

Climate Change Steering Group

Date and Time - **Wednesday 30 March 2022 – 2:30pm**

Venue - **Remote Meeting**

Councillors appointed to the Steering Group:

Councillors K.M. Field (Chair), S.J. Coleman, P.J. Gray, L.M. Langlands, P.N. Osborne and S.M. Prochak, MBE.

AGENDA

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

2. **DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

To receive any disclosure by Members of personal and disclosable pecuniary interests in matters on the agenda, the nature of any interest and whether the Member regards the personal interest as prejudicial under the terms of the Code of Conduct. Members are reminded of the need to repeat their declaration immediately prior to the commencement of the item in question.

3. **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING - 24 FEBRUARY 2022 - MATTERS ARISING** (Pages 1 - 6)

4. **REVISED TERMS OF REFERENCE** (Pages 7 - 8)

5. **PLACE BASED CARBON CALCULATOR** (Pages 9 - 12)

6. **PROJECTS UPDATE**

- TO FOLLOW

7. **APPOINTMENT OF PROJECTS OFFICER (ENVIRONMENT)**

8. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

9. **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING - TBC**

(Please bring your diaries with you)

Malcolm Johnston
Chief Executive

Agenda Despatch Date: 24 March 2022

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**Rother District Council's aspiring to deliver
an Efficient, Flexible and Effective Council; Sustainable Economic Prosperity;
Stronger, Safer Communities; and a Quality Physical Environment.**

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Rother District Council

CLIMATE CHANGE STEERING GROUP

24 February 2022



Minutes of the Climate Change Steering Group meeting held remotely on Thursday 24 February 2022 at 2:30pm.

Members of the Steering Group Present: Councillors K.M. Field (Chair), S.J. Coleman, P.J. Gray, L.M. Langlands, P.N. Osborne and S.M. Prochak (MBE).

Other Members present: Councillors P.C. Courtel, K.M. Harmer, G.F. Stevens, H.L. Timpe and J. Vine-Hall (in part).

Advisory Officers Present: Deputy Chief Executive, Director – Place and Climate Change and Democratic Services Officer.

Also present: 2 members of the public via the live webcast.

CCSG21/09. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

(1)

There were no apologies for absence.

CCSG21/10. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

(2)

There were no declarations of interest made.

CCSG21/11. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING – 25 NOVEMBER 2020 AND 13 JANUARY 2022 – MATTERS ARISING

(3)

There were no matters arising.

CCSG21/12. PROJECTS FOR CONSIDERATION

(4)

At the last meeting, the Climate Change Steering Group (CCSG) suggested several projects that they would like to see instigated and progressed. The Director – Place and Climate Change had categorised and incorporated all projects into three distinct sections namely Rother District Council (RDC) Deliverable Corporate; RDC Deliverable District; and Third Party Deliverable (RDC Partnership) as detailed in the report. It also included projects incorporated in the Council's Corporate Programme and those that could be subject to applying for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding. Some projects had and could be actioned, others were subject to policy matters.

During the discussion the following was noted:

- Clarity was sought on progress of the comments and recommendations proposed by the CCSG at the meeting held on 25 November 2020, namely formulation of a Grounds Maintenance Contract Task and Finish Group and waste contract. It was clarified that the Joint Waste Partnership had commissioned a study to investigate the establishment of a carbon-neutral fleet. Results of the study would be available from March 2022 and reported to the Joint Waste and Recycling Committee.
- Clarity was also sought on progress of the staff digital suggestion box, climate change target page on the website, tree wardens, the Clean Growth UK led by Brighton University, staff survey and 'green tip of the week' on 'MyAlerts'. Progress was unknown at the meeting and would be sought.
- RDC Deliverable (Corporate) – the CCSG requested the timescales and progress of each project and which ones had already been instigated or were scheduled to commence etc. The Director – Place and Climate Change advised that delivery of the projects would be overseen by the Project Officer (Environment). This position was currently out for recruitment and several applications had been received. Interviews were scheduled to be held and it was anticipated that the new officer would be in post by the end of March / beginning of April. Once appointed, the Project Officer would be responsible for prioritising the projects and instigating those that could be actioned immediately, as well as those that would require additional resources and / or funding. £100,000 per annum had been assigned (this included the officer's salary). Project delivery timescales were unknown at this stage. The Council's primary focus was to deliver both a mixture of balanced short and long-term projects, subject to resources and funding, which benefitted all residents and reduced the carbon footprint across the district. A programme of delivery would be formalised and agreed by Cabinet for the CCSG to oversee and monitor; regular progress would be reported.
- A carbon neutral measurement tool was being used to identify and calculate / map-out the district's carbon footprint; details would be presented at the next meeting.
- All available powers to influence, educate and support residents and businesses (change lifestyle choices) to reduce their carbon footprint would be required.
- Members requested that the pollinator and pesticide policy project be instigated as soon as possible.
- Important that partnership and local community working was successful and continued to be developed to deliver projects efficiently and effectively to ensure the Council's aims were realised for the district, e.g. wildflower verges with East Sussex County Council etc.
- Important to identify when to seek support / advice that required specific expertise, e.g. Sussex Wildlife Trust, Bexhill Environment Group, Energise East Sussex etc. The Director – Place and Climate Change clarified that advice was currently being sought from the Sussex Wildlife Trust regarding work and support they could provide for the Council. Once received this would be

incorporated with the Council's Environment Strategy; the CCSG would be kept abreast of developments. Members were reminded that the Environment Strategy was a living document and was continuously evolving and being reviewed / updated.

- Important that the Council focused on progressing a robust Environment Strategy with clear deliverable and realistic actions.
- An impactful way to reduce carbon usage was through the Council's Housing Policy and development of the Local Plan.
- Provide 'pool' electric vehicles for employees to carry out their Council duties. Officers with car allowances be encouraged to use that money to purchase electric vehicles. Viability / practicality research would be required.
- Record measurement of all projects and communicate results to residents via the Council's website and all social media platforms.
- Deliver low carbon retrofitting of Council owned stock, e.g. energy efficient heat pumps, solar panels etc.
- Progress was sought on the tree planting project for Bexhill. Information was not available and Members would be advised of progress after the meeting.
- CIL funding would only apply to infrastructure projects that met CIL strategic criteria (set by the Government). Match-funding opportunities might be available with relevant partners e.g. ESCC.

Progress on instigated projects would be reported at the next meeting. Members were encouraged to consider what the Council's priorities were and to forward project ideas to the Director – Place and Climate Change. Work would commence on project feasibility against benchmarking / baselining and an update would be reported at the next meeting.

RESOLVED: That:

- 1) progress on instigated projects, carbon neutral measurement tool and project feasibility against benchmarking / baselining be reported at the next meeting; and
- 2) Members forward project ideas to the Director – Place and Climate Change.

CCSG21/13. **COMMUNICATIONS / ENGAGEMENT PLAN**

(5)

The Deputy Chief Executive delivered a presentation on the Council's proposed approach to communications and engagement on climate change regarding its aspiration to be carbon neutral by 2030. The presentation focused on the following key areas:

- the Council's community leadership role;
- engagement and sharing ideas with the community and relevant organisations / partners e.g. local strategic partnership, parish and town councils etc;
- improved communication e.g. using social media platforms;
- promotion and progression of projects;

- develop a 'green' branding e.g. posters for displaying in community centres, village halls etc.;
- measuring impact; service alignment and effective data collation;
- behavioural insights e.g. "make a pledge";
- inspiring motivation and involvement; and
- development of a clear and robust Climate Action Communication Plan to showcase service area project updates.

Following the presentation, Members had the opportunity to ask questions and during the discussion, the following was noted:

- creation of a 'green stamp' business accreditation / rating system identifying which organisations were reducing their carbon footprint; scored on carbon ratings and incentives provided e.g. trees for planting etc.;
- it was clarified that there were several on-line measuring tools to measure your carbon footprint;
- check on progress of 'pledge makers' and set-up a reward / discount / certificate scheme once achieved;
- develop ways of generating incentives and competition;
- engagement with young children in local schools to promote carbon reduction ideas;
- develop 'green section' on the website promoting all Council community projects incorporating useful reference links and downloadable resource materials for schools etc.;
- promote 'good news' stories e.g. purchase and development of woodland area in St Marks Ward by Little Common Wood Association; these stories resonant with the public;
- Members were advised of an environmental project of hedgerow planting at the Combe Valley Countryside Park; important to highlight and share this information;
- continuous shared learning with relevant partners; and
- important to source, use and share community expertise.

Members were thanked for their contributions and it was clarified that a Climate Action Communication Plan would be devised in consultation with the joint East Sussex Communications Team and presented at a future meeting.

RESOLVED: That a Climate Action Communication Plan be devised in consultation with the joint East Sussex Communications Team and presented at a future meeting.

CCSG21/14. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

(6)

There were no any other business items proposed.

CCSG21/15. **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

(7)

The date of the next meeting was arranged for Wednesday 30 March 2022 at 2:30pm to be held remotely on MS Teams.

CHAIR

The meeting closed at 16:03pm

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Rother District Council

**CLIMATE CHANGE STEERING GROUP
TERMS OF REFERENCE****1. Purpose**

On 16 September 2019 Full Council passed a motion declaring a 'Climate Emergency' and made a carbon neutrality commitment for Rother District with a target date of 2030. The Climate Change Steering Group has been established by Cabinet to develop, plan and initiate the steps that the Council will need to take to meet this highly ambitious target.

2. Objectives

- To produce an action plan or strategy that is designed to ensure that the operations of the Council are carbon neutral by 2030.
- To agree and monitor a set of Key Performance Indicators to ensure that the Council meets its carbon neutral objective by 2030.
- To identify relevant existing powers that the Council may exercise, and any additional powers to be requested from Central Government, that could be used to encourage carbon neutrality throughout the district.
- To identify which policies, strategies and working practices of the Council might require amendment, and to outline a timescale for reviewing these.
- Identify and consult with existing external bodies and partnerships; and make recommendations on new partnerships that should be established to help achieve the 2030 target.
- Identify citizens across Rother who are climate champions for their communities and to use them to inform on ideas to implement locally.
- To investigate all possible sources of external and internal funding, including the Council's Community Infrastructure Levy's Climate Emergency Bonus Fund and match funding to support this commitment.
- Investigate what Rother District Council can do to minimise the emission of gases other than CO₂ which adversely affect climate change.
- **Once established, to monitor the Communication Strategy in connection with the contract for the enforcement of environmental offences.**
- To present a pre-consultation draft action plan to Council for consideration no later than 24 February 2020, including recommendations for next steps and resource requirements.

3. Scope

For the purposes of this initiative, the operations of the Council are considered to be any action taken by the Council either institutionally or through its Members, staff, volunteers, and contractors in the discharge of its duties.

In developing the action plan the Steering Group will need to consider the existing carbon footprint of the Council, existing and emerging carbon reducing technologies, opportunities for change in institutional and personal behaviour, the impact of Council property assets, and the likely financial cost and resource requirements for meeting the 2030 target.

The Steering Group will also consider wider issues related to climate change over which the Council might wield influence, but do not directly contribute to our own carbon footprint.

4. Membership and Structure

The Climate Change Steering Group will be a cross party group of seven Members. The Group will be chaired by the Lead Member for Environment and Transport and will consist of one other Executive Member and five non-Executive Members, reflecting a broad political balance.

Councillors S.J. Coleman, K.M. Field, P.J. Gray, L.M. Langlands, P.N. Osborne and S.M. Prochak.

5. Meetings

The Steering Group will meet regularly, the frequency, time and venue to be decided by the Members in liaison with officers. Meetings will be open to the general public and Members may also wish to organise public engagement events as part of the action plan development.

Place Based Carbon Calculator

CREDS¹ have recently launched their Place-Based Carbon Calculator, a free tool that maps the carbon footprint of every neighbourhood in England. The tool has been developed to;

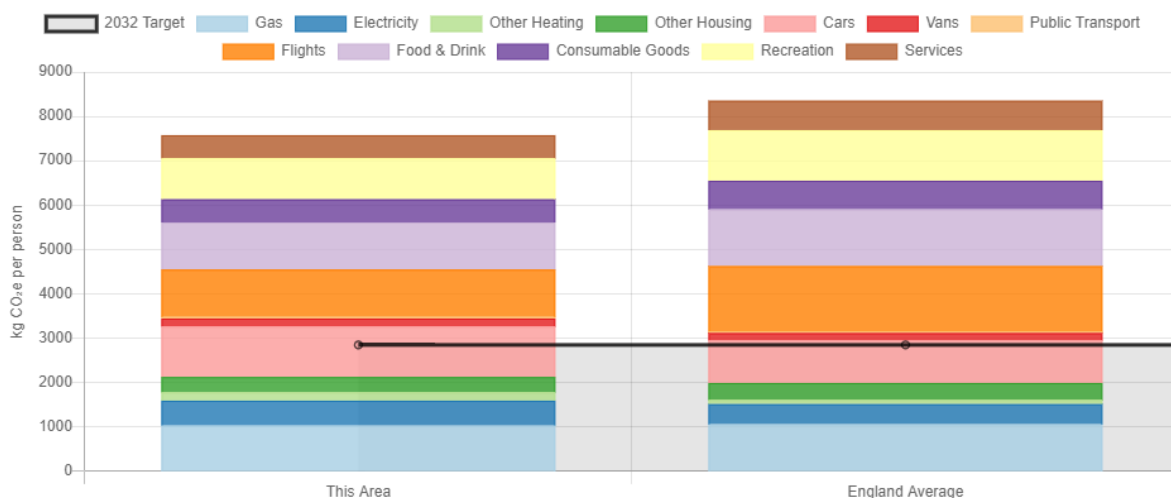
1. Calculate the carbon footprint of each neighbourhood in England
2. Add in as much context and explanatory data as possible, so we know why footprints vary and what we can do about it
3. Present all this data in an accessible and easy to use format.

To calculate an exact carbon footprint requires a lot of detailed information on individual behaviours and consumption patterns. Unfortunately, this kind of data does not exist for everybody in England. Instead, the tool draws on the best available data and research for each part of our carbon footprint. Where there is detailed local data it is used, such as gas and electricity consumption. But for other types of consumption, such as food, the calculator relies on surveys and modelling to fill in the gaps. Together these methods give an overview of the total carbon footprint for an LSOA. This is then divided by the number of people living in the LSOA to get an average carbon footprint per person. It is this metric, as it is easy to understand, that is used to compare across different areas.

The tool is free and available for anyone to view at - <https://www.carbon.place/>

Rother' Carbon Footprint (according to CREDS tool)

CREDS can derive a 'footprint' by local authority area. For Rother;



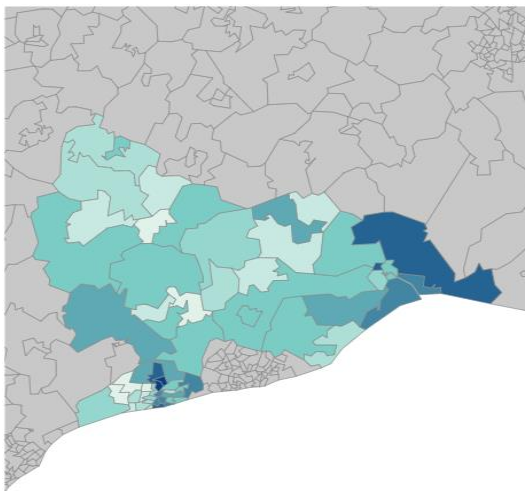
The above shows that on average a resident of Rother contributes less to carbon dioxide production than the England average.

Some of the key areas where Rother performs better than the UK average relate to lifestyle choices such as the food we eat, flights taken, recreation activity, consumable goods, and services purchased.

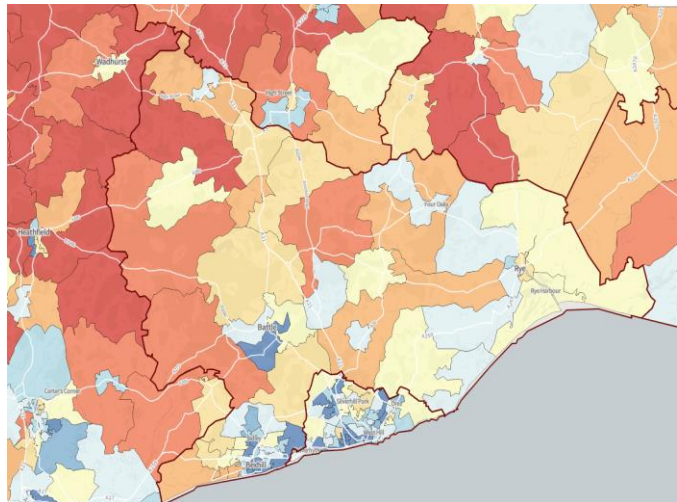
¹ The Centre for Research into Energy Demand Solutions (CREDS) is a research centre established in 2018 with a vision to make the UK a leader in understanding the changes in the energy demand needed for the transition to a secure and affordable, net-zero society. It is a partnership between many of the UK's leading academic institutions (including the University of Sussex) and other relevant interested bodies (such as BEIS, the Energy Savings Trust, Ofgem).



These are all areas where choice and wealth are influential factors and play a bigger role in how much carbon is emitted per person. This is more evident when you look at the CO2/person indices in comparison to the multiple indices of deprivation. There is a general correlation between the wealthier areas (as shown in lighter shades of blue and green MID Map) and the greater CO2/person areas (as shown in darker reds and orange)



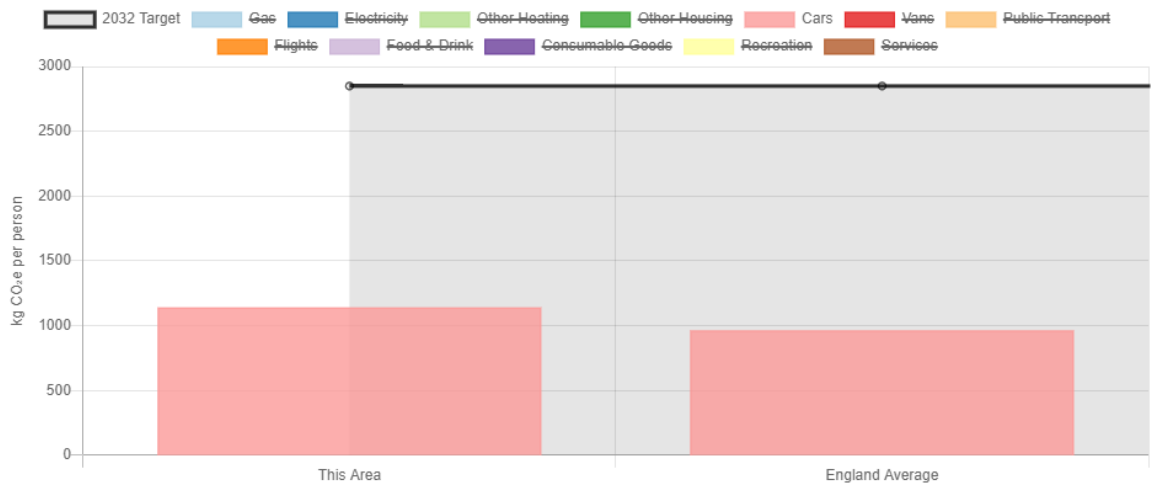
Multiple Indices of Deprivation (MID)



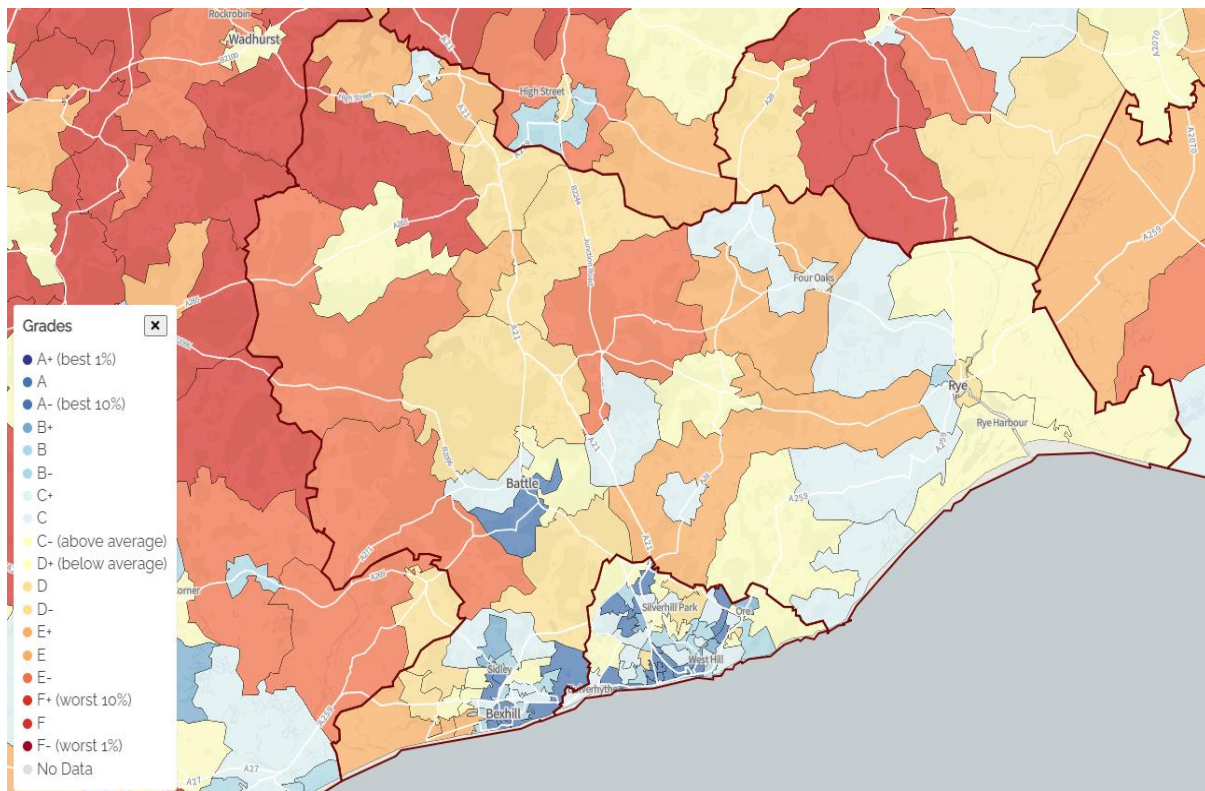
Carbon/Person in LSOA

The fact Rother has a population that is comparatively deprived and suffers particularly from a low wage economy assists in our performance on a national level as our residents are limited in their lifestyles choices.

Looking at cars the difference between Rother and the England average is also marked with the carbon output being almost 20% higher than the national average. This is likely a reflection of the particularly rural nature of our district with limited public transport. This is relatively consistent with similar rural areas of equivalent wealth.



What the Place-Based Carbon Calculator can do is drill down to a very local level (Lower Super Output Area) which will be of use to Parish Councils, local Councillors and the local community in identifying priorities for tackling carbon emissions on a local community level.



Looking at just two areas of the district in Sidley and Ticehurst and Etchingham which are at the opposite ends of the scale with regards to indices of deprivation we can see that their carbon footprints are very different. It should be noted that the footprint is only relative based on data available to the system.

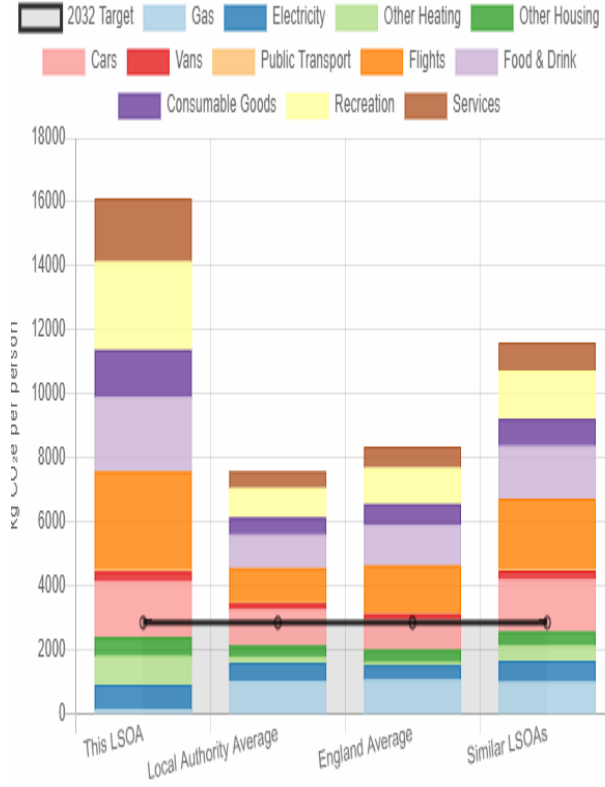
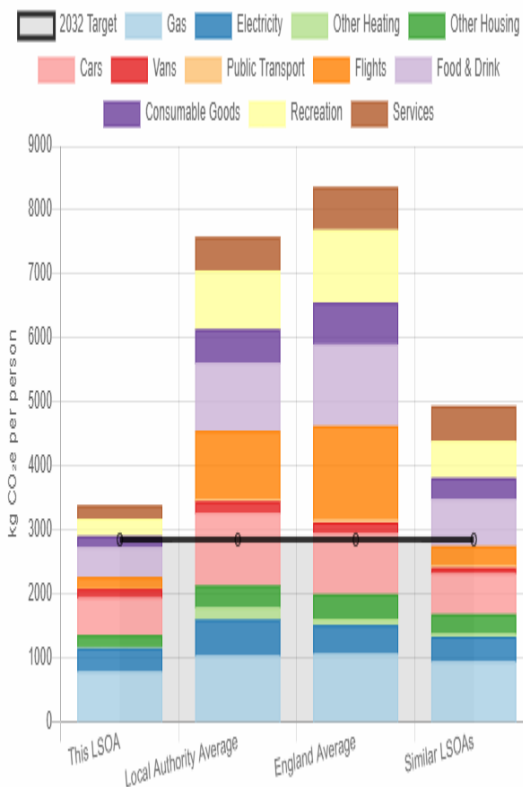
The results show two very different neighbourhoods in relation to their contribution to the districts wider carbon footprint. In fact the Carbon Output per head of population in the worst performing area is 5 times greater than the best performing area.

Sidley

Name	Grade	kgCO ₂ e per person
Total	A	3380
Electricity	B	368
Gas	B	780
Other Heating	C	238
Car Driving	B	581
Van Driving	D-	134
Flights	A-	181
Consumption of goods and services	A+	1300

Ticehurst and Etchingam

Name	Grade	kgCO ₂ e per person
Total	F	16100
Electricity	F	768
Gas	A+	131
Other Heating	F	902
Car Driving	F	1760
Van Driving	F+	291
Flights	F+	3040
Consumption of goods and services	F	9140



The Place Based Carbon calculator is free and available for anyone to view at - <https://www.carbon.place>.