

Climate Emergency Action Plan: Progress Update 15 – September to December 2023

This document summarises progress against the priority actions within the Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP) since September 2023, as reported to the Greener Woking Working Group in December 2023.

[View background information about the CEAP.](#)

This section provides an overview of new activities recorded this quarter (September to December 2023). Further details are included in the table that follows on page 4.

- The Energi Raven software pilot continues to monitor energy use at eight council owned buildings.
- New energy contracts were signed with Northern Gas and Power and LASER on 1 October 2023 for communal areas at WBC housing sites.
- Following the closure of the Victoria Arch project, ThamesWey Energy is looking to identify alternative sites to further expand the Town Centre energy network to fully utilise the £9.4 million in government support received via the national Heat Networks Investment Project (HNIP).
- ThamesWey's new low-carbon energy centre in the Sheerwater Regeneration scheme is in its final phases of completion and is expected to be operational this quarter.
- Funding continues to be available through the Home Upgrade Scheme 2 (HUG2) via Action Surrey for low-income households impacted by fuel poverty that are not connected to the mains-gas network.
- In September 2023, the government launched its £1 billion [Great British Insulation Scheme](#).
- A SCC led partnership project has been awarded £745,000 in government funding to understand how to overcome barriers to retrofit energy efficiency measures as part of the Department for Net Zero and Energy Security's [Local Energy Advice Demonstrator \(LEAD\) programme](#).
- A second phase of the popular [Solar Together](#) scheme is in progress. Phase 2 has seen almost 2,000 applications across Surrey, 204 of which are in Woking borough. Of these 17 have been installed already (422 instals completed countywide).
- On 20 September 2023, the government announced an exemption to phase out fossil fuel boilers by 2035 - pushing it back from the original target date of 2026.
- Application details are soon to be published about the government's new £10 million [Community Energy Fund](#) designed to support local renewable energy projects.
- Further to the successful application to South Western Railway's Customer and Communities Improvement Fund, four locations for additional secure cycle storage close to Woking Railway Station were subject to public consultation via the Woking Community Forum until 19 November 2023.

- The government's plan to ban the sale of new petrol and diesel cars has been pushed back by five years to 2035.
- Following a competitive tender process, SCC appointed Connected Kerb as its concession framework operator to install thousands of public EV chargepoints over the next five years across the county. WBC officers have discussed potential car park and off-street locations in Woking borough that could be considered in the first phase of the scheme pending guidance on the contract in the context of the government intervention and organisational review.
- SCC is currently undertaking a [kerbside electric vehicle charge point trial](#) targeted at EV drivers that do not have access to off-street parking.
- WBC Building Services colleagues are working with Connected Kerb to install a back office telemetry system to proactively monitor the EV points in Victoria Place Red Car Park.
- Further to reports of some EV units failing at the Victoria Place Red Car Park, the chargepoint installer Schneider and the Victoria Place developer Sir Robert McAlpine have checked the points and rectified the faults.
- The Woking Net Zero strategy was presented to the Greener Woking Working Group at its meeting on 18 September 2023. As agreed, further work will be undertaken by officers to review the deliverability of the strategy in the context of the council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and Section 114 notice. Pending this review, the strategy is scheduled to be considered for adoption at the Executive on 21 March 2024.
- The final [draft Climate Change Supplementary Planning Document \(SPD\)](#) was circulated to the Greener Woking Working Group at the end of October 2023 ahead of its consideration by the Executive on 16 November and adoption by Council on 30 November 2023.
- The review of WBC's [Core Strategy](#) was presented to the Council at its meeting on 12 October 2023. The review demonstrated that all the policies of the Core Strategy remain up-to-date and are in general conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Officers will bring forward a timetable to produce a new Local Plan before the prevailing plan expires in 2027.
- On 18 October 2023, Climate Emergency UK (CEUK) published its local authority [climate action score cards](#) results. With an overall score of 34%, WBC came top in Surrey. WBC scored particularly highly for 'Collaboration and Engagement' with a score of 65%, significantly higher than the national district average (43%) thanks to the ongoing Planet Woking programme and recent Woking Net Zero consultation.
- Climate change and biodiversity focused communications continue through the Planet Woking programme with regular social media posts and new case studies uploaded to the [website](#).
- The Planet Woking Wildlife Gardening Guide was approved for publication at the last Greener Woking Working Group meeting on 18 September 2023. The full [guide](#) and [quick reference infographic](#) have been published on the Planet Woking website.

- Woking Environment Action (WEAct)'s Woking Repair Café continues to offer free repairs for electrical and mechanical items, furniture, clothes, toys and textiles. The next repair café takes place on Saturday 9 December 2023 at St Mark's Church, Westfield Road, GU22 9QA.
- WEAct will soon be launching a monthly e-newsletter to keep readers updated on the group's recent activities, current initiatives, upcoming events and ways to get involved. Details on how to subscribe are available on [WEAct's website](#).
- Due to ongoing cost savings, Woking Borough Council is no longer a member of the Air Alert subscription service.
- On 27 September 2023, the government set out an updated timetable for the delivery of 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) for new housing, industrial and commercial developments from January 2024. Guidance and regulations are due to be published by the end of November 2023.
- In October 2023, the Basingstoke Canal Society confirmed it had raised £165,000 for its new electric trip boat, Kitty II, which will be ready for the spring/summer 2024 boat trip season.
- In October 2023, Surrey County Council celebrated having the highest number of [eco schools](#) awarded with Green Flag status in England. All 88 eco schools in Surrey have achieved this accolade.
- SCC's Adaptation and Resilience Strategy – [Surrey Adapt](#) - was approved by its Cabinet on 31 October 2023.
- In October 2023, [Surrey Heathland Partnership launched a conservation volunteer programme](#) with opportunities at heathland sites across the county. There are two remaining dates in this year's programme: 6 December at Smarts Heath and 20 December at Brookwood Heath.
- This year's annual international climate conference – [COP28](#) – takes place between 30 November and 12 December 2023 in Dubai.

Climate Emergency Action Plan – Progress Update 15

This document summarises progress against the priority actions within the Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP) since September 2023, as reported to the Greener Woking Working Group in December 2023. New activity within the quarter (September to December 2023) is shown in bold for ease of reference and bulleted in pages 1 to 3.

[Read background information about the CEAP.](#)

Council assets

Theme / Priority action	Description of actions taken
Adopt an emissions baseline for the council's estate and operations.	<p>The independent carbon footprint assessment of the council's corporate emissions is available to view on its website. The report's recommendations have been used to inform the Woking Net Zero strategy which was presented to the Greener Woking Working Group on 18 September 2023. As agreed, further work will be undertaken by officers to review the deliverability of the strategy in the context of the council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and Section 114 notice. See additional note on the Woking Net Zero strategy later in this update.</p> <p>Officers in Property Services are progressing a pilot of an energy monitoring software system called Energi Raven. This is produced by Woking based company SAV Systems. The product is designed to help identify potential energy, carbon and financial savings on a building by building basis. The pilot is monitoring energy use at the following council owned buildings: Civic Offices, Export House, Woking Leisure Centre, Pool in the Park, Hoe Valley Community Building, Sportsbox, Wolsey Place Shopping Centre and Hale End Court. The online dashboard displays live consumption for gas, water and electricity and can provide monthly and year on year comparisons. Alarms can be set to proactively manage spikes in consumption. The six-month trial will conclude towards the end of this year. SAV Systems has used initial findings to inform detailed energy surveys for Export House and the Civic Offices including proposals for improved energy performance and management. These will be subject to WBC review and approval. The pilot and follow-up measures have the potential to contribute to delivering a recommendation of</p>

	<p>the carbon footprint assessment to improve the energy performance of council owned and leased properties.</p> <p>Further to a recent energy procurement exercise, officers in Property Services finalised energy contracts on 1 October 2023 via energy brokers Northern Gas and Power and LASER for 17 and 233 sites respectively (most of which are housing sites). Both brokers selected Npower as the energy supplier whose current fuel mix is 42% renewables.</p>
<p>Collaborative work with ThamesWey to deliver on carbon reduction goals e.g., decarbonising the energy supply for all council buildings and operations and eliminate emissions directly through the supply of renewable / sustainable power sources.</p>	<p>ThamesWey Energy received £9.4 million in government support through the national Heat Networks Investment Project (HNIP) which will help deliver plans to expand and decarbonise the supply of heat to Woking Town Centre. The funding will help facilitate extension of Woking’s heat and cooling networks to supply energy to new developments in the Town Centre as well as further decarbonisation of heat through the addition of large-scale heat pumps and heat storage capacity at Poole Road energy centre. It was originally proposed that it would also facilitate expansion of the network south of the railway line as part of the Victoria Arch project but this has now been stopped following a report approved by the Executive at its meeting on 5 October 2023. Alternative sites are being considered in light of this as part of a report required in order to retain the funding which must be spent before the end of 2025.</p> <p>The new low-carbon energy centre in the Sheerwater Regeneration scheme is in its final phases of completion and is expected to be operational this quarter. The energy centre – which utilises air source heat pumps - will provide heat and power to completed units in the Sheerwater redevelopment via a local district heating network. Renewable electricity generated by solar photovoltaics across the site will complement the system.</p> <p>In October 2022, Action Surrey was successful in its bid to become the delivery agent for SCC’s Sustainable Warmth contract delivering fully funded household energy efficiency improvements.</p> <p>Installations under Action Surrey’s Sustainable Warmth on-gas grant funding scheme were delivered by the end of September 2023 with full</p>

completion and closure of the project anticipated by the end of November 2023. Further details on this are included in the separate ThamesWey update report on this agenda.

In May 2023, Action Surrey launched a further government funding stream via the Surrey consortium called Home Upgrade Scheme 2 (HUG2). HUG2 is the second phase of funding designed to provide energy efficiency improvements for low-income households impacted by fuel poverty that are not connected to the mains-gas network and rely on alternative forms of energy for heating (e.g. electric, oil and biomass heating). The following measures are available through the scheme: loft insulation, cavity wall insulation, external solid wall insulation, underfloor insulation (for suspended floors), air source heat pumps, solar photovoltaic (PV) panels, solar thermal water panels and park home insulation. Funding will be available until 2025. Eligibility criteria apply. Residents should contact Action Surrey on 0800 783 2503 or by email at Info@actionsurrey.org for further information. An application form is available to download via the [Action Surrey](#) website.

In September 2023, the Government launched its £1 billion [Great British Insulation Scheme](#) to help the most in need heat their homes for less. Households in lower council tax bands (A-D) with less energy efficient homes (Energy Performance Certificate rating of D or below) will be offered upgrades such as **roof, loft or cavity wall insulation. Previously known as ECO+, the scheme will help around 300,000 households across the country with the cost of installing new home insulation, saving consumers around £300 to £400 a year on their bills. The scheme works by obligating energy suppliers to help customers to reduce their heating bills, through the installation of energy efficiency measures. The cost of this may be covered in full through the scheme, or it may be offered for a contribution, depending on the measure and any property issues. Action Surrey will be able to assist local residents access the funding with details soon to be published on their [website](#).**

SCC continues to develop the wider Sustainable Warmth contract to incorporate other potential decarbonisation and renewables projects.

In May 2023, ThamesWey supported a further successful countywide bid for a two-year project funded by central government, led by Surrey County Council. **The partnership project with SCC, Action Surrey, Surrey Climate Commission and Zero Carbon Guildford aims to expand the current market offer to address the ‘able and willing to pay’ market** i.e. householders that do not qualify for any grant assistance and can afford to implement energy efficiency measures. **Awarded £745,000 in funding the project aims to overcome barriers to retrofit energy efficiency measures as part of the Department for Net Zero and Energy Security’s Local Energy Advice Demonstrator (LEAD) programme.** [Further details about this and other successful pilots are available on the Greater South East Net Zero Hub website.](#) The project will coordinate with numerous trusted voluntary groups working face-to-face in the community including Woking Environment Action. Delivery will be enabled via in-person advice, a one-stop shop and home decarbonisation loans. Pilot areas, including Surrey, are currently preparing to deliver their offering and local promotion of their services will be rolled out soon. Training is due to start soon for voluntary groups. Further updates will be provided when they become available.

A second phase of the popular [Solar Together](#) scheme is in progress. Phase 2 has seen almost 2,000 applications across Surrey, 204 of which are in Woking. Of these 17 have been installed already (422 instals completed countywide).

On 20 September 2023, the government announced an exemption to phase out fossil fuel boilers by 2035 - pushing it back from the original target date of 2026. The Prime Minister also announced an increase in grants to help those making the transition from boilers to heat pumps, rising from £5,000 to £7,500. The news release is available to view online here: [PM recommits UK to Net Zero by 2050 and pledges a “fairer” path to](#)

	<p>achieving target to ease the financial burden on British families - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)</p>
<p>Improve the energy performance of council owned and leased properties – initially through an appraisal of Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) and Display Energy Certificates (DECs).</p>	<p>Anthesis' independent carbon footprint assessment identified pathways to net zero for the corporate estate including measures to improve the energy performance of council owned and leased properties. These are in line with the council's 2030 net zero target for its corporate estate as per the climate emergency declaration made in 2019. The recommended measures have been incorporated into the Woking Net Zero strategy which was presented to the Greener Woking Working Group on 18 September 2023. As agreed, further work will be undertaken by officers to review the deliverability of the strategy in the context of the council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and Section 114 notice. See additional note on the Woking Net Zero strategy later in this update.</p>
<p>Large scale renewable energy plan to be drafted, detailing how wind energy could be funded across the borough and how it could be complemented with solar energy.</p>	<p>Woking Borough Council's Renewable Energy Plan was adopted by the Executive on 17 June 2021. The objectives of the Plan have been incorporated into the Woking Net Zero strategy which was presented to the Greener Woking Working Group on 18 September 2023. See earlier update. Officers in Green Infrastructure continue to work with SCC to explore collaborative renewables opportunities in furtherance of the Plan's objectives, within the limitations presented by the council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and Section 114 notice.</p> <p>The second phase of the Solar Together scheme is in progress having been launched in June 2023. It will see further household solar PV installations in the borough with 739 expressions of interest received from Woking householders - 695 of these were for solar PV with 44 additional registrations for battery storage. A total of 9,016 registrations were received across Surrey. The next phase of the scheme involves an auction with pre-vetted installers. The winning bid is the lowest and sets the price for all solar and battery systems. Further news on the scheme will be reported in future CEAP updates.</p> <p>As reported above, ThamesWey's new low-carbon energy centre in the Sheerwater Regeneration scheme is in its final phases of completion</p>

	<p>and is expected to be operational this quarter. The energy centre – which utilises air source heat pumps - will provide heat and power to completed units in the Sheerwater redevelopment via a local district heating network. Renewable electricity generated by solar photovoltaics (PV) across the site will complement the system. Together the energy centre and PV generation help towards the borough’s decarbonisation and renewables targets.</p> <p>Application details are soon to be published about the government’s new Community Energy Fund. The £10 million fund is designed to support local communities in setting up local renewable energy projects that will provide local jobs and deliver energy security. In this region, the fund will be administered by the Greater South East Net Zero Hub. Interested groups are invited to register interest in the Fund by emailing CEF@gsetzerohub.org.uk to receive further details once the fund opens for applications.</p>
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Transport

Theme / Priority action	Description of actions taken
<p>Avoid unnecessary travel to meetings where possible and develop a mandatory transport hierarchy as part of the council’s Staff Transport Plan.</p>	<p>Following a recommendation from this Working Group, on 17 June 2021 the Executive resolved that non-statutory meetings should continue, where practical, on a remote basis. This will help further reduce unnecessary travel to meetings and associated carbon emissions.</p>
<p>Identify locations for the installation of electric bike charging points to further enable staff (and public) to select sustainable modes of transport and alternatives to the car, particularly for short journeys.</p>	<p>The installation of e-bike and e-mobility scooter charging facilities has been raised with SCC under their active travel plans and highlighted as a priority for this Working Group.</p> <p>Further to the successful application to South Western Railway’s Customer and Communities Improvement Fund, suitable options for additional secure cycle storage close to Woking Railway Station have been identified and were subject to public consultation via the Woking Community Forum until 19 November 2023. Residents were asked their views on recommendations for the cycle storage locations prior to procurement and installation. It is anticipated that the £40,000 funding will be</p>

	<p>sufficient to provide eight bike hangars, each housing six to eight bikes, providing a secure and robust on-street cycle parking solution, giving cyclists peace of mind when they are away for the day or night. There are four proposed sites, each within easy reach of the railway station:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two hangars at the junction of The Broadway and High Street • Two hangars at Duke’s Court • Two hangars in Crown Square • Two hangars in the new Victoria Place civic space. <p>The scheme must be delivered within this financial year. Updates on the Woking Train Station Secure Cycle Parking Project will be provided to the Working Group in due course.</p>
<p>Work with the council’s car club provider to replace the existing petrol cars with electric vehicles.</p>	<p>WBC’s car club scheme has two vehicles for officers to use on council business; one of which is a Nissan Leaf electric vehicle (EV).</p> <p>As part of the government’s announcement on 20 September 2023 pledging a “fairer path to net zero”, it was confirmed that the plan to ban the sale of new petrol and diesel cars had been pushed back by five years, so all sales of new cars from 2035 will be zero emission. The government suggested this will enable families to wait to take advantage of falling prices over the coming decade if they wish to.</p> <p>WBC continues to participate in the Surrey EV Strategy Forum. The aim of this forum is to work together to deliver a consistent strategy across the county to provide the necessary EV infrastructure for Surrey residents to help facilitate a shift to zero emission transport.</p> <p>A key objective of the Surrey EV Forum is to accelerate delivery of EV charging infrastructure across the county. Districts and boroughs have expressed their interest in a fully funded concession framework for EV chargepoint installation, to be led by Surrey County Council. Concession frameworks are a popular delivery mechanism for local authorities looking to increase EV infrastructure as they offer no or low-cost options with extensive roll out of fast and rapid chargepoints. Following a competitive tender</p>

process, SCC appointed Connected Kerb as the concession framework operator to install thousands of public EV chargepoints over the next five years across the county. [Understood to be the largest on-street EV chargepoint contract in the UK](#), the contract enables up to £60million of investment to install public EV chargepoints across Surrey at on-street locations as well as on other suitable public sector and community organisation managed car parks.

Individual contracts have been extended to interested districts and boroughs to formalise participation and to nominate locations to inform a network delivery plan. **As at early November 2023, eight districts and boroughs had signed Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDAs) as an indicator of their interest in participation. These are: Elmbridge, Epsom and Ewell, Guildford, Reigate and Banstead, Spelthorne, Tandridge, Waverley and Woking. Tandridge has signed the full contract and is ready to proceed.** SCC and Connected Kerb are finalising a list of potential sites as part of the first phase of charge point installation. It is anticipated this will be shared with participating districts and boroughs soon. The first phase of charge points will be fully funded by the framework operator. SCC is also preparing a bid application to the government's [Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund \(LEVI\)](#) for submission at the end of November 2023 for a subsequent installation phase. LEVI is designed to support local authorities in accelerating the roll out and commercialisation of local electric vehicle charging infrastructure for residents who don't have access to off-street parking. **WBC officers have discussed potential car park and off-street locations that could be considered in the first phase of the scheme pending guidance on the contract in the context of the government intervention and organisational review.**

SCC is currently undertaking a [kerbside electric vehicle chargepoint trial](#). The trial is targeted at EV drivers that do not have access to off-street parking. Trailing a cable across the pavement is considered unlawful in Surrey (and most places across the UK) which makes home EV charging challenging if not impossible for those without a driveway. New products are

emerging to try and address this issue and make home charging more widely accessible. SCC's pilot is testing two products via resident participation:

- **Cable gullies** - channels installed in the pavement that can be used to safely trail an EV charging cable across a pavement. SCC has 30 gullies available to trial.
- **Trojan AON chargers** – a charging point is installed in the pavement near the kerb and a cable laid underneath the pavement connecting it directly to a property's own electrical supply. A portable "lance" is needed to use the charging point. SCC is trialling 50 Trojan AON chargers.

Details on how to apply to take part in the trial along with terms and fees are available on the [SCC website](#). Although applications for the Trojan AON chargers have now closed for this year, there is still availability for the cable gully trial.

WBC Building Services colleagues are working with EV infrastructure specialist Connected Kerb to install a back office telemetry system to proactively monitor the EV points in Victoria Place Red Car Park. The telemetry system will also improve customer experience by enabling proactive maintenance and repairs via an alert system facilitated by the telemetry. Additionally, the system will also facilitate the introduction of charging fees for EV charging. **The telemetry installation is currently subject to procurement. Further to reports of some EV units failing at the Red Car Park, Building Services arranged for the chargepoint installer Schneider and the Victoria Place developer Sir Robert McAlpine to check the points and rectify the faults – this was completed in October 2023.**

Enterprise Rent A Car Ltd recently extended their car club offering in the Town Centre with two additional electric vehicles available to hire by residents of The Marches. The vehicles are conveniently parked in Victoria Place Red Car Park and are bookable via their online portal.

Policy, leadership and behaviour changes

Theme / Priority action	Description of actions taken
<p>Review Woking 2050 to incorporate the council's pledge for carbon neutrality and climate emergency action plan.</p>	<p>The Woking Net Zero strategy – the follow up strategy to Woking 2050 - was presented to the Greener Woking Working Group at its meeting on 18 September 2023. The latest draft incorporated feedback from the public and stakeholder consultation that took place during the summer. As agreed by the Working Group, further work will be undertaken by officers to review the deliverability of the strategy in the context of the council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and Section 114 notice. Pending this review, the strategy is scheduled to be considered for adoption at the Executive on 21 March 2024.</p> <p>The Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP) will be reviewed and updated to incorporate the latest strategy actions and themes. Furthermore, a set of performance indicators will be developed to accompany the CEAP to ensure we can easily monitor progress against measurable actions. Consultation feedback requested that SMART targets be incorporated – this will be developed as part of this exercise.</p> <p>The draft summary Woking Net Zero strategy will be updated following adoption of the main document and published to the council and Planet Woking websites pending.</p> <p>The final draft Climate Change Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was circulated to the Greener Woking Working Group at the end of October 2023 ahead of its consideration by the Executive on 16 November and Council on 30 November recommending its adoption. A consultation statement accompanied the SPD highlighting the modifications made following feedback received during the public and stakeholder consultation that took place during the summer.</p> <p>On 18 October 2023, Climate Emergency UK (CEUK) published its local authority climate action score cards results. These are an assessment of all UK councils' climate action since 2019 and their response to reducing emissions and tackling the climate emergency. This is very different from last year's 'Plan Scorecards', where CEUK assessed the council's written climate</p>

action plans and strategies. While presented as a league table of local authority climate progress, it is important to note that this year's results cannot be compared to last year because of the change in methodology and scoring criteria. The scoring involved a 'Right of Reply' exercise which gave councils an opportunity to review the marking and submit any extra evidence. Last year WBC scored 70% and was second to Waverley amongst Surrey councils and in top ten national district councils. This year's change in methodology saw the average score for a district council at 29% - much lower than last year. The highest score was 61% by Lancaster City Council. The top five performers are all city councils. CEUK states that the assessment was designed to highlight the barriers to local climate action and the trend in scores across the country highlights the need for more support and funding from central government. With an overall score of 34%, WBC was the top Surrey authority. WBC scored particularly highly for 'Collaboration and Engagement' with a score of 65%, significantly higher than the national district average (43%) thanks to the ongoing Planet Woking programme and recent Woking Net Zero consultation.

Collaborative working on the climate agenda across Surrey continues with monthly meetings of the district and boroughs' climate change officers. Also, in furtherance of Surrey County Council's [Climate Change Delivery Plan \(CCDP\)](#), meetings of the Greener Futures Partnership (GFP) Steering Group continue. This is an opportunity for senior managers and portfolio holders from across the districts and boroughs to receive and discuss updates on partnership working and projects delivering against our common net zero targets. Building on this collaboration, the Greener Woking Working Group has welcomed County Cllr Marisa Heath, Cabinet Member for the Environment and Carolyn McKenzie, Environment Director from SCC, to its meetings.

Surrey Environment Partnership waste reduction initiative [Rethink Waste](#) in partnership with Green Redeem continues. By signing up online for free, Surrey residents can win prizes for reducing their waste. Weekly emails and engaging activities such as pledges, videos and quizzes, along with a personalised online dashboard are designed to help the public make small, yet impactful lifestyle changes. Each time a resident

	<p>completes an activity, they win points which can be used to enter competitions for prizes or donations to charities or local schools.</p>
<p>Develop an engaging staff communication programme to promote and raise awareness of what the council is doing to address climate change across its estate and operations (and more broadly across the borough).</p>	<p>Climate change and biodiversity focused communications continue through the Planet Woking programme. The contract with Air Social, who managed Planet Woking’s social media accounts, ended on 30 June 2023. Social media posts via Instagram and Facebook continue to be facilitated in-house. The website has been managed and updated in-house for the duration of the programme in any case. Recent communications include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 - 5 posts per month on social media; • New case studies uploaded to the Planet Woking website encouraging the public to get involved and make sustainable choices. Recent topics include the Woking Train Station secure cycle parking consultation; CEUK climate scorecards; tips for an eco-friendly bonfire night; promotion of grant funding available through Action Surrey; Surrey Heathland Partnership’s volunteer conservation programme; promotion of Surrey Environment Partnership’s recent discounted compost bin offer; and the publication of the Planet Woking Wildlife Gardening Guide. <p>Climate change e-learning continues to be available for officers and members on the Surrey Learn Portal. Take up has been limited but this must be considered in the context of various corporate training requirements for staff.</p> <p>The Planet Woking Wildlife Gardening Guide was approved for publication at the last Greener Woking Working Group meeting on 18 September 2023. The full guide and quick reference infographic have been published on the Planet Woking website.</p> <p>Public engagement and awareness raising continues through Woking Environment Action (WEAct). The group’s Woking Repair Café continues to offer free repairs for electrical and mechanical items, furniture, clothes, toys and textiles. The last session took place on 11 November at St Michael’s Church, Sheerwater. The aim of the repair café is to help reduce the number of items going to landfill that often have not reached the</p>

	<p>end of their useful life. The group also helps people learn how to repair household items themselves. The next repair café takes place on Saturday 9 December 2023 at St Mark’s Church, Westfield Road, GU22 9QA. Further details are available on WEAct’s website.</p> <p>WEAct will soon be launching a monthly e-newsletter to keep readers updated on the group’s recent activities, current initiatives, upcoming events and ways to get involved. Details on how to subscribe are available on WEAct’s website.</p> <p>Green Infrastructure attendance at meetings of Woking Chamber of Commerce’s Environment Committee continues. The group meets every six weeks to exchange news of local environmental initiatives and events.</p>
<p>Develop a staff and councillor communications campaign to promote and encourage positive behaviour changes that focus on messages around switching off equipment, avoiding single use plastics, etc.</p>	<p>Communications to staff and councillors to promote and raise awareness of the pledge to become net zero will be ongoing. This has in part been addressed with messages arising through projects as noted above and, in particular, through Planet Woking and the Woking Net Zero consultation. Green topics are also regularly included in the weekly corporate e-newsletter issued by Marketing Communications.</p>

Sustainable development

Theme / Priority action	Description of actions taken
<p>Further develop planning guidance to reflect the council’s climate and ecological emergency declaration.</p>	<p>The final draft Climate Change Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was circulated to the Greener Woking Working Group at the end of October 2023 ahead of its consideration by the Executive on 16 November and its adoption by Council on 30 November 2023. A consultation statement accompanied the SPD highlighting the modifications made following feedback received during the public and stakeholder consultation that took place during the summer.</p> <p>The review of the Core Strategy was presented to the Council at its meeting on 12 October 2023. The review demonstrated that all the policies of the Core Strategy remain up-to-date and are in general</p>

	<p>conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The practical implications of this finding are limited, since the Council must in any event begin an update to the Core Strategy as soon as possible, in order to adopt it before the expiry of the current Local Plan period in 2027. The fact that the policies remain up-to-date means that they can continue to be applied to planning decisions during the update process.</p> <p>It was agreed that officers will bring forward a timetable and associated outline of the work programme to produce a new Local Plan.</p>
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Other news

Theme / Priority action	Description of actions taken
	<p>Due to ongoing cost savings, Woking Borough Council is no longer a member of the Air Alert subscription service. Further information about air quality in Woking borough is available via the Council's website.</p> <p>On 27 September 2023, government set out an updated timetable for implementation of the 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirement for new housing, industrial and commercial developments from January 2024. By law new developments must deliver a net positive for the local environment, for example by creating new habitats and green spaces. Guidance and regulations are due to be published by the end of November 2023. Further information on BNG is available online.</p> <p>UK100 recently launched its new report "Powers in Place: Nature". It provides an overview of local authority powers to drive nature recovery, tackle climate change, and simultaneously deliver health and wellbeing co-benefits by promoting engagement with the natural environment — and the related duties they are subject to. Shorter member briefing papers are also available which outline the key takeaway recommendations, key barriers and case studies for each chapter of the main handbook.</p>

In October 2023, the Basingstoke Canal Society confirmed it had raised £165,000 for its new electric trip boat. Brayzel Narrowboats will be building the Kitty II boat in time for the spring/summer 2024 boat trip season. £75,000 came from a successful [Your Fund Surrey](#) grant application. The remainder of the funds had been kindly donated by a number of local contributors and Woking residents. [Find out more about the Basingstoke Canal Society and current projects.](#)

In October 2023, Surrey County Council celebrated having the highest number of eco schools awarded with Green Flag status in England. All 88 eco schools in Surrey have achieved this accolade. [Eco-Schools](#) is the largest education programme in the world which helps sustainability become an integral part of school life. The highest accreditation in the scheme is Green Flag status. Over 50,000 Surrey pupils have been engaged in the programme in projects such as switch off campaigns to save energy; planting trees for the benefit of wildlife and air quality; and supporting national campaigns such as Walk to School week. [Further information about the Surrey Eco Schools Programme is available online.](#)

SCC's Adaptation and Resilience Strategy – "Surrey Adapt" - was approved by its Cabinet on 31 October 2023. The strategy sets out Surrey's collective approach to avoiding, reducing and adapting to the increasing risks of climate change. This includes planning for and adapting to: floods; droughts and water insecurity; heatwaves and prolonged changes in temperature extremes; wildfires; and other potential knock-on impacts of climate change on human health, disease burden, impacts on infrastructure and the natural environment. As part of our partnership working, officers in Green Infrastructure contributed feedback to the development of this strategy. There are also some actions expected of districts and boroughs to support delivery of this strategy, for example:

- Integration of climate risk into policy, planning and infrastructure design alongside work already ongoing on climate change mitigation and nature recovery.
- Developing a targeted approach to support more vulnerable groups to adapt such as schools and care homes, as well as specific

geographical areas ensuring a just approach and that no one is left behind.

- Incorporation of climate resilience in the Council's and partners' engagement with the business sector.
- Developing a collective partnership approach to engagement with, and communication to, communities that raises awareness of the risks but also what action can be taken to adapt.

[The strategy and covering report is available on the SCC website.](#)

In October 2023, [Surrey Heathland Partnership launched a conservation volunteer programme with opportunities at heathland sites across the county](#). There are two remaining dates in this year's programme: 6 December at Smarts Heath and 20 December at Brookwood Heath. The Partnership hopes to announce more dates from January 2024. Prospective participants are asked to email heathlandproject@surreycc.gov.uk to register as a volunteer and to receive further information. Corporate volunteering opportunities are also available on request.

In October 2023, Surrey Wildlife Trust received a welcome £500 donation from Victoria Place and its generous fundraisers that took part in its summer Woodland Wonderland campaign which promoted protecting and restoring woodland surrounding Woking.

This year's annual international climate conference – [COP28](#) – takes place between 30 November and 12 December 2023 in Dubai. COP stands for Conference of the Parties, and it will be attended by countries that signed the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) – a treaty agreed in 1994. The COP has met annually since 1995 and brings together heads of state, climate experts and campaigners to agree further coordinated action to tackle climate change.