing action plans. We will work with Petroc and support local schools to maximise opportunities for the next generation in our new green future.</p> <p>This action links to the following Devon Carbon Plan actions: R3, R22</p>	<p>The forthcoming Economic Strategy for Northern Devon emphasises the need to develop our green economy.</p> <p>Development of Floating Offshore Wind projects in the Celtic Sea offer a once in a lifetime opportunity to develop a green, high tech economy in northern Devon. We have recruited a Clean Maritime Officer for northern Devon to enhance capacity in this area. We have also received £100k from the South West Net Zero Hub to develop a green hydrogen roadmap for northern Devon.</p> <p>We are partners in a Green Economy Group for northern Devon which will provide advice and support for businesses interested in sustainability and regeneration.</p> <p>Two businesses have been supported by the first round of our Rural England Prosperity Fund for England Net Zero funding. Further funding can be found at North Devon Plus.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>
<p>7.5 We will promote shopping local, promoting farmers markets, direct fish sales and local green start-ups and develop the local green economy and economic generation by pursuing opportunities, funding and seeking cooperation to take full advantage of opportunities.</p> <p>This action links to the following Devon Carbon Plan actions: F1, F1.1, F1.2</p>	<p>We are delivering this in Barnstaple through our Future High Street Fund project and ongoing town centre management.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>

<p>7.6 We will support our farmers and the agricultural industry to produce more sustainable food.</p>	<p>North Devon+ are supporting the agricultural sector to understand the changing funding landscape and biodiversity requirements.</p> <p>We recently held a special public meeting to address issues facing the agricultural industry.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	
<p>This action links to the following Devon Carbon Plan actions: <i>F9, F19</i></p>			
<p>7.7 We will work with the Devon Climate Emergency Partnership to deliver actions enabling Devon to become net zero carbon by 2050.</p>	<p>Northern Devon Futures are intending to focus on this as one of the key aims of their strategy. A climate action group has been set up to facilitate this.</p> <p>Climate change will be one focus of the new potentially devolved administration for Devon.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	
<p>7.8 We will work with the Devon Climate Emergency Partnership to deliver actions enabling Devon to adapt to climate change.</p>	<p>We have identified a number of actions within the Adaptation Strategy for Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly that can be delivered by NDC. This includes provision of information to Town and Parish Councils on the impact of climate change in their area.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	