

Surrey Heath Borough Council Climate Change Action Plan



Climate Emergency Declaration

On the 9th of October 2019, the Council declared a Climate Emergency and pledged to become carbon neutral by 2030 across its own estate and operations, including contractors used, and support the actions being taken by Surrey County Council in this area.

Introduction

Climate change is one of the greatest challenges facing our society. The scientific evidence of anthropogenic climate change is overwhelming and will have a lasting impact on people and wildlife¹. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change 2018 report² makes clear that the impacts of climate change are being experienced now through unprecedented global trends and through more localised severe weather events. The Climate Emergency declared by the Council recognises that climate change is happening, and that action needs to be taken now, both to mitigate and to adapt.

The Surrey Heath Climate Change Action Plan has two key aims:

1. To work towards achieving the ambitious net-zero carbon emission target by 2030 as an organisation and contribute to making the Borough net zero by 2050 (with the aspiration for net zero by 2030).
2. To ensure that the Council as an organisation is resilient to the impacts of climate change and support the resilience of the Borough to the impacts of climate change.

¹ Appendix 1 provides links to the key sources of scientific evidence for anthropogenic climate change.

² V Masson-Delmotte et al.: Global Warming of 1.5°C. An IPCC Special Report on the Impacts of Global Warming of 1.5°C above Pre-industrial Levels and Related Global Greenhouse Emission Pathways, in the Context of Strengthening the Global Response to the Threat of Climate Change, Sustainable Development, and Efforts to Eradicate Poverty. Summary for Policymakers. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Oct. 2018. http://report.ipcc.ch/sr15/pdf/sr15_spm_final.pdf

To deliver the aims of the Action Plan, eight objectives have been identified:

1. Develop and deliver a credible pathway to being carbon neutral by 2030 in our estate and operations.
2. Deliver significant carbon reductions through developing and implementing an energy strategy to reduce energy consumption and increase local renewable energy production to transition to zero-carbon energy.
3. Work with partners to support initiatives and infrastructure to increase the uptake of walking, cycling and public transport, and low emission vehicles.
4. Deliver improvements to green infrastructure in the Borough, increasing the potential of land, biodiversity, current and future woodland in the Borough to sequester and store carbon.
5. Work with partners to help facilitate reduced waste and increase reuse and recycling in the Borough.
6. Use education and best practice sharing to drive significant behavioural changes within Surrey Heath to encourage the adoption of more sustainable lifestyle choices.
7. Facilitate and encourage partnership working to increase the resilience of the council's estate and operations to climate change and set the standard for all sectors of our local community to reduce their carbon emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change.
8. Support the development of the green economy, including sustainable farming and food production.

The Action Plan draws directly on the Surrey Climate Change Strategy, available on Surrey County Council's website³. The strategy supports the shared ambition of Surrey's 12 local authorities for Surrey's residents to live in clean, safe and green communities, where people and organisations embrace their environmental responsibilities and sets out the collective approach to do our part to tackle climate change.

The Action Plan is supported by the emission baseline set out in the Climate Change Study⁴ prepared by Aceom on behalf of the Council to support the development of the new Local Plan. Chapter 4 of the study sets out the baseline carbon emissions for Council as an organisation, as well as the Borough wide emissions (2017 base year). The study also makes wider recommendations on how the new Local Plan, currently being prepared by the Council, can address climate change. The new Local Plan will deliver climate change actions specific to planning policy, including ensuring that new developments contribute to

³ <https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/people-and-community/climate-change/what-are-we-doing/climate-change-strategy>

⁴ Available at <https://www.surreyheath.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Surrey%20Heath%20Local%20Plan%20-%20Climate%20Change%20Study.pdf>

climate change mitigation and adaptation. As such, Local Plan Actions have not been included in the Climate Change Action Plan at this stage.

It is widely accepted that delivering actions to address climate change will offer many co-benefits. These include:

- Health benefits – Due to cleaner air, warmer homes, more exercise and better mental health.
- Economic benefits – Less lost time due to traffic congestion, job creation in the green economy, operational cost savings via increased energy efficiency and waste reduction.
- Biodiversity benefits– green infrastructure and nature based solutions to climate change, such as tree planting, can have a wide range of additional benefits including supporting biodiversity, water, soil and air quality.

The challenges associated with addressing climate change are inherently complex and guidance and best practice is continually evolving as a result of changes in technology and our understanding of the issues. Therefore, the Action Plan has been prepared as a living document that will be updated regularly, adapting to changing circumstances. The Action Plan is replicated on the Council's website⁵, along with more information on how individuals can make a difference.

It should be noted that the ability to deliver the Action Plan will depend on the resources that are available. Indeed, not all actions in this Plan will be deliverable and the key actions will need to be prioritised to deliver carbon emission reductions efficiently and effectively.

Defining actions

The Action Plan is separated into the following six key areas, although it is noted that there is a degree of overlap:

- Energy
- Transport
- Environment
- Behavioural change
- Operations
- Monitoring

⁵ Link to be added when webpages go live.

To reflect the Council’s levels of influence across the Borough, the actions within each of the six key areas has been separated into two categories:

1. Council Operations: Actions that are directly within the scope of Surrey Heath Borough Council as an organisation (building and assets).
2. Wider Borough: Actions to support and work with all other relevant organisations and individuals to significantly reduce emissions Surrey Heath.

It is noted that there are differences between actions that are direct and actions that are indirect. As such, each action has also been labelled as either a direct action, such as the installation electric vehicle charging points into Council owned car parks, or an indirect action, such as undertaking initial scoping work to understand the feasibility of installing electric vehicle charging points into Council owned car parks.

Timescales

Specific actions may take months or years to deliver and therefore an indicative **start date** timescale is provided for each action in the six key areas, based on the definitions summarised in Table 1 below.

Timescale	Start date⁶
Ongoing	Action currently in progress
Short term	6 – 12 months
Medium term	Up to 2 years
Long term	Longer than two years

Table 1: summary of action start date timescales.

Priority actions

Due to the wide range of actions it is necessary to prioritise actions based on their effectiveness and ease to undertake. Actions have been categorised and colour coded as high, medium and low priority, in consultation with the Council’s Climate Change Working Group, based on the effectiveness of the action and the ease of undertaking the action.

⁶ Effective as of the 1st April 2021.

Resources

Actions in the plan cover a wide range of service areas and in some cases will require external funding to be delivered. As such, Actions have been categorised as follows:

- Within existing budgets - actions which can be delivered within existing budgets and resources at this stage.
- Will require additional funding - actions which will require external funding (either through capital investment or grant funding) or additional resources to be delivered.
- Likely to require additional funding - actions which will likely require external funding (either through capital investment or grant funding) or additional resources to be delivered.

Monitoring and actions

The Climate Change Working Group will continue to meet regularly to facilitate the delivery of actions in this Action Plan, including evaluating updates to the Action Plan. The Action Plan is a dynamic document that will evolve as the climate emergency landscape inevitably shifts over time. Therefore, the plan will be reviewed regularly to ensure that it stays current and remains fit-for-purpose.

A monitoring framework will be developed by the Council to measure the success of actions. A suite of relevant key performance indicators will also be developed to assist with performance management, and this will capture key milestones achieved during the last reporting period and any risks or issues for the actions in question. Each action has categorised based on the service area responsible for delivery.

The Action Plan sets out the Corporate Management Team lead for each key area, together with the relevant service area for each action. The service areas include Economic Development (ED), Media and Marketing (M&M), Environmental Health (EH), Planning Policy (PP), Human Resources (HR) and Development Management (DM).

Energy

The Surrey Heath Climate Change study identifies that approximately 15% of the Council's carbon emissions as an organisation originate from its energy usage. It also identifies that domestic and industrial energy usage accounts for over 60% of Borough wide emissions.

Council Operations Energy Actions						
ID	Action	Resourcing	Direct or indirect?	Timescale	Priority	CMT lead Finance - Service area:
E1	Develop and implement an Energy Strategy for the Council do deliver Energy actions, working with partners including the Surrey Energy Partnership ⁷ and Surrey Climate Commission.	Within existing budgets	Indirect	Short term	High	Climate change officer
E2	Become members of APSE Energy ⁸ .	Within existing budgets	Indirect	Complete	High	PP
E3	Change electricity supply to a 100% green energy tariff for Council owned and operated buildings. Consider options for offsetting gas usage in Council owned and operate buildings.	Likely to require additional funding	Direct	Short term	High	Property
E4	Continue and accelerate the rollout of LED lighting across the Council's estate, including parks and open spaces, to reduce energy use.	Will require additional funding	Direct	Ongoing	High	Property and Green Spaces
E5	Continue and accelerate improvements to the energy efficiency of Council owned and operated buildings. Work with tenants to	Will require additional funding	Direct	Ongoing	High	Property

⁷ Surrey Energy Partnership aims to support and facilitate the transition to clean energy

⁸ The Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) is a bespoke Local Authority Energy Collaboration is a partnership developed by our member authorities which looks to leverage and maximise the opportunities afforded to local authorities by working together on a national scale in the green energy agenda.

	identify and implement measures to improve the energy efficiency of the Council's leased assets.					
E6	Identify and bid for external grant funding for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects.	Within existing budgets	Indirect	Ongoing	High	Finance
E7	Examine the viability of installing renewable energy onto Council owned buildings and land, such as solar panels, and identify buildings and/or land that is suitable for renewable energy installations.	Likely to require additional funding	Indirect	Ongoing	High	Property
Wider Borough Energy Actions						
E8	Promote the introduction of renewable and low carbon energy across the Borough.	Within existing budgets	Indirect	Ongoing	High	PP
E9	Work with businesses and citizens across Surrey Heath by providing information and advice on low-cost technologies to reduce energy consumption.	Within existing budgets	Indirect	Short term	Medium	ED, M&M EH
E10	Examine the potential for zero/low carbon heat networks in the Borough.	Likely to require additional funding	Indirect	Medium term	Medium	Planning policy
E11	Work with our partners in local government and the energy supply sector to consider the establishment of district energy networks or similar systems.	Within existing budgets	Indirect	Long term	Medium	Climate Change Officer
E12	Investigate the potential to survey energy uses and consumption patterns across the Borough.	Likely to require additional funding	Indirect	Long term	Low	EH

Transport

The Surrey Heath Climate Change study identifies that approximately 34% of Borough wide emissions relate to transport, of which the vast majority relates to road transport. The study also identifies that approximately 10% of the Council's emission originate from employee commuting and fleet vehicles.

Council Operations - Transport Actions						
ID	Action	Resourcing	Direct or indirect?	Timescale	Priority	CMT lead Regulatory/Community - Service area:
T1	Continue to implement and develop agile working practices to reduce employee journeys and business miles. Encourage greener community and active travel for necessary journeys.	Within existing budgets	Direct	Ongoing	High	HR
T2	Undertake a survey of employee commuting and business travel patterns.	Within existing budgets	Indirect	Short term	Medium	HR
T3	Identify incentives that could be used to encourage sustainable modes of transport for staff, including investigating the potential for an employee car club.	Within existing budgets	Indirect	Medium term	Medium	HR
T4	Examine the potential to transition SHBC fleet vehicles to electric and/or other low/zero emission vehicles.	Likely to require additional funding	Indirect	Medium term	High	Community Services/ Green spaces
T5	Investigate the potential to increase electric vehicle charging points within Council car parks.	Likely to require additional funding	Indirect	Ongoing	High	Property & Parking
Wider Borough – Transport Actions						
T6	Support the rapid shift to electric vehicles by working in partnership with Surrey County Council and electric vehicle charging point providers to	Within existing budgets	Indirect	Short term	High	Climate Change officer

	investigate the potential to deliver EV charging points installation projects across the Borough.					
T7	Start initial work on exploring the opportunity for improving sustainable movement corridors in Surrey Heath, working with Surrey County Council.	Within existing budgets	Indirect	Short term	High	PP
T8	Work with partners to prioritise the delivery of strategic infrastructure to be located near key transport hubs, reducing the demand for travelling by private car and improving overall mobility and accessibility, in and between urban areas.	Within existing budgets	Direct	Ongoing	High	PP
T9	Work with SCC to significantly improve the Borough's cycle network, with the potential for the production of a cycle strategy specific to Surrey Heath.	Within existing budgets	Direct	Ongoing	High	PP
T10	Investigate the potential for an Urban Consolidation Centre in Camberley which would enable last mile deliveries to be made using electric freight vehicles (including e-bikes) rather than diesel-powered HGVs.	Likely to require additional funding	Indirect	Long term	Low	ED/ Climate Change officer
T11	Work with taxi companies and licence holders to consider low carbon vehicles.	Within existing budgets	Indirect	Medium term	Low	EH
T12	Investigate opportunities to develop a car sharing scheme for local residents.	Likely to require additional funding	Indirect	Medium term	Medium	Climate Change officer

Environment

The Surrey Heath Climate Change Study identifies that the total carbon sequestered by Council-owned green space in 2017 was estimated to be 195.3 tCO₂e, which equates to -195.3 tCO₂e removed from the atmosphere. The study also estimates that the total carbon sequestered within Surrey Heath by non-Council-owned green space in 2017 was 10,336 tCO₂e, which equates to -10,336 tCO₂e removed from the atmosphere.

Council Operations - Environment Actions						
ID	Action	Resourcing	Direct or indirect?	Timescale	Priority	CMT lead Business - Service area:
ET1	Continue to minimise the use of herbicides and pesticides where possible and appropriate.	Within existing budgets	Direct	Ongoing	High	Greenspaces
ET2	Continue to encourage reduced mowing where appropriate to allow wildflower planting and growth. Review machinery used to undertake works, including increasing the use of low carbon equipment.	Within existing budgets	Direct	Ongoing	High	Greenspaces
ET3	Review potential to undertake a tree density assessment of the Borough, giving a clear understanding of tree cover in the borough.	Likely to require additional funding	Indirect	Medium term	Medium	Greenspaces /trees
ET4	Examine the opportunities to improve green infrastructure networks in the Borough, including opportunities for Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANGs).	Within existing budgets	Indirect	Ongoing	High	Greenspaces /PP
ET5	Investigate the potential to 'rewild' the Borough, including open spaces in Council ownership	Likely to require additional funding	Indirect	Medium term	Medium	Greenspaces
ET6	Identify opportunities for community gardens/ allotments throughout the Borough.	Within existing budgets	Indirect	Medium term	Medium	Greenspaces

ET7	Examine how the carbon storage capacity of the Council's green assets can be maximised.	Likely to require additional funding	Indirect	Long term	Low	Greenspaces
ET8	Examine the potential to 'green' Council buildings, such as integrating green roofs and green walls into the fabric of buildings (this also relates to energy, providing better insulation etc).	Likely to require additional funding	Indirect	Medium term	Medium	Greenspaces /Property
ET9	Investigate and cost opportunities to reuse water, for example incorporating rainwater harvesting, as part of Council building projects.	Likely to require additional funding	Indirect	Medium term	Medium	Property
Wider Borough – Environment Actions						
ET10	Work with partners to facilitate a tree planting and green infrastructure strategy (specific to climate change), taking account of the Borough's biodiversity assets.	Within existing budgets	Indirect	Ongoing	High	PP
ET11	Work with partners to develop and deliver a framework for biodiversity net gain.	Within existing budgets	Indirect	Short term	High	PP
ET12	Continue to work with Joint Waste Solutions and partners to deliver reductions in carbon emissions associated with waste management in Surrey Heath, including vehicle fleet management and supply chain engagement.	Within existing budgets	Indirect	Ongoing	High	Joint Waste Solutions
ET13	Promote the 'greening' of buildings in the Borough, such as integrating green roofs and green walls into the fabric of buildings.	Within existing budgets	Indirect	Medium term	Medium	DM/ PP

Behaviour Change

Supporting and promoting changes to more sustainable practices and lifestyles can play a significant role in reducing emissions from all sources, both within the organisation and the Borough more widely.

Council Operations – Behaviour Change Actions						
ID	Action	Resourcing	Direct or indirect?	Timescale	Priority	CMT lead Transformation - Service area:
B1	Increase and diversify our communications and engagement on climate change, including directing resources towards community engagement and behavioural change.	Within existing budgets	Indirect	Ongoing	High	ED
B2	Facilitate local events promoting sustainable practices, making best use of the Council's assets (e.g. using vacant units in the SQ etc).	Likely to require additional funding	Indirect	Medium term	Medium	ED
B3	Investigate the potential for pop-up units in the Town Centre for local sustainable businesses, for example in vacant units.	Likely to require additional funding	Indirect	Short term	Medium	ED
B4	Require deliveries to be by electric vehicles where practicable.	Likely to require additional funding	Indirect	Medium term	Medium	ED
Wider Borough – Behaviour Actions						
B5	Work with the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEPs), e.g. to identify funding sources that residents can access.	Within existing budgets	Indirect	Short term	High	ED
B6	Consider the potential to support or advertise local reuse websites/apps to promote waste reduction in the Borough.	Within existing budgets	Indirect	Medium term	Low	EH
B7	Establish a programme of funding for charities or other local initiatives who redistribute surplus food to those in need.	Will require additional funding	Indirect	Long term	Low	Transformation

B8	Working in partnership with local businesses and organisations to deliver carbon reductions throughout the Borough.	Within existing budgets	Indirect	Medium term	Low	ED/ EH
B9	Work with local events to reduce emission and waste from events through producing a best practice guidance.	Within existing budgets	Indirect	Medium term	Low	EHOs
B10	Investigate the potential for a local award for businesses that demonstrate excellence in reducing carbon emissions or achieve net zero.	Likely to require additional funding	Indirect	Medium term	Low	ED/ EH
B11	Investigate potential opportunities to partner with universities for local research and innovation.	Within existing budgets	Indirect	Medium term	Medium	ED
B12	Review and improve how we involve residents in our existing decision-making processes.	Within existing budgets	Indirect	Short term	High	Climate Change Officer
B13	Review the implications of moving towards a low carbon economy on Surrey Heath's jobs and skills markets.	Will require additional funding	Indirect	Long term	Low	ED
B14	Working with partners, use local economic data to provide a clearer picture of ongoing reuse activities, to identify circular economy opportunities and assets.	Likely to require additional funding	Indirect	Long term	Medium	ED
B15	Work with partners to help facilitate reduced waste and increase reuse and recycling in the Borough.	Within existing budgets	Indirect	Ongoing	High	Joint Waste Solutions

Operational

The Surrey Heath Climate Change Study identified that the Council's procurement spend accounts for over 70% of the organisation's emissions.

Council Operations – Operational Actions						
ID	Action	Resourcing	Direct or indirect?	Timescale	Priority	CMT Lead Corporate - Executive Head/ lead officer:
O1	Make climate change a priority for decision making, both in terms of procurement processes and officer reports.	Within existing budgets	Indirect	Ongoing	High	Executive Head - Corporate
O2	Embed carbon reduction objectives into all decision-making processes in the Council, ensuring that the Council's supply chains are minimising carbon emissions.	Likely to require additional funding	Indirect	Ongoing	High	Executive Head - Corporate
O3	Educate, train and encourage internal procurers and commissioners to review their consumption of goods and services, reduce usage and adopt more environmentally friendly products and procedures	Will require additional funding	Indirect	Medium term	High	Head of Corporate & Head of Transformation
O4	Further reducing the use of single use plastics by working towards minimising single use plastics within the organisation (except for personal protective equipment). Review SHBC's own operations and practices in line with The UK Plastics Pact target – 100% recyclable, compostable or reusable plastic packaging.	Will require additional funding	Indirect	Medium term	High	Climate change officer
O5	Consider how internal budgets are used effectively to value and support work on carbon reductions and identify appropriate ways to	Within existing budgets	Indirect	Ongoing	High	Climate change officer

	support and incentivise internal carbon reduction/offsetting projects					
O6	Carry out departmental Climate Change risk assessments	Will require additional funding	Indirect	Short term	High	Climate change officer and champions
O7	Establish a network of staff Climate Change Champions across the Council.	Within existing budgets	Indirect	Ongoing	High	Climate change officer
O8	Raise staff/Councillor awareness through carbon literacy training	Will require additional funding	Indirect	Ongoing	High	Climate change officer
O9	Examine the potential to introduce a Community Municipal Investment (CMI) to support the investment of local green projects.	Will require additional funding	Indirect	Short term	High	Climate change officer
Wider Borough – Operational Actions						
O10	Evaluate the need to develop a Surrey Heath Resilience Plan and how this could be facilitated.	Likely to require additional funding	Indirect	Medium term	Medium	Climate change officer

Monitoring

Council Operations – Monitoring Actions						
ID	Action	Resourcing	Direct or indirect?	Timescale	Priority	CMT Lead Legal - lead officer:
M1	Update the Council's carbon emissions baseline as an organisation to 2019. As part of this, assess the potential for grant funding to help support the delivery of this action.	Likely to require additional funding	Indirect	Short term	High	Climate change officer
M2	Create a monitoring framework for the Action Plan to monitor progress.	Within existing budgets	Indirect	Ongoing	High	Climate change officer
M3	Collect consumption data from tenants to improve monitoring data, working with tenants to gather carbon footprint or energy consumption data.	Within existing budgets	Indirect	Medium term	High	Climate change officer

Appendix 1 – links to key sources of scientific evidence for anthropogenic climate change

- The Government's website 'Climate Change Explained' (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/climate-change-explained#evidence-and-analysis>) provides useful background information and evidence on Climate Change, including a PDF version of the webpage with references.
- The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is the United Nations body for assessing the science related to climate change. The IPCC website (<https://www.ipcc.ch/>) includes numerous reports setting out the evidence of climate change and the impacts it will have on human life and biodiversity.
- The Committee on Climate Change (CCC) advises the government on emissions targets and reports to Parliament on progress made in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The CCC is an independent, statutory body established under the Climate Change Act 2008. The CCC website (<https://www.theccc.org.uk/publications/>) includes a number of publications on climate change, including the national 'sixth carbon budget'.