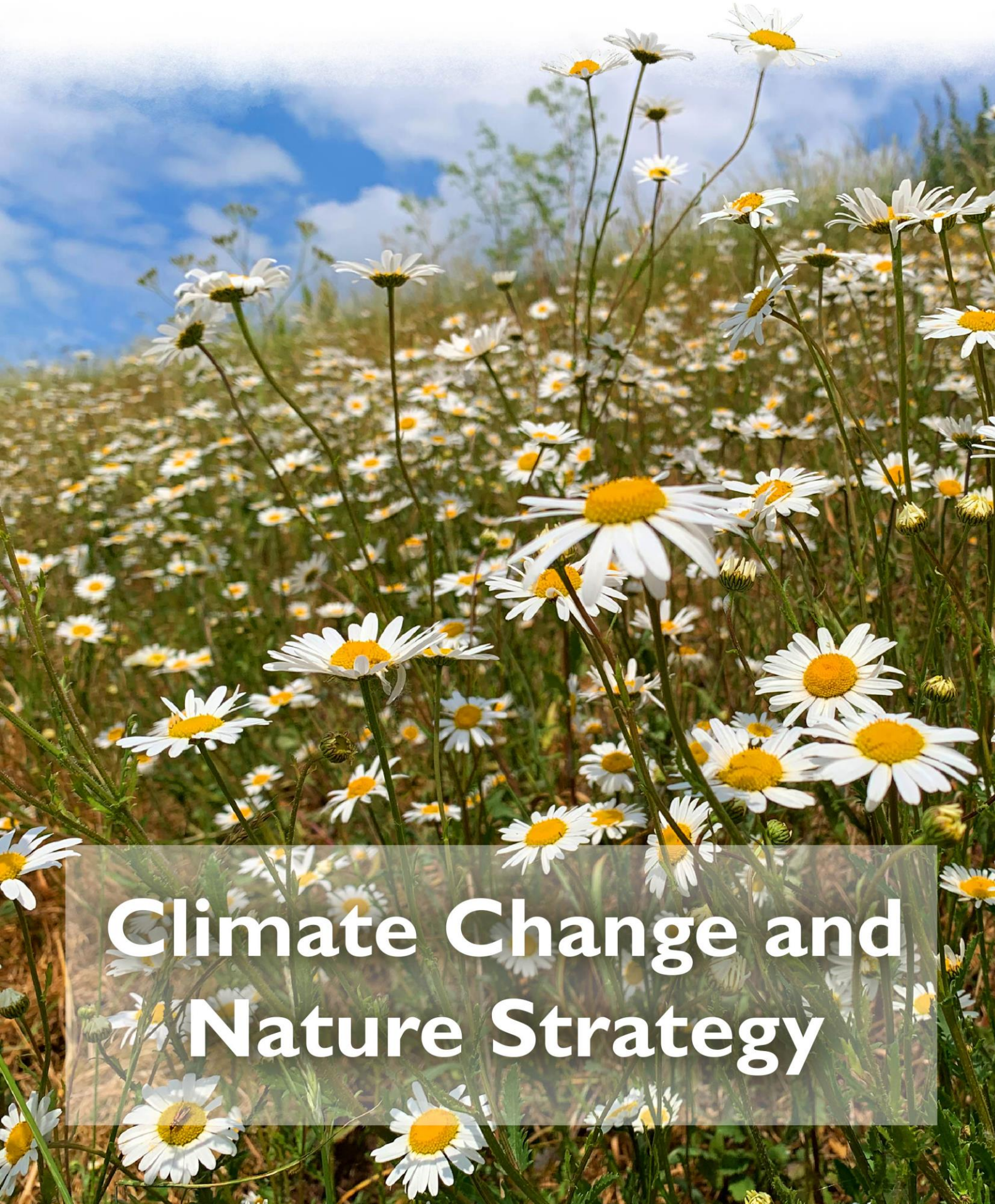
East Staffordshire Borough Council

Oct 2022



Climate Change and Nature Strategy

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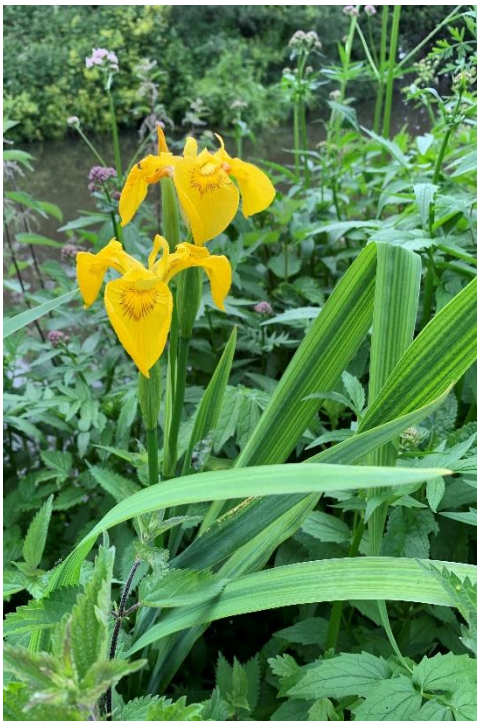
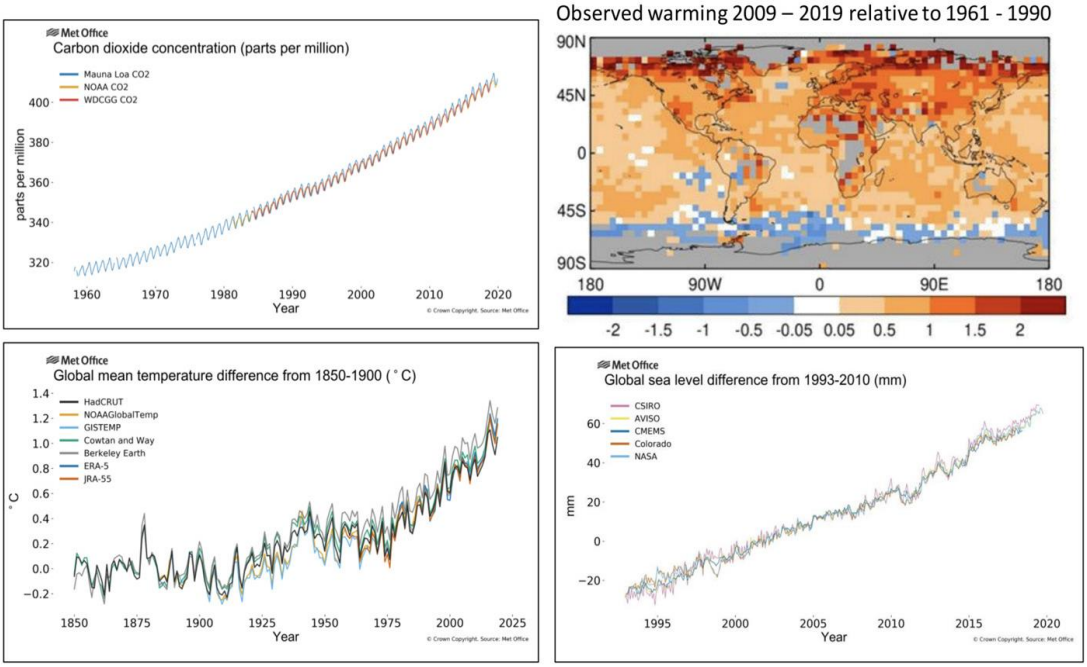


Yellow Iris, Trent & Mersey Canal

Introduction

Global climate is changing



There is clear evidence that climate change is happening**.** The diagrams above show the increase in atmospheric carbon dioxide levels over the period 1960 to 2020[1] (known as the Keeling Curve), the increase in global temperatures over the period 1850 to 2020, global sea level from 1993 to 2020 and warming over the period 2009 to 2019[2].

Projections for the UK climate (UKCP18[3]) predict that temperatures and sea levels will continue to rise. For temperature "all areas of the UK are projected to be warmer" by the end of the 21st century. Summers as hot as 2018 could be expected every other year by the middle of the century. During the summer of 2022, several temperature records were broken. For sea level, projections show the largest increases towards the south of the UK, with London "very likely" to see between 0.53m and 1.15m of sea level rise by 2100 under a high-emissions scenario.

The UK Climate Change Committee's third Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA3[4]) identifies 61 climate risks and 8 priority risks:

1. Habitat damage & species loss
2. Reduced soil health from flooding & drought

[1] climate.metoffice.cloud/dashboard.html
[2] www.metoffice.gov.uk/hadobs/
[3] Met Office Hadley Centre (2018): UKCP18 Probabilistic Climate Projections. Centre for Environmental Data Analysis.

[4] Betts, R.A. and Brown, K.(2021) Introduction. In: The Third UK Climate Change Risk Assessment Technical Report [Betts, R.A.,Haward, A.B. and Pearson, K.V.(eds.)]. Prepared for the Climate Change Committee, London

3. Damage to natural carbon stores (eg. peat)
4. Agricultural productivity (eg. crops, livestock)
5. Supply chain risk (food, goods, services)
6. Power system failure
7. Human health (eg. building overheating)
8. Multiple risks from impacts overseas (eg. forced displacement)

Even if greenhouse gas emissions stopped immediately the gases already in the atmosphere would mean some climate change would continue to happen.

In 2015, the UK government and 195 other governments from around the world signed the Paris Agreement[5]. An agreement to limit average global temperature increase to no more than 1.5 °C.

In October 2018, the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reported on the state of global warming[6]. It warned of the rapid and far reaching consequences of warming above 1.5 °C and that limiting global warming to 1.5°C would require rapid, far-reaching and unprecedented changes in all aspects of society.

Since 2018, a global 'Climate Emergency' movement has arisen with national and local governments across the world declaring climate emergencies. In 2019, the UK Government amended the Climate Change Act 2008 to introduce a legally binding 'Net Zero' emissions target for the UK by 2050.

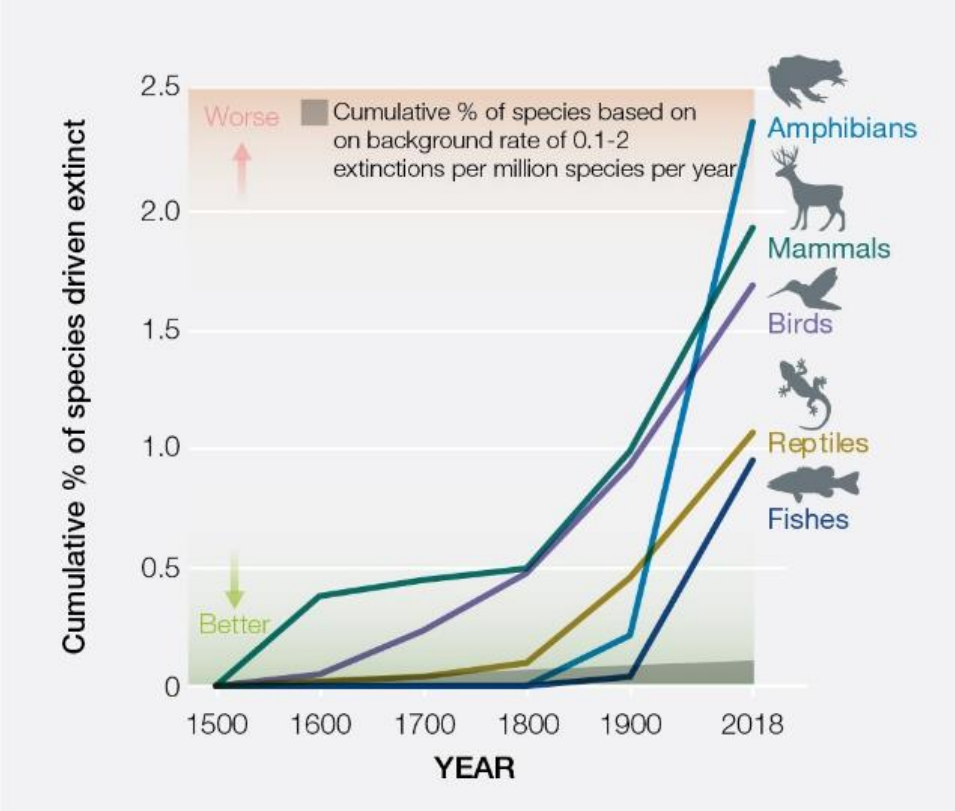
Nature is in crisis

The natural world provides essential resources and ecosystem services such as food, clean water, clean air, medicines, sources of energy, raw materials, carbon storage and sequestration, protection from extreme weather events, recreational and health benefits. The ability of the natural world to provide these services should be protected but is being compromised by environmental damage and a loss of biodiversity.

The Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services was published in 2019 by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. It concluded that nature and its vital contribution to people, is deteriorating worldwide and that the drivers of this change are accelerating[7]. A substantial proportion of the assessed species are threatened with extinction and overall trends are deteriorating, with extinction rates increasing sharply in the past century. The diagram below taken from the report shows extinctions since 1500 for vertebrate groups[8].

[5] www.un.org/en/climatechange/paris-agreement
[6] www.ipcc.ch/sr15/
[7] ipbes.net/global-assessment
[8] Fishes includes bony fishes, cartilaginous fishes and lampreys. Values for Reptiles and Fishes are likely to be underestimates as not all species in these groups have been assessed for the IUCN Red List. The range of background rates of extinction (grey line) is based on 0.1-2 extinctions per million species per year, following Ceballos et al. (2015) and references therein. Source: Analysis of data in the IUCN Red List in September 2018.

The State of Nature report (2019)[9] stated that the UK's biodiversity had been massively depleted by centuries of habitat loss, management changes, development and persecution. Since the 1970 baseline used in the report the net loss of nature in the UK has continued. 15% of UK species are classified as threatened with extinction and 2% are already extinct. The UK is one of the most nature-depleted countries on the planet[10] and climate change will accelerate this rate of decline.



But it is not too late to act!

If action is taken to radically reduce greenhouse gas emissions now, there's a good chance we can limit average global temperature rises to 2˚C above pre-industrial levels. This doesn't mean there will be no more changes in the climate as warming is already happening, but we could limit, adapt to and manage these changes. We can also reverse the decline in biodiversity. It is vital for the planet and for future generations.

[9] jncc.gov.uk/news/uk-state-of-nature-2019-report/

[10] www.rspb.org.uk/globalassets/downloads/about-us/48398rspb-biodivesity-intactness-index-summary-report-v4.pdf

Our ‘Climate Emergency’ Declaration

East Staffordshire Borough Council declared a **‘Climate Emergency’ in August 2020** and now has a target:

> ***“to make the Council’s activities carbon neutral by 2040 and aspires to make the Borough carbon neutral by 2050”***

In March 2022, the Council carried a **motion to support nature’s recovery** across the Borough and committed to several additional actions to protect and enhance nature.

Following the declaration of the Climate Emergency in 2020, the Council quickly published an interim **Climate Change Action Plan** containing 57 actions[11].

Climate change and nature recovery are now **considered in all Council decisions, strategies, policies and plans**.

[11] www.eaststaffsbc.gov.uk/environmental-health/climate-change

Climate Change and Nature Strategy aims

The Council's Corporate Priorities

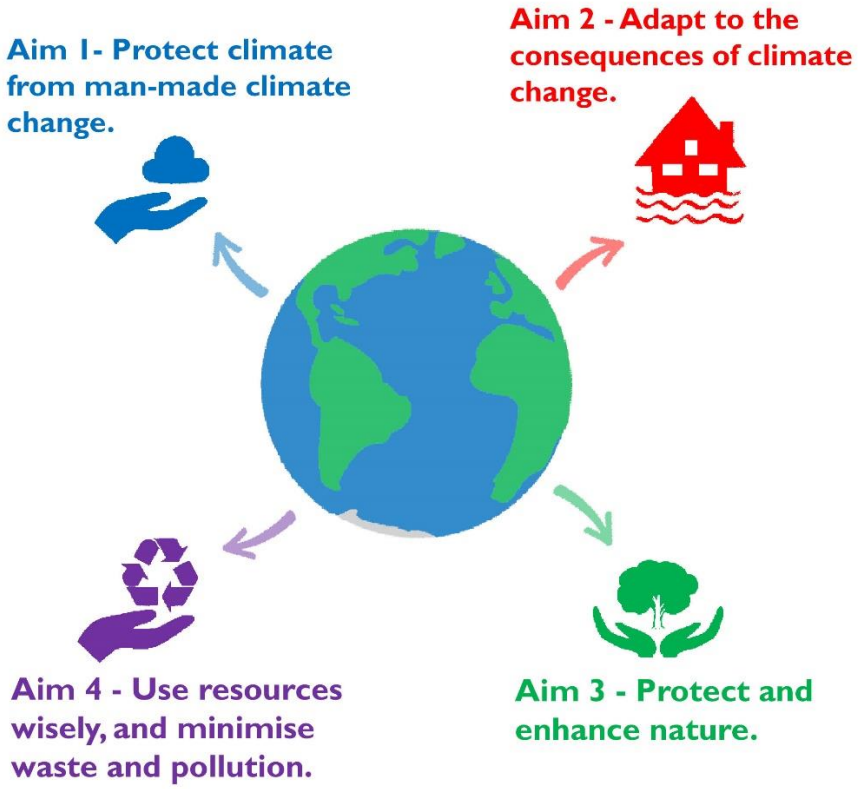
The **Council's corporate priorities** are[12]:

- Community Regeneration
- Environment and Health & Wellbeing
- Value for Money

The work on climate change and nature recovery will contribute directly to these priorities. There are economic development opportunities associated with the transition to a zero carbon economy. Efficient use of energy and other resources will increase value for money. Community involvement in nature's recovery can provide health and wellbeing benefits. Electric vehicles will result in improved air quality for communities living in areas with high air pollution. Adapting to climate change will reduce the health impacts of flooding and overheating.

Climate Change and Nature Strategy aims

The Strategy has four aims:



[12] www.eaststaffsbc.gov.uk/performance-management/corporate-plan

A fair transition to a carbon neutral East Staffordshire

During work to address the climate emergency it will be necessary to identify and **support those individuals and communities in the Borough who are most vulnerable to the consequences of climate change**. These may include for example communities at risk of increased flooding or elderly people more at risk from overheating. It will also be important to ensure progress towards a carbon neutral Borough doesn't increase inequalities. Decarbonised heating systems and electric vehicles could initially cost more. Residents without off-street parking will require access to electric vehicle charging points. Disruption to food supply could increase prices. Some parts of the workforce may need retraining to provide job security as we transition to a zero carbon economy.

Under-represented groups will also need to be included in the process, particularly young people who will have to deal with the future consequences of climate change created by the actions of today.

The role of the Council

The Council is in a key position to take action on climate change and nature recovery and has influence through its **role as a regulator, service provider and community leader**. It also has **full control over the way it manages its own estate and operations**.

Despite this, the Council will need to **work in partnership**. The Council's influence over the majority of emissions in the Borough is limited. The Council will need to work together with the people and businesses of the Borough, local authority partners and other key organisations.

The importance of action from the UK government

The work of the Council is set within the context of Government policy, most significantly the Net Zero Strategy[13] published in October 2021. The Strategy collects all previous climate change commitments and then builds on them further. It provides a pathway to a Net Zero 2050 future for the country. The actions included in the Net Zero Strategy are fundamental to East Staffordshire becoming a carbon neutral borough. Government is able to provide the legislation, policy and funding necessary to ensure large-scale change happens and necessary actions such as the mass introduction of electric vehicles and air source heat pumps for home heating or the construction of new off-shore wind turbines take place. The Council will need to **lobby Government** to ensure that the necessary support is provided to allow the Council to fulfil its aspiration.

[13] www.gov.uk/government/publications/net-zero-strategy

Aim 1 - Protect climate from man-made climate change

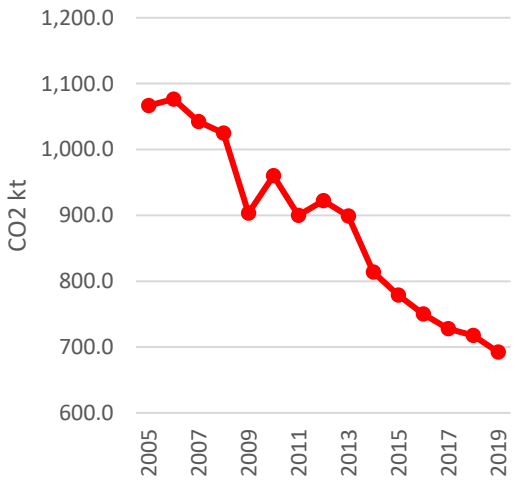
The Borough must help protect the climate from man-made climate change by reducing emissions of greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide resulting from the burning of fossil fuels such as gas and oil. Much of this will be down to national actions but the Council will still have a role to play.

Carbon dioxide emissions in East Staffordshire

In 2019, data provided by BEIS[14] showed that the total **CO_2 emissions for the Borough** were 692.5 kilotonnes. This represents a welcome **35.1% reduction** from 1066.4 kilotonnes in 2005 (see Figure 1).

A more detailed analysis of the greenhouse gas emissions for 2019 by sector has been provided using the SCATTER tool[15] (Figure 2). When ranked according to emissions residential buildings, road transport and industrial buildings represent approximately 60% in equal proportions. Commercial buildings represent another 9% and institutional buildings another 3.9%. This means that **buildings and road transport represent over 70% of all emissions**. Livestock represent another 11.2% and aviation 6.

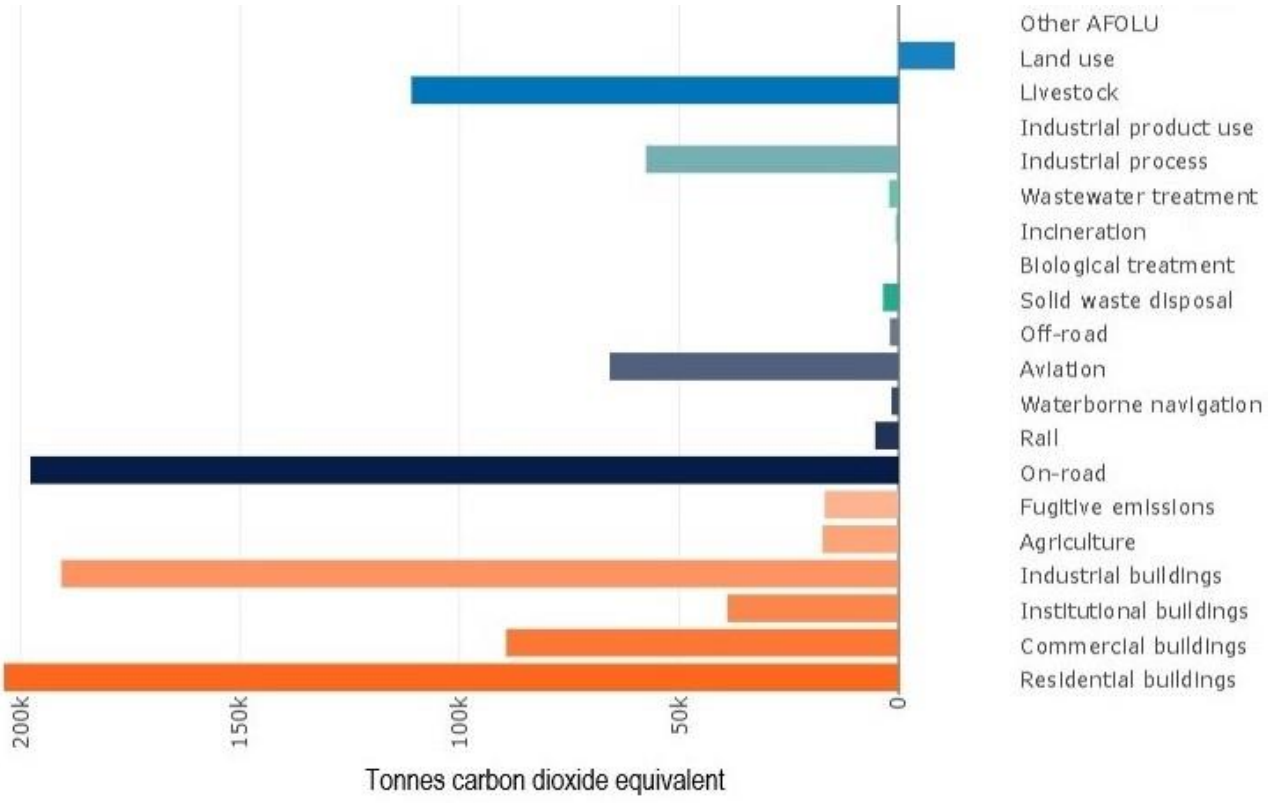
Figure 1 - East Staffordshire CO_2 Emissions 2005-2019



[14] www.gov.uk/government/collections/uk-local-authority-and-regional-greenhouse-gas-emissions-national-statistics

[15] scattercities.com

Figure 2 – East Staffordshire CO_2 Emissions for 2019 by Key Sector



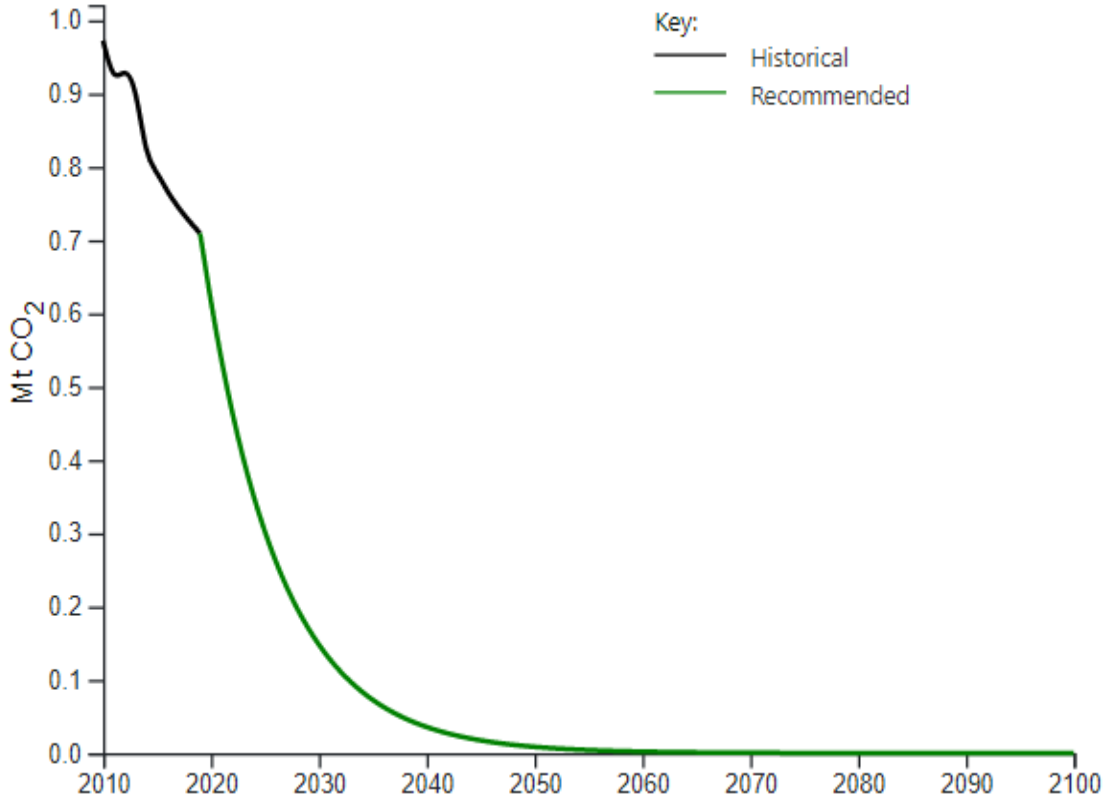
Carbon dioxide emissions pathway for East Staffordshire

The Tyndall Centre[16] has produced a carbon dioxide emissions pathway from 2010 to 2100 for East Staffordshire (Figure 3). It is based on a recommended science-based carbon budget. The budget requires East Staffordshire to emit no more than **4.6 million tonnes of CO_2**. Based on emissions[17] in 2017, East Staffordshire would use up the entire budget by 2027. So despite the welcome reduction in emissions shown in Figure 1 the **rate of reduction needs to improve considerably**.

[16] carbonbudget.manchester.ac.uk/reports/

[17] Based on BEIS LA statistics 2017 CO_2 emissions East Staffordshire (excluding aviation, shipping, process CO_2 emissions from cement production and those from LULUCF)

Figure 3 – Energy related CO_2 only emissions pathway (2010 – 2100) for East Staffordshire premised on the recommended carbon budget provided by the Tyndall Centre



The Council's own carbon dioxide emissions

In 2009/10, the **Council's own estate and operations** produced a total of 3547 tonnes of CO_2e. In 2021/22, that amount had reduced to 2122 tonnes of CO_2e (provisional figure). This represents a welcome **40.2% reduction** (Figure 4).

The Council's emissions for 2021/22 are broken down by source in Figure 5. The Council's vehicle fleet accounted for 38% of the emissions and energy use in corporate buildings (gas and electric) approximately 15%. The Council's outsourced services accounted for the majority of emissions, another 46%. The outsourced services included in the figure are the leisure facilities at Meadowside, Uttoxeter and Shobnall and the fuel used by the landscape contractor's (I D Verde) vehicle fleet. The leisure facilities alone accounted for 41% of the total emissions, so are clearly the largest emitter.

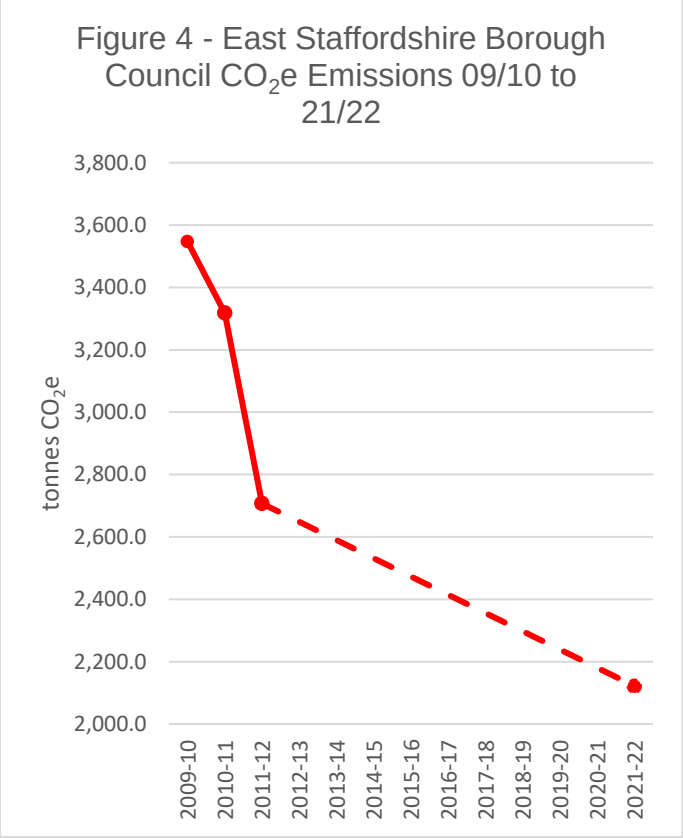
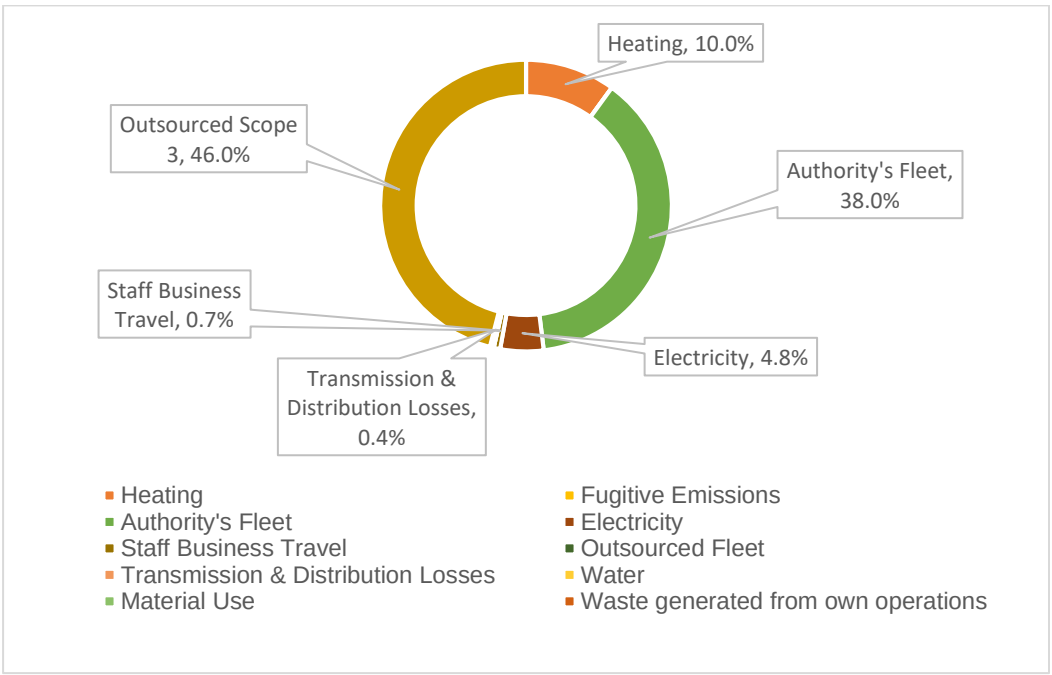


Figure 5 - East Staffordshire Borough Council CO_2e Emissions for 2021/22 by Source



What has been done so far to reduce CO_2 emissions

Prior to the publication of the interim Climate Change Action Plan, the Council had moved to a smaller building footprint so reducing energy consumption and increased the amount of home working by staff so reducing commuting emissions. Since then many of the actions in the interim Action Plan have started or been completed.

Across the Borough these include:

- A Staffordshire wide **Electric Vehicle Strategy** has been led by the County Council and should be published early in 2023. It will be used to determine key locations for EV charging points to be installed and will inform the EV Strategy for East Staffordshire that will be completed in March 2023. Three dual floor mounted **EV charging points** are currently being procured and will be installed in Coopers Square Car Park in Burton by March 2023. LED lighting has also been installed on Council car parks.

EV charging point, Uttoxeter

- Through the Burton Towns Fund programme[18], the Borough Council is working with the County Council to bring forward a number of **improvements to the cycle network in Burton** included in the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan[19]. The Towns Fund investment for this project is expected to commence in 22/23 and complete by 23/24.

- **Public transport improvements** such as new bus services have been secured through planning permission at numerous sites across the Borough including Burton Road in Tutbury, land south of Branston, south of Forest Road, Upper Outwoods Farm, Red House Farm, Branston Locks, Burton Gateway (employment site) and west of Uttoxeter.

- The Council works with the community-based organisation **Beat the Cold** to provide an **energy efficiency advice service** to fuel poor and vulnerable households. The Service provides advice to approximately x114 households per quarter. The advice cover general energy issues, identifying additional savings through warm homes discount, heat grants, water tariff support

[18] www.eaststaffsbc.gov.uk/burton-town-regeneration-programme/regeneration/towns-fund

[19] www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Transport/transportplanning/Walking-and-cycling.aspx

and referrals for debt advice and benefits checks.

- The Council is also a partner in the **Staffordshire Warmer Homes Scheme**[20]. Targeted promotion of the Scheme in areas of housing with poor energy efficiency standards has resulted in x24 measures being installed in properties including external wall and loft insulation, Solar PV and air source heat pumps. The next phase has secured an additional £5.9 million of funding for residents across Staffordshire.

- The Local Plan[21] contains several policies to help mitigate climate change and also ensure development adapts to the consequences of climate change. These policies include Green Infrastructure (SP23), Climate Change, Water Body Management & Flooding (SP27), Renewable and Low Carbon Energy (SP28), Accessibility & Sustainable Transport (SP35) and Designing in Sustainable Construction (DP2). A **Climate Change and Sustainable Development Supplementary Planning Document**[22]**,** which was adopted in August 2022, has been written that takes each policy topic and provides guidance on how the policy requirements can be met.

For the Council's own estate and operations:

- The Council recently purchased a new fleet of waste vehicles comprising a combination of Refuse Collection Vehicles, sweepers and caged tippers. The vehicles are Euro 6 compliant meaning reduced air pollution and better fuel efficiency. The Council also purchased five **electric vans** for operational use. Charging points have been installed at the Millers Lane Depot and Stapenhill Cemetery staff car parks. There is a target to replace the entire waste collection fleet with low emission vehicles by 2030.

[20] www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Warmer-Homes/Staffordshire-Warmer-Homes.aspx
[21] www.eaststaffsbc.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/local-plan-2012-2031
[22] www.eaststaffsbc.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/supplementary-planning-documents

Council fleet electric van

- The Horticultural Team also organise **tree planting** on many of the Council's green open spaces. A total of 2500 trees were planted between November 2021 and March 2022 and only native species were planted. The majority were planted by volunteers and many potential volunteers contacted the Council directly to ask if they could be involved as they wanted to help improve the environment and protect against climate change. These trees will take in carbon dioxide from the atmosphere as they grow. They will also support the other Strategy aims by helping nature to recover, reducing air pollution and helping the Borough adapt to climate change by reducing flood risk and providing shade to reduce overheating.


Tree planting, Burton

What we will do next to continue reducing CO_2 emissions in East Staffs:

:

- Work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by further developing the **Climate Change section of the Climate Change and Nature Action Plan** with themes covering:

  i. Energy generation
  ii. Residential buildings
  iii. Industry, commerce and institutions
  iv. Transport and travel
  v. Carbon sequestration
  vi. Council's own estate and operations

  Measures to be investigated include photo voltaic panel installation, energy conservation work in buildings, decarbonised heat, environmental management support for local businesses, walking/cycling/public transport infrastructure improvements and EV charging infrastructure.

- Update the Council's **Tree Policy** to guide the increased levels of tree planting necessary to respond to the climate emergency. This will include work to establish **the carbon sequestration potential** of Council-owned and other land in the Borough. The tree planting taking place at the moment is already contributing as the young trees grow and take carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

- Plant more trees in dedicated **Carbon Capture Areas** to help nature recovery and help adaptation to climate change.

- Plan the **detailed actions necessary for the Council's own estate and operations to become carbon neutral by 2040**. They will cover energy supply, Council buildings and assets such as car parks, the vehicle fleet, staff travel and out-sourced services such as the leisure facilities.

- Investigate measures to **offset** any unavoidable residual emissions which may occur when all of the actions in the Climate Change and Nature Action Plan have been implemented. Offset measures include further carbon sequestration (eg. tree planting) but also additional projects who reduce emissions such as energy conservation or energy generation projects. These projects may take place outside of the Borough and involve paying other organisations who specifically undertake projects to provide offsetting services.

Aim 2 - Adapt to the consequences of climate change

The greenhouse gas emissions already in the atmosphere are causing climate change to happen. As more fossil fuels are burnt there will be more climate change and the consequences will become more serious. The Borough must prepare.

Flooding Burton Washlands, Feb 2020

Predicted future climate in East Staffordshire and the risks

The latest climate projections for the West Midlands predict **warmer wetter winters and hotter drier summers with an increase in the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events such as storms, excessive rainfall and heat waves[23].**

Local risks include **increased flooding, storm damage,**

[23] Met Office, UKCP18

overheating, drought, ecological change and biodiversity loss, reduced air and water quality, health and socioeconomic impacts, disruption to local service provision and more emergency situations[24]. There are also risks associated with impacts outside of the local area such as **supply chain disruption (food, goods, services) and multiple risks from impacts overseas such as forced displacement and civil conflict.**

What we have done so far to adapt to climate change

The most obvious immediate risk from climate change in the Borough is the **increased risk of flooding**. The River Trent and particularly Burton have a history of flooding and there have been regular flood events over the centuries. This was obvious in February 2020 when Storm Dennis brought extensive flooding and threatened to overwhelm flood defences in our locality.

The County Council is the lead local flood authority for Staffordshire and responsible for producing the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy[25]. The Environment Agency, Severn Trent Water and private land owners also have significant flooding responsibilities. The role of the Borough Council is more limited but it does work in partnerships with other organisations when necessary.

Council projects and services related to flooding include:

- The **Washlands Enhancement Project** is currently being delivered by the Council following an upgrade to 9km of flood defences in Burton by the Environment Agency.

The upgrade to flood defences protecting more than 7,000 homes and businesses cost £28 million. Construction started in June 2019 and then following the 2020 flooding, further work was undertaken to address flooding concerns along the A38. This final element of the scheme was completed in June 2022.

The Washlands is an extensive area of land along the river through to the centre of Burton upon Trent. It is a functional flood plain. To accompany the upgrade of the flood defences the Washlands Enhancement Project was established to balance the regular flooding with public access and

[24] www.sustainabilitywestmidlands.org.uk/resources/west-midlands-climate-change-adaptation-plan-2021-2026/

[25] www.staffordshire.gov.uk/environment/Flood-Risk-Management/Local-Flood-Risk-Management-Strategy.aspx

recreation, whilst also promoting nature conservation and a more environmentally sensitive approach to green space management. The project will contribute to the regeneration of the town by turning an underutilised open space into a regional tourism destination. East Staffordshire Borough Council, in partnership with the Environment Agency and other public and private sector partners launched a new shared landscape vision for the Washlands in 2018. The project is due to complete in 2023.

- Planning policy set out in the **Local Plan[26]** also contains policies on flooding. Policy SP27 is specifically about climate change, water body management and flooding. The first preference is to avoid developments in locations at risk of flooding. The policy also expects all new developments to incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage (SuDs) which is a more natural way of providing drainage that reduces flood risk, reduces pollution, benefits water quality and enhances nature and landscape. SuDs features include permeable paving, swales, retention ponds and green roofs. The Climate Change and Sustainable Development Supplementary Planning Document[27], adopted in August 2022, offers further guidance on water management.

- Preparation for emergency events or situations such as a major flooding incident. **Emergency Planning** responsibilities are shared with Staffordshire County Council, the emergency services, health authorities and the Environment Agency under the Staffordshire Resilience Form. The Council is classed as a Category 1 emergency responder and the Council's responsibilities include preparing emergency plans, advising the public, responding with some direct support and leading the recovery.

  The Council has played a key role in running the **Property Flood Resilience Recovery Support Scheme[28],** set up by DEFRA in the wake of Storm Dennis (February 2020). The Scheme provided grants of up to £5,000 to homes which had been flooded. The grant paid for work to make properties more resilient to future flooding and less likely to incur damage**.** In

[26] www.eaststaffsbc.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/local-plan-2012-2031
[27] www.eaststaffsbc.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/supplementary-planning-documents
[28] www.eaststaffsbc.gov.uk/emergency-planning/flooding/flooding-recovery-support

total, the Council paid out c£371k of grants to 86 residential and business properties.

- **Tree planting** already described under Aim 1 will also reduce flood risk because trees intercept water. In addition, they provide shade which reduces overheating.

The work the Council is doing to **protect and enhance nature** and **reduce air pollution** as described under Aims 3 and 4 later in the Strategy will also help prepare for climate change.

What we will do next to adapt to climate change in East Staffordshire:

- Build on the work already described to reduce flood risk and develop a dedicated climate change adaptation section for the **Climate Change and Nature Action Plan**. This will address all of the climate-related risks identified above.
- Consider the role of **urban design in reducing overheating and the urban heat island effect**.
- Investigate **water conservation** and **drought resilience**.
- Further **prepare Council services and assets** for climate change.

Ensuring the Borough can adapt to the consequences, climate change will involve numerous organisations and individuals. The Council will also seek to **work in partnership** where necessary to ensure adaptation actions are taken.

Aim 3 - Protect & enhance nature

Reversing the decline of the natural world is important to protect biodiversity and the services nature provides to people.

The services nature provides for us locally include absorbing carbon dioxide and storing it as carbon, helping adaption to climate change (eg. preventing overheating in urban areas or reducing flood risk), reducing pollution, pollinating food plants and improving the health and well-being of individuals.

The decline of the natural world is also contributing to climate change because greenhouse gases are released when forests are cleared, peatlands dry out and other habitats degrade.

In March 2022, the Council carried a **formal motion to further support the recovery of nature across Staffordshire** and this will drive the Council's work to help nature recover. The actions necessary to deliver the requirements of the motion have been incorporated into the Climate Change and Nature Action Plan.

Woodland at Branston Water Park

The decline of nature in East Staffordshire

The **State of Staffordshire's Nature report** (2016)[29] concluded that, based on expert knowledge and the best available data many species in Staffordshire are declining. This includes rarer species such as the water vole, hazel dormouse and a number of invertebrate species, such as the small heath butterfly and white-clawed crayfish. Just 32% of Staffordshire's geological and nature conservation SSSIs are in a Favourable condition and only 45% of Local Wildlife Sites are under appropriate conservation management. Only 5% of Staffordshire's waterbodies are classified as being in Good Overall Status with 46% classed as either in Poor or Bad Overall Status.

Bullfinch

What we have done so far to help nature

Many of the actions in the Climate Change and Nature Action Plan have already started.

Across the Borough:

- The **Planning Service** already requires biodiversity to be considered where possible as part of the planning process. **Local Plan[30]** policy SP29 requires applicants to consider Biodiversity and Geodiversity. Other policies such as SP30 Green Infrastructure, SP27 Climate Change, Water Body Management & Flooding and DP2 Designing in Sustainable Construction also consider biodiversity.
- Along with other Staffordshire authorities the Council has since January 2022 held a **district license for the Great Crested Newt**. This allows a more strategic approach to the conservation of the rare and legally protected amphibian by offering land-scape scale conservation and long-term certainty over habitat. The scheme is gathering interest amongst developers with some expected to join the scheme over the next year.

Great Crested Newt (female)

[29] Staffordshire Wildlife Trust. (2016). The State of Staffordshire's Nature

[30] www.eaststaffsbc.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/local-plan-2012-2031

For the Council-owned green space:

- The **Community & Open Spaces** service manage Council-owned green space. This includes formal parks, such as Stapenhill Gardens and Bramshall Park, less intensively managed green space and nature reserves. The service already provide **public access to nature**, **maintain sites for biodiversity, manage invasive non-native species, avoid the use of peat and chemicals where possible, adopt relaxed mowing regimes and prioritise native and pollinator plant species.** They also **plant trees** as described under Aim 1 above**.**

Great tit

- In 2022, Burton represented the midlands region in the Small City category of **RHS Britain in Bloom** and was awarded a Silver Gilt for its entry. There was also a special award for the work the Council leads with young people, as it claimed a certificate of achievement for Children and Young People participation. Amongst a number of other exciting projects were tree planting projects to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee and the **planting of wildflower seeds throughout the town to encourage bees and other pollinating insects**.

Bee friendly planting

- In 2022, Stapenhill Gardens and Bramshall Park also achieved the prestigious **Green Flag award** which requires biodiversity to be considered in park management.

Burton in Bloom, Stapenhill Gardens

What we will do next to help nature recover in East Staffordshire:

:

- Strengthen Planning requirements in line with the Environment Act (2021) which will require **mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain for new developments** from 2023. **Guidance for planning applicants on Biodiversity Net Gain**[1] has been prepared and in anticipation of the new requirement the Planning Service are already requesting Net Gain where possible and raising awareness amongst the development industry.

- **Map Nature Recovery Networks** in the Borough as part of a contribution to the new **county-wide Nature Recovery Strategy** being led by the County Council. The Planning Service has already had discussions on possible schemes where off-site Biodiversity Net Gain could take place, also fulfilling the Nature Recovery Strategy.

- Further develop and expand where possible the **nature-friendly land management practices** described above on Council-owned green space.

- Update the Council's **Tree Policy** as described under Aim 1 earlier in the Strategy to guide the increased levels of tree planting necessary to respond to climate change. Additional tree planting will then take place through the establishment of formal **Carbon Capture Areas**.

- Establish **Biodiversity Enhancement Areas**, smaller green areas designed to enhance biodiversity through relaxed mowing regimes, in the spring of 2023.

- Revise the Council's **procurement** requirements to ensure new contracts will be required to **avoid the use of peat**. The Council's procurement activity also has an impact outside of the Borough because there are many products available such as timber and food (eg. coffee, chocolate) which can impact forests. By using **certification schemes** (eg. Forest Stewardship Council, Fairtrade) it is possible to ensure products are more likely to be from sources/forests which are legal and sustainably managed.

Aim 4 - Use resources wisely, and minimise waste & pollution

Unsustainable resource use produces waste and creates pollution. Resources need to be used more efficiently as part of the transition to a 'circular economy' so eliminating waste and pollution wherever possible. The Council has a role to play in this transition through the way it spends money in the Borough, helps the economy develop and through the services it provides such as waste collection, street cleaning and pollution control.

The resource use, waste and pollution challenge

The Borough generates a considerable amount of waste. The **Council has a legal responsibility to collect domestic waste from households, including residual waste and dry recycling**. The former is sent to an energy recovery facility and the latter to a materials recovery facility. The Council also collects garden waste and sends it to a treatment facility for conversion into compost. During 2021/22, the Council collected 27,466 tonnes of residual waste, 10,422 tonnes of dry recycling and 10,133 tonnes of garden waste.

The Council is legally required to **review and assess air quality in the Borough**[31] and determine whether or not nationally set air quality objectives air likely to be met. Traffic in the Borough is the main cause of air pollution. Where the objectives are not likely to be met the Council must declare an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and prepare an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) setting out the measures needed to resolve the situation. East Staffordshire currently has two AQMAs declared for the pollutant nitrogen dioxide (NO_2). Both AQMAs are located in Burton upon Trent, with the larger area focusing on the Derby Turn roundabout and the surrounding road network. The smaller AQMA focuses upon the St Peters roundabout in Stapenhill. This type of traffic related AQMA is common across local authorities in England and Wales. Both AQAPs are predominantly based on actions contained in Staffordshire County Council's **Integrated Transport Strategy**.

In 2022/23, the Council **budget for supplies and services** was £3.285 million. The potential environmental

[31] www.eaststaffsbc.gov.uk/environmental-health/pollution/air-quality

impact of this spend is significant. It also provides an opportunity to promote good environmental practice and create environmental benefits in the local economy. **The Council also generates waste** from its own buildings and activities as a result of that expenditure. This includes general waste (eg. paper, card, plastic), catering waste, electronic waste and construction waste.

What we have done so far to ensure resources are used wisely and waste and pollution are minimised

The Council is already taking action to use resources more efficiently, reduce waste and reduce air pollution:

- The Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent[32] was adopted in 2007 and subsequently refreshed in 2017. The preparation of a new Strategy has been delayed due to uncertainty surrounding the Government's Resources and Waste Strategy and the Environment Act (2021). In particular, further advice is awaited on the Consistency Agenda, Extended Producer Responsibility and a Deposit Return Scheme, all of which could impact on the Council's services. The strategy is the basis for municipal waste management provision across the County. Recently however, the Council implemented a **change to its dry recycling collection service** with the introduction of a new, **larger blue bag to recycle both paper and cardboard.** A media campaign took place during spring 2022 to fully explain the changes, including a video for the website to highlight the importance of recycling correctly.

Recycling collection

- Work to **improve air quality** predominantly relies on the Staffordshire County Council **Integrated Transport Strategy** because traffic is the main cause of air pollution in the Borough. However, the Council has taken other actions to improve air quality in the Borough. This includes the work already described through the Planning Service, the **improvements to public transport and cycling infrastructure** and the **three electric vehicle charging**

[32] www.staffordshire.gov.uk/Waste-and-recycling/wastestrategy/

points at Coopers Square Car Park in Burton.

The County Council **Air Aware project** has been engaging with schools and businesses in the Borough. The Council helped to set-up and support air quality monitoring at Horninglow School in Burton.

- The Council **Procurement Policy** requires staff to consider climate change when making procurement decisions. **Environmental requirements** are also included in the tender exercises for some large contracts such as the enhancement works on the Washlands in Burton upon Trent.

- In July 2021, the Council carried a formal motion to **phase out Single Use Plastics (SUP)** wherever possible from its buildings and activities. Single-use plastics include items such as cutlery, plates, vending machine cups, food packaging, condiment sachets and plastic bottles, most of which are not recycled. A SUP action plan has been developed and is being implemented with an initial focus on outward facing facilities such as the Brewhouse and Civic Function suite in Burton. Work has also taken place with Everyone Active in the leisure facilities. A video showing examples of action from across the Council has been produced. Development of the action plan is ongoing to reflect new government policy and new SUP alternatives as they are made available through suppliers.

What we will do next to ensure resources are used wisely and waste and pollution are minimised in East Staffordshire:

- Take part in the development of the **new Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Staffordshire** when Government policy is clarified. In addition, the government has indicated **separate weekly food waste collections** for all households would be required from 2025. The Staffordshire Waste Partnership has already started working on potential solutions for the collection and treatment of this waste stream. Funding has been secured from WRAP for a study to explore how the Councils across the County can work together on this to deliver efficiencies.

- Continue with **educational activities to increase recycling** in the Borough and promote waste minimisation.

- Review the local **Air Quality Strategy and Air Quality Management Plan** and continue to work with the County Council to reduce the air quality impact of transport by promoting cycling, walking and public transport through the County Council's **Integrated Transport Strategy**.

- Contribute to implementing the county-wide **Electric Vehicle Strategy** will be used to determine the key locations for the installation of EV charging points across the County.

Engaging stakeholders

Engaging stakeholders is an important part of the process of becoming a carbon neutral Borough. A **Climate Change Communications and Engagement Plan** has been prepared which details how the Council will inform and raise awareness, consult, work in partnership and support.

Informing & raising awareness is mainly through the Council's website, press releases, the Council's e-newsletter, social media and events. Internally, the staff newsletter has been used and **Carbon Literacy training for staff** is planned.

Consultation so far has been through the East Staffordshire **Parish Council Forum**. Going forward a **citizens group and citizens survey** are being considered. Internally, **staff Climate Change Groups** are being implemented to help identify actions.

As explained in the introduction, the majority of the emissions in the Borough and impacts on nature are outside of the Council's control. The Council will need to increasingly work in **partnership**. Existing partnerships are already in place such as the county-wide **Staffordshire Sustainability Board** which brings together the local authorities.

The Council will also provide direct **support** for some climate and nature projects in the Borough such as the Kingfisher Project[33].

The Kingfisher Project

[33] www.thekingfisherproject.co.uk/

Main sources of funding

The actions within the Climate Change and Nature Action Plan still need to be costed and in some cases the funding identified and secured. Going forward, each action will be costed on a case by case basis and affordability will be considered as part of the annual review of the Medium Term Financial Strategy or funded using existing budgets, in accordance with financial regulations.

In 2022/23, the Council's **revenue budget** was approximately £12.5 million. Many of the actions in the Action Plan will be funded from the revenue budget, including necessary staffing.

The Council also has a **capital programme budget**. The capital budget for 2022/23 was approximately £1.8 million, before carried forward sums. This included £114k for electric vehicle charging infrastructure.

The Borough was also successful in obtaining regeneration funding. **The Towns Fund programme for Burton upon Trent** will for example receive an indicative sum of £23.8m. This will fund some work on climate change and nature, for example, the Council is working with the County Council to bring forward a number of improvements to the cycle network in Burton and a landmark visitor centre on the Washlands in partnership with the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust.

Other potential sources of funding to be investigated include **government and other grants** (eg. building decarbonisation, tree planting, electric vehicle charging infrastructure, flood adaptation) and **borrowing** or **other green finance** (eg. community share offers to fund Photo Voltaic panel installation).

Some actions, for example energy conservation, may **generate long-term savings**. Other actions, such as Electric Vehicle charging, may **generate income**.

For community projects the Council administers the **Councillors Community fund** which has the potential to be refocussed on climate change and nature projects.

Other important plans & strategies

The Council's **Corporate Plan**[34] sets out the way in which the Council will deliver, develop and improve its services over the next 12 months in line with strategic objectives and the three corporate priorities described in the introduction. Actions necessary to

[34] www.eaststaffsbc.gov.uk/performance-management/corporate-plan

deliver this Strategy will be included in the Corporate Plan as necessary.

The **Local Plan**[35] is a key document and contains planning policies to help shape the future of the Borough and help deliver the aims of this Strategy. The existing policies will be revised next time the Local Plan is reviewed. This will be some time after November 2022. The new Local Plan will be a vital opportunity to introduce the new policies needed for the Borough to become carbon neutral by 2050.

The **Burton upon Trent Town Investment Plan**[36] and the **Uttoxeter Masterplan**[37] are key urban regeneration documents for the Borough. The Council will work in partnership with the Burton Town Deal Board to bring transformational regeneration to the Town through the £23.8m Town Fund. The regeneration of Uttoxeter will be supported through the Masterplan. The Council will be investigating how the Maltings Shopping Precinct could be developed and has also commenced work on the Bus and Parking Strategy for Uttoxeter in partnership with the County Council and Amey.

Delivery, monitoring & reporting

The development and implementation of this Strategy and the Climate Change and Nature Action Plan will be managed by the **Corporate Management Team** and elected members through **Cabinet and Scrutiny Committee**. A revised Action Plan will be published in 2023 to reflect the aims of this Strategy.

A **cross-party member group** is being established to provide additional oversight and guidance.

Progress with implementation and any associated recommendations will be **reported annually at the end of each financial year to Cabinet and reviewed by Scrutiny Committee**.

Following the annual review of progress, key messages will be **communicated** through the Council's website, via press releases, the Council's e-newsletter and social media. Feedback will be sought from **stakeholders across the Borough** including suggestions for additional actions that the Council can take.

[35] www.eaststaffsbc.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/local-plan-2012-2031
[36] www.eaststaffsbc.gov.uk/burton-town-regeneration-programme/regeneration/towns-fund
[37] www.eaststaffsbc.gov.uk/burton-town-regeneration-programme/regeneration/uttoxeter-masterplan

Glossary

Adaptation – Avoiding or reducing the negative impacts of climate change (eg. increased flooding) and taking advantage of the benefits (eg. different food crops).

Biodiversity – The variety of plants and animals that can be found on earth.

Carbon budget - The total amount of carbon dioxide that can be emitted over a period of time to meet a target for limiting global warming.

Carbon dioxide equivalent, CO_2e – A unit that considers different greenhouse gases (eg. methane, nitrous oxide) and presents the impact as the equivalent amount of carbon dioxide that would create the same amount of warming.

Carbon neutral - Having no net release of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere by balancing emissions with removal. Some emissions can remain if they are offset (see below).

Carbon sequestration – Removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere through a natural or technological process. Examples include tree planting and Carbon Capture and Storage.

Circular economy – An economy that continually reuses resources to eliminate waste and pollution.

CO_2 – Carbon dioxide

Decarbonisation – Reducing and ultimately eliminating the greenhouse gases produced by a process or activity. It is commonly associated with the production of electricity and heat.

Ecosystem services – Services provided by nature for the benefit of people such as regulating climate and storing carbon, reducing flood risk, reducing urban over-heating, improving air and water quality, pollinating food plants, providing resources such as timber, health benefits and recreational opportunities.

Greenhouse gas (GHG) – A gas that traps the sun’s heat when released in to the atmosphere. The most widely known greenhouse gas is carbon dioxide but others include methane, nitrous oxide, and the fluorinated gases found in fridges, air conditioning and aerosols.

Mitigation – Reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the atmosphere to stop climate change getting worse.

Net Zero - Having no net release of greenhouse gas into the atmosphere by balancing emissions with removal. This differs from carbon neutral because it covers all greenhouse gases and not just carbon dioxide. Some emissions can remain if they are offset (see below).

Offset or Offsetting – When attempting to become carbon neutral or Net Zero there may be some emissions that are considered unavoidable. The unavoidable emissions can be offset with further sequestration measures (eg. tree planting) or additional projects that reduce emissions such as energy conservation or energy generation projects. These may take place outside of the local area and involve paying other organisations who specifically undertake projects to provide offsetting services.

Contact & further information

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