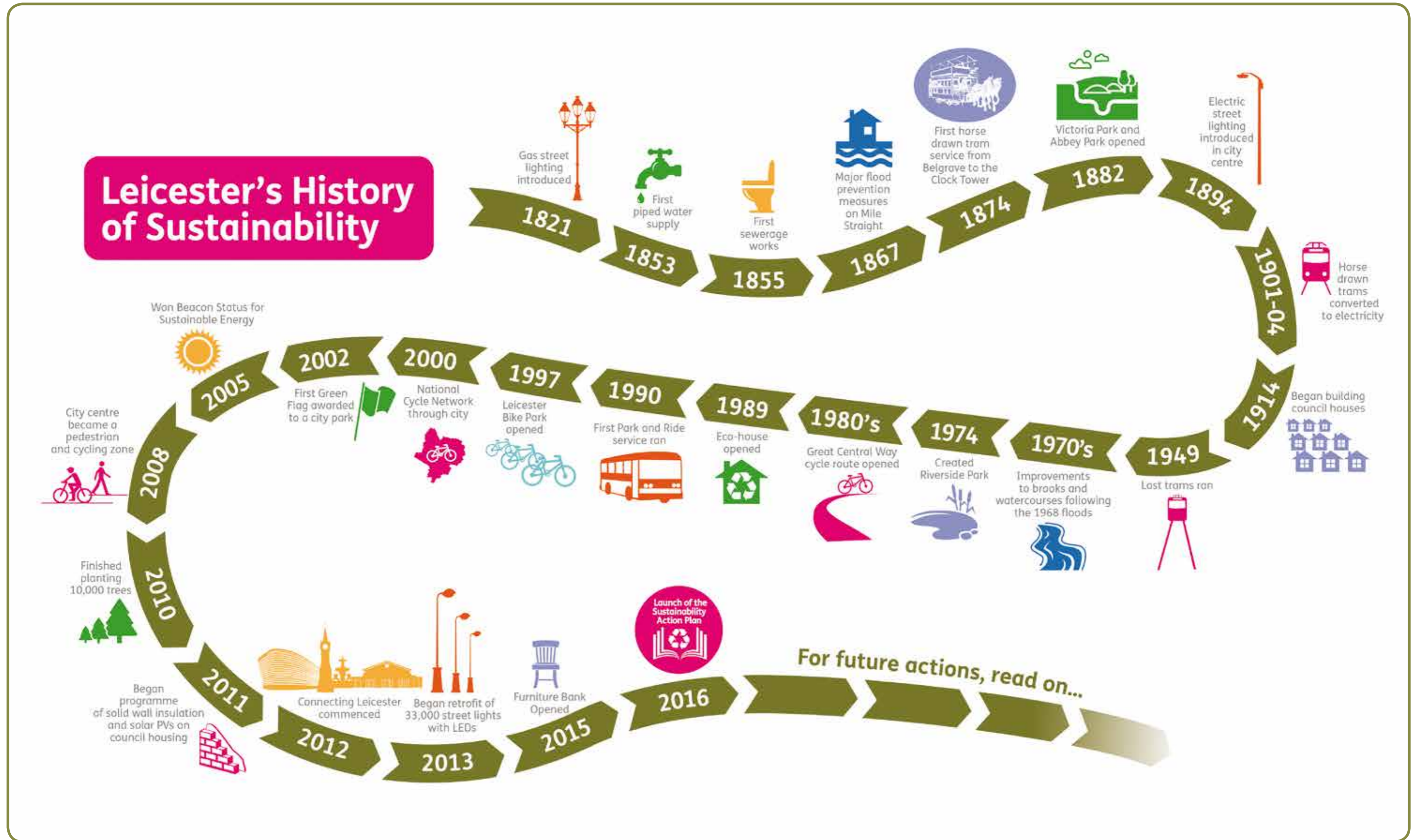


# Leicester's Sustainability Action Plan

2016 – 2019



# Timeline of Achievements



# Foreword from Councillor Clarke



Welcome to Leicester City Council's Sustainability Action Plan 2016-2019.

Leicester's credentials as a sustainable and smart city are amongst the strongest in the UK. The concept of 'sustainability' and all that it entails has received increasing political support over the past 2 decades, as risks posed by environmental issues have become more of a threat to our society. Today the future of cities like ours, and the contribution they can make to addressing climate change and associated environmental issues, are key concerns of communities locally, and of political leaders around the world; as highlighted by the Paris Agreement, the culmination of COP21, in December 2015.

Leicester is now well underway with action to meet its climate change target of reducing emissions of carbon dioxide by 50% from 1990 levels by 2025. The last two decades have seen real and important progress. The city's District Heating Scheme now connects with 2,800 dwellings and 38 operational buildings. Thousands of homes have improved their energy efficiency and hundreds of businesses and organisations have taken steps to reduce their carbon footprint. Over 320 corporate buildings have

intelligent metering monitoring electricity, gas, water and heat. Today, the Connecting Leicester project is transforming the city, making journeys by sustainable transport a more attractive option and contributing to carbon reduction and better air quality.

This action plan focuses exclusively on where the city council has a level of direct influence across 6 key themes. Key actions include:

- Building on the recent 'White Lights' project, which has delivered smart, LED street lighting across the city, cutting carbon and delivering savings: a clear win-win.
- Investigating ways of making our existing housing stock more energy efficient and use all avenues to support the private rented sector to do the same.
- Continuing to work with partners to deliver flood prevention interventions, whilst at the same time making our rivers, canals and brooks more accessible to the public.

Delivering a low carbon city is this mayoral administration's top environmental priority. The priorities and ambitions detailed in the pages that follow provide more evidence of our capacity and our desire to deliver more, supporting both environmental and public health agendas.

This document covers the current mayoral term, six years short of the target date. Whilst achieving a 50% carbon reduction from 1990 levels remains a challenge, in 2016 Leicester is now ready to seriously consider what it will take to deliver a zero carbon future.

When we set the ambitious carbon reduction target for 2025, the goal of a low carbon city was part of a distant future, now it is within our grasp. This action plan is an important step towards that goal and the sustainability it will bring.

**Councillor Adam Clarke, Assistant City Mayor for Energy and Sustainability**

# Contents

|                                 |    |
|---------------------------------|----|
| Foreword                        | 4  |
| An Integrated Approach          | 6  |
| City Council Ambitions for 2025 | 7  |
| Strategic Themes                | 8  |
| Priorities for 2019             | 9  |
| Business                        | 10 |
| Housing                         | 12 |
| The Council                     | 14 |
| Development                     | 16 |
| Mitigation and Adaptation       | 18 |
| People                          | 22 |
| Monitoring Progress             | 24 |
| Ambitions in Detail             | 25 |
| Glossary                        | 26 |





## An Integrated Approach

This action plan captures sustainability across the whole council. It draws on a number of documents from specific services who manage sustainability within their own programmes. To find out more information about sustainability in specific service areas please refer to the following documents<sup>1</sup>:-

[Leicester Cycle City Action Plan](#)

Economic Action Plan

[Healthy Air for Leicester – Leicester’s Air Quality Action Plan](#)

[Leicester Tourism Action Plan](#)

[Leicester’s Biodiversity Action Plan](#)

[Leicester’s Food Plan](#)

[Green Infrastructure Strategy](#)

[Leicester’s Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#)

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<sup>1</sup> Note that at the time of press the new Economic Action Plan is not yet published.

# City Council Ambitions

- Halve city wide carbon dioxide emissions by 2025
- Halve the city council's carbon footprint by 2025
- Meet EU target levels for air quality to create a healthier environment for city residents
- Encourage healthier lifestyle choices, and double everyday cycling numbers by 2018, and then again by 2024
- Engage with more individuals, households, schools and employers each year in order to improve environmental awareness
- Protect and enhance open space and improve connectivity to wildlife areas



\*More information regarding our Ambitions can be found on page 25

# Strategic Themes

The Sustainability Action Plan is divided into 6 strategic themes as demonstrated in the diagram below. A number of priorities and actions, to be completed by 2019, have been developed for each strategic theme in order to facilitate a more sustainable city.



# Priorities for 2019

## Business

- 1 Support businesses to reduce their carbon emissions
- 2 Provide support to businesses that contribute to the low carbon economy

## Housing

- 3 Increase the energy efficiency of council housing
- 4 Increase the energy efficiency of private homes in the city
- 5 Work towards delivering an energy company

## The Council

- 6 Reduce the council's carbon footprint, maintaining the momentum for meeting the 2025 target

## Development

- 7 Improve and extend the existing District Heating Scheme
- 8 Reduce the environmental impact of new development in the city
- 9 Improve pedestrian and cycle connections, and the quality and provision of public spaces, to enhance Leicester's public realm
- 10 Improve existing smart infrastructure in Leicester to work towards becoming a smart city

## Mitigation and Adaptation

- 11 Facilitate an increase in the take up of cleaner and more efficient vehicles to address air quality
- 12 Increase the proportion of travel by sustainable transport modes such as cycling, walking and use of public transport
- 13 Minimise waste and increase recycling
- 14 Increase support for sustainable procurement
- 15 Protect and enhance biodiversity
- 16 Identify and enhance green networks and water corridors across the city
- 17 Improve and adapt services to increase resilience to the expected impacts of climate change

## People

- 18 Increase action taken by city residents in support of the Sustainable Leicester priorities
- 19 Enhance environmental education across the city

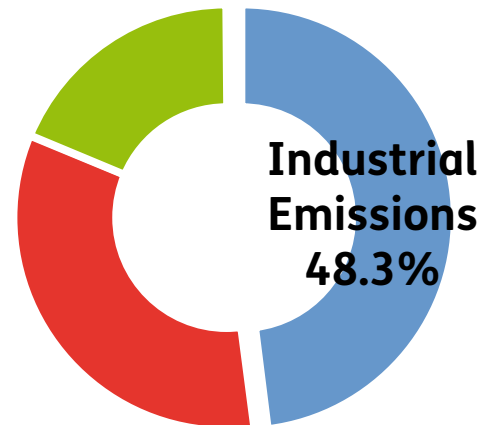


# Theme 1 - Business

Leicester's businesses and organisations are responsible for approximately half of the city's emissions of carbon dioxide. Effective engagement with this sector will therefore be critical to the overall plan for carbon reduction.

Figures from the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC)<sup>2</sup> show a 20% decrease in industrial CO<sub>2</sub> emissions since 2005. This reflects both the changing nature of business and the increasing energy efficiency of modern production processes and building management systems.

Leicester City Council is developing an ambitious vision to develop a stronger low carbon economy, supporting local businesses and attracting investment to the city. This includes building strong partnerships with organisations that pledge to take action and reduce their carbon footprint.



## Priorities and key actions

### 1. Support businesses to reduce their carbon emissions

Within the city, enhancing energy and resource efficiency is particularly significant since we remain a disproportionately manufacturing economy and the two largest sub sectors, food and drink, and textiles, are traditionally heavy energy consumers. Our business support strategies will include a focus on these sectors. We will also use our direct communication channels to promote the low carbon message to the 500 plus businesses who are direct tenants of city council premises.

The Leicester Energy Agency<sup>3</sup> provides free advice and audits for small to medium enterprises in the city on how to improve their efficiency and reduce carbon. Over 50 Leicester organisations and businesses pledged their support to the previous Climate Change Programme of Action.

Moreover, the council operates a discretionary rates relief programme. The scheme prioritises high growth businesses, bringing empty buildings back to use, and regeneration of priority areas. The council will review this programme to establish if it is possible to incentivise investment in energy reduction measures.

<sup>2</sup> Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC) carbon dioxide emission statistics for local authority areas can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-carbon-dioxide-emissions-national-statistics-2005-2013>

<sup>3</sup> More information on services offered to Leicester businesses through Leicester Energy Agency can be found at:

<http://www.energyagency.co.uk/>

|     | Action  | Completion Date |
|-----|---|-----------------|
| 1.1 | Review the discretionary rates relief scheme to incentivise investment in sustainable technologies  | 16/17           |
| 1.2 | Promote energy efficiency measures throughout the council commercial estate and to key business sectors including food and drink and textiles | 16/17           |
| 1.3 | Ensure all of the council's rented assets "To Let" to commercial businesses meet a minimum Energy Performance Rating of E                     | 17/18           |
| 1.4 | Expand existing work with city wide partners on climate change mitigation and adaptation  | 17/18           |
| 1.5 | Engage with over 90 businesses each year through the Leicester Energy Agency and seek funds to incentivise investment in energy efficiency    | 18/19           |

## 2. Provide support to businesses that contribute to the low carbon economy

The Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP)<sup>4</sup> aim to drive forward regeneration and growth of the local economy. In partnership with the LLEP, the council will provide specific business support to those within the low carbon sector.

|     |   |       |
|-----|---|-------|
| 2.1 | Facilitate networking and communication within the low carbon sector supply chain   | 16/17 |
| 2.2 | Review and expand the current offer of low carbon related vocational and higher education programmes, in partnership with colleges and universities | 18/19 |
| 2.3 | Support research and development in low emission technologies and support businesses in this sector   | 16/17 |
| 2.4 | Engage with 180 businesses in the city to promote electric vehicles   | 18/19 |
| 2.5 | Consider how the council can directly sponsor awards and initiatives that encourage and celebrate environmental best practice                       | 17/18 |

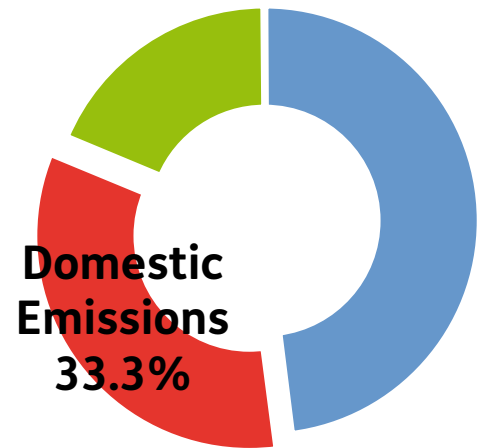


<sup>4</sup> Information on the LLEP can be found at; <https://www.llep.org.uk/>

## Theme 2 - Housing

The domestic sector contributes approximately one third of the city's emissions of carbon dioxide. Emissions from this sector have decreased by 14% since 2005.

In comparison to other UK cities, Leicester has a higher proportion of solid wall properties. Meeting our 50% carbon reduction target will require a plan for dealing with these older, less efficient properties (particularly inner city terraces) that are more expensive and difficult to treat. We will therefore develop schemes to take advantage of any future funding offers, to work with private residents to maximise economies of scale and manage the visual impact of external wall treatments.



Successive funding schemes for private sector housing from both central government and energy companies have encouraged take up of the lower cost energy efficiency measures, such as loft and cavity wall insulation. The carbon agenda is not the only incentive for improving the efficiency of the city's housing stock. Inefficient housing has a number of negative impacts on health, from respiratory issues to stress, which emphasises the need to make further steps in the domestic sector. The council will continue with installing basic energy efficiency measures across the city and to top-up loft insulation in particular alongside boiler replacement and installation of new heating controls.

### Priorities and key actions

#### 3. Increase the energy efficiency of council housing

Work continues to improve the energy efficiency of the council's own housing stock, including the installation of metering for those residents whose properties are part of the District Heating Scheme, and a specific focus on the least efficient housing.

|     | Action  | Completion Date |
|-----|---|-----------------|
| 3.1 | Introduce individual metering in 2,700 council homes on the District Heating Scheme                             | 16/17           |
| 3.2 | Complete programme of external wall insulation for 188 council houses   | 16/17           |
| 3.3 | Roll out the boiler replacement programme to a further 1,460 council houses                                     | 16/17           |
| 3.4 | Invest £500,000 in continuing specialist work to ensure all council housing attains a SAP rating of 75 or above | 17/18           |

#### 4. Increase the energy efficiency of private homes in the city

The Council's Home Energy Team<sup>5</sup> offer a free advice service to all the city's private housing residents on request, as well as providing funding to those who live in inefficient homes that are difficult to heat. The council has committed to exploring more local energy generation opportunities that will benefit residents.

|     |   |       |
|-----|---|-------|
| 4.1 | Continue to run the Health through Warmth scheme, providing energy efficiency improvements to households in need  | 16/17 |
| 4.2 | Provide up to £80,000 in grants to landlords for making energy improvements to their tenanted properties heating systems                                  | 16/17 |
| 4.3 | Assess the heating and energy efficiency of private rented properties, and bring about improvements to the accommodation when intervention is appropriate | 16/17 |
| 4.4 | Conduct Energy Sense surveys to private households on request   | 16/17 |
| 4.5 | Identify renewable energy projects for the domestic sector  | 18/19 |

#### 5. Work towards delivering an energy company

The council has made a commitment to investigate the setting up of a new energy company to offer lower tariffs to city residents and to look at innovative ways of creating more energy efficient homes and local renewable energy generation projects. The different models for an energy supply company have been investigated to identify the most beneficial option for residents.

|     |  |       |
|-----|--|-------|
| 5.1 | Establish an energy supply company to offer fairer fuel tariffs to residents | 16/17 |
| 5.2 | Investigate the potential for setting up a wider energy services company     | 16/17 |



<sup>5</sup> Information on schemes run by the Home Energy Team can be found here: <http://www.leicester.gov.uk/your-council/policies-plans-and-strategies/energy-efficiency/energy-at-home>

## Theme 3 – The Council

The council has a corporate target to reduce its carbon footprint by 50% by 2025 (based on 2008/09 levels). Achieving this target is also important on a city-wide scale as the council's own carbon footprint accounts for approximately 3% of city wide carbon emissions, over 1% of which is from school buildings.

If the council is to be successful in influencing others in the city to reduce their environmental impact, it should have its own strong action plan in place, setting an example within its own operations.

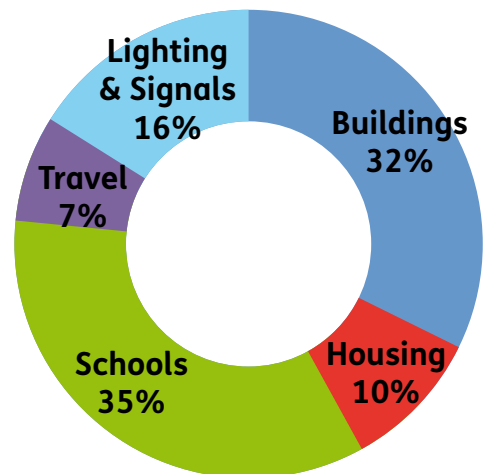
### Priorities and key actions

#### 6. Reduce the council's carbon footprint, maintaining the momentum for meeting the 2025 target

Since reporting began in 2008/09, the council has achieved a 12.5% reduction in emissions, and the 2014/15 footprint stands at 59,220 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e. The council's carbon footprint consists of emissions from corporate buildings, schools, ICT, housing services, public lighting and staff travel. The main contributing factors to the council's footprint are emissions from operational buildings and ICT, and the schools building stock, therefore carbon reduction projects in these areas are most likely to have a significant saving. However, we have made excellent progress in reducing emissions from public lighting which consists of street lighting, traffic signalling, bollards, and festive lighting.

The council has a programme in place to assess progress in each of the areas within its operational carbon footprint to identify gaps and opportunities for new carbon reduction projects, such as energy efficiency improvements and renewables.

The council has just launched its 'Using Buildings Better' programme which aims to make a direct contribution to reducing our overall carbon footprint, by significantly reducing the number of buildings the council maintains, as well as improving the way we deliver services to our customers.



|     | <b>Action</b>  | <b>Completion Date</b> |
|-----|--|------------------------|
| 6.1 | Implement energy performance contracts in the Council's own estate and schools to make energy savings and provide advice on operating the school building stock more efficiently | 17/18                  |
| 6.2 | Identify and install 1MW of PVs on Council buildings   | 18/19                  |
| 6.3 | Invest £150,000 in upgrading the city's way lighting to LEDs   | 16/17                  |
| 6.4 | Deliver and maintain a staff behavioural change campaign to deliver energy savings across the Council's operational buildings  | 18/19                  |
| 6.5 | Replace 110 fleet vehicles with Ultra Low Emission Vehicles and aim to remove a total of 200 vehicles from the fleet   | 18/19                  |
| 6.6 | Endeavour to use the best available technology to minimise emissions from our expanding schools portfolio  | 18/19                  |
| 6.7 | Consolidate council properties through the Using Buildings Better programme, moving services online to reduce the need for city residents to travel between facilities           | 18/19                  |
| 6.8 | Support local, national and international initiatives that mitigate climate change and demonstrate Leicester's commitment to carbon reduction and adaptation                     | 18/19                  |



## Theme 4 – Development

Development concerns all elements of the city's carbon footprint: business, domestic and transport sectors. Leicester has an expanding population with growth pressures. The council is committed to reducing the impact of this growth by incorporating environmental measures in developments in the city. This includes both the mitigation of climate change through the implementation of carbon reduction measures during infrastructure planning, and adapting to future effects of climate change through planning and flood risk reduction measures. Implementing such measures will also provide more opportunity for growth in the low carbon sector.

### Priorities and key actions

#### 7. Improve the existing District Heating Scheme

District heating has been identified as a key way of achieving long term carbon reduction targets. New developments in the city centre are potentially suited to district heating.

The current scheme is mainly run on gas fired CHP (combined heat and power) which is more efficient than conventional methods of heat and electricity generation through a reduction in the amount of wasted heat. Carbon produced from the District Heating Scheme can be reduced further by adding renewable energy into the system.

|     | Action  | Completion Date |
|-----|---|-----------------|
| 7.1 | Increase the capacity of the existing Leicester District Energy Scheme by 7MW   | 18/19           |
| 7.2 | Introduce renewable forms of energy into the Leicester District Energy Scheme in order to help decarbonise the scheme | 18/19           |

#### 8. Reduce the environmental impact of new development in the city

In addition to the existing District Heating Scheme there is the potential for new stand-alone CHP networks to be created, where there is the heat demand. There are further opportunities to plan for energy infrastructure improvements that will increase the resilience of the city in terms of its energy supply in the city's regeneration areas such as Waterside. In privately led developments, planning policy will encourage the implementation of environmental measures through the requirement of sustainability statements for major developments.

|     |  |       |
|-----|--|-------|
| 8.1 | Promote and deliver district heating in new developments and regeneration areas where feasible                   | 18/19 |
| 8.2 | Address the feasibility of additional low carbon energy solutions within new developments and regeneration areas | 18/19 |
| 8.3 | Continue to provide sustainability advice to all new major developments  | 18/19 |
| 8.4 | Increase allotment provision in the city by 6,000m <sup>2</sup>  | 18/19 |
| 8.5 | Reduce the number of cuts to roadside verges to provide both economic and environmental benefits                 | 16/17 |

## 9. Improve pedestrian and cycle connections, and the quality and provision of public spaces, to enhance Leicester's public realm

The Connecting Leicester<sup>6</sup> programme provides opportunities to improve the quality and sustainability of the built environment. The provision of new walking and cycling routes in the city centre is expected to have an impact on travel patterns in the wider city and provide more opportunity for city residents to make healthier and more sustainable lifestyle choices.

|     |  |       |
|-----|--|-------|
| 9.1 | Make improvements to 12 more streets in the city centre through Phase 2 of the Connecting Leicester programme, including the reconstruction of pedestrianised areas and widening of footpaths to allow joint use footway and cycleways | 18/19 |
| 9.2 | Complete Legible Leicester <sup>7</sup> and upgrade the cycling and pedestrian signage across the city centre  | 18/19 |
| 9.3 | Seek to improve the local environment and public realm through the development of Love Leicester Community Action Plans  | 16/17 |
| 9.4 | Maintain Green Flag <sup>8</sup> standards in the city's parks   | 16/17 |
| 9.5 | Increase the amount of secure workplace, residential and city centre cycle parking   | 18/19 |

## 10. Improve existing smart infrastructure in Leicester to work towards becoming a smart city

A smart city integrates infrastructure, information and communication to identify issues and deliver innovative solutions. This means smarter urban transport networks, more efficient ways to heat and power buildings, and opportunity for more interaction in the process.

Leicester City Council is already delivering a number of smart technologies in the city across a number of different sectors including the roll out of real time information, smart ticketing, and the Love Leicester app<sup>9</sup>. The next step is to identify where further smart solutions are needed, and work with key partners in the city to deliver this.

|      |   |       |
|------|---|-------|
| 10.1 | Conduct a feasibility study exploring how Leicester can develop as a smart city | 16/17 |
|------|---|-------|

<sup>6</sup> More information on the Connecting Leicester scheme can be found at:

<https://www.leicester.gov.uk/your-council/city-mayor-peter-soulsby/my-vision/connecting-leicester/>

<sup>7</sup> Legible Leicester is the development of a new way finding and mapping system in the city, to make it easier for visitors to navigate the city

<sup>8</sup> Green Flag is an award given in recognition to the best managed green spaces. This is judged on a number of criteria including sustainability and community involvement.

<sup>9</sup> Download the Love Leicester app to report environmental damage in your community here:

<http://love.leicester.gov.uk/reports/home>

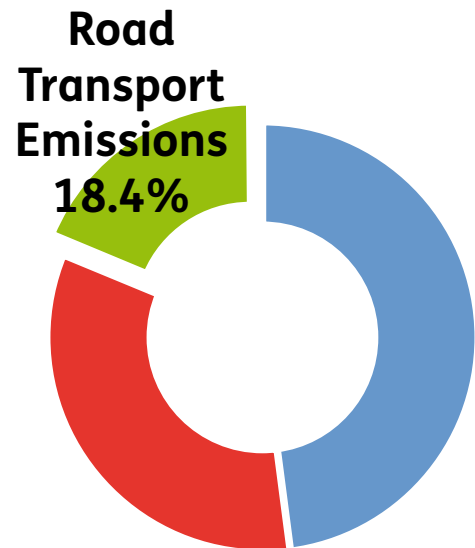


## Theme 5 – Mitigation and Adaptation

Climate change mitigation refers to action to reduce carbon emissions and prevent climate change. Climate change adaptation addresses our resilience to the existing and expected impacts of climate change.

Emissions from transport account for 18% of city wide emissions of carbon dioxide. Managing the transport element is a key challenge during a period of substantial urban growth in the greater Leicester area with an anticipated 45,000 extra dwellings by 2031. In addition to reducing carbon emissions, this will benefit the health and wellbeing of city residents in two ways: by improving air quality and providing healthier lifestyle options.

Waste, local food production, biodiversity, and resilience currently all fall outside of the scope of the city's carbon footprint as measured by government, however it is equally important to target these issues when mitigating and adapting to climate change.



### Priorities and key actions

#### 11. Facilitate an increase in the take up of cleaner and more efficient vehicles to address air quality

Air pollution has a direct impact on a person's health, with close linkages to heart disease, lung cancer and respiratory issues. The council's Air Quality Action Plan<sup>10</sup> aims to reduce the risk to health and quality of life in the city.

A key action in the plan is to promote the use of low emissions vehicles, which is crucial to reducing emissions from road transport. Using low emission vehicles not only helps to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, it also reduces the particulates emitted that contribute to poor air quality.

|      | Action   | Completion Date |
|------|--|-----------------|
| 11.1 | Work towards having 4,700 Ultra Low Emission Vehicles registered in the city                                       | 18/19           |
| 11.2 | Work with bus operators to have 100% of registered local bus services using vehicles with EURO 4 or better engines | 18/19           |
| 11.3 | Work towards installing 500 electric vehicle charging points in public areas across the city                       | 18/19           |

<sup>10</sup> Leicester's Air Quality Action Plan can be viewed at:

<http://www.leicester.gov.uk/your-council/policies-plans-and-strategies/environment-and-waste/air-quality>

## 12. Increase the proportion of travel by sustainable transport modes such as cycling, walking and use of public transport

Promoting sustainable transport options, and improving infrastructure for such options, is key to achieving significant behavioural change in the city. The opening of the new Haymarket Bus Station and the introduction of real-time information are representative of our ongoing commitment to improve bus services and thus increase the uptake of public transport. Continued improvements to foot and cycle ways through the Connecting Leicester scheme are expected to positively influence the uptake of sustainable transport in the city.

|      |   |       |
|------|---|-------|
| 12.1 | Increase bus patronage to 27.5 million and continue to run the Bus User Panel to give passengers an opportunity to influence decisions      | 18/19 |
| 12.2 | Increase the take up of the Park and Ride scheme through a programme of promotional activities, to reduce congestion and harmful emissions  | 18/19 |
| 12.3 | Have 25 planning related business Travel Plans being consented each year, including for Ashton Green and Waterside residential developments | 18/19 |
| 12.4 | Investigate the potential for introducing a cycle hire scheme in the city   | 18/19 |
| 12.5 | Increase the number of walking trips in the city from approximately 105,000 to 115,000  | 2018  |



### 13. Minimise waste and increase recycling

The waste hierarchy places emphasis on reducing, re-using and recycling in order to minimise waste being sent to landfill. As well as the waste itself, a number of implications for city wide emissions are associated with the management process, including the fuel used by its collection vehicles.

|      |   |       |
|------|---|-------|
| 13.1 | Investigate options to further maximise the diversion of materials through reuse schemes  | 18/19 |
| 13.2 | Engage with city residents and businesses to encourage the use of Leicester's two Household Waste Recycling Centres <sup>11</sup> | 18/19 |
| 13.3 | Increase the rate of recycling through direct engagement in communities to promote Leicester's recycling scheme                   | 18/19 |
| 13.4 | Analyse the carbon footprint of the collection and treatment of household waste   | 16/17 |
| 13.5 | Investigate opportunities for improving recycling facilities in public spaces   | 17/18 |
| 13.6 | Publish a '2030 vision' for sustainable waste management  | 18/19 |

### 14. Increase support for sustainable procurement

The council will reduce its impact on the environment, ensure high ethical standards, and will support the local economy by implementing sustainable procurement. This will provide an example of good practice for others to replicate.

|      |   |       |
|------|---|-------|
| 14.1 | Develop and launch a new initiative, working with suppliers to achieve sustainability and social value improvements through goods and services procured by the council                        | 16/17 |
| 14.2 | Further integrate fair trade into our procurement activity and encourage other public sector bodies to join us  | 18/19 |
| 14.3 | Achieve the Silver Food for Life Catering Mark <sup>12</sup> for City Catering, providing 79 schools in the city with healthy and ethical food with use of some local and organic ingredients | 17/18 |

### 15. Protect and enhance biodiversity

The natural environmental infrastructure of the city provides a valuable role in carbon storage and climate change adaptation. This is particularly true for the city's mature tree stock which store large amounts of carbon in comparison to young saplings. Biodiversity plays a major role in providing habitats for wildlife and provides an indicator for sustainability in the city.

<sup>11</sup> You can recycle a wide range of materials at your nearest Household Waste Recycling Centre: <http://www.leicester.gov.uk/your-environment/recycling-and-waste/recycling-centres>

<sup>12</sup> The Catering Mark provides an independent endorsement that food providers are taking steps to improve the food they serve, including the sustainability of their ingredients.

|      |  |       |
|------|--|-------|
| 15.1 | Increase the number of Local Wildlife Sites by 10%   | 18/19 |
| 15.2 | Organise 150 volunteers to work on conservation projects to enhance biodiversity each year   | 18/19 |
| 15.3 | Create and enhance 3 wildflower meadows each year  | 16/17 |
| 15.4 | Designate 35 Council-managed mature trees per year as Local Wildlife Sites and manage them to prolong their life and nature conservation value | 18/19 |
| 15.5 | Plant bulbs, 100% of which are good for pollinating insects, covering an area over 5,800m <sup>2</sup> across the city                         | 16/17 |

## 16. Identify and enhance green networks and water corridors across the city

Green Infrastructure can help to deliver a broad range of economic, environmental and social benefits. Pressures on green space within Leicester from population growth and housing demand are easily recognised. The council's Green Infrastructure Strategy aims to inform the Connecting Green Leicester plan, identify new Green Infrastructure provision, enhance existing green space and adapt this for multiple uses, to allow all city residents easier access to the benefits of green space.

|      |  |       |
|------|--|-------|
| 16.1 | Prepare a green network map of the city to prioritise opportunities for green infrastructure | 16/17 |
| 16.2 | Create and/or enhance 3 wetland/SuDS each year   | 18/19 |

## 17. Improve and adapt services to increase resilience to the expected impacts of climate change

In terms of climate change adaptation the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy<sup>13</sup> is now complete and a range of actions preventing flooding in the city are being developed and delivered in conjunction with partners.

|      |  |       |
|------|--|-------|
| 17.1 | Reduce the flood risk to 2,000 properties through conveyance improvements along the River Soar   | 2018  |
| 17.2 | Develop a drought plan for the city  | 18/19 |
| 17.3 | Continue to progress with communicating the 'Do you know your flood risk?' <sup>14</sup> campaign to raise awareness and increase preparedness of city residents to flooding | 18/19 |

<sup>13</sup> The Local Flood Risk Management Strategy can be viewed at: <http://publications.leicester.gov.uk/lfrms>

<sup>14</sup> Find out more about your flood risk at: <http://www.leicester.gov.uk/your-environment/flooding-and-severe-weather/>

## Theme 6 – People

Raising awareness of environmental issues is key to encouraging Leicester residents to adopt a low carbon lifestyle and contribute to becoming a more sustainable city. Travel, improving the energy efficiency of homes, waste, education, valuing the environmental realm, local food growing, are all actions that involve city residents and only by working together will we make the city truly sustainable.

Living sustainably and living healthily are inseparable. Most changes, which are good for the environment, are good for health. Improving local air quality, encouraging more physically active travel and supporting sustainable living and working conditions are good examples of this.

### Priorities and key actions

#### 18. Increase action taken by city residents in support of the Sustainable Leicester priorities

The adoption of the priorities set out in this plan by Leicester City Council will need to be supported by city residents in order to be effective. To maximise the number of residents making sustainable lifestyle choices, it is necessary to inform them of the multiple benefits; including the potential financial savings and improvements to health. A number of engagement activities have been developed to encourage city wide participation in the sustainability agenda.

|      | Action   | Completion Date |
|------|--|-----------------|
| 17.1 | Register 100 more members to LeicesterShare <sup>15</sup> to reduce the number of single occupancy vehicles                | 16/17           |
| 17.2 | Provide cycle training to 3,400 adults   | 2018            |
| 17.3 | Have 240 people participate in the Get Walking Keep Walking <sup>16</sup> Programme  | 16/17           |
| 17.4 | Have 25,000 members of the public take part in the Ride Leicester <sup>17</sup> festival                                   | 18/19           |
| 17.5 | Achieve 60,000 hours of volunteer work in parks and green spaces across the city, involving 9,000 volunteers <sup>18</sup> | 16/17           |
| 17.6 | Continue to provide a collective energy switching service to target fuel poverty   | 18/19           |
| 17.7 | Encourage city residents to participate in national environment days   | 18/19           |
| 17.8 | Revise the Food Plan to help tackle food poverty and health challenges in the city   | 16/17           |

<sup>15</sup> Sign up to LeicesterShare car sharing scheme at: <https://leicestershare.liftshare.com/>

<sup>16</sup> Find out more about Get Walking Keep Walking at: <http://www.leicester.gov.uk/transport-and-streets/walking-in-leicester/community-walking-project>

<sup>17</sup> To find out more about cycling events in Leicester visit: <http://www.goskyride.com/Leicester>

<sup>18</sup> To volunteer in Leicester's parks visit: <http://www.leicester.gov.uk/leisure-and-culture/parks-and-open-spaces/contribute-and-get-involved/volunteering-in-our-parks>

## 19. Enhance environmental education across the city

Leicester City Council supports environmental education in schools to ensure that young people in Leicester have an increasing knowledge of environmental issues and the ability to act on it. To have a real impact on influencing the next generation it will be necessary to take an approach that involves the whole school community.

The council also provides opportunities for city residents to learn more about how they can reduce their environmental impact, recognising that lack of knowledge can be a barrier in encouraging residents to act on climate change.

|      |   |        |
|------|---|--------|
| 19.1 | Have 90 of Leicester's schools registered with the Eco-Schools <sup>19</sup> programme  | 16/17* |
| 19.2 | Host the annual events programme for Eco-Schools  | 16/17* |
| 19.3 | Have 30 more schools enrolled on to The Soil Association's Food for Life <sup>20</sup> programme, offered to infant, primary, secondary and special schools, bringing the total to 70 | 16/17* |
| 19.4 | Offer Bikeability Cycle Training to 80% of primary school pupils  | 2018   |
| 19.5 | Involve 50 children from local schools in the annual Bioblitz event   | 16/17  |
| 19.6 | Use social media campaigns to engage with our stakeholders on climate change  | 18/19  |

\*Completion dates for actions 19.1, 19.2 and 19.3 refer to the academic year



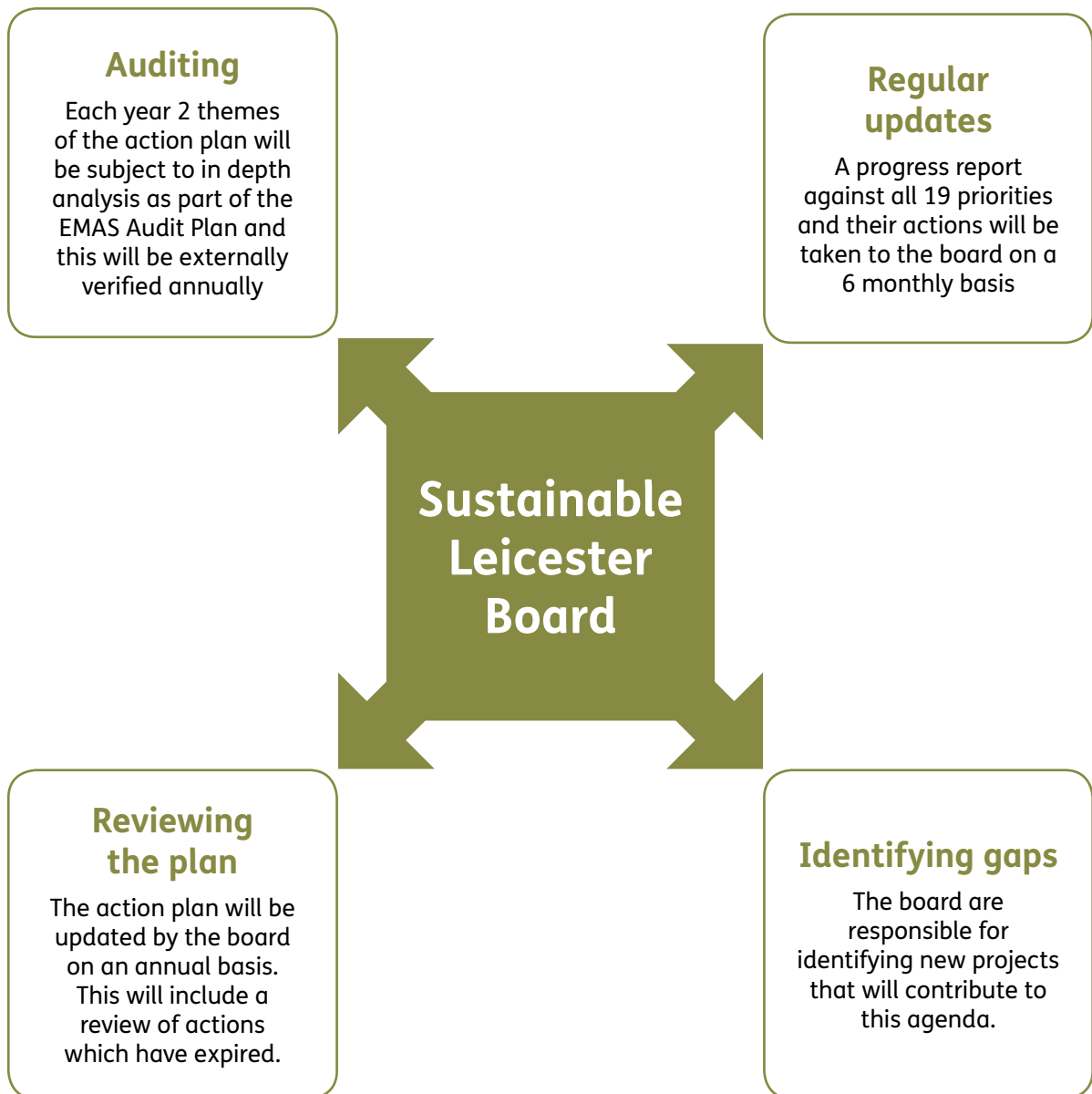
<sup>19</sup> More information on the Eco-Schools scheme can be found at: <http://eco-schools.org.uk/>

<sup>20</sup> More information about what the Food for Life programme entails can be found at: <http://www.foodforlife.org.uk/schools/criteria-and-guidance>

# Monitoring Progress

The Sustainability Action Plan sets out an ambitious set of actions demonstrating how the Council plans to mitigate and reduce its environmental impact in the city, and ensure that the delivery of its services will be sustainable in the future.

The Council is committed to achieving the goals set out in the plan, and has assigned the Sustainable Leicester Board the responsibility to monitor and report progress as demonstrated below. The board is attended by Directors and Heads of Service across the council, and each member has been assigned a strategic theme to steer. The council is registered for the Eco-Management and Audit Scheme<sup>21</sup> (EMAS) and will audit the Sustainability Action Plan in accordance with EMAS requirements.



<sup>21</sup> Find more information about EMAS at Leicester City Council at: <http://www.leicester.gov.uk/your-council/policies-plans-and-strategies/environment-and-waste/environmental-impact/>

# Summary of Ambitions

## Ambition 1 - Halve city wide carbon dioxide emissions by 2025

The council has set an ambitious target to reduce emissions in the city by 50% by 2025, based on a 1990 baseline of 2388.3kt CO<sub>2</sub>. The most recent city wide emissions for 2013, published by DECC in June 2015<sup>22</sup> stand at 1,719.6kt CO<sub>2</sub>; requiring a further saving over the next 10 years of 525.5kt CO<sub>2</sub>.

## Ambition 2 - Halve the city council's carbon footprint by 2025

The council plans to lead by example in reducing its own greenhouse gas emissions by 50% by 2025, based on 2008/09 levels when reporting first began. The current footprint for 14/15 stands at 59,220t CO<sub>2</sub>e, requiring a further saving of 26,334t CO<sub>2</sub>e by 2025.

## Ambition 3 - Meet EU target levels for air quality to create a healthier environment for city residents

Like many other UK cities, Leicester currently exceeds the EU threshold level of 40µg/m<sup>3</sup> for nitrogen dioxide in a number of areas, primarily along routes in and out of the city centre that experience high levels of traffic. Modelling by DEFRA has indicated that air quality in Leicester may reach the EU threshold level by 2020 through introducing lower emission vehicle technology.

## Ambition 4 - Encourage healthier lifestyle choices, and double everyday cycling numbers by 2018, and then again by 2024

The council has committed to achieving an increase in cycling numbers by 100% by 2018, raising cycling figures to 26,000. By 2024 the council have committed to achieving the same again. This will be achieved through improvements detailed in the council's Cycle City Action Plan, including; improvements to cycling corridors and improved links across the city, public cycling schemes, implementation of cycling hubs at all transport interchanges.

## Ambition 5 - Engage with more individuals, households, schools and employers each year in order to improve environmental awareness

Leicester City Council has a number of ongoing engagement projects across the city, spanning a wide range of environmental issues, including; energy efficiency, air quality, waste and recycling, biodiversity, and education. The council recognises that engaging with city residents is critical to meeting its overarching environmental targets, and will endeavour to increase engagement activities each consecutive year.

## Ambition 6 - Protect and enhance open space and improve connectivity to wildlife areas

Leicester's Green Infrastructure Strategy will map the current status of green sites across the city. This will be used as an evidence base to create or enhance green networks throughout Leicester which will improve connections to our wildlife sites to benefit both biodiversity and people. Regular monitoring of the number of networks and amount of green space will show how many spaces have been created.

<sup>22</sup> Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC) carbon dioxide emission statistics for local authority areas can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-carbon-dioxide-emissions-national-statistics-2005-2013>



# Glossary

## Biodiversity

The variety of species within a particular type of ecosystem. In terms of biodiversity in Leicester, the council aims to conserve and enhance a range of species that characterise the city.

## CHP - combined heat and power

Where conventional power stations deliberately 'waste' heat by cooling towers, a CHP unit will generate electricity whilst then using the heat produced for central heating and domestic hot water. In Leicester, CHP feeds in to the district heating scheme in order to increase efficiency.

## Climate change adaptation

Action that seeks to reduce the vulnerability to current and expected impacts of climate change. This includes increasing our resilience to flooding, drought, and other extreme weather events.

## Climate change mitigation

Action taken to prevent the release of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere in order to avoid a change in climate.

## District heating

Leicester's District Heating Scheme comprises underground insulated pipes carrying hot water to a number of buildings from a boiler house in order to deliver heat.

## Energy Performance Certificate

These are ratings given to properties to present their energy efficiency on a scale from A - very energy efficient, to G - not energy efficient.

## Fairtrade

Fairtrade certified produce meets a set of social, economic and environmental standards set out by the Fairtrade Foundation<sup>23</sup> to ensure better prices, decent working conditions and fair terms of trade for farmers and workers.

## Green infrastructure

Networks of multifunctional green space that use vegetation, soils, and natural processes to manage water and create healthier urban environments. This contributes to a higher quality natural and built environment, and helps to deliver sustainable communities.

## Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>)

A pollutant formed in the atmosphere from road traffic, in particular diesel engines. This contributes to poor air quality in Leicester and can have a damaging effect on health and the environment. Air pollution occurs when the amount of pollutant in the air exceeds the recommended levels.

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<sup>23</sup> More information about the Fairtrade Foundation can be found at: <http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/en/what-is-fairtrade/what-fairtrade-does>

## Procurement

This is the action of buying goods or services. Leicester City Council has a procurement team responsible for this and it is important that this process is done sustainably by taking into consideration the environmental, social and economic impact of any decisions.

## PV (Photovoltaic)

Photovoltaic panels are a type of renewable energy that convert solar energy into electricity which can then be used to power buildings.

## Real time information

In terms of Leicester's bus services, real time information is the ability to access live timings for when buses are due to arrive at specific bus stops. This would let a passenger know exactly what time to expect their bus, and if there are any delays.

## Resilience

In terms of climate change, resilience is the ability of the city, a community or an individual to prepare for and manage when faced with the consequences of existing climate change, for example a severe weather event.

## Retrofit

Whereas some projects within the Council may involve replacing old technology completely, a retrofit is the process of upgrading an existing item with an updated feature without having to replace the entire product. Leicester's traffic signalling retrofit will involve current traffic signals to have their bulbs and controller replaced with higher efficiency LED lights, without replacing the body of the signal.

## SAP rating

SAP or Standard Assessment Procedure, is a national measure used to assess and compare the energy and environmental performance of housing. The assessment uses assumptions for occupancy and behaviour to provide a like for like comparison between housing.

## Waste hierarchy

This demonstrates the order of preference for the disposal of waste.

The more the actions at the top are prioritised, the less waste is sent to landfill.

