

Climate Emergency Action Plan: Progress Update 12 – November 2022 to March 2023

This document summarises progress against the priority actions within the Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP) since November 2022, as reported to the Greener Woking Working Group in March 2023.

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

This section provides an overview of new activities recorded this quarter (November 2022 to March 2023). Further details are included in the table that follows on page 3.

- The independent carbon footprint assessment of the Council's corporate emissions is now available to view on its [website](#).
- Officers in Property Services are engaging with Woking based company SAV Systems on a pilot of their Energi Raven energy monitoring software.
- Officers in Property Services are developing a comprehensive database of energy and water utility providers and consumption across the Council's assets.
- [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.
- [Action Surrey](#)'s Sustainable Warmth grant funding scheme has been extended until end of September 2023.
- A network of '[warm hubs](#)' continues to operate across Woking borough.
- Surrey County Council (SCC) launched a new [online Energy Advice Tool](#) to help signpost residents to tailored information on grants, support and advice, and non-financial help.
- On 21 November 2022, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a report on domestic energy efficiency.
- SCC is looking to develop the Sustainable Warmth countywide consortium contract to include a renewables scheme similar to the [Solar Together](#) initiative.
- The active travel bid submitted by SCC in collaboration with WBC to the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities was unsuccessful.
- The bid to South Western Railway's Customer and Communities Improvement Fund for additional secure cycle storage close to Woking Railway Station has been shortlisted.
- SCC has identified an operator for the forthcoming countywide electric vehicle (EV) concession framework with the contract to be finalised in March 2023. The contract then will be extended to interested districts and boroughs to formalise participation and to nominate locations to inform a network delivery plan.
- The proposed introduction of fees for EV charging was agreed at the Executive on 17 November 2022 as part of the Review of Fees and Charges 2023-24 report.
- The draft Climate Change Strategy was considered by the Greener Woking Working Group on 8 February 2023 and is due to be considered by the Executive at its meeting on 23 March 2023 ahead of public and stakeholder consultation planned from mid May 2023.
- The Greener Woking Working Group welcomed County Cllr Marisa Heath, Cabinet Member for the Environment and Carolyn McKenzie, Environment Director from SCC, to its meeting on 8 February 2023 which considered the draft Climate Change Strategy and draft Climate Change Supplementary Planning Document.
- [Climate Emergency UK](#) will be undertaking a review of local authority climate action to inform this year's score cards.

- Climate change and biodiversity focused communications continue through the [Planet Woking](#) programme including social media posts; website case studies and the February edition of the e-newsletter.
- A Planet Woking Green Garden Guide has been drafted by Green Infrastructure.
- Officers in the Economic Development Team launched the [Go Green](#) pages of the Woking Works website in January 2023.
- Public engagement and awareness raising continued through [Woking Environment Action](#) (WEAct) including via its climate hub; its Annual General Meeting (AGM); and a presentation to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The group is also due to take part in a workshop at Woking High School as part of their “Let’s Talk” event on 17 March 2023, promoting the Take the Jump campaign.
- The Executive is asked to endorse the [Take the Jump](#) campaign at its meeting on 23 March 2023 and encourage staff and Councillors to consider what behaviour shifts they can take in support of the Council’s corporate and borough climate commitments.
- The draft Climate Change Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was presented to the Local Development Framework (LDF) Working Group on 1 February and to the Greener Woking Working Group on 8 February 2023. It will be considered by the Executive at its meeting on 23 March 2023 ahead of public consultation beginning mid-May 2023.
- The Surrey Building Control Awards are due to take place in May 2023 featuring an award for Best Sustainable Project.
- As part of a Cabinet reshuffle, the Department of Business, Enterprise and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) was dismantled on 7 February 2023, creating a new Department for Energy Security and Net Zero.
- [Low Carbon across the South and East](#) (LoCASE) grants are still available to SMEs until April 2023 with training available on 3 and 26 April 2023.
- On 13 January 2023, Chris Skidmore MP published the findings of his [review of the government’s approach to delivering its net zero target](#).

Climate Emergency Action Plan – Progress Update 12

This document summarises progress against the priority actions within the Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP) since November 2022, as reported to the Greener Woking Working Group in March 2023. New activity within the quarter (November 2022 to March 2023) is shown in bold for ease of reference and bulleted in pages 1 to 2.

[Read background information about the CEAP](#)

Theme / Priority Action: Council Assets	Progress to March 2023: Description of actions taken
<p>Adopt an emissions baseline for the Council's estate and operations.</p>	<p>The independent carbon footprint assessment of the Council's corporate emissions is now available to view on its website. The findings were presented to a meeting of this Working Group on 30 November 2022 and have been used to inform the review of the Council's climate change strategy (further details of which are included later in this update report).</p> <p>Officers in Property Services are engaging with Woking based company SAV Systems on a pilot of their Energi Raven energy monitoring software. The product is designed to help identify potential energy, carbon and financial savings on a building by building basis. The pilot has the potential to contribute to delivering a recommendation of the carbon footprint assessment to improve the energy performance of Council owned and leased properties.</p> <p>Officers in Property Services are developing a comprehensive database of energy and water utility providers and consumption across the Council's assets. The database will improve knowledge of the complexity of current suppliers and help identify opportunities for possible savings in consumption and associated carbon emissions and expenditure.</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</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. Over the next seven years, the funding will help facilitate extension of Woking's heat and cooling networks to supply energy to</p>

<p>the supply of renewable / sustainable power sources.</p>	<p>new developments in the Town Centre including sites south of the railway line. The HNIP funding will also enable further decarbonisation of heat through the addition of large-scale heat pumps and heat storage capacity at Poole Road energy centre.</p> <p>In October 2022, Action Surrey was successful in its bid to become the delivery agent for SCC's Sustainable Warmth contract. The contract will serve the consortium of Surrey districts and boroughs in delivering £12 million funding for household energy efficiency improvements under the third wave of the government's Sustainable Warmth funding (also known as LAD3 and HUG).</p> <p>Action Surrey's Sustainable Warmth grant funding scheme has been extended until end of September 2023. The fund, aimed at people living in hard to heat homes and on lower incomes, offers grants between £10,000 and £25,000 to improve insulation and install renewable technology - helping to save energy, reduce emissions and combat rising energy prices. Improvement measures include loft insulation, cavity and external wall insulation, underfloor insulation and renewables, such as solar electricity panels. At the time of writing, 127 households were in the process of having measures installed with 55 further households approved and awaiting booking. £2,630,000 had been allocated in approved quotations. Further to the scheme's extension, new applications are welcome although eligibility criteria and property type restrictions apply. Residents are advised to apply as soon as possible as installer capacity and the total funding available is limited. Further details on this are included in the separate ThamesWey update report on this agenda.</p> <p>SCC is looking to develop the wider Sustainable Warmth contract to incorporate other potential decarbonisation and renewables projects. Further details to follow as the project develops.</p> <p>A network of 'warm hubs' continues to operate across the county. These are free, safe, and friendly environments where residents can come to keep warm, meet with other people, and receive advice on cutting their</p>
---	---

	<p>energy use. Warm hubs operating in Woking borough include the centres for the community, Eastwood Leisure Centre, St Andrew's cafe in Goldsworth Park, The Lighthouse in Woking town centre, Renew 88 based at Knaphill Baptist church and Woking Library. By visiting a warm hub, residents can reduce their energy bills and carbon footprint by turning off their heating and help boost their health and wellbeing in the colder months. For more information and to view the locations of the hubs, visit Woking Borough Council's warm hubs webpage.</p> <p>On 17 February 2023, Surrey County Council launched a new online Energy Advice Tool to help signpost residents to relevant support available during the cost of living crisis. By simply answering a series of short questions, residents can receive tailored information on grants, support and advice, and non-financial help. The tool looks at a range of support options including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • finding free or part-funded schemes for household energy efficiency measures. • signposting to debt relief grants. • help with locating additional services such as clothes and food banks. • fuel vouchers.
<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>The results of the independent carbon footprint assessment have identified pathways to net zero for the corporate estate including measures to improve the energy performance of Council owned and leased properties.</p> <p>On 21 November 2022, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a report on domestic energy efficiency. The report gave an overview of what the Council continues to do to ensure local homes across a range of tenures are being brought up to modern energy efficiency standards. It examined the level of energy efficiency measures developers currently provide in new residential developments, the local and national context in which any new actions will need to be considered and highlighted some further opportunities for action subject to funding availability.</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>The Surrey Solar Together group-buying solar PV project which ran during summer 2021 saw 142 Woking households commit to the scheme. While the scheme has now closed to new applications, to date there have been 114 approved installations resulting in a total of 558 kW installed capacity, 1,551 panels installed, and 91,822 kg saved CO2 emissions. Woking households participating in the scheme have invested just over £721,677. SCC is looking to develop the Sustainable Warmth countywide consortium contract to include a future renewables scheme, similar to the Solar Together initiative. An update on this will be given in a future report.</p>
<p>Theme / Priority Action: Transport</p>	<p>Progress to March 2023: Description of actions taken</p>
<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 and the Liberal Democrat administration. As reported previously, it was confirmed that e-bike facilities will be considered for West Byfleet Railway Station as part of cycle infrastructure and route improvements linking Woking Town Centre and West Byfleet.</p> <p>In January 2023, it was announced that unfortunately the £10.8 million active travel bid submitted by SCC in collaboration with WBC to the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities had been unsuccessful. It was hoped the bid would deliver targeted improvements to walking, cycling and bus infrastructure facilitating better connections to/from Sheerwater and the links across the Woking Town Centre, Sheerwater and West Byfleet corridor.</p> <p>A bid application was submitted to South Western Railway's Customer and Communities Improvement Fund 2023-24 for additional secure cycle storage close to Woking Railway Station, in August 2022. The bid was shortlisted in December 2022. An outcome is anticipated soon.</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). 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 meet common climate targets and facilitate a shift to zero emission transport in line with the government's Road to Zero Strategy which bans the sale of petrol and diesel vehicles from 2030.</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 process, SCC identified a concession framework operator in December 2022 with the contract to be finalised in March 2023. The contract will be extended to interested districts and boroughs to formalise participation and to nominate locations to inform a network delivery plan.</p> <p>The proposed introduction of fees for EV charging was agreed at the Executive on 17 November 2022 as part of the Review of Fees and Charges 2023-24 report.</p>
<p>Theme / Priority Action: Policy, leadership and behaviour changes</p>	<p>Progress to March 2023: Description of actions taken</p>
<p>Review Woking 2050 to incorporate the Council's pledge for carbon neutrality and climate emergency action plan.</p>	<p>Green Infrastructure is reviewing the Council's climate change strategy. An initial draft strategy has been prepared following a self-assessment and gap analysis to identify what the revised strategy needs to include based on good practice and external feedback. The draft also reflects WBC's CEAP and other local and national developments since 2015 including SCC's approved Climate Change Delivery Programme. The draft was considered by the Greener Woking Working Group on 8 February 2023 and has also been the subject of WBC officer consultation. The draft strategy and</p>

proposed plans for public consultation are due to be considered by the Executive at its meeting on 23 March 2023. Meanwhile, feedback from Members and officers is being considered and where appropriate incorporated into a further updated draft ahead of public and stakeholder consultation planned from mid May 2023. A consultation plan is being developed in collaboration with the Council's Lead Engagement Officer.

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. The last meeting took place on 17 January 2023.** This is an opportunity for senior managers and portfolio holders from across the districts and boroughs to receive updates on partnership working and projects delivering against our common net zero targets.

Building on this collaboration, the Greener Woking Working Group welcomed County Cllr Marisa Heath, Cabinet Member for the Environment and Carolyn McKenzie, Environment Director from SCC, to its meeting on 8 February 2023 which considered the draft Climate Change Strategy and draft Climate Change Supplementary Planning Document.

Climate Emergency UK Local Authority Score Cards - Last year, [Climate Emergency UK](#) (CE UK) compiled their [Council Climate Action Score Cards](#) based on local authority climate and ecological action across the country. Assessment was made against over 100 criteria covering themes such as plans for decarbonisation; collaborative working and action to conserve wildlife and biodiversity. Woking Borough Council was awarded a score of 70%, placing it tenth in the country's list of district councils. **During February and March 2023, CE UK will be undertaking a review of subsequent local authority action. A five week 'Right of Reply' during April-May 2023 will again enable local authorities to review and submit further evidence in response to CE UK's initial appraisal. Final revised score cards are then due to be launched in autumn 2023.**

<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. Recent communications include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 - 10 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 Do Nothing for Nature; Free trees from the Woodland Trust; Veganuary; CREST23, the Council's carbon footprint assessment and net zero training for businesses. • The February 2023 edition of the Planet Woking newsletter was sent out to subscribers and is available online. <p>Climate change e-learning is available for officers and members on the Surrey Learn Portal here. Take up has been trialled amongst teams within Neighbourhood Services. Corporate Leadership Team has requested that the course be promoted at team meetings.</p> <p>A Planet Woking Green Garden Guide has been drafted by Green Infrastructure. The guide provides practical tips for residents on how they can turn their gardens into wildlife havens and builds on a resident request received at a Planet Woking webinar. The draft will be subject to online consultation and is considered elsewhere on this meeting's agenda.</p> <p>Officers in the Economic Development Team launched the Go Green pages of the Woking Works website in January 2023. These offer sustainability advice and information to local businesses along with local case study examples.</p> <p>Public engagement and awareness raising continues through Woking Environment Action (WEAct). Based in Mercia Walk until early February 2023, the WEAct climate hub offered information and advice on how residents can do their bit for the local environment. On 26 January 2023, the group held its AGM which was well attended and set out the future direction for the group. On 2 February 2023 WEAct hosted an evening at the Hub for like-minded young climate enthusiasts aged 16 – 20 to come together to share ideas on future activities. On 20 February 2023, the group presented to the</p>
--	--

	<p>Overview and Scrutiny Committee outlining its history, its outreach activities role and priorities in continuing local action and engagement in furtherance of the shared environmental goals of the group and the Council.</p> <p>WEAct has actively promoted the Take the Jump campaign which encourages people to try out six lifestyle shifts to live more sustainably. This will be a subject of a workshop at Woking High School as part of their “Let’s Talk” event on 17 March 2023. WEAct will be asking students what shifts they could make towards a more sustainable future. WEAct will also promote the forthcoming climate change strategy consultation and ask that students participate.</p> <p>Following a request that the Council encourage members of the public to sign up to Take the Jump, the Executive is asked to endorse the campaign at its meeting on 23 March 2023 and encourage staff and Councillors to consider what behaviour shifts they can take in support of the Council’s corporate climate commitments.</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 carbon neutral will be ongoing. This has in part been addressed with messages arising through projects as noted above and, in particular, through Planet Woking.</p> <p>Officers from the Green Infrastructure team gave a presentation to Senior Managers on 18 January 2023 on the Council’s climate activities and Strategy review. This was an opportunity to reaffirm its priority and emphasise the role all staff have to play in working towards the Council’s climate targets. Senior Managers agreed to share key messages with their teams.</p>
<p>Theme / Priority Action: Sustainable development</p>	<p>Progress to March 2023: Description of actions taken</p>
<p>Further develop planning guidance to reflect the Council’s climate and ecological emergency declaration.</p>	<p>Running in parallel to the climate change strategy review, the Council’s Climate Change Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is under review by Planning Policy. The draft SPD was presented to the Local</p>

	<p>Development Framework (LDF) Working Group on 1 February and to the Greener Woking Working Group on 8 February 2023. It will be considered by the Executive at its meeting on 23 March 2023 ahead of public consultation beginning mid-May 2023.</p> <p>The Surrey Building Control Awards are due to take place in May 2023. The awards categories include Best Sustainable Project recognising use of renewables, design, running and lifecycle costs etc. Entries opened on 20 February and close on 6 April with an awards presentation due to take place mid-May 2023.</p>
<p>Theme / Priority Action: Other news</p>	<p>Progress to March 2023: Description of actions taken</p>
	<p>As part of a Cabinet reshuffle on 7 February 2023, the Prime Minister Rishi Sunak dismantled the Department of Business, Enterprise and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and created a new Department for Energy Security and Net Zero. The department's purpose is to secure long-term energy supply, bring down bills and halve inflation. Its four priorities are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • delivering security of energy supply; • ensuring properly functioning energy markets; • encouraging greater energy efficiency; and • seizing the opportunities of net zero to lead the world in new green industries. <p>Low Carbon across the South and East (LoCASE) aims to help businesses become more competitive and profitable while protecting the environment and encouraging low carbon solutions. Supported by the European Regional Development Fund, it provides a free business support programme offering focused, individual support to small and medium sized enterprises (including social enterprises) improving competitiveness and creating jobs through increased energy efficiency and new low carbon business. Grants are available for businesses of up to £20,000 as well as an environmental training scheme and events. Targeted business support is on offer for companies who offer 'green' or low carbon goods and services. To date, LoCASE has</p>

received 90 enquiries from Woking businesses resulting in nine successful applications so far. In total the initial nine applications will receive £44,077 in LoCASE grants, generating an investment of £134,617 and saving just over 31 tonnes of CO2 equivalent emissions. The projects will enable a total annual saving of at least £34,243 in energy costs for these businesses.
Please do share the information with local business contacts as funding is available until April 2023.

LoCase offers briefings to help businesses with their applications. The next available date is 3 April 2023. Further information is available on [Eventbrite](#). LoCASE also offers a Net Zero 360 course which is designed to help SMEs understand and calculate their carbon footprint and create a plan to reach net zero. The next available date is 26 April 2023. For further information please contact lowcarbon@surreycc.gov.uk.

[Mission Zero: Independent Review of Net Zero](#) – On 13 January 2023, Chris Skidmore MP published the findings of his review of the government’s approach to delivering its net zero target. The review makes 129 recommendations to ensure a green economy that is pro-business and pro-growth while working towards achieving legally binding targets to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050. The review was informed by a call for evidence and engagement with businesses, organisations, local government, academia and the public. As reported in the last update report in November 2022, Woking Borough Council submitted a response. The report recognises the crucial role of local government in delivering the national net zero target. It recommends a “Net Zero Local Big Bang”, noting that reforming the relationship between central and local government on net zero will empower local authorities to deliver place-based action and unlock the high levels of local net zero ambition that we have across the UK.

The main recommendations from the review include:

- **Using infrastructure to unlock net zero** – to include the delivery of the British Energy Security Strategy and reforms to Planning to enable solar and onshore wind to be developed more easily, helping communities reap the benefits of cheaper low-carbon electricity.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating sustainable governance structures for net zero – to include establishing an Office for Net Zero Delivery responsible for placing net zero delivery at the heart of government thinking. • Backing business to go green – to include reviewing incentives for investment in decarbonisation; development of a new UK Emissions Trading Scheme (EMS); and launching a ‘Help to Grow Green’ campaign, offering information and support to SMEs. • Catalysing local action – to include reforming the Planning system at local and national level to place net zero at its heart; and simplifying funding mechanisms to make it more efficient and productive for both central and local government. This recognises that local authorities are a key partner in delivering net zero, but current central government funding arrangements are standing in the way of effective local action. • Increasing transparency and engaging people – to include expanding the government’s public reporting on net zero and enhancing public engagement and information on the carbon cost of behaviour choices. • Delivering cleaner, cheaper and greener homes – to include legislating for the Future Homes Standard meaning no new homes to have gas boilers from 2025; phasing out new/replacement gas boilers by 2033; and replacing EPC ratings with Net Zero Performance Certificates (NZPC) for households. • Capitalising on international leadership – to include the introduction of environmental and climate protections in future free trade agreements; and the removal of trade barriers to environmental goods and services. • Setting ourselves up for 2050 and beyond – to include enhanced investment in research and development and net zero technologies.
--	---