



West  
Northamptonshire  
Council

# Sustainability Report 2022/23



**Sustainable**  
West Northants

# Contents

Foreword	3
Introduction	4
Executive Summary	4
Energy	5
Housing	7
Transport and Highways	9
Biodiversity	11
Emissions Reporting	13
External Accreditations	16
Adaption	16
Waste	17
Economic Growth	19
Regeneration	20
Environmental Health	21
Public Health and Wellbeing	22
Procurement	23
Performance	24
Looking Forward	24
Glossary	25



# Foreword

This first WNC annual sustainability report is a statement of projects and initiatives completed during 2022/23 which have contributed to the council's sustainability commitments, including our progress towards net zero.

Key council service areas have all contributed to the report, with the content summarised by the sustainability team.

Following the publication of the sustainability strategy and launch of Sustainable West Northants in 2022, the Council made three Sustainability Pledges as a foundation for steering resources and actions.

These primary commitments are:

- Net zero own emissions by 2030 and those of residents and businesses by 2045
- Take a community leadership role for Sustainability in West Northants
- Ensure all our Council strategies and policies are aligned to and contribute to the delivery of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This report has been produced to demonstrate our progress towards these commitments, to show transparency and to show that we are determined to lead by example. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) form the basis of our sustainability approach and have been highlighted throughout the report sections to show progress towards specific areas of sustainability.

Sustainability is not just about the work of a specific team; it is about the whole council and beyond, because it needs to become, and I believe it is becoming, a key thread throughout the whole organisation. It's also important to note that sustainability isn't just about having a specific budget for a small team, but rather about having a sustainability focus, initiatives, and investment across all departments of the Council.



I would like to thank the Sustainability Team for the energy and passion that they continually put into helping us to achieve our sustainability goals, and also to thank the cross-party Sustainability Working Group for the oversight and ideas that they provide to this work.

Thanks also to the many staff across WNC who are helping us towards our sustainability goals in their own departments, and to the partner organisations which we are delighted to be working alongside towards common objectives.

While we still have a long way to go and there is so much more to do, I want to assure you that we will continue to keep you informed of our progress with complete transparency. We recognise the urgency of this matter and will make it a top priority for our council.

In the meantime, I am extremely proud of what we are starting to achieve, and I hope that you are encouraged by the progress that you read about in this report.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Nunn'.

**Cllr Jonathan Nunn**

Leader  
West Northamptonshire Council



# Introduction

This report has been created to summarise the sustainability progress at the Council during 2022/23 with information drawn from key service areas such as public health, housing and waste as well as the work completed by the sustainability team.

The report follows on from the Council's sustainability pledges made in 2022 and aims to demonstrate our position as a leader in sustainability. The project has been supported by the introduction of a cross-party sustainability members working group. The working group supported the development of a sustainability workplan which helped shape the priorities for the sustainability team. The workplan will continue to be

reviewed on a regular basis. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) consist of 17 goals created in 2015 as a blueprint to achieving a better and more sustainable future for all. They address a range of challenges including those related to poverty, inequality, climate change and peace. All the goals are interconnected and need to be tackled in cohesion. It was agreed that the Council would use the SDGs as a framework for reporting on our sustainability progress and the relevant SDGs are referenced throughout sections of this report. For more information on the targets and indicators for each of the SDGs, [visit the UN website - UN SDGs.](#)



# Executive Summary

Since the sustainability pledges were made in 2022, the Council has demonstrated the commitment to these pledges by forming a dedicated sustainability team. At the time, the Council decided to shift the focus to sustainability and not solely climate change and the extent of the projects covered within this report demonstrates the broad remit of the team. The report shows good progress over the first year since the team was introduced and further annual sustainability reports will demonstrate our transparency and commitment in this area.

Particular highlights during 2022/23 include measures to support residents to improve the energy efficiency

of their homes, participating in our first No Mow May campaign and achieving Bronze level accreditation to the Investors in the Environment scheme.

In addition to these achievements, the Council has laid the foundations for long term sustainability progress to be delivered through projects such as the deployment of large scale solar arrays, installation of energy efficient heating systems for leisure centres and an off-gas village competition, all of which will help deliver both net zero targets.





The Council's Assets & Environment team manages energy for the Council, working with the Sustainability team and others.

## Renewable energy purchases

During the 2022/23 year the Council and Northamptonshire Partnership Homes, which manages WNC's council housing stock, purchased 24m kWh of energy from renewable sources (64% of the council's energy demand), these purchases are supported by Renewable Energy Guarantees of Origin (REGO) certificates. The benefit of this is a reduced reliance on fossil fuel energy. The Council will continue to work to increase the number of assets on renewable energy contracts.

## Reducing energy demand

As well as the commitment to purchase our energy from renewable sources, the Council is also generating its own renewable energy through various solar arrays (also known as photovoltaics or PV). During 2022/23 the Council generated 359,010 kWh of renewable energy which reduced our demand for national grid energy. The number of buildings with small renewable energy generation systems will continue to increase further reducing electricity sourced from the national grid.

In the corporate buildings, energy is predominantly controlled centrally to manage lighting and heating effectively. A staff engagement campaign to promote energy awareness and efficiency is planned for winter 2023 which will endeavour to reduce unnecessary energy in corporate buildings, where use of electrical equipment or lighting is down to the individual user.

## Closure of Lodge Road offices (office optimisation)

WNC is going through a process of responding to its lower requirements for office space. The first phase of this was the decision to close the Daventry Lodge Road offices. Staff have been relocated to other office locations and WNC's presence in Daventry is maintained at the Abbey Centre. The closure of Lodge Road will result in an estimated CO2e saving of 140t per year.



## Large scale solar projects

In 2022/23, the Council embarked on a programme to assess the feasibility of installing large scale PV systems on its assets around West Northamptonshire. This is an ambitious programme with the goal of securing the energy demand of the Council from renewables by 2030. During 2023/24 the Council will be working with partners to develop the business case for this project. Initial indications are that the Council controls sufficient land to make this goal possible.

## Estate Climate Strategy

The Estate Climate Strategy will draw much of the above work together and set out an approach by which WNC can achieve a net zero estate by 2030. Where practical, the aim is to achieve this directly, through efficient buildings, low carbon heating and lighting, and good management. Emissions which remain would be offset either through generation of surplus green electricity or measures such as tree planting to positively remove carbon from the atmosphere.

The strategy will be presented to Cabinet for approval later in 2023.

## Construction and Maintenance Climate Strategy

The draft strategy has taken into consideration guidance from professional bodies and agencies. It sets out a series of steps the Council could take to work towards low-carbon construction. These include:

- Only building that which is genuinely required.
- Re-using and adapting existing buildings where practical.
- Using low-carbon materials where practical, especially timber, which can support net removal of carbon from the atmosphere, the strategy will be presented to Cabinet for approval later in 2023.

## Sustainable heat network

In partnership with NPH, the council has been awarded £112k as part of the Heat Network Delivery Unit phase 12 funding, to carry out a feasibility study for a sustainable heat network for Northampton and Rothersthorpe village. Public Health grant

and NPH are match funding the study in a bid to help alleviate fuel poverty by designing a solution to deliver lower-cost large-scale carbon heat to homes and to commercial properties. Sources of heat being explored include large-scale water and air source heat pumps and waste industrial heat.

If the feasibility study suggests a network would be viable, the next step would be to apply for a further grant for design development and commercial assessment.

## Off-gas village competition

The Council is working with partners on a scheme to pilot sustainable energy for a village without gas supplies. In such villages both the cost and carbon footprint of heating tends to be higher, as residents and businesses have to rely on oil or solid fuels for most of their heating needs. It is likely a local 'smart grid' would be used, allowing shared use of renewable energy sources.

It is proposed to hold a competition to select a village to pilot this approach. If successful, further villages may follow.

## Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS)

The Council was successful in securing £7m from the PSDS phase 3b to decarbonise and improve energy efficiency of four leisure centres across West Northamptonshire, this was match funded by a contribution from WNC bringing the total project value to £8m. The fund, initiated by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, is delivered by Salix Finance, which supports decarbonisation and energy efficiency across Great Britain. The objective is to bring facilities up to date and contribute towards decarbonisation.

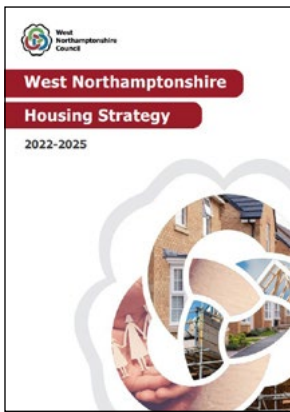
The funding will be used to decommission the end-of-life gas boilers and replace them with air source heat pumps or similar low carbon heating solutions which will be partially fed by electricity produced from new PV systems at Daventry Leisure Centre, Moulton Leisure Centre, Brackley Leisure Centre, and Towcester Centre for Leisure. The estimated annual carbon reduction on completion of the project is 861 tCO<sub>2</sub>e per year.



# Housing



## Housing Strategy



Improving the quality, affordability, and energy efficiency of homes across the West Northamptonshire area is a key priority for the sustainability agenda with multiple benefits. Improving the fabric of building, improving energy efficiency and reducing energy demand in homes contributes towards our net zero area wide ambitions, reduces energy bill costs for residents, a particular concern during the current cost of living

crisis, and can improve comfort levels and reduce instances of damp and mould and their associated health risks.

The first housing strategy for West Northamptonshire Council was developed by the Housing Team and approved by Cabinet in 2022, forming one of the cornerstones for delivering the Council's Corporate Plan 2021-2025.

### [The West Northants Housing Strategy 2022-2025](#)

identifies the key issues relating to housing and is built around delivering on four themes and their associated objectives and highlights the importance of partnership working to achieve this. The four themes cover aspects of all three pillars of sustainability: Economic, social and environmental. The four themes are:

**Theme 1:** Deliver homes people need and can afford

**Theme 2:** Improve the quality, standard and safety of homes and housing services

**Theme 3:** Support residents to live healthy, safe, independent and active lives

**Theme 4:** Support thriving and sustainable communities.



## Northamptonshire Partnership Homes (NPH)

NPH manages a portfolio of 12,404 homes on behalf of WNC and aim to transform these to a net zero portfolio by reducing energy consumption and increasing renewable energy generation. 1,600 homes already have PV systems installed and in 2022/23 these generated 2.8 million kWh of renewable energy, saving 550 tCO<sub>2</sub>e as well as saving residents hundreds of pounds in energy bills and providing some protection from energy price fluctuations.

In 2022/23 WNC received funding under the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) and in partnership with NPH completed the delivery of the SHDF demonstrator project. This project saw 149 homes in the Kingsley and Kingsthorpe area undergo a whole house retrofit. The award-winning project focused on older solid walled properties which are more expensive to heat and less energy efficient. Throughout the project high performance energy efficiency measures were installed such as external wall insulation, loft insulation, improved ventilation, new windows, and doors along with smart devices to monitor internal conditions. Additionally, 70 new PV systems were installed.

This SHDF demonstrator project has been extended through wave 1 of the SHDF, through a grant of just over £6 million, treating a further 200 properties in the same way. This project is ongoing but aims to complete a total of 429 retrofits. In March 2023, NPH was notified that WNC had been awarded £1.25 million from wave 2 of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund meaning that NPH will be able to continue this project into the future and treat a further 101 homes.

## Funding

The Sustainability and Housing teams at WNC have worked together to secure access to the following funding schemes for home energy improvements for residents on low incomes living in energy inefficient properties:

### **Green Home Grant Local Authority Delivery**

**Phase 2 (LAD 2):** The delivery of LAD2 concluded in 2022. This was a government funded project to improve the energy efficiency of the homes of people on lower incomes. Greater South East Energy Hub (GSEEH) have grant funded £166k. This supported NPH to install air source heat pumps and PV systems on 15 and 18 council properties, respectively.

**Sustainable Warmth:** Government funded scheme which was due to run from early 2022 to 31st March 2023. Due to various start delays, delivery of this scheme has been extended and is ongoing as of the end of financial year 2022/23 although it is now closed to new applicants and a sufficient number of eligible households have been referred to our delivery partners. Sustainable Warmth combines two schemes; Home Upgrade Grant (HUG) which is for homes that are not connected to the gas grid and Local Authority Delivery 3 (LAD3) which is for homes which are connected to the gas grid for heating.

WNC secured funding as part of the Cambridge and Peterborough consortium bid, managed by the Greater Southeast Net Zero Hub (GSENZH). WNC was allocated funding to upgrade 34 properties through HUG and 153 through LAD3.

**ECOflex:** The Energy Company Obligation (ECO) is a Government Scheme which confers an obligation on energy suppliers to install energy efficiency and heating measures to homes. It is currently in its fourth iteration, known as ECO4 which will run until 31 March 2026. ECO is aimed at householders on means tested benefits, however, suppliers are allowed to fulfil part of the obligation through ECOflex. ECOflex means that householders who are on low income/are particularly vulnerable to the effects of living in a cold home can still be eligible. Working with an installer, households complete a self-declaration and provide evidence to show that they meet the requirements of one of the Government defined eligibility routes. Participating local authorities then check and sign off these declarations so that householders can access funding.

There is quite a significant administrative burden for local authorities who choose to participate in ECOflex and at WNC this has stretched internal resources. For ECO4flex, WNC agreed a partnership agreement with national energy charity NEF (at no cost to the authority) to ease some of this burden. NEF check and onboard installer qualifications and add them to their network of approved suppliers and pre-check self-declarations and evidence. WNC then complete a final check and sign the declarations and audit a random sample.

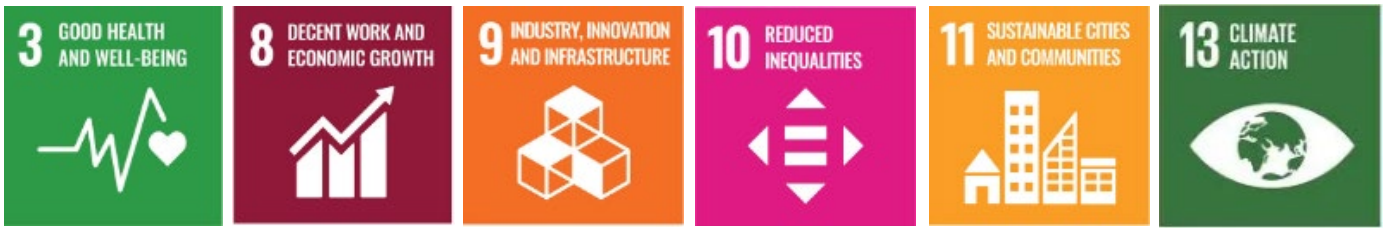
In 2022/23 WNC signed off 38 declarations through this arrangement. Additionally, although installers can contact NEF directly to join their network, we also received contact from 14 installers looking to undertake ECOflex work in our area, who were then directed to the NEF network.

**HUG2:** Government scheme designed to be a continuation of the HUG scheme in Sustainable Warmth to upgrade homes that are not connected to the mains gas grid for heating. WNC were part of the successful Cambridge and Peterborough consortium bid, managed by the GSENZH, the application was submitted in November 2022 and successful applicants were notified in March 2023. As we are part of a consortium bid, funding allocation has some flexibility, but we expect to have funding to upgrade around 120 homes in West Northamptonshire. Delivery of this project will begin in 2023 and should conclude by 31 March 2025.





# Transport and Highways



## Local Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure (LEVI)

The Council is working on a large-scale concession contract to support the roll-out of EV charging facilities on its street and car parks, and the car parks of any willing partners.

UK Government introduced the Local Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure (LEVI) fund to support local authorities with the deployment of local electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure. The capability fund provides upfront resource funding to recruit dedicated staff to undertake the planning required for EV infrastructure. WNC was awarded £73,620 for the capability fund in 2022/23 with a further tranche of £335,380 awarded and the recruitment process has commenced.

The second aspect of LEVI is the capital fund, this will enable the Council to bid for funds to deliver EV charge point infrastructure. WNC has provisionally been allocated £2.8 million for this purpose.

## Active Travel

### Strategy development and behavioural change

In 2022/23 we were successful in securing £152,723 from the Capability and Ambition Fund. The one-year funding, which has to be spent by November 2023 is the second revenue funding round being managed by the Department for Transport's new executive agency, Active Travel England, who has a 2030 vision for half of journeys in towns and cities to be walked, wheeled or cycled.

Some of the funding is being used to develop a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan for Towcester. This document will set out the priorities for improving walking and cycling infrastructure in Towcester over the next 10 years. It is being developed with stakeholders including National Highways to ensure integration with

their proposals for the A5. The project began in March 2023 and is planned to conclude in autumn 2023.

Draft Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans for Brackley and Daventry were also completed in 2022/23 and consultation on them is planned later this year.

As well as building new infrastructure, encouraging, and supporting behavioural change is key to getting more people to walk, cycle and scoot. Alongside our normal Bikeability training for school children, £29,670 of the Capability and Ambition Fund is being used to support delivery of a range of behaviour change initiatives that include cycle training, loan bikes both electric and pedal, led rides aimed at different sectors of the community and maintenance and training qualifications.

Delapre Abbey are our delivery partner for these activities which will mainly be focused in the vicinity of Brackmills, University of Northampton, schools in the area and the wider community through initiatives like social prescribing. The project will be monitored throughout and evaluated at the finish. The area was chosen to complement the proposed traffic free routes in the Delapre area. Funding for these was secured through Active Travel Fund round 4. They are being delivered in 2023/24.

### Scheme delivery

During 2022/23 we continued to develop the Abington Area Active Travel Scheme, through the Active Travel Fund and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). Following feasibility design, public consultation was undertaken in spring 2023. The comments, online survey results and feedback are being analysed and compiled into a consultation report which will be published on the consultation portal. The feedback will be used to inform the next steps with the portfolio holder.



# Transport and Highways

## Public e-scooters and e-bikes

This year we made major in-roads into making Northampton's e-scooters part of everyday life for our residents, offering an affordable, low carbon and flexible way to travel. Working with our micromobility partners Voi and North Northants Council, having taken on the scheme in its infancy from the previous council, we committed to extending it and steering a significant increase in take-up. We have worked closely with police to innovate and improve safety, investing in new racks and creating an online reporting feature to help prevent misuse by users. Voi has also developed plans for providing e-bikes alongside the e-scooters.

## Kier

The contract 'Climate Change and Environmental Management Plan' was developed at the start of the WNC's contract with Kier in September 2022. This is a management plan with a suite of appendices to manage environment and sustainability on the WNC Highways contract. The sustainability objectives and associated action plans were developed by aligning with Kier's Group Targets, the UN SDGs and WNC objectives. One of the most significant changes to fleet management since the contract commenced has been the introduction of hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO), this has reduced fleet emissions associated with this contract.

Kier also had a stand down day which promoted sustainability and biodiversity improvements. They handed out leaflets made with wildflower seeded paper with the Kier Sustainability Principles printed on them. Kier is increasing overall sustainability awareness and have delivered a series of Toolbox Talks, articles and bulletins to be rolled out throughout the year including; energy saving, pollution prevention, single use plastics, No Mow May and nesting birds.



# Biodiversity



## Local Nature Recovery Strategy

The Council has now been formally appointed as the responsible authority for developing a local nature recovery strategy for West Northamptonshire. This work will be done in close collaboration with local groups, landowners, and businesses, working with the Northamptonshire Local Nature Partnership. The Strategy will help restore West Northamptonshire's nature, including rare and threatened species, whilst securing other benefits which as flood risk mitigation and natural carbon storage. Recruitment of a Nature Recovery Co-ordinator is underway.

## Parks and Open Spaces

### Daventry Parks

WNC have worked with Cummins to plant 50 trees at Borough Hill along with a beech hedgerow. The project was developed with Cummins to celebrate their 50th anniversary of working in Daventry. The beech hedgerow will provide a year-round source of shelter and food for wildlife and will remain long after the fence. Further to the Borough Hill project, 213 trees have been planted within Daventry Country Park as part of the Queens Green Canopy with volunteers from the Daventry Scouts as well as several private memorials and donations to the park.

Work is ongoing with Green Health to develop a Community Allotment Garden, producing a variety of plants and vegetables for re-sale to raise funds to reinvest into the project. This project offers people living with mental illness the opportunity to develop knowledge and awareness of horticulture and its benefits on health.

### The Racecourse

The Garden in the Park: A space that was previously an antisocial behaviour hotspot has been turned into a community garden and orchard. It consists

of 12 raised beds which are sponsored or cared for by organisations such as the Umbrella Fair organisation, The Friends of the Racecourse, Bosworth Independent College, Northamptonshire MIND, and Billingbrook School (Special Educational Needs & Disabilities).

The project will support organisations to grow fruit and vegetables for use in their own organisation or to supply the local community with the produce through a proposed new community shelf and 'pick your own' events. The site consists of planters, a wildflower bed, a small orchard with trees and bushes and composting bays where contractors recycle green waste to be used within the garden and park. There is also a seating area, bug hotel, bird baths and feeders.

A workshop has been created which will be used by the community and schools to build bird boxes, hedgehog houses and more and will include an area for potting up. The Council's landscape maintenance contractor has changed a large bed near the entrance to the park from annual bedding to a seasonal wildflower bed. Additionally, 25 new trees have been planted in the park.

### Bradlaugh Fields

Over the last two years, wildflower areas have been created with the intention to expand the area in the coming year. Two beds have been made using willow from the park which has been planted to become a living surround.

Different species of trees have been donated including willow, hazel, rowan, box, horse chestnut, and three Christmas trees as well as some rose plants.



# Biodiversity

In the outdoor classroom, rangers planted a hazel, dog rose and hawthorn to provide habitat for nesting birds in the future. These were donated by a member of the community.

Over the last six months work has started to develop a community orchard at Bradlaugh with the help of community payback (probation service) and LIVE team (supported employment). The area has been planted with 12 fruit trees and fruit bushes with a wide variety of species. Similarly to the Racecourse, this will be open for the community to come and pick their own.

The Friends of Bradlaugh fields have a community garden with pine trees, vegetables and herbs which they tend to on a weekly basis. The intention is to develop the garden into a sustainable resource for the local community.

## No Mow May

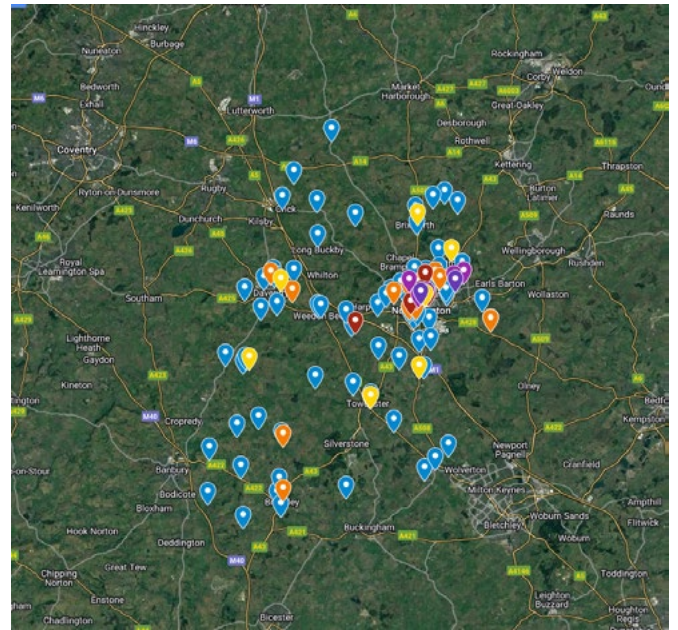
From early 2023, we started preparing to implement the 'No Mow May' campaign across the area. Several parks were selected including Abington Park, The Racecourse and more. We also contacted parish and town councils asking them to participate in the campaign, as well as starting discussions with the WNC highways team to decide what road verges can be left unmown without causing an obstruction to safety.

Overall, we had 16 parish and town councils officially confirm they would be participating in the campaign, although we expect actual participation to be much higher. This will have several benefits to the area from increasing biodiversity and reducing emissions from grass cutting equipment. The outcome of the 2023 campaign will be reported in next year's sustainability report.

## Allotment Mapping

At the request of the sustainability members working group, work is ongoing to collect information about allotments and food assets to create an interactive map. The map has multiple layers and will be used to identify the areas without access to allotments and with little or no access to fresh produce. There are currently over 70 allotments in the area with a range of WNC, parish council and privately owned sites.

The interactive map will be a useful tool for organisations such as the WNSFP who can use the gap analysis to develop future projects.



## Tree Strategy & Policy

Following a review by a task and finish group of the Place Overview & Scrutiny Committee, Cabinet endorsed proposals for the Council to develop a Tree Strategy & Policy, and Council approved as part of the budget funding for a strategic tree officer to work on the strategy and policy, and then its implementation. The recommendations reflected the outcomes of engagement with parish councils and community groups, and a survey of public attitudes and priorities. Challenges with recruitment initially slowed the process, but the Council has now appointed a consultancy to commence work on the document, and recruitment for the officer post is underway. There will be further public engagement as work on the strategy and policy proceeds.

During the year the Council also used funding from the Forestry Commission to plant 64 trees as part of their Urban Tree Challenge Fund. The three year project aims to complete planting of 127 trees across three parks – Bradlaugh Fields, The Racecourse and Eastfield Park.

Other areas of the Council's work, such as the Construction & Maintenance Climate Strategy, will also consider opportunities to support tree planting and positive use of timber.



# Emissions Reporting



Carbon emissions represents one of the clearest and toughest measurements of our progress. West Northamptonshire Council committed to achieving net zero on its own emissions by 2030 and net zero on West Northants emissions by 2045. Adopting these ambitious Net Zero targets require the Council to monitor, reduce and where possible, eliminate sources of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions across the organisation and the area. In addition to the benefits net zero will bring to West Northants, it will also contribute towards the UK 2050 Net Zero target.

## WNC Operational Emissions

In 2022, West Northants Council declared their target of reaching net zero emissions in its own operations by 2030. In order to track progress against this target, an annual review of emissions will be undertaken and reported within the sustainability report. The reporting year 2021-22 has been established as the baseline and details of this first emissions report can be found here [WNC Emissions Base \(moderngov.co.uk\)](https://www.moderngov.co.uk).

WNC strive to continuously improve its reporting on

emissions and will seek to provide the fullest picture on our progress that data allows. This means where additional data becomes available and calculation methodologies improve, we will include this in our reporting. In 2022-23 we have established a methodology for recording working from home emissions; included new data on materials used such as the food and drink consumed at our offices; and improved our data on waste generated from our operations.

For reporting year 2022-23 total emissions were 22,964.70 tCO<sub>2</sub>e. This is a 3.4% increase against the baseline. However, in part this arises from including more aspects of emissions (e.g. home working) rather than true increases. We are also pleased to have achieved an overall reduction in Scopes 1 and 2 which are the direct emissions. Table 1 and Figure 1 below show these emissions in more detail and how they compare to the 2021-22 baseline.



# Emissions Reporting

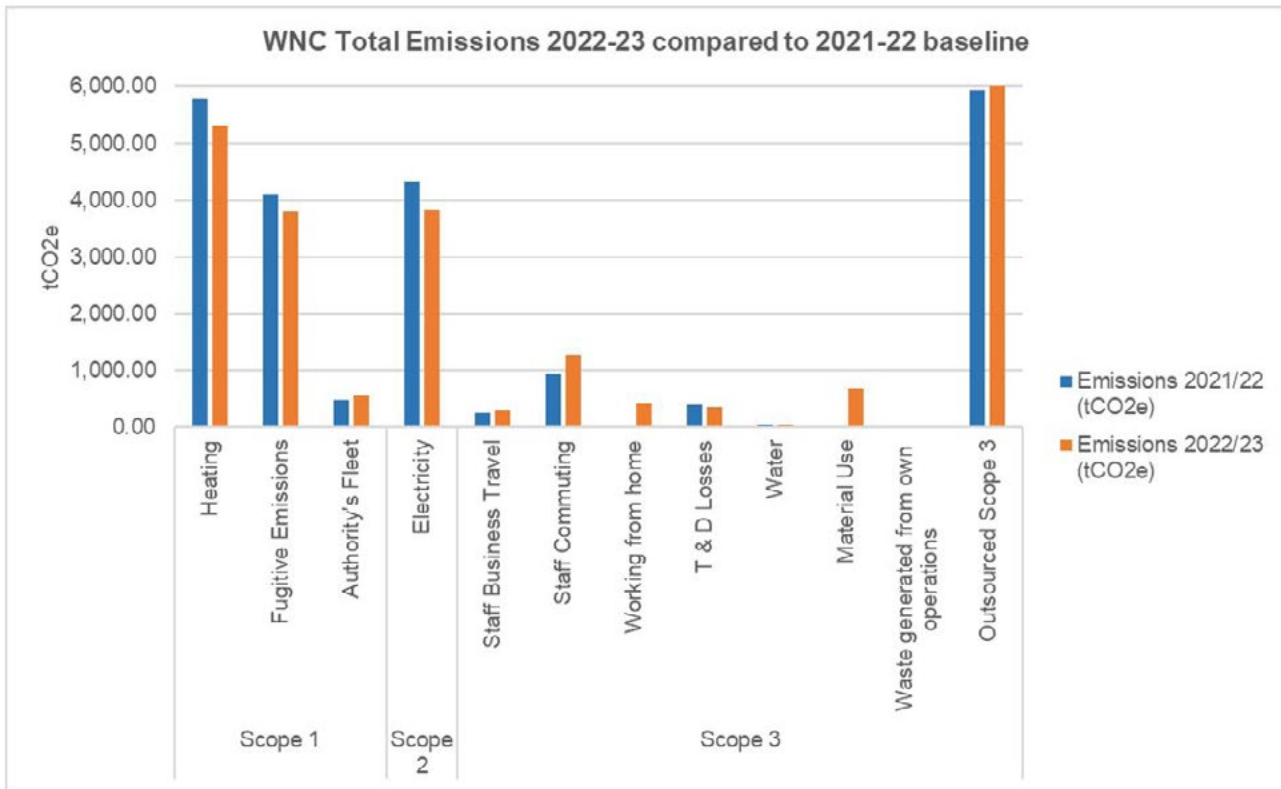
Table 1: Emissions by scope 2022-23 and the percentage change from the 2021-22 baseline

Scope	Emissions Type	Emissions (tCO2e)	Percentage of Total Emissions	Percentage change from baseline
<b>Scope 1</b>	Heating	5,296.11	23.1%	-8.4
	Fugitive Emissions	3,795	16.5%	-7.3
	Authority's Fleet	560.04	2.4%	18.1
<b>Scope 2</b>	Electricity	3,828.47	16.7%	-11.5
<b>Scope 3</b>	Staff Business Travel	294.25	1.3%	16.5
	Staff Commuting	1,255.66	5.5%	35.5
	Working from home	404.74	1.8%	100.0
	T & D Losses	350.22	1.5%	-8.5
	Water	29.56	0.1%	3.4
	Material Use	684.13	3.0%	3656.2
	Waste generated from own operations	3.49	0.02%	41.7
	Outsourced Scope 3	6,463.04	28.1%	9.2
<b>Total Emissions</b>		<b>22,964.70</b>	100%	3.4
Renewable Energy Generation (kWh) (WNC)	359,010			
Green Tariffs (kWh) (WNC & NPH)	24,343,420	4,554		
<b>Net Emissions</b>		<b>18,410.70</b>		



# Emissions Reporting

Figure 1: 2022-23 emissions compared against 2021-22 baseline



## Key points

Scope 1 - Total mileage from the authority's fleet has increased from 2021-22 likely due to return to business as usual. A decrease in energy use and fugitive emissions has resulted in an overall decline in total emissions for scope 1 by 6.75% compared to baseline. These factors highlight the importance of the Fleet Climate Strategy, which is at an early stage of development.

Scope 2 - Largest reduction is attributable to a decrease in emissions from streetlighting as the asset portfolio transitions to LED, around 4000 lights were converted last year and the whole portfolio will be transitioning over the next two years. Scope 2 emissions have decreased by 11.48% compared to baseline.

Energy continues to account for a large proportion of total emissions (39.8%) but a decrease of almost 1,000 tCO2e from energy use has been observed against the baseline.

Scope 3 – Two new datasets have been introduced in this category namely the working from home

emissions and material use which has resulted in an additional 1,088 tCO2e in this category. Emissions from staff commuting have increased this year due to an increase in the number of respondents driving to work. Scope 3 emissions have increased by 87% compared to baseline mostly attributable to the new data.

Outsourced Scope 3 – There have been increases in vehicle mileage across most of the outsourced services which has resulted in an increase in outsourced Scope 3 emissions by 9.2% against baseline. The Kier contract has seen a transition to a greener fleet with the introduction of hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) fuel.

## Area Wide Emissions

[The Area Wide Emissions Baseline](#) report informs and supports our communities, residents, and businesses in reducing their own emissions and will help us meet our commitment to achieve net zero West Northamptonshire emissions by 2045.



# External Accreditations

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



## Investors in the Environment (iiE)

WNC has reached a key milestone in its journey towards becoming a net zero local authority by achieving its first national environmental

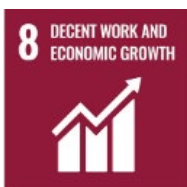
accreditation. Following an independent audit, the Council has started this journey by earning Bronze Award accreditation with the Investors in the Environment scheme (iiE), recognising its commitment towards sustainability. The iiE scheme is designed to help organisations improve their environmental performance and reduce their impact on the

environment, save time and money as well as get recognition for their progress. Bronze status is the first of three iiE accreditation levels the Council is working towards achieving to ensure environmental excellence.

## Local Government Chronicle (LGC) Awards Nomination

In late 2022, the Council was shortlisted for the Climate Response award at the 2023 LGC awards. The submission was made following the implementation of our new Sustainable West Northants Strategy and programme.

# Adaptation



## Local Plan

The development plan for West Northamptonshire consists of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (WNJCS) (Part 1) and Part 2 Plans for the Daventry, Northampton and South Northamptonshire areas.

These plans all contain policies relating to sustainable development that are used to guide proposals and make decisions. The Plans will guide development in West Northamptonshire to 2029.

Policies S10 and S11 of the WNJCS specifically set out the sustainable development principles that applicants should adhere to with Policy C1 seeking to achieve modal shift to foot and cycle for most journeys.

Policies BN2 and BN3 relate to biodiversity and woodland enhancement and creation.

The Local Plan Part 2s (LPP2) adds further details to the Part 1 policies.

Policy ST1 of the Daventry Settlements and Countryside LPP2 supports measures to promote walking and cycling within and around Daventry town, including connections with nearby villages; between villages that depend on each other for services and facilities; and between other towns and villages. It also promotes specific walking and cycling routes and sustainable routes along the canal and disused railway line networks. The policy also encourages the provision of EV charging infrastructure within

developments.

Policy ENV9 supports proposals for renewable and low carbon development subject to their impact on a variety of environmental assets and existing development.

Policy CW1 promotes healthy lifestyles including co-locating services and provision of sustainable links between developments, services and facilities, jobs and the countryside.

Policy Q3 of the Northampton LPP2 requires developments to provide a Sustainability Statement to be submitted with planning applications discussing, among other issues, how the development will adapt to climate change, reduce carbon and manage water resources. Additionally, Policy MO1 'Designing sustainable transport and travel' requires new developments to be designed to promote, improve, and encourages active lifestyles to improve wellbeing.

Similarly, policies within the South Northamptonshire LPP2 (ST1, ENV9 and ENV11) require applicants to promote measures such as cycling and walking over the use of the private car, support renewable energy development and manage flood risk.

The Council is currently preparing a new Local Plan for West Northamptonshire. Sustainable development will be a golden thread running through the plan and planning policy is currently working with other services and stakeholders to ensure that policies can achieve quality sustainable development across the authority.





# Waste



## Internal Waste

In December 2022, disposable coffee cups were removed from the café at One Angel Square, this means that disposable cups are now not supplied at any council offices. It was estimated that on an average day the café used 150 disposable coffee cups. An incentive was introduced to encourage people to bring their own cup and the café space was redeveloped to create a wellbeing area. The change has been received well by staff and has helped the Council to work towards its sustainability commitments by eliminating a whole waste stream.

As part of the work towards the Investors in the Environment accreditation, a Waste Management Plan was developed by the Facilities Management team to describe the waste collection processes at each of the WNC offices. Alongside this, new bin stickers were introduced to encourage recycling and reduce contamination. A food waste collection also commenced at One Angel Square and was already in place at the other offices.

## Northampton Food Waste Reduction and Recycling Campaign

Starting in March 2023, the Northampton Food Waste Reduction and Recycling Campaign, "Love Food Hate Waste", is working with Public Health to promote healthy eating, to assist residents with cost-of-living crisis, to reduce the amount of food waste that is disposed of and to encourage residents to use the separate food waste collection systems.

Food waste is carbon intensive and can make up 30% of the carbon emissions from the residual waste stream. By reducing and recycling food waste WNC will also be reducing area wide carbon emissions.

## Contamination in Recycling Campaign

The aim of this campaign is to reduce the amount of non-recyclable items in resident's co-mingled recycling bins. If the recycling collected is significantly contaminated, the whole load may be rejected, and this material is disposed of rather than recycled. This increases the costs to the council and means we aren't maximising the amount that can be recycled, with the associated carbon savings that recycling achieve.

Residents have helped us to increase the amount of waste that goes in their recycling bins rather than their waste bins, so now we are moving to the next level of recycling knowledge, and to aid residents in understanding this, our key campaign message is **'Right stuff, Right Bin. If in doubt, leave it out'**. The campaign is informing residents what items are accepted in their co-mingled recycling bin and where other items that are not accepted, but which could be recycled may be taken.



## West Northamptonshire Bin App



During 2023 the availability of the West Northamptonshire bin app was extended to include the town of Northampton. Residents can use this app to be sent reminders as to when to put their general waste and recycling containers out for collection.

This aids the smooth running of the service, leads to fewer missed bins and encourages participation in our recycling services. The app can also be used to check what can and can't be recycled in our services but also by other community schemes. The app has replaced some paper-based forms of communicating with residents on recycling issues, meaning less paper use and reduced emissions from the delivery of printed materials to individual households. Further development of the app is planned for later in 2023, whereby residents will be able to use it to report issues which require our action to us.

## Resources and Waste Strategy

At the formation of West Northamptonshire Council, the waste functions of the four predecessor councils amalgamated to become one waste collection and disposal service. This means the authority has a mixture of services provided "in house" and others

provided by contractors, the contracts for which will come to an end in 2025 (waste treatment, disposal and Household Waste Recycling Centres) and 2028 (waste collection).

Prior to these arrangements ending, consideration needs to be given to the Council's 'vision' for harmonising waste services, so that new arrangements can be put in place to ensure the seamless delivery of services for residents, that in their development and operation, meet the council's targets – financially and sustainability.

West Northamptonshire's Waste Management team are in the process of developing a 'Resources and Waste Strategy' which will provide the action plan for future implementation. The Vision for the strategy is currently subject to public consultation and will be finalised in the autumn of 2023.



# Economic Growth



## Economic Growth and Inward Investment Team

The Economic Growth and Inward Investment (EGII) Team have worked closely with the Sustainability Team in multiple initiatives, including launching the Sustainability strategy and establishing new initiatives to support employers to access guidance on decarbonisation. The EGII Team are leading on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund which has dedicated funds aimed at decarbonisation for residents and for businesses, along with an allocation towards Active Travel.

The EGII Team are also leading on a new Place Vision for West Northamptonshire, establishing ambitious aspirations for how the area can be developed to continue to thrive and evolve to achieve economic prosperity. Sustainability is a priority for the Vision, recognising that energy efficiency, reduced emissions and nurturing the natural environment and supporting the planet are of utmost importance.

As part of the remit of the EGII Team, they are dedicated to supporting employers to fill their vacancies by utilising the skilled local labour market, as well as enabling residents to secure local, sustainable employment. This will result in reduced commuting, improved community engagement and increased economic benefits and retention of spend.

Inward Investment and place-marketing is a priority for the EGII Team and all of West Northamptonshire Council and they're dedicated to attracting employers to create highly skilled, highly paid jobs for local residents and boost the economy for the benefit of everyone.

The EGII Team and Sustainability Team will continue to work collaboratively for the benefit of the business community, using WNC as a champion and pioneer for reducing emissions and fulfilling the UNSDG's. This will result in an enhanced economy, a thriving community and showcasing West Northamptonshire as a destination to work, live, visit and invest.

## Business and Intellectual Property Centre (BIPC) Start up Day

In February the Council's sustainability team attended a Business Start Up day ran by the BIPC Northamptonshire and engaged with pre-startup businesses to understand their barriers to engaging in sustainability and net zero. Feedback suggested that most business start-ups are keen to do the right thing from the outset but are unsure where to start and what information to trust. We have been awarded a share of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to offer support to businesses in West Northamptonshire to decarbonise during the next two years.

## Explore West Northants App

The ExploreWN app is a tourism/e-commerce platform to raise awareness of the local offer to residents and visitors to West Northants. The website and app provide information on local events and things to do in the area as well as exclusive offers from local businesses. It is free for businesses to join and there are currently over 250 businesses/organisations registered across West Northants, with over 1,000 users utilising the innovative tool. By showcasing the high-quality local offer, residents aren't required to travel as far for shopping, tourism and leisure purposes, reducing commuting and increasing local spend. The app promotes the ethos of supporting the local community and the benefits and impacts this has to the economy.

This app is part of the reason that WNC was successful in winning the regional "All Round Small Business Friendly" Award in the FSB Local Government Awards, as it showcased West Northamptonshire Council's creative approach to promoting businesses, driving physical footfall, increasing local spend and shining a spotlight on local employers.



# Regeneration



## Northampton Bike Park

The project involved the conversion of a 16 ha site from a disused nine-hole golf course into a mountain bike centre. The project retained all the natural features and habitats which included native hedgerow, broadleaf woodland, neutral grass lands, ponds, ruderal areas and scrubland. These will be managed for the next 30 years via a Local Ecological Management Plan and monitored on a five yearly basis. Additional features including hibernacula and bird and bat boxes have been installed across the site.

The trails themselves are 1 to 3m in width and constructed from gravel and stone and are therefore not considered to result in the creation of significant ecological barriers to the movement of species within/across the site and as such, the scheme is not considered likely to result in a notable reduction of the site's overall ecological connectivity.

Prior to the construction of the bike park, the Northamptonshire area was devoid of any purpose-built free facilities, for off road cycling. Some unofficial trails have been built in local woods and are well used by local mountain bike riders, but obvious conflicts exist between the riders, landowners and other amenity users. Riders

were also driving up to two hrs or more to use facilities with a similar provision. The one thing all of these facilities have in common is the need for motorised transport to get there. Given this the Northampton will reduce the number of local users travelling to use facilities elsewhere and will also make it easier for younger riders to access. The facility is also in line with the Northamptonshire Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2016-2020 which sets out measures to reduce health inequalities through the creation of spaces, facilities, and infrastructure to enable people to make healthier choices. It also sets out objectives to ensure people have access to leisure spaces, green and natural spaces and recreational facilities and community assets that promote health and wellbeing and improve cycling as part of an integrated infrastructure.



# Environmental Health



## Air Quality

WNC recognises that air pollution is a significant environmental and public health concern. During the last year a grant funded project from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) has progressed the installation of real time NOx sensors at major junctions across Northampton. These sensors will link to traffic management systems and in due course provide real time air quality data to the roadside information screens.

A further project which has received funding for the coming year will progress the development of local evidence base on the extent of particulate pollution across West Northants using low-cost sensor. This data will be brought together with an evaluation of the extent of solid fuel combustion and the economic and social implications of any controls on this will assist in decision making in relation to an expansion of the existing smoke control areas in West Northants.

## Fly Tipping

In Autumn 2022 the Cleaner Communities Campaign was launched with the aim of bringing together a range of services to help make West Northamptonshire a

cleaner and greener place to live and thrive. Through a dedicated webpage and social media posts, actions taken to address fly tipping and other environmental crime are publicised. Enforcement action forms part of the programme and during 2022/23 a total of 71 prosecutions for environmental crime offences were commenced. Work is progressing with MSc students at the University of Northampton to develop innovative approaches to better understand the causes of fly tipping and to find long term sustainable solutions to this problem.



# Public Health and Wellbeing



During the last year, the public health team have been supporting colleagues around the development and implementation of the Anti-Poverty Strategy. They have provided £2 million of Public Health funding recognising that there is a link between poverty and a reduction in health and wellbeing. This funding has been used to support the warm spaces, distribution of the household support fund, Community Training Partnership, food larders and food banks.

The Integrated Care Northamptonshire System agreed its strategy for Northamptonshire in December 2022, and the team are currently working on the West Northamptonshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy. It has 10 ambitions around 'Live Your Best Life': -

- The best start in life
- Access to the best available learning
- Opportunity to be fit, well and independent
- Employment that keeps them and their families out of poverty
- Good housing in places that are clean and green
- To feel safe in their homes and when out and about
- Connected to their friends and families
- The chance for a fresh start when things go wrong
- Access to health and social care when they need it
- To be accepted and valued simply for who they are.

Last year **Northamptonshire Health Inequalities Strategy and Plan** was produced which is based around the 'Core 20 plus 5', an NHS approach to reducing healthcare inequalities. The approach defines a target population – the 'Core20PLUS' – and identifies '5' focus clinical areas requiring accelerated improvement. The 'Core20' is the most

deprived 20% of the population as identified by the national Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). 'PLUS' is identified at a local level with people identified from ethnic minority communities, people with learning disabilities and long-term health conditions etc. '5' is the clinical areas of focus that require

accelerated improvements, this includes maternity, severe mental illness, early cancer diagnosis, chronic respiratory disease and hypertension case finding and optimal management. Alongside this the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment has been refreshed which is the baseline of health and wellbeing for residents in West Northamptonshire.

Public Health have funded a scheme with a contribution from the UKSPF called Northamptonshire Energy Saving Service (NESS) which is a multiagency service providing free, independent, and confidential advice and support to those who are struggling with fuel poverty. Over 640 residents in West Northants have been directly supported by NESS since August 2022. This has resulted in an estimated £14,418 energy savings for residents and the total debt managed is £117,928.

The development of the Northamptonshire Anchor Institutions Network began in 2022 led by public health. The network consists of organisations that have a significant impact across the local area due to their influence on employment, sustainability, assets and social value. One of the ambitions of the network organisations have committed to improving is their impact on sustainability.



# Public Health and Wellbeing

## Workplace Wellbeing

At West Northants Council we are in the process of implementing our Workforce Wellbeing Strategy, activities to date include reviewing and relaunching our Mental Health First Aider network; and providing Wellbeing rooms in our main office hubs. We have also developed guidance to Improve the Way you Work and support sustainable and healthier habits

in the now normal, virtual and hybrid workspace. Our learning and development open programme weaves wellbeing into all our delivery with focused courses on the impact of change and personal resilience.

## Procurement



## Social Value Policy

In 2022 the Council introduced a Social Value Policy for the decision making, procurement and contract delivery of its goods, services and works.

The Social Value priorities of WNC are as follows:

- Jobs – Promote local skills and employment
- Growth – Supporting growth of responsible regional business
- Social – Healthier, safer, and more resilient communities
- Environment – Decarbonising and safeguarding our world

We require our suppliers to set out the social, economic and environmental benefits they achieve when performing our contract meaning that the true commercial impact is taken into account when tendering. It will encourage vendors to consider the way that they deliver goods, services or works, for example:

- creating job opportunities for residents, those not in employment or for people with disabilities
- providing support, advice or mentoring opportunities to the unemployed, schools or school leavers
- providing opportunities for a diverse range of suppliers, including the participation of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) and 3rd sector organisations, and local suppliers in general
- offering a range of apprenticeship, training and skills development opportunities as well as employment opportunities
- providing support for communities
- promoting greater environmental sustainability: minimising waste and pollution, supporting carbon reduction initiatives, furthering energy efficiency and other sustainability activities.

Since October 2022, successful providers who have bid for procurement contracts have promised £1,061,142 of additional Social Value alongside delivering the Contract.



# Performance

The Council has 6 key priorities which all form part of the vision towards Sustainable West Northants. For more information on the 2022/23 performance against the corporate plan measures, [see the annual report.](#)

**Green and Clean**  
Environment & Wellbeing

1

**Improved Life Chances**

Health, Social Care & Families

2

**Connected Communities**

Transport & Connectivity

3

**Thriving Villages & Towns**  
Place Shaping & Homes

4

**Economic Development**  
Growth & Prosperity

5

**Robust Resource Management**

Transparency & Financial Probity

6

# Looking forward

This report provides a comprehensive overview of progress towards delivery of the Council's sustainability objectives and an overview of the work completed by the new sustainability team. The report will be published on an annual basis providing updates for residents on progress towards the Council's sustainability objectives. The next report will be a reflection on the current 2023/24 year and will be published in the autumn of 2024. To support our net zero ambitions, the Council is developing an Emissions Reduction Plan which will outline the route to achieving net zero on council operations by 2030. This report is expected to be published in early 2024.

To keep up to date with our progress, view the [Council's forward plan](#), visit our dedicated [Sustainable West Northants page](#) and follow the team on Twitter @SustainableWN. You can contact the team by email at [sustainable@westnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:sustainable@westnorthants.gov.uk)





# Glossary

**Authority's Fleet** - Vehicles owned and operated by the authority. (1)

**Biodiversity** – the variety of plant and animal life in a particular habitat (2)

**Decarbonisation** – the process of removing or reducing carbon emissions, especially carbon dioxide from the atmosphere because of a process

**Financial Control Boundary** - The authority reports on all sources of carbon emissions over which it has financial control. The authority has financial control over a service if it has the ability to direct the financial and operating policies of the service with a view to financially managing its activities, e.g. setting budgets, managing expenditure, and/or obtaining an 'income', such it might be the case in leisure centres, community centres, etc. (3)

**Fuel Poverty** – when households are spending 10% of their income to provide a sufficient heating regime. (<https://www.nea.org.uk/what-is-fuel-poverty/#:~:text=The%20definition%20of%20fuel%20poverty,maintain%20a%20satisfactory%20heating%20regime.>) (4)

**Fugitive emissions** - These emissions result from intentional or unintentional release. (3) The only fugitive emissions included in this report are those emitted from closed landfill sites.

**Net Zero** – achieving a balance between the carbon emitted into the atmosphere, and the carbon removed from it (What is net zero and how can we get there? - Energy Saving Trust) (5)

**Outsourced Scope 3 emissions** – These emissions are from high value, large, outsourced contracts which are likely to present the biggest opportunity for making emissions reductions. For example waste management services (collection, disposal, treatment), facilities management, leisure centres, highway maintenance, social care and children's services (including home to school transport) (1)

**Ruderal** – growing on waste ground

**Scope 1 emissions** - Direct GHG emissions occur from sources that are owned or controlled by the company, for example, emissions from combustion in owned or controlled boilers and vehicles. (3)

**Scope 2 emissions** - Indirect GHG emissions from the generation of purchased electricity consumed by the

company. (3)

**Scope 3 emissions** - Scope 3 is an optional reporting category that allows for the treatment of all other indirect emissions. These emissions are a consequence of the activities of the company, but occur from sources not owned or controlled by the company. For example, staff business travel, water usage, waste. (3)

**Staff Business Travel** - Vehicles owned by employees but used to carry out the business of the authority. (1)

**Staff Commuting** – This represents emissions from vehicles used for staff commuting to and from work. (1) This data was obtained by a survey undertaken by WNC.

**T & D Losses** – Electric utility companies often purchase electricity from independent power generators or the grid and resell it to end-consumers through a transmission and distribution (T&D) system. A portion of the electricity purchased by a utility company is lost during its transmission and distribution to end-consumers. (3)

## References

1. LGA - Climate Change: <https://www.local.gov.uk/climate-change-reporting-guidance-local-authorities>
2. WWF - <https://www.worldwildlife.org/pages/what-is-biodiversity>
3. GHG Protocol - <https://ghgprotocol.org/sites/default/files/standards/ghg-protocol-revised.pdf>
4. NEA Action for Warm Homes - <https://www.nea.org.uk/what-is-fuel-poverty/>
5. Energy Saving Trust - <https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/what-is-net-zero-and-how-can-we-get-there/>

