

CARBON NEUTRAL PLAN 2030

MONITORING REPORT
(2023-2024)

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The following provides our update to the 2030 Carbon Neutral Plan, which sets out our ambitions and action plan to be a carbon-neutral council by 2030. Throughout this report, we refer to our carbon footprint. In most cases, this is accompanied by the unit of measure which is tonnes (t). We also refer to the carbon footprint as CO₂e. This is a metric measure that is used to compare emissions from various greenhouse gases on the basis of their Global Warming Potential by converting amounts of other gases to the equivalent amount of Carbon Dioxide (CO₂).

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Welcome to our 2023-2024 update



In 2021, we approved the Charnwood Carbon Neutral Plan 2030, an ambitious plan to achieve carbon neutrality from the Council's operations by 2030. This monitoring report provides an update to the Carbon Neutral Plan and our target to be carbon neutral by 2030.

We continue to build on our long-standing efforts to reduce the carbon impacts of our activities. This includes our efforts to support positive action against relevant UN Sustainability Goals.



Our world is already changing around us, with increasing temperatures, changing weather patterns and risks to our Council and Borough. Climate change affects us all, but we also all have the power to do something about it. Our Climate Change Board continues its work in our quest to decarbonise our activities and become carbon neutral by 2030.

About our Plan

The Carbon Neutral Plan is a subset of our Climate Change Strategy. As reported previously, the Carbon Neutral Plan was designed to be flexible and regularly reviewed. Now in 2024, we have 6 years left to achieve our aspirations of net zero after emerging from a worldwide COVID-19 Pandemic that still impacts our people and our activities.

To facilitate action, the Climate Action Board meets bi-monthly to provide a conduit for ensuring that we monitor the actions that were agreed and to enhance or modify our efforts as appropriate. The Board will call on outside expertise that can't be sourced in the Council, as required and where appropriate.

Borough Wide

This Action Plan does not set out how the Borough as a whole will reach carbon neutrality. It does identify our impact on the Borough and ways that the Council can use its powers to support the transition to a low carbon future

Climate Action Board

The Climate Action Board was established to:

- Take forward the actions outlined and approved in the Council's Carbon Neutral Plan.
- Oversee and manage the Change Climate Strategy.
- Oversee and manage other Council actions that contribute positively to climate change (e.g. air quality).

such as through land use planning and the provision of infrastructure. However, we are continually working with communities, partners, residents and businesses to seek to decarbonise our Borough.

A summary of our journey to date

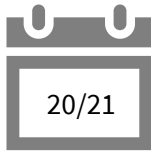


Carbon Management Plan

In 2015, we developed a Carbon Management Plan aiming to achieve a 15% reduction in carbon emissions by 2020 against a 2012-2013 baseline. Within a year from 2015-2016, as a result of energy savings across the Council operations, we had achieved a 21% decrease.

Our commitment to carbon neutrality was announced in June 2019. By the end of 2019, our emissions had fallen by 37%. In absolute terms, this was a reduction of 787 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (tCO₂e). This assisted financial savings of over £280,000. To achieve these savings we switched to using renewable electricity, which means the electricity purchased didn't create carbon emissions, installed highly energy-efficient LED lighting and controls in offices, buildings, car parks including Beehive Lane car park and communal areas of sheltered housing, installed more energy-efficient heating in Charnwood Museum and swapped vehicles for electric and more fuel-efficient ones.





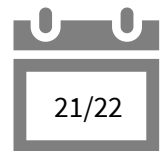
Charnwood Carbon Neutral Plan 2030

In 2021, we launched our Carbon Neutral Plan to present options for inspiring local and regional action whilst reducing our carbon footprint. We established this by consultation with all parts of Charnwood Borough Council.

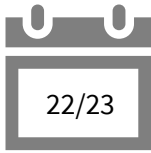
We established a new 2018-2019 baseline of a carbon footprint of 1,130 tCO₂e which took into account our decision to procure renewable electricity.

Our 2020-2021 footprint was calculated as 1,092 tCO₂e, a decrease in our footprint from our baseline and previous years. Once again, the impact of the decarbonisation of the national grid for electricity and our decision to procure renewable energy had a positive impact. Building and transport emissions were also reduced by the COVID-19 Pandemic Governmental travel/working restrictions.

Our decarbonisation efforts continued in 2021-22. A normalisation of our activities as we unwound from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic saw only a minor increase in the overall footprint to 1,130 tCO₂e. Continued energy efficiency works in our buildings stock saw a further reduction in GHG emissions (particularly in terms of natural gas use).



Tiny Forest Project – Holt Drive, Loughborough



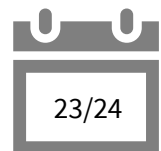
We continued to seek efficiency savings in the use of transport fuel, building energy and water in our everyday activities. We also continued to look ahead to where more challenging savings can be made, for example in replacing the fuel used in our refuse collection vehicles and replacing natural gas boilers in our buildings with heat pumps. These changes are not as easy to implement, and typically require considerable additional investment. This means making choices as to when and how we commit that investment, so as not to compromise our day-to-day work.

We also completed our project to plant 14,000 trees across the autumn/winter of 2022/2023.

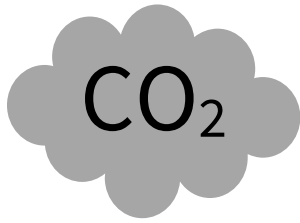


‘Nature Positive’ is a potentially strategic change of mowing regimes to encourage biodiversity. A three-year pilot scheme has been launched. The pilot will be assessed in two years to see its results.

Authorisation to commission a feasibility study at the Town Hall for low or zero-carbon heating has been granted.



Our 2024 Carbon Footprint



Our 2024 Carbon Footprint has been calculated using the same principles as in 2021-2022, to ensure a true comparison. It is based upon emissions generated from 1st April 2023 through to 31st March 2024. We anticipate that at some point in the future, we may have to rebaseline, as we enhance our carbon reporting to take into account our indirect emissions and potential changes within our data sets.

Our methodology

1

Step 1 – Location based

Calculation of our emissions from buildings (gas & electricity), transport, waste and water.

2

Step 2 – Market based

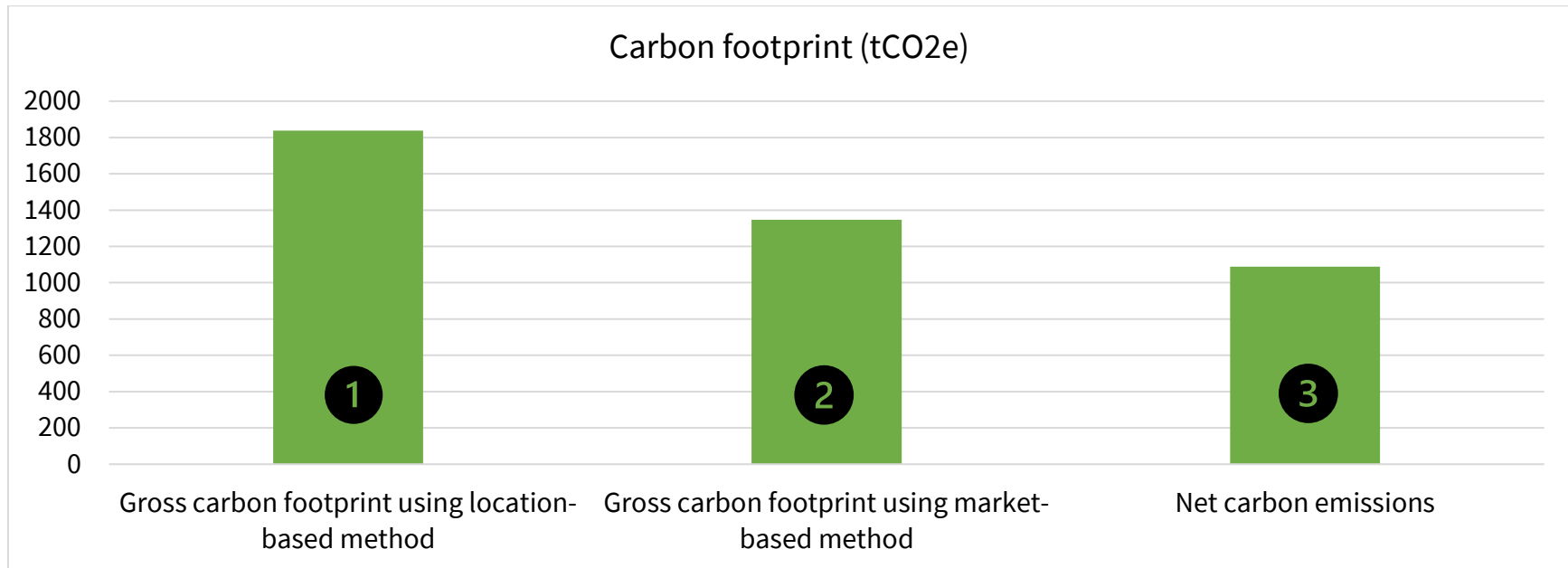
Accounting for our use of 100% renewable electricity at our council buildings creating zero emissions.

3

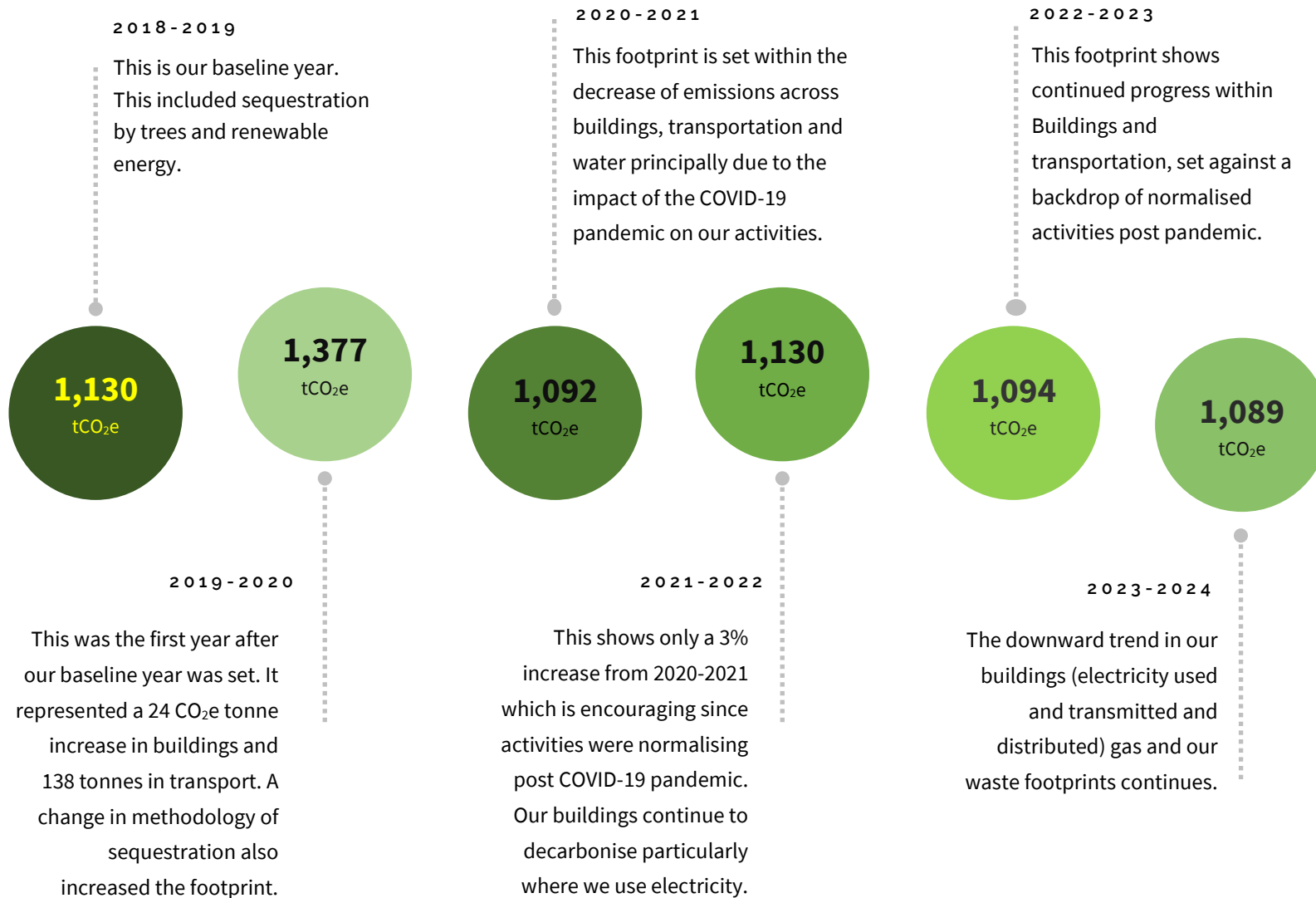
Step 3 – Calculation of net footprint

This is the emissions generated in step 1, minus the emissions “saved” in step 2, together with activities that take carbon dioxide directly from the atmosphere (sequestration).

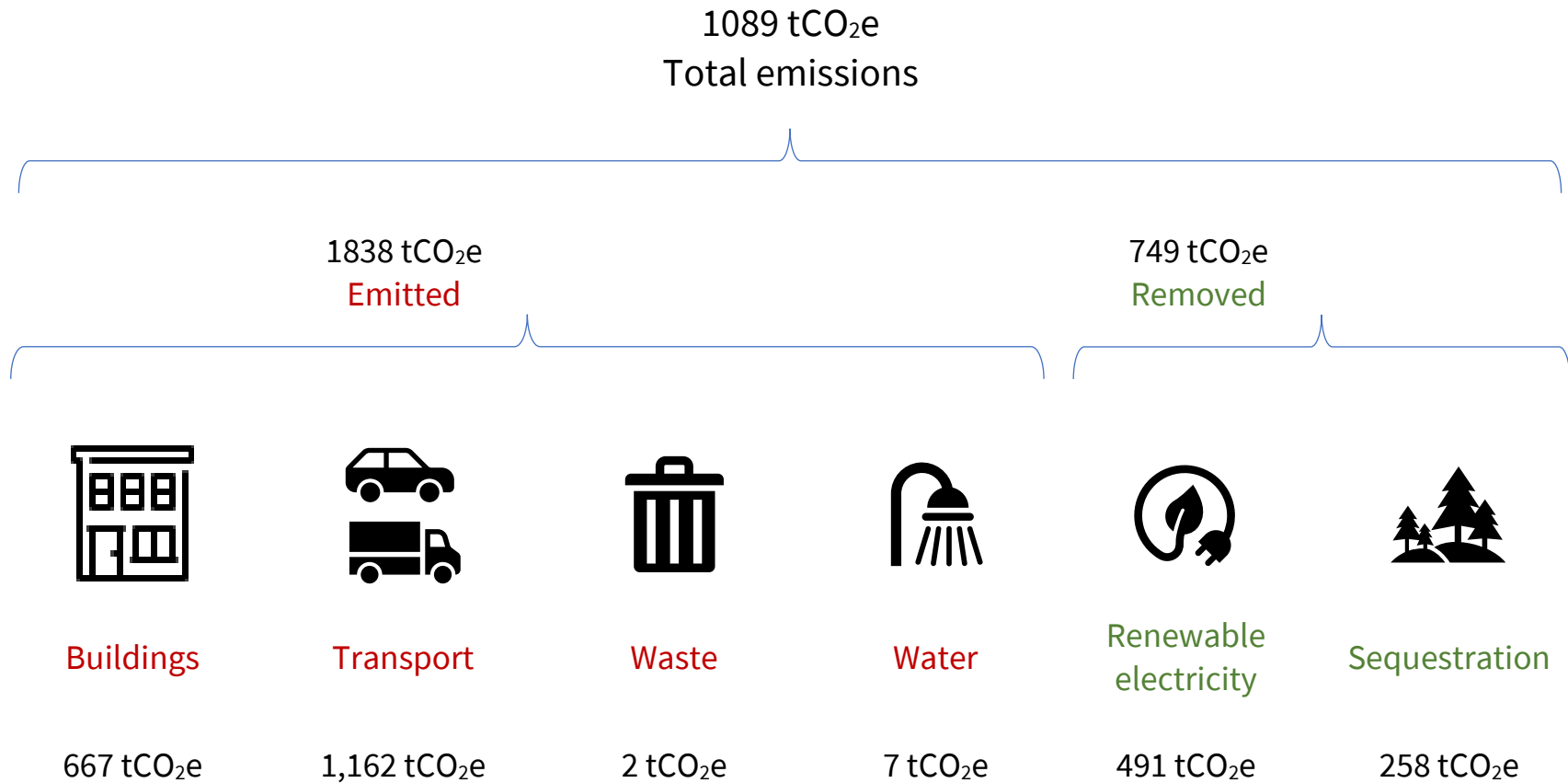
Total Carbon Emissions 2024



Total Net Carbon Emissions



Emissions, renewable electricity and sequestration in 2023-2024



Carbon footprint comparison

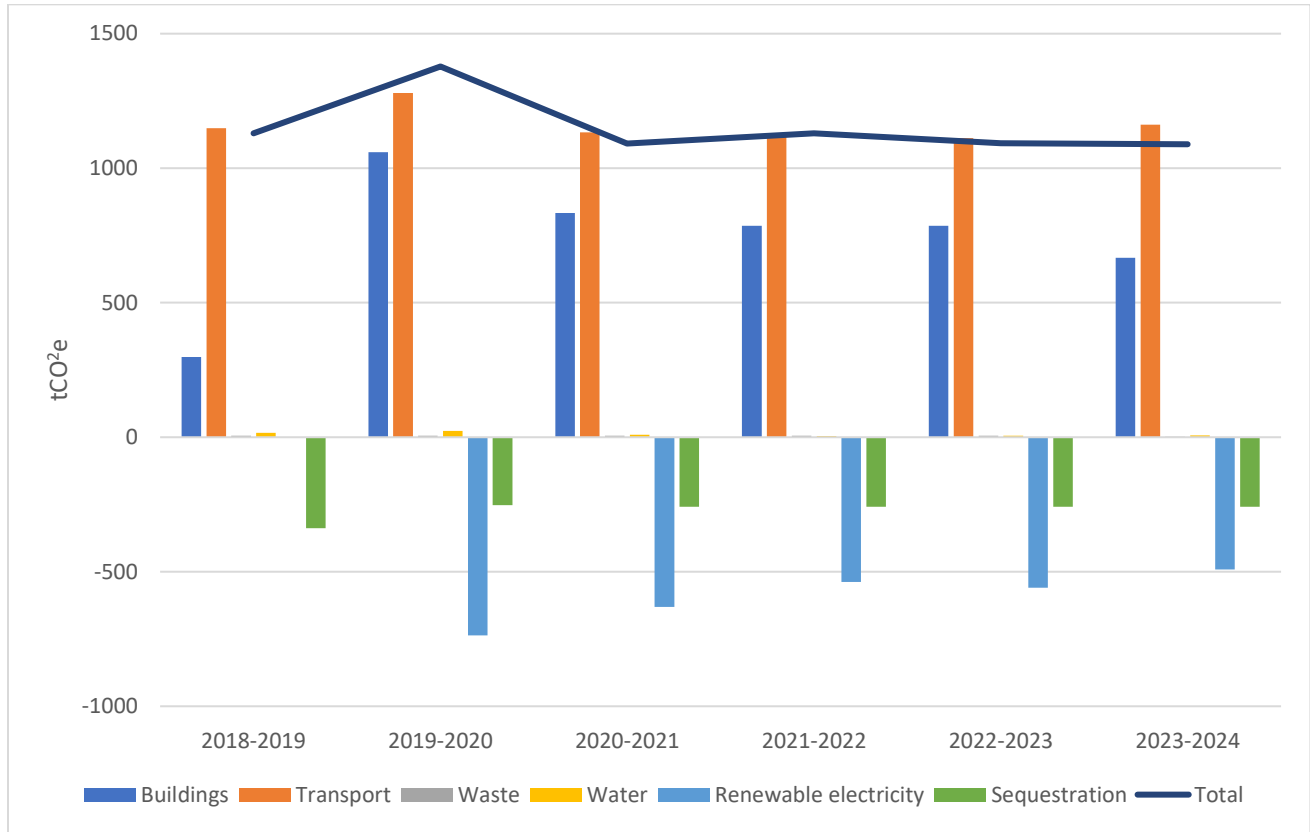


Yearly comparison of Net emissions in tCO₂e

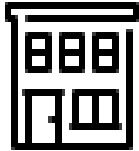
The 2023-2024 carbon footprint highlights the continued benefit of our ongoing actions in maintaining and improving our overall carbon footprint. It is encouraging to see the continued downward trend of building-related emissions. This reflects efforts to reduce overall heating energy needs and continued focus on efficient use of electricity, including our Southfield Road building being fitted with LED lighting.

We continue to purchase electricity from certified renewable sources to move closer to a net zero position in terms of our operations.

Type	2018 -2019	2019 -2020	2020 -2021	2021 -2022	2022 -2023	2023 -2024
Buildings	298	1059	833	786	786	667
Transport	1,149	1,279	1,133	1,130	1,112	1162
Waste	6	6	6	6	6	2
Water	16	23	9	4	6	7
Renewable electricity	0	-737	-631	-538	-559	-491
Sequestration	-338	-252	-258	-258	-258	-258
Total	1,130	1,377	1,092	1,130	1,094	1,089



Five-year carbon footprint comparison



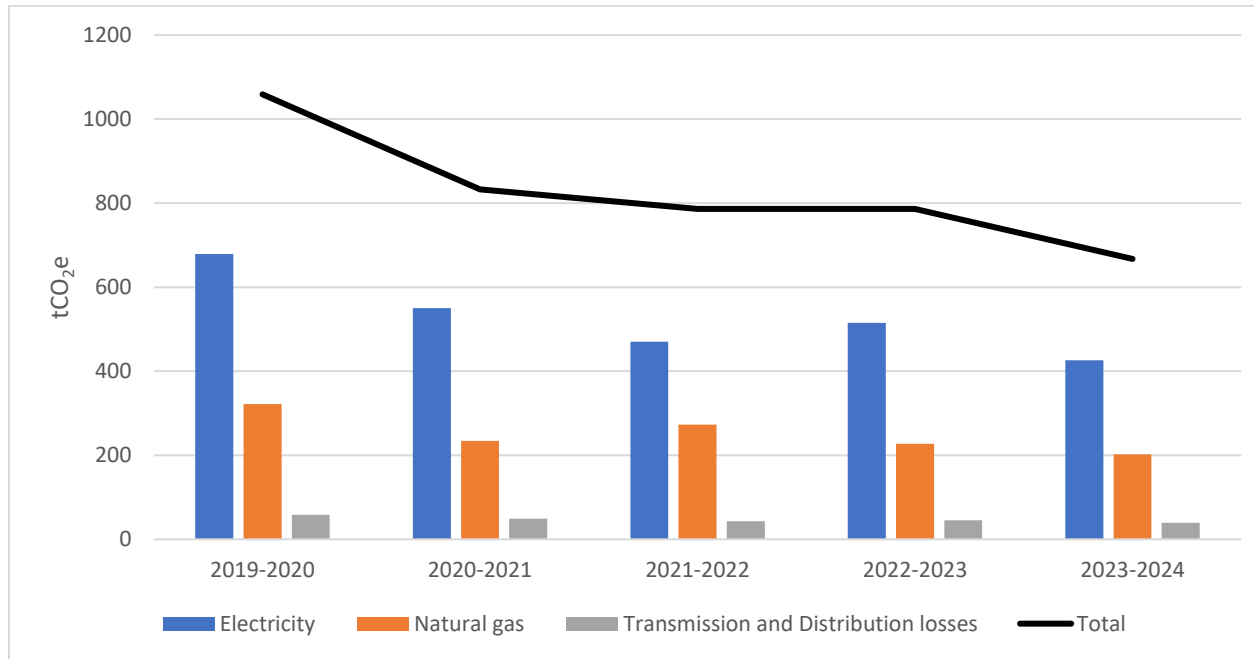
Yearly building emissions in tCO₂e

The downward trend of electricity, gas and transmission and distribution losses from our base year continues to be encouraging. Our electricity will always see a degree of variability depending upon activity and use but the 37% reduction from our baseline year demonstrates our reduction commitment.

According to the Met Office, the five warmest years in the UK since 1884 include 2022 and 2023 which impacts demand for heating (through natural gas). However, as reported previously, reductions in natural gas use at Woodgate Chambers and the Oak Business Centre show the benefit of fabric improvements and boiler replacement.

Buildings	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Electricity	679	550	470	515	426
Natural gas	322	234	273	227	202
Transmission and Distribution losses	58	49	43	45	39
Total	1,059	833	786	786	667

We continue to review the opportunities for further savings through wider feasibility studies, helping us have a potentially more holistic perspective of our buildings which should provide greater reductions in future. A feasibility study has been approved for commissioning a low or zero-carbon heating at our Town Hall.



Five-year carbon footprint comparison



Yearly transport emissions in tCO₂e

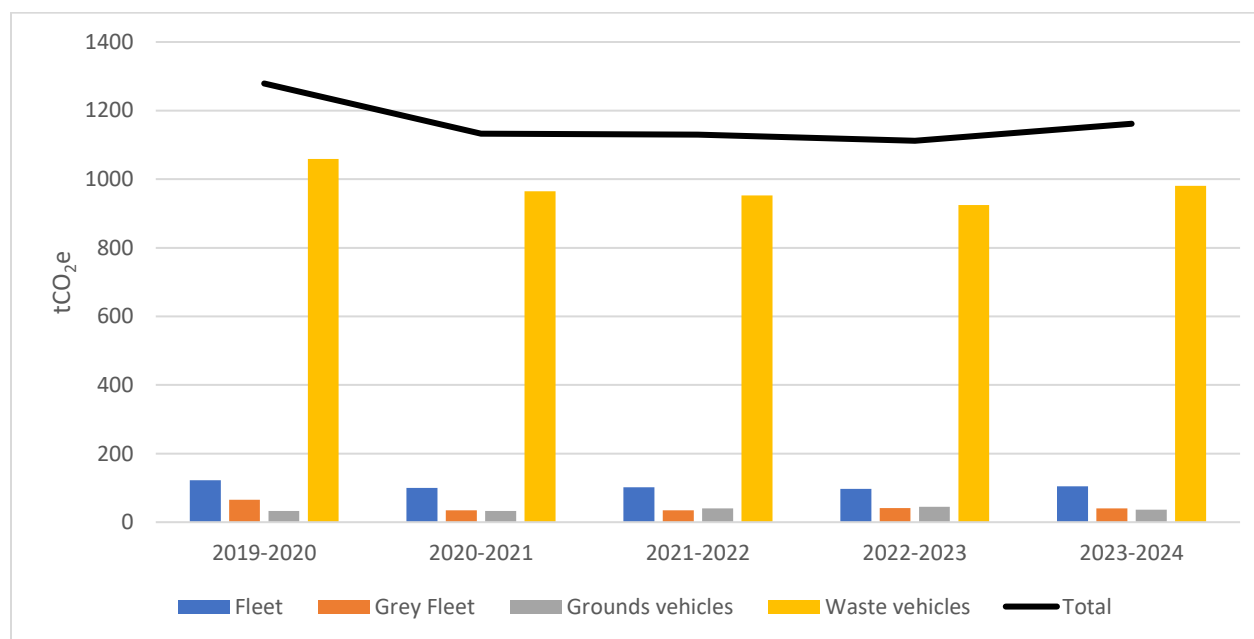
Following a downward trend of our transport data, overall, the amount of tCO₂ related to transport has slightly risen. Our own fleet's carbon footprint has fallen by nearly 15% since our base year. Our cars used for pest control have also been replaced with electric vehicles (EVs). Our Grey fleet carbon reduction has been helped by our colleagues using 7 EVs when travelling on business. In addition, our Mayor continues to travel in an EV.

Transport	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Fleet	122	100	102	97	104
Grey Fleet	65	35	35	41	40
Grounds vehicles	33	33	40	45	36
Waste vehicles	1,059	965	953	925	981
Total	1,279	1,133	1,130	1,112	1,162

The carbon from our vehicles that collect household waste, recycling, garden waste, sweepers and street cleansing has been calculated this year based on the ratio of mileage and fuel data provided in 2022-2023 multiplied by the distance the vehicles travelled in 2023-2024. We hope to return to our usual methodology in the future.

Further investigation is continuing to seek reductions in emissions by exploring further use of electric vehicles and by potential fuel substitution across the waste vehicle fleet. Wholesale fleet replacement requires considerable investment and so can only be achieved incrementally. There are challenges in terms of both the availability of alternative vehicles (and fuels), the relative cost of these changes and how soon vehicles or fuels can be available. Electric waste vehicles are currently around twice as expensive as conventional diesel vehicles.

We have already installed further charging points to support a future fleet switch to electric vehicles.



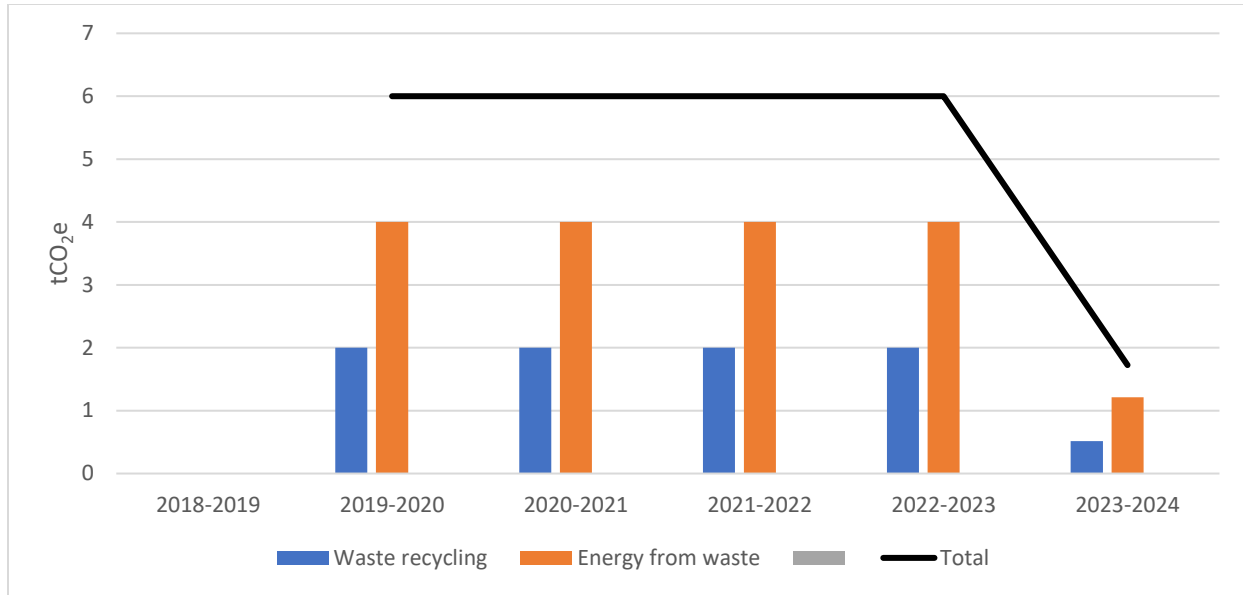
Five-year carbon footprint comparison



Yearly waste emissions in tCO₂e

Waste from our activities has remained relatively constant due to its estimation based on the average of previous years. This is because we switched the company to which we transfer our waste. However, the carbon conversion published by the Government has been reduced because of a discrepancy. Therefore, our carbon footprint from our waste has been reduced further.

Waste	2019- 2020	2020- 2021	2021- 2022	2022- 2023	2023- 2024
Waste recycling	2	2	2	2	1
Energy from waste	4	4	4	4	1
Total	6	6	6	6	2



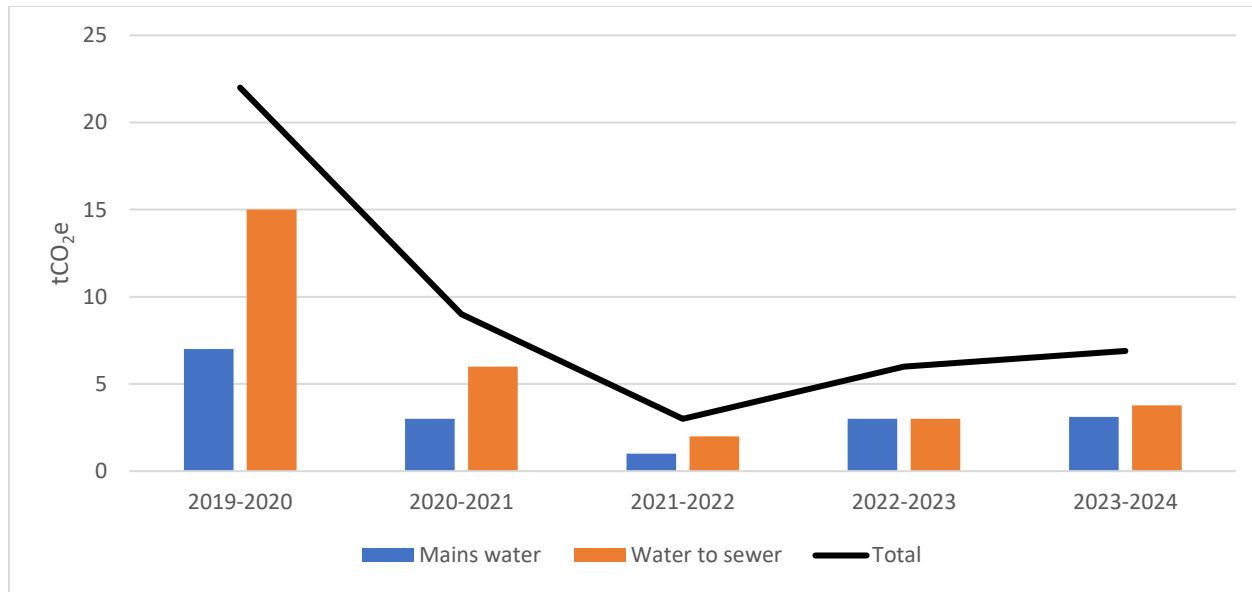
Five-year carbon footprint comparison



Yearly water emissions in tCO₂e

Water-related greenhouse gas emissions in 2023-2024 were 68% lower than in our baseline year. We continue to monitor opportunities for water efficiency in our buildings, particularly during routine maintenance replacement schedules for kitchen and sanitaryware.

Water	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Mains water	7	3	1	3	3
Water to sewer	15	6	2	3	4
Total	22	9	3	6	7



Leisure Centers



Yearly (gross) emissions in tCO₂e

Fusion Lifestyle, a registered charity, operates Charnwood Borough Council's leisure centres located at Browns Lane, South Charnwood and Soar Valley. Whilst the carbon derived from Fusion's operations of the leisure centres doesn't fall within Charnwood's carbon footprint, it was decided for transparency, that it would be reported this year, and in the future, alongside our data and within this report.

Fusion operates an Environmental Management System as part of an Integrated Management System and is certified to ISO14001:2015 with annual audits in place to assess compliance. There is an Environmental Strategy (2012-2024) which sets out the processes and actions to improve environmental and energy management. A Net Zero Energy Strategy is being developed. This started in early 2024 and will continue to develop into 2025. The carbon figures below represent the information derived from Fusion's Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting information:

Type	2023 -2024
Electricity	182
Gas	876
Transmission of electricity	16
Total	1,074

An update of our Actions

Our Corporate Strategy, Climate Change Strategy and Carbon Neutral Plan includes climate change as priorities. The following provides an update to our Carbon Neutral Plan approved actions, to meet our goal of carbon neutrality by 2030.



Main Challenges

The tracking of our carbon footprint demonstrates we have three main challenges:

1. Reducing net carbon emissions from buildings
2. Reducing net carbon from transport
3. Investing in carbon positive activities

01

Reducing net emissions from buildings

The carbon footprint of our buildings is dominated by gas consumption, gas burnt to heat our buildings and produce hot water. It remains our intention to decarbonise, as far as practicable, gas burnt to heat our buildings and produce hot water.

02

Reducing net emissions from transport

The carbon footprint of our vehicles is dominated by diesel consumption although across our reported Transport category we are encouraged that there are a growing number of EVs including our Mayorial car. Our intention is to minimise and optimise, wherever practicable, our fleet journeys and seek alternative fuel sources.

03






































Investing in carbon positive activities
















Our intention is to seek renewable energy opportunities where it is possible. In addition undertake tree planting which will not only sequester carbon but add to biodiversity.































Detailed analysis of our actions



























Timescale	CO ₂ e reduction Impact	Borough impact	Financial cost /risk	Project owner	Progress
0-2 years	Low	Low	Low	Officer	In preparation
3-5 years	Medium	Medium	Medium	Manager	In progress
5 plus	High	High	High	Head	Complete







No.:	Action detail:						Commentary:	
1	Ensure dedicated resources are in place to implement the management and delivery of the Carbon Neutral Plan.					£	<p>The Climate Action Board meets to ensure that the Carbon Neutral Plan actions are managed and delivered effectively while ensuring delivery is financially sustainable. The current approved Capital Plan contains a Climate Action Fund budget of £1 million available to progress individual projects. This resource will be used to fund feasibility studies and other preparatory work. We also have a dedicated full-time Sustainability Officer.</p> <p>Individual projects, if shown to be feasible, will be funded by Capital or Revenue, with the associated authorisation obtained through established governance routes.</p>	
2	Formalise and embed a process for evaluating the impact arising from the Council's decisions.					£	Reporting systems are in place.	

3	Install a solid and better insulating door at the rear entrance of the Town Hall (stage door) to eliminate the current loss of heat and cold draughts.						Installation of a new door has been completed and is operational with no defects reported.	
4	Commission a technical feasibility study for low or zero carbon heating options in the Town Hall. This replace the 20-year-old boiler and would be installed as part of a full building renovation						Town Hall boilers are less than ten years old. Informal scoping of a feasibility study has been undertaken. A feasibility study has been approved for commissioning.	
5	Renew quotes for double glazing and flat roof insulation at Charnwood Museum and procure the best option.						Despite several attempts to progress this work, the supply chain has not responded favourably. Action cancelled.	
6	Complete LED installations in Museum staff areas with person-in-room sensors.						Works completed by 27 th July 2023.	
7	Continue to replace bulbs when needed with best available LED option across the estate.	 					As per our policy, as traditional units/lamps fail, they are being replaced by LED options, where practicable. Action complete.	
8	Procure renewable gas.						Given wholesale energy market conditions (particularly gas) this is no longer a financially viable project. The green gas premium was in the region of 0.9p/kWh in May 2022. The unit standard gas price in 21/22 was 1.4321 ppkWh and in 22/23 is 2.4788 ppkWh.	

9	Upgrade and switch to electric vehicles in the street management & pest control fleet.					£	<p>Fleet procurement across the world is experiencing significant difficulties and this is the same experience here at Charnwood. While trying to action this project, we have experienced vehicle lease providers not being able to commit to any pricing because of the long lead in times for supply and the uncertainties around costs going forwards.</p> <p>This is still being pursued and it's hoped that problems will ease soon, as supply chains return to normal.</p> <p>However, charge points have been installed at the Pest Control unit ready for charging EV vehicles. Two vans have been delivered. 1 van is still awaiting delivery.</p>	
10	Smart bin feasibility study.					£	<p>Prices have been obtained to undertake the smart bin trial. Consideration needs to be given as to whether the trial represents value for money and whether this action is to be pursued.</p> <p>Cancelled due to high cost and negligible impact on reducing carbon footprint.</p>	
11	Cross-service electric pool car and charging feasibility study.					£	<p>An electric/petrol hybrid has been purchased as part of a wider trial. A sustainable compromise had to be sought because of the vehicle supply chain issues with electric vehicles. This was why a hybrid was chosen rather than full electric (EV).</p>	

12	Cross-service maintenance vehicle feasibility and pilot.						This action has been replaced with action 22 (Green Fleet Review).	
13	Progress tree programme including 13,000 to 14,000 trees at Hathern during Autumn/Winter 2021-2022.						14,000 trees were planted across the autumn/winter of 2022/2023. Some residual issues are being addressed with tree tubes falling over due to high winds.	
14	Embedding Nature P.O.Sitive in the Carbon Neutral Plan.						Nature Positive is a change of mowing regime to encourage biodiversity. A three-year pilot scheme reduced mowing trial commenced. This will be assessed in two years to keep, remove or extend. Action complete	
15	Site feasibility studies for Solar PV installations on Council owned land, including land purchased for the purpose.						A feasibility study has been undertaken and whilst theoretically possible, the National Grid has no ability to receive power from a solar farm. In addition, National Grid has a queue of upgrades to carry out before a potential solar farm can be connected. Examining smaller solar installations at Allsopp's Lane, Council offices and Oak Business Centre.	
16	Borough-wide feasibility study for land-based solar PV installations, for example at Council owned car parks.						The Car Parks Team are reviewing this topic based upon the car parks directly owned by us. Solar Hub for Charnwood to be sited on Southfields extension car park: Solar canopy, with 12 fast chargers and battery storage.	

17	Feasibility study for rooftop solar PV installations across our built estate.	 				£	A 'Solar together' application confirmed the commercial assets do not fit readily into the scheme and have therefore been excluded. Oak Centre feasibility study has been returned for assessment and viability as a project to be delivered. This will be reflected in future as a standalone item once a decision has been made.	
18	Site feasibility studies for wind energy generation taking account of Local Plan Opportunity Areas.					£	There are currently two wind power installations, one at West Beacon Farm and the larger one at the Severn Trent Sewage Treatment Works, Wanlip. Areas have been identified in the Charnwood Local Plan 2021-37. Onshore wind can be problematic – not generating activity in this sector, risks too high, returns not strong without subsidy scheme. Local objections can stop an application. Turbines we see now have become obsolete and new equipment tip on blades has doubled costs. Action cancelled.	
19	Complete LED installations upgrade at the Town Hall.					£	Individual units replaced. Any additional works will require a capital project. Second stage replacement LED stage lighting at the Town Hall approved. This will result in the total stage rig being between 90%-95% LED.	
20	Feasibility waste fleet change from diesel to hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO).					£	An options report was presented to the Senior Leadership Team looking at the technical viability and associated costs of a fuel switch for waste vehicles to HVO. The decision was made not to progress due to it not being a viable option at the moment.	
21	Smart boiler replacement & new radiators at Oak Business Centre.					£	These works were completed in January 2022. This will contribute to a reduction in the natural gas used in meeting the building heating requirements.	

22	Undertake a Green Fleet Review with the assistance of the Energy Saving Trust.						A Housing fleet review has been commissioned.	
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Continuing the journey to net zero

The UK perspective

In June 2023, the Climate Change Committee (CCC) warned of “worryingly slow” progress, stating that the current policies within the UK won’t deliver net zero in time for 2050.

In September 2023, Prime Minister Rishi Sunak announced a “more pragmatic, proportionate, and realistic approach” to net zero. This included a significant U-turn on the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES), which required all rented properties to have an Energy Performance Certificate rating of C or above by 2028 along with pushing out the deadline for the transition of new cars to EV from petrol and diesel.

Net Zero was a crucial topic when the Country went to the election in July 2024. We await to see the implementation of Labour’s manifesto pledge of:

“The climate and nature crisis is the greatest long-term global challenge that we face. The clean energy transition represents a huge opportunity to generate growth, tackle the cost-of-living crisis and make Britain energy independent once again.”

The Local Government Association perspective

Going into the election the Local Government Association published a report as to the extent that central government was assisting council’s climate change policy. The key findings were:

- Seventy-two per cent of respondents stated their council has a net zero target for the authority itself.
- Seventy per cent reported that their council has a net zero target for the area as a whole.
- Ninety-seven per cent of councils had an official target for reaching net zero for either or both the local authority itself and the area as a whole.
- Sixty-seven per cent of councils were very or fairly unconfident that their local authority will achieve its net zero targets within the timescales set out in its strategy.

- Forty per cent of respondents said not at all when asked to what extent has central government's overall work with their local council on net zero has given them confidence in achieving a 'just transition'.
- Forty-six per cent reported they were not at all confident, and a further 46 per cent were only confident to a small extent, that there was a sufficiently clear and scaled financing plan to deliver the central government's commitment to achieve net zero by 2050.
- Ninety per cent disagreed that the funding schemes currently available for local government to help achieve net zero allowed their council to sufficiently fund their net zero strategy locally.
- Seventy-six per cent of respondents strongly or tend to have agreed that their council is concerned by the impact of inflation on the deliverability of projects within the restrictions set by a national scheme.
- Sixty-one per cent agreed that their council has, at least once, been dissuaded from submitting bids into funds due to the investment needed to develop proposals.
- Forty-three per cent of councils have, at least once, had to return funding to the government due to being unable to deliver projects within the restrictions set by a national scheme.
- Fifty per cent of councils generally feel successful in bidding into national funding pots.
- Total awareness of Your Local Net Zero Hub, Heat Networks Delivery Unit, Active Travel England, and the Office for Net Zero Emissions was between 80 and 90 per cent. Sixty-two per cent of respondents were aware of Net Zero Go.
- Fifty-two per thought that central government's non-financial support was sufficient to a small extent and a further 16 per cent said it was not at all sufficient.

The local perspective

In January 2024, Leicestershire County Council Environment and Climate Change Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed that the commitments be revised to deliver net zero emissions on the Council's activities by 2035 and net zero emissions on the County's emissions by 2050 (5 years later for each target).

The target of reaching net zero emissions by 2030 is still challenging and to date, we have shown that we can act decisively and effectively to reduce carbon emissions. As a council, we have been reducing our carbon emissions for many years through our Carbon Management Plan and are building on a solid record of success.

We will continue to seek efficiency savings in the use of transport fuel, building energy and water in our everyday activities.

The Council is not alone in its journey. We work in collaboration with our fellow authorities in Leicestershire as well as the County Council and other key stakeholders such as Loughborough University. In this way, we can ensure that our efforts to reduce GHG emissions are assisted by wider works where these are relevant. This could be, for example, in negotiating with the local grid electricity network operator to enable connection for local renewable energy generation, or in procurement routes for low-emission vehicles.

The Council will continue to follow strategic changes in the way we use power, heat and transport systems to be able to best use these changes to the benefit of all residents in the Borough.

Sustainable Development Goal alignment

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a collection of 17 interrelated goals set by the United Nations. By measuring and reducing our carbon footprint we directly contribute to 9 SDGs:



- 100% of water treated
- Reduction in water consumption



- Our plans are for sustainable infrastructure.



- Reduction in carbon from buildings, waste & water
- Decarbonisation
- Climate Change Strategy.



- 100% of energy demand met by renewable energy



- Measured carbon emissions
- Reduction in carbon from buildings, waste & water



- Reduction in carbon from buildings, waste & water



- Reduction in carbon from buildings, waste & water



- Measured carbon emissions
- Reduction in carbon from buildings, waste & water



- Reduction in carbon from buildings, waste & water
- 14,000 trees have been planted in 2022-2023.

Sources

- Information has been abstracted from invoices and internal sources to derive energy-related data.
- CO₂e emissions have been calculated using the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero conversion factors 2024.
- The “Charnwood GHG Accounting Tool” was used to calculate carbon emissions and sequestration figures.
- The “Detailed analysis of actions” was a result of updates from the Climate Action Board.

Caveats

- Electricity consumption data for Southfield Road has been reduced based on the area that we occupied in 2022-2023.
- Our 2023-2024 Carbon Footprint has been calculated using the principles in 2020-2021 to ensure a true comparison.
- The carbon from our vehicles that collect household waste, recycling, garden waste, sweepers and street cleansing has been calculated this year based on the ratio of mileage and fuel data provided in 2022-2023 multiplied by the distance that the vehicles travelled in 2023-2024. It is anticipated that our standard methodology will revert when assumed anomalous data has been identified.
- The total amount of renewable electricity claimed is the total amount of electricity purchased from those buildings that we are responsible for. There may be unit differences in data (particularly totals) where rounding to a decimal place has been applied.
- Waste data was not available for 2022-2023 as there was a change in the company to which we transferred our waste. Waste has been estimated for 2023-2024 based on the average tCO₂e since 2018-2019.



Charnwood

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