

## Climate Change Steering Group

Date and Time - **Thursday 26 October 2023 – 2:00pm**

Venue - **Formal Remote Meeting**

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### **Councillors appointed to the Steering Group:**

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

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### **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 - 28 SEPTEMBER 2023 - MATTERS ARISING** (Pages 3 - 8)
4. **CLIMATE STRATEGY 2023** (Pages 9 - 46)
5. **ROTHER DISTRICT GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS REPORT - 2021** (Pages 47 - 60)
6. **OPERATIONAL ANNUAL CARBON EMISSIONS REPORT 2022/23** (Pages 61 - 72)
7. **HOME UPGRADE GRANT 2 - OCTOBER 2023 UPDATE** (Pages 73 - 76)
8. **PROJECT SUMMARY - UPDATE** (Pages 77 - 84)
9. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**
10. **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING - 30 NOVEMBER 2023, 2:00PM**

Lorna Ford  
Chief Executive

Agenda Despatch Date: 18 October 2023

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**Rother District Council**

**CLIMATE CHANGE STEERING GROUP**

28 September 2023



Minutes of the Climate Change Steering Group “informal” meeting held remotely on Thursday 28 September 2023 at 2:00pm.

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

Other Members present: Councillors S. Burton, Mrs. V. Cook, S.B. McGurk, C. Pearce (in part) and A. Rathbone Ariel (in part).

Advisory Officers Present: Director – Place and Climate Change (in part), Environment Strategy Officer, Project Officer (Environment) and Democratic Services Officer.

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**CCSG23/01. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

(1)

There were no apologies for absence.

**CCSG23/02. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

(2)

There were no declarations of interest made.

**CCSG23/03. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING – 27 APRIL 2023 –  
MATTERS ARISING**

(3)

Progress was sought on the Electric Bike Scheme. Members were advised that a Cycle to Work Roadshow was relaunched at the Town Hall in the summer and all staff were being encouraged to use low carbon travel options, where possible. At present, there was no secure covered / shelter facilities for bicycles at the Town Hall; this was currently being investigated and would be financed via the Human Resources department. For security purposes, the shelter would be located in the rear car park (not in public view). It was understood that electric bicycle batteries were removable and could be charged inside the Town Hall, subject to PAT testing.

Concerns were raised that in-house funding was limited for smaller carbon reduction projects and that, in general, external funding opportunities would need to be sourced. It was clarified that Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy funding could only be applied for and used for the larger infrastructure type projects.

The Director – Place and Climate Change advised that a £104,000 annual budget was assigned to the climate projects, which included funding for the Environment Strategy Officer and Project Officer (Environment) posts. This funding had also been used for the Couch to Carbon Zero Scheme and carbon literacy training.

#### CCSG23/04. **PROJECTS SUMMARY – UPDATE**

(4)

The Project Officer (Environment) updated the Climate Change Steering Group on the completed, ongoing, outstanding short, medium and long-term projects. The following project / objectives had been updated since the last meeting:

- Evaluate & Reduce Council Staff Travel Emissions: Green Team priorities were a) publish staff commuter survey findings (completed); b) promote active travel, public transport and low emission vehicles providing costs (w/c 25 September 2023); c) explore adopting staff benefit packages regarding public transport and low emission vehicles; and d) ensure team agreements supported home and office working including the environmental impact on travel.
- Electric Vehicle Charging Points in Council Car Parks: On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme funding still to be realised. Enquiries were underway to explore 100% supplier funded models that did not rely on funding.
- Improve Tree cover in Bexhill: Over 200 trees were planted in Spring 2023; approximately 100 trees were scheduled to be planted in Autumn / Winter 2023. Bexhill was recognised as a Tree City of the World. An application was being considered to the Coronation Living Heritage Fund, which would allow the Council to plant 'micro woods' in urban areas and offer grants for community orchards.
- Biodiversity Audit: Site audits had been completed; a report and findings would be presented at the meeting scheduled to be held on 30 November 2023.
- Reduce Village Halls Carbon Emissions and Install Electric Vehicle Charging Points: Phase 1 was completed in June with bespoke Net Zero Plans issued to 39 participating halls. Grant funding offers were being drafted and would be issued to halls as soon as possible. Additional funding options were being explored.
- Local Plan: The latest update on the Local Plan was detailed on the Council's website at the following link: [Local Plan Review – Rother District Council](#).
- Plant More Wildflower Areas on Green Spaces: Biodiversity Audit surveys for 23 Council-owned green assets, outside Bexhill had been completed. Reports with recommendations for biodiversity enhancements were expected by the end of November 2023.
- Meet the Target Page on the Council Website for Tree Coverage: Available on the Council's website at the following link: [Trees – Rother District Council](#)
- Incentivise Parish and Town Councils to adopt Climate Emergency Policies and encourage Biodiversity Audits: The Environment Strategy Officer (ESO) had attended three Battle Town Council (BTC) Climate and Ecology Committee meetings where key actions

to reduce emissions were identified. BTC were calculating their operational emissions. Salehurst and Robertsbridge Parish Council had declared a climate and ecological emergency; the ESO would sit on their working group and assist with climate action planning. The ESO had attended Ashburnham and Penhurst Parish Council, East Guldeford Parish meeting and Brede Parish Council and presented a report on declaring a climate and ecological emergency including next steps. The ESO had provided climate and ecological emergency information to Brightling and Udimore Parish Councils.

- Green Asset Management Plan: Conversations were underway to define “Green Asset Management” and how this might align with the strategic asset management plan scheduled to be developed.
- Develop a Plan to ensure all Rother District Council assets are Carbon Neutral: The Environment Strategy was currently being reviewed and would be published by the end of 2023; it would include a decarbonisation strategy. In September 2023, the boilers in both Town Hall buildings were replaced with energy efficient condensing gas boilers; significant carbon emission savings were anticipated.
- Low Carbon Energy / Heat Pumps on New Housing and Retrospectively: 566 registrations were made by Rother residents to Solar Together Spring 2023. 115 households had paid for installations with 23 completed to date.
- Promote Repair Swap Shops: Robertsbridge Repair Café was promoted in EcoTips on the Council’s website (September 2023).
- Increase Use of Public Transport and Active Travel: Flexi bus and £2 Government bus fare cap was promoted on all Council communication platforms.

During the discussion the following points were noted:

- Frustration was expressed that projects were progressing at a slow “drawn out” pace e.g. Village Halls etc. The Project Officer (Environment) advised that it was important detailed assessment / surveys were completed, as some buildings did not consume enough electricity for them to warrant having solar panels installed; it was a complex decision-making process. Other carbon reduction opportunities would be explored, such as heating, insulation, glazing systems etc. It was important that data was collated to see what the most appropriate option for each building was. It was agreed that lessons should be learnt and shared from projects that had been successfully implemented.
- Members agreed that best practice guidance / opportunities should be disseminated via Rother Association of Local Council (RALC) meetings.

## **CCSG23/05. CLIMATE STRATEGY REFRESH – VERBAL UPDATE**

(5)

The Climate Change Steering Group (CCSG) was updated on the Council’s Climate Strategy 2030. Since the Council’s Climate Emergency Declaration in September 2019, significant work had progressed regarding the Council’s Climate Strategy. The existing strategy consisted of eight priorities including 45 pledges. Following on

from the consultation responses received in 2020, data / evidence collated, policy changes, and best practice initiatives sourced from other similar local authorities, it was considered an opportune time to reconsider the priorities / pledges and completely refresh the strategy.

It was proposed to reword the Council's Strategy Development – Vision to *“By 2030, Rother will be a carbon-neutral district where climate-resilient communities are well-equipped to deal with the challenges of climate change and are no longer contributing to global warming.”*

The Environment Strategy Officer advised that the revised strategy would be considered at the next meeting of the CCSG scheduled to be held on Thursday 26 October 2023 at 2:00pm.

It was anticipated that the new Climate Strategy would be fully approved and adopted by the end of 2023.

#### **CCSG23/06. LOCAL AREA ENERGY PLANS (LAEPS) – VERBAL UPDATE**

(6)

The Environment Strategy Officer updated the Climate Change Steering Group (CCSG) on Local Area Energy Plans (LAEP) which were being commissioned by some local authorities who were looking to create a plan to help address power supply and meet their net zero goals and climate emergency declarations.

Discussions with UK Power Networks (UKPN) and Energy Systems Catapult (ESC) had confirmed that it would cost approximately £100,000 to complete a full LAEP over a period of one year for the Council. No funding was available. Discussions with ESC suggested that a countywide approach would be more appropriate, and currently regular discussions were being held with East Sussex County Council (ESCC) and the Climate Officers from Eastbourne Borough Council and Wealden and Lewes District Councils. It was understood that ESCC had already unsuccessfully applied for funding. Feedback was also being sought from local energy groups regarding best practice and future solutions / technologies etc.

As a full LAEP was unaffordable, it was proposed to produce a LAEP for decarbonising heat only; a funding application was in progress, and the CCSG would be kept abreast of developments. Members agreed that it was essential that the Council worked alongside all relevant partners / stakeholders to progress the LAEP.

#### **CCSG23/07. PUBLIC MEETING SCHEDULE – VERBAL UPDATE**

(7)

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Climate Change Steering Group would be a “formal” meeting and held in the public domain. The meeting would be held on MS Teams and webcast live. The Council's amended Climate Strategy would be reviewed and considered at this meeting.

**ACTION 1:** That the meeting scheduled to be held on Thursday 26 October 2023, be a “formal” meeting, held in the public domain and webcast live (Democratic Services).

**CCSG23/08. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

(8)

The following any other business items were discussed:

- **Weedkiller:** Concern was aired that toxic weedkiller products were being used to control the spread of weeds across the district. Members were advised that East Sussex County Council was responsible for the maintenance / upkeep of the district’s public pathways and roads. It was clarified that ‘NO’ pesticides weedkillers were used on all Council-owned open spaces by the Council’s Grounds Maintenance and Arboriculture Contractor.
- **Wildflowers – Marina, Bexhill:** Clarity was sought regarding the future of the wildflower beds at Marina, Bexhill. Mixed views had been expressed regarding whether the wildflowers should remain or be replaced by more traditional / seasonal flowers / planting. It was understood that Councillor Bayliss was sourcing volunteer interest to take over the responsibility of the upkeep of these beds. Members were advised that, to date, no decision on the future of the flowerbeds had been made. It was agreed that a cost-effective / appropriate planting scheme should be adopted and where possible, best practice followed. It was difficult to please all, as some people would prefer wildflowers (which required little watering and were sustainable) and others more traditional planting (which would require continuous maintenance). The Council would be open to community-led / volunteer group suggestions. It was recommended that the Council produced a best practice “planting” guide; this was already in the process of being developed.
- **Bexhill in Bloom:** Councillor Gray advised that Bexhill had recently won a ‘Gold Award’. She felt certain that the wildflower beds had helped to secure this honour for the town.
- **EcoTip:** Members were encouraged to forward any EcoTips to the Environment Strategy Officer to upload to the Council’s Climate Directory on the website.

**CCSG23/09. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

(9)

The date of the next “formal” meeting was arranged for Thursday 26 October 2023 at 2:00pm to be held remotely on MS Teams.

**CHAIR**

The meeting closed at 3:09pm

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**Rother District Council**

**Report to:** Climate Change Steering Group

**Date:** 26 October 2023

**Title:** Climate Strategy 2023

**Report of:** Lucie Bolton, Environment Strategy Officer

**Ward(s):** All

**Purpose of Report:** For Members to review the copy for the Climate Strategy

**Officer**

**Recommendation(s):** It be **RESOLVED**: That:

- 1) the Climate Strategy 2023 be approved, subject to any amendments from stakeholders; and
- 2) the Overview and Scrutiny Committee consider the Climate Strategy 2023 at their meeting scheduled to be held on 20 November 2023.

**Introduction**

1. To tackle the Climate and Ecological Emergencies, the strategy to reduce emissions and create a cleaner, greener, more equitable district must evolve. The strategy review carried out in 2022/23 in partnership with stakeholders and the wider community, has resulted in the refreshed Climate Strategy (CS).
2. The CS sets out how the Council will use its powers and influence to make Rother District carbon neutral, and reduce the Council's operational emissions to Net Zero, by 2030.
3. This report presents the findings of the Environment Strategy 2020 review, the additional evidence base required for the strategy refresh, stakeholder engagement, and the final copy for the CS, subject to any stakeholder amendments.
4. The layout of the CS will be designed by a professional graphic designer and copy editor once the copy is agreed, and the CS has been considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

**Background**

5. On 16 September 2019, Rother District Council (RDC) formally declared a Climate Emergency at full Council and committed to:

*Pledge to do what is within our powers, to make Rother District carbon neutral by 2030, taking into account both production and consumption emissions.*

6. In 2020, the Council's response to the Climate Emergency was developed in consultation with local partners and residents. On 21 September 2020, the Environment Strategy 2020 was adopted by the Council.
7. The COVID-19 pandemic delayed the publication of the Action Plan, but significant steps have been taken by the Council to reduce emissions both across the district and operationally. The Council's progress on the Environment Strategy 2020 is published on the Climate Emergency web pages.
8. Climate awareness, Climate Emergency Declarations, and Local Authority Environment Strategies were relatively new in 2019/20. Climate science and public awareness have increased considerably in the relatively short time since. The COVID-19 pandemic has also changed our lives in many ways and the public response demonstrates how quickly behaviour can change when resourced and motivated.
9. Considering these changes, the Council agreed to refresh the Environment Strategy in 2022 and the CS has been produced (Appendix A).

### Environment Strategy Review

10. A review of the Environment Strategy 2020 highlighted the following areas for improvement:
  - Emissions evidence-based – District and Organisational.
  - Changes to national policy – Environment Act 2021.
  - Rother specific climate risks and opportunities.
  - Climate Action Plan – to direct delivery.

### 2020 Consultation Review

11. The public consultation for the Environment Strategy ran from March – May 2020. The consultation received 108 individual responses and 14 organisations responded.
12. A summary of the responses is provided in the table below:

What could I do to reduce the impact my household and I have on the environment?	What support could the Council provide me to help me reduce my impact on the environment?	What should the Council be doing to reduce its impact on the environment?	Is there anything missing from the draft action plan that we should consider including?	Please let us know if you have any other comments regarding the proposed Environment Strategy
Energy efficiency	Waste – recycling, food waste, compost bins, go digital	Lead by example – buildings	Food waste	Positive comments
Transport – EV, bike, drive less	Transport – EV charging points, cycle routes, more busses	Lead by example – staff travel	Biodiversity	Get on with it

Renewable energy	Planning Permission	Planning permission	Planning permission – solar panels	Don't exclude those who can't afford to be green
Waste	Encourage community action	Reduce waste the council produces	Ban bonfires	Silly jargon

## Best Practice

- The following local authority climate strategies were reviewed for best practice.
- Hastings Borough Council, Eastbourne Borough Council, and Lewes District Council have all updated their strategies in the last year and Wealden District Council is about to embark on a strategy refresh.

Neighbouring Authorities	Climate Emergency UK – 2022 top rated	Similar – Emissions profile, deprivation, rural-urban population density	Others
Hastings BC	Somerset West and Taunton Council	Norfolk CC	Bristol One City
Wealden DC	Staffordshire Moorlands DC	Suffolk CC	North Norfolk DC
Eastbourne BC	East Devon DC	East Lindsey DC	Swale BC
Lewes DC			Horsham DC
East Sussex CC			Surrey CC
Folkestone and Hythe DC			Kent CC
Ashford BC			Winchester CC
Tunbridge Wells BC			

## Evidence Base

- Both Rother District and operational GHG emissions were included in the evidence base for the CS (Agenda Item 5 - Appendix A and Agenda Item 6 - Appendix A).
- Other RDC strategic documents including the Anti-Poverty Strategy, the emerging Local Plan, annual Air Quality Assessments, and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment have formed part of the evidence base for the CS.

## Stakeholder Engagement

- Extensive stakeholder engagement has been a core part of this strategy review. The CS Engagement Tracker in Appendix B lists the occasions when the Environment Strategy Officer has presented, discussed, or otherwise engaged with stakeholders on the refresh. The Tracker does not include discussions about the CS via email. This engagement is ongoing as stakeholders respond to the CS.

## Guiding Principles

18. The CS refresh identified the need for Guiding Principles which can be seen below. The Guiding Principles ensure the Council is using its position and influence to lead by example, work in partnership, and ensure no one is left behind.

Act now	Work in partnership	Continuously improve	Communicate impact	Be Fair
The Council recognises the urgency and will take action commensurate to the challenge.	The Council recognises its own limitations and the scale of the challenge. The Council will continue to work in partnership to achieve its goals.	The Council will measure, review, and update the Climate Strategy and Climate Action Plan regularly to ensure it remains relevant and effective.	The Council will communicate its impact and climate action to encourage others.	The Council will ensure the transition is fair. This means ensuring the benefits of climate action are accessible to all and no one is excluded.

## Vision

19. The vision has been updated and aligns with the refreshed CS.
20. *By 2030, Rother will be a carbon-neutral district where climate-resilient communities are well-equipped to deal with the challenges of climate change and are no longer contributing to global warming.*

## Aims and Objectives

21. The following aims and objectives have been proposed. They reflect the CS vision and the Council's 2019 pledge.

### Aim

The aim of this strategy is to enable, encourage, and accelerate the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions across the district.

### Objectives

- The built environment will be low carbon and climate resilient.
- The need to travel will be reduced, those that do will be on foot, bike, public transport, or in a low/zero carbon vehicle.
- The district will produce less waste and support a thriving circular economy.
- Nature will be in recovery across the district.
- Clean, renewable energy will be produced locally.

## The Climate Strategy

22. Each of the five action areas is addressed within the CS with details of both the challenge and the Council's approach explained.

23. Each action area supports one of the CS Objectives and has two or three outcomes which are displayed in the table below:

Vision	A carbon-neutral district where climate-resilient communities are well equipped to deal with the changing climate and are no longer contributing to global warming				
Overall Impact Measure	Greenhouse Gas Emissions reduced to 10% of 2019 baseline and nature in recovery across the district				
Theme	Buildings and Energy Efficiency	Transport	Resource Consumption and Waste	Biodiversity and Land Use	Energy Generation
Strategic Goals (Outcomes)	1. The built environment will be low-carbon and climate-resilient	2. Need to travel will be reduced, those that do will be on foot, bike, public transport, or EV	3. The district will produce less waste and support a thriving circular economy	4. Nature will be in recovery across the district	5. Clean, renewable energy will be produced locally
Measure of success - Objectives (Outputs)	Mass retrofit of existing buildings  New buildings are carbon neutral or carbon negative	Sustainable forms of transport supported through the planning system  Facilitate the transition to LZC vehicles across the District  A programme of activities to promote active travel across the District	Reduced consumption of resources and waste  Increased repair, reuse, and recycling of goods and materials	Halt land and marine species decline  Increased biodiversity and carbon sequestration	Solar PV on all suitable roof space  Support renewable energy generation

## Climate Action Plan

24. A three-year Climate Action Plan has been produced to direct delivery of the CS.
25. The Climate Action Plan will be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee along with the CS at their meeting scheduled to be held on 20 November 2023.
26. The Climate Action Plan for 2027-2030 will be developed in 2026.

## Options

27. The Council considered continuing with the existing Environment Strategy, but the evidence base included in the CS refresh demonstrates the need to focus the Council's resources on supporting emission reductions in the five action areas of Buildings and Energy Efficiency, Transport, Resource Consumption and Waste, Biodiversity and Land Use and Energy Generation.

## Conclusion

28. The CS is a well-researched, evidence-based document that will guide the Council's climate action and enable to Council to meet its pledge to do what is within its powers to make Rother a carbon-neutral district.
29. The Climate Action Plan will direct delivery and ensure the Council is doing what is within its powers to make Rother climate resilient.

## Environmental

30. The CS builds upon the work of the Environment Strategy 2020. It will guide the Council's climate action and enable to Council to meet its pledge to do what is within its powers to make Rother a carbon-neutral district.

## Equalities and Diversity

31. The impacts of climate change are not felt equally by residents in Rother. The CS recognises those inequalities and through the Guiding Principles, will ensure a just transition to a low-carbon society for all residents. A full Equalities Impact Assessment is being undertaken and will be included with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Report.

Other Implications	Applies?	Other Implications	Applies?
Human Rights	No	Equalities and Diversity	Yes
Crime and Disorder	No	Consultation	No
Environmental	Yes	Access to Information	No
Sustainability	Yes	Exempt from publication	No
Risk Management	No		

Chief Executive:	Lorna Ford
Report Contact Officer:	Lucie Bolton (Environment Strategy Officer)
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Appendices:	A – Climate Strategy A – Rother District Emissions Report – 2021 (see Agenda Item 5) A – Operational Annual Carbon Emissions Report 2022/23 (see Agenda Item 6) B – Climate Strategy Engagement Tracker
Relevant previous Minutes:	n/a
Background Papers:	n/a
Reference Documents:	n/a

# Climate Strategy 2023

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## Forward

To Add

## Executive Summary

To Add

## Introduction

To tackle the Climate and Ecological Emergencies, the strategy to reduce emissions and create a cleaner, greener, more equitable District must evolve. The strategy review, carried out in 2022/23 in partnership with stakeholders and the wider community, has resulted in the Climate Strategy 2023. This document sets out how the Council will use its powers and influence to make Rother District carbon neutral, and reduce the Council’s operational emissions to Net Zero, by 2030.

## Background

Climate change is the defining issue of our time. Evidence from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in the 2023 [AR6 report](#) demonstrates global warming is likely to exceed 1.5°C well before 2050 with the existing policies and laws currently in place. The burning of fossil fuels and deforestation is causing an unprecedented increase in global temperatures.

The impacts of climate change can be seen all around us. Unlike the Covid-19 pandemic which had a devastating, sudden impact, the impact of climate change has been less visible however scientists predict we are nearing the tipping point. We are seeing an increase in flooding, droughts, and extremes in temperature. In 2022 and we saw the warmest year on record with temperatures reaching above 40 degrees and the average annual temperature passing 10 degrees for the first time.



In 2019, in response to the climate crisis, the UK Government passed legislation to achieve Net Zero by 2050. This aligned with the commitments of the Paris Agreement to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees. The Government committed to halting its contribution to global warming and lead the way in clean growth.

Rother District Council shared the Government's goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. On 16th September 2019 Rother District Council formally declared a Climate Emergency at Full Council and committed to:

*Pledge to do what is within our powers, to make Rother District carbon neutral by 2030, taking into account both production and consumption emissions.*

In 2020 the Council's response to the Climate Emergency was developed in consultation with local partners and residents. On 21st September 2020, the Environment Strategy 2020 was adopted by the Council. The COVID-19 pandemic delayed the publication of the Action Plan, but significant steps have been taken by the Council to reduce emissions both across the District and operationally. Full details of these actions can be seen on the Council's Climate Emergency [webpage](#).

Climate Emergency declarations and Local Authority Environment Strategies were relatively new in 2019/20. Climate science and public awareness has increased considerably in the relatively short time since. The pandemic has also changed our lives in many ways and the public response demonstrates how quickly behaviour can change when resourced and motivated.

There has also been a growing awareness of the Ecological Emergency we face with devastating biodiversity loss and species decline. The Climate and Ecological Emergencies are distinct but intrinsically linked. Restoring, protecting, and enhancing nature can remove carbon from the atmosphere and store it. Nature-based solutions such as natural flood management are highly effective ways to adapt to the changing climate and create a more sustainable landscape.

This Strategy will be reviewed at intervals and progress against the Climate Action Plan 2023-26 will be reported annually in the Climate Action Report. Action planning for 2026-2030 will be presented in due course taking into consideration progress on the present Climate Action Plan 2023-26 and technological advancements.

Rother's carbon footprint is presented in Appendix A and a summary of the findings has been included in this document. This baseline data identifies key sources of emissions which need to be prioritised for decarbonisation. The evidence base has also been used to select action areas to improve biodiversity, opportunities to lock up carbon through sequestration and generate clean, local energy.

### What is a carbon neutral District?

To achieve carbon neutrality an area, business or individual needs to find a balance between the emissions they emit and the levels of sequestration. Carbon is sequestered, or

absorbed, naturally in trees, wetlands, grasslands, soil and the ocean. Carbon capture and storage technologies can also remove carbon from the atmosphere.

To be a carbon-neutral District, emissions in Rother must be reduced and sequestration, through natural processes, enhanced.

As an organisation, Rother District Council has a target to be Net Zero by 2030. Net Zero is more ambitious compared with carbon neutrality as the focus is on reducing emissions and only offsetting the residual, hard to abate emissions. The Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi) recommends organisations reduce emissions by at least 90% before offsetting to reach Net Zero.

## Rother’s Carbon Footprint

### District-wide emissions

In 2019, the District-wide carbon footprint for Rother was 448.87 kilotonnes CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent (ktCO<sub>2</sub>e). This is to be considered the baseline year, against which reductions are measured, as this is the year the Council made the Climate Emergency Declaration.

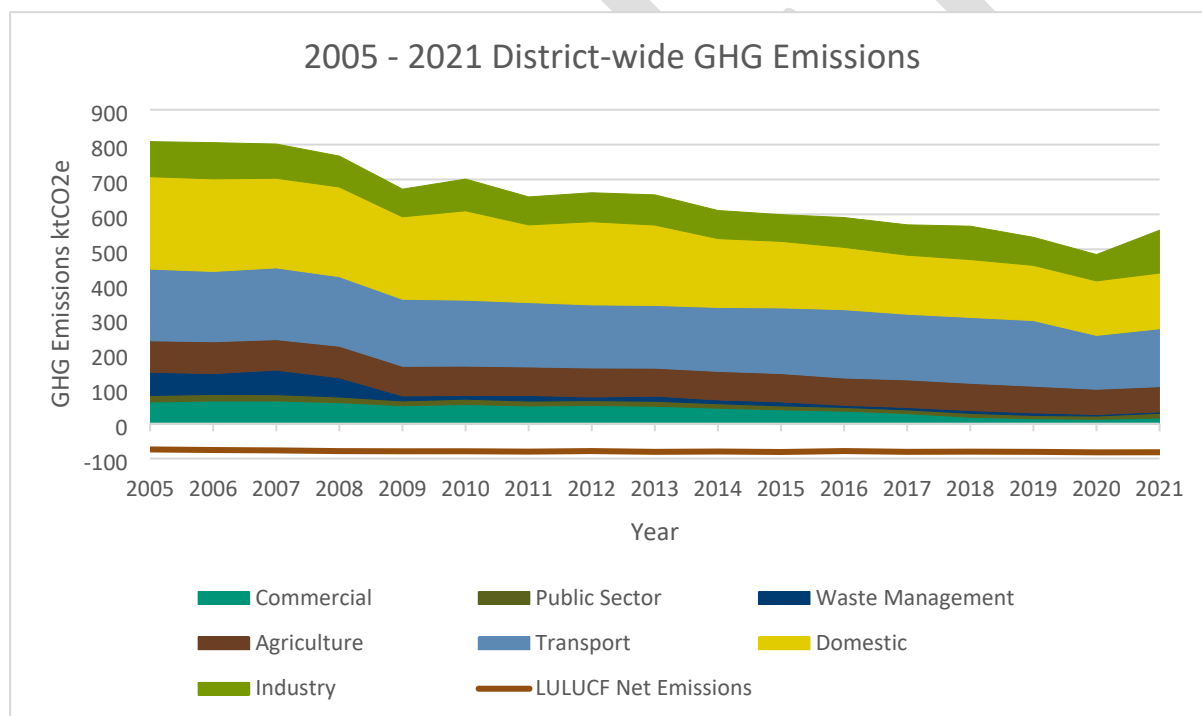


Figure 1: District-wide carbon emissions by sub-sector from 2005 - 2021 for Rother (Source: DESNZ 2023)

Emissions have been steadily decreasing across Rother since 2005. This is mostly due to the decarbonisation of the national grid. The government has set a 2035 target for the national grid to be fossil fuel free.

Each year the government publishes UK local authority and regional estimates of greenhouse gas emissions. The statistics use nationally available data sets going back to 2005 and cover territorial emissions of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) and nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O). Figure 1 and Figure 2 show the breakdown of emissions by sector in Rother from 2005 – 2021.

In 2021, Rother had a carbon footprint of 472.6 ktCO<sub>2</sub>e, up 15% on 2020 and up 4% on 2019. Emissions have risen between 2020 and 2021 across all parts of the UK and Rother is no exception. This is mainly due to an increase in industrial emissions and post-COVID transport emissions which has been seen across the county and nationally. Transport emissions have however remained below pre-COVID levels.

Industrial emissions have seen a particular increase across the country with 85% of local authorities experiencing an increase. This increase is largely from industrial gas usage.

Transport, domestic, and industrial emissions are responsible for 90% of Rother’s emissions. Tackling the emissions from where we live, work, and how we travel will be the focus of this Climate Strategy. The full report for 2021 District-wide emissions is presented in Appendix A.

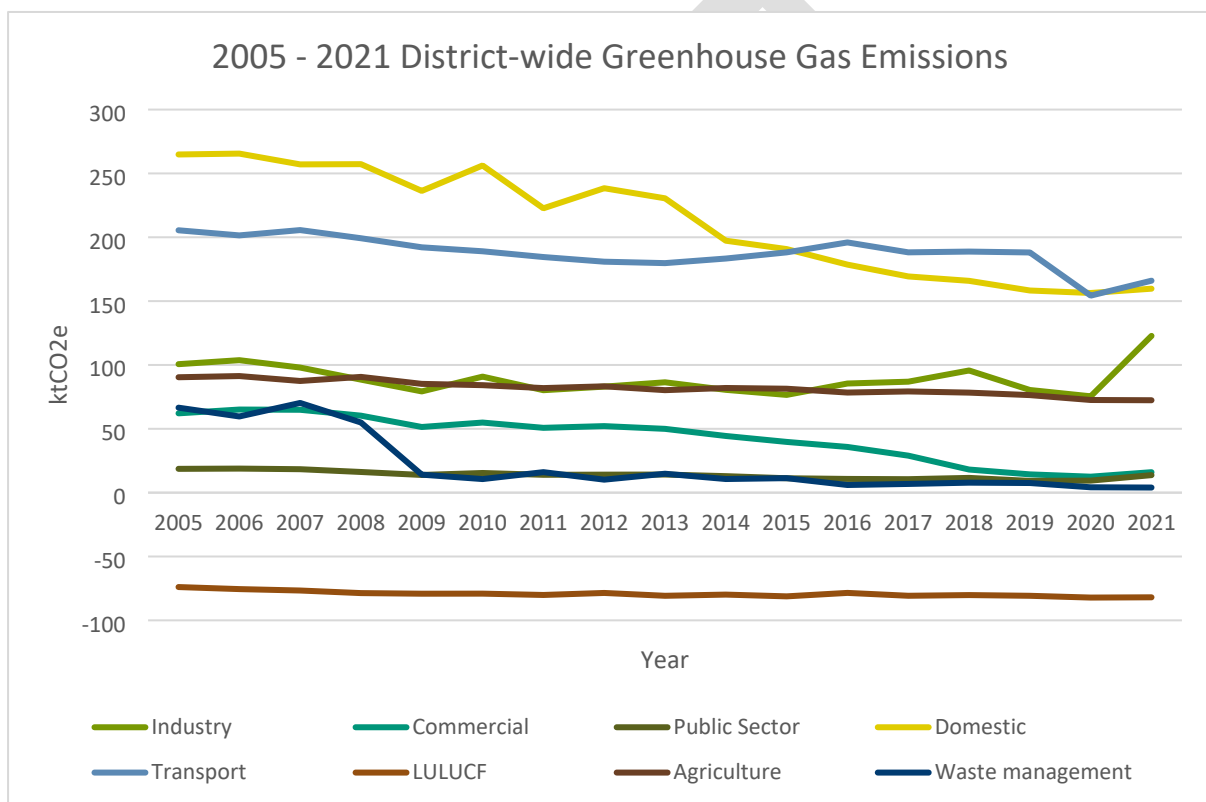


Figure 2: Rother's GHG emissions by sub-sector

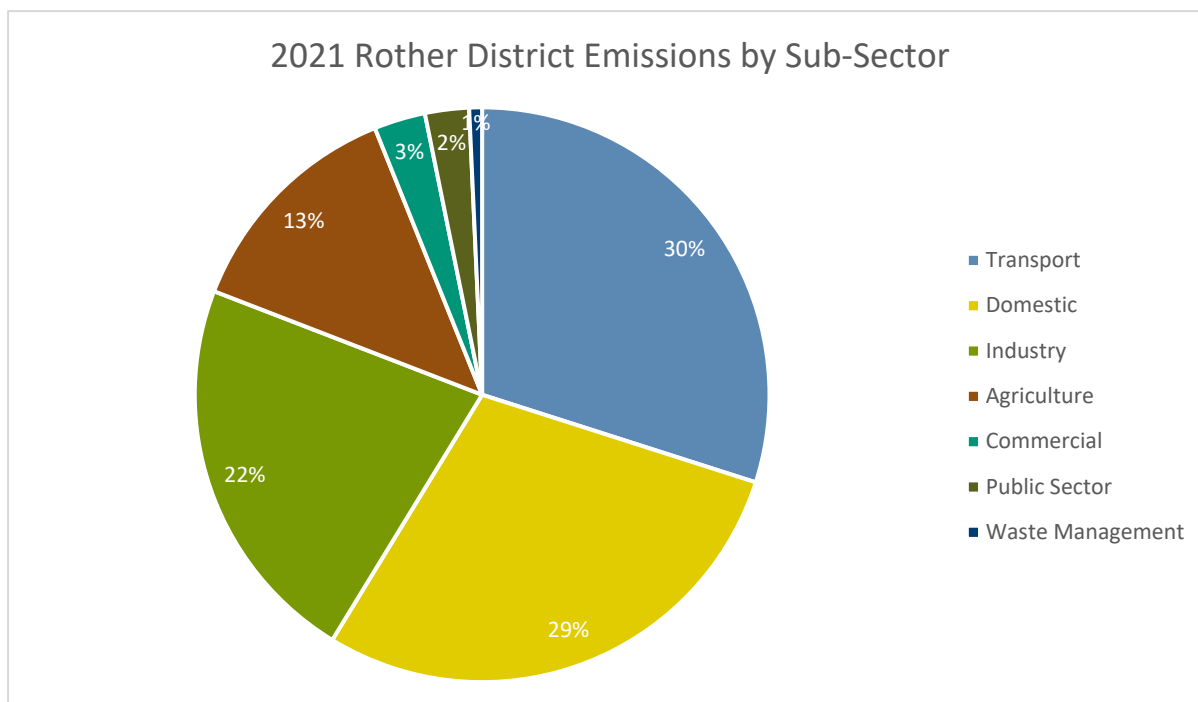


Figure 3: Rother District's 2021 Emissions shown by sub-sector

### Rother District Council operational emissions

Rother District Council has published Scope 1 and 2 emissions for 2019/20, 2020/21 and 2021/22. Scope 3 emissions from the waste contract, leisure centres, and indirect operational activities such as business mileage were included for the first time in the 22/23 reporting. The full 2022/23 annual report can be seen in Appendix B. The Council set its baseline accounting year as 2019/20. This aligns with the year the Council made the Climate Emergency Declaration and gives a pre-covid figure. Emissions dropped significantly in 2020 due to multiple lockdowns and a 2020/21 baseline would not be a true reflection of emissions without lockdowns.

Scope 1 – emissions released as a direct result of an activity such as fuel for heating boilers and the fuel burned in council-owned fleet vehicles.

Scope 2 – emissions released as an indirect consumption of energy. For a local authority, this is purchased grid electricity used in its operations.

Scope 3 – all other indirect emissions that occur from activities upstream or downstream of an organisation.

Scope 3 emission reporting is relatively new and methodologies for accurate calculations are still emerging. From 22/23, the Council reports on the Scope 3 emissions it can accurately obtain. This includes emissions from the waste fleet, leisure services, staff business mileage, and water consumption in council-operated buildings. Staff commuting will be included in Scope 3 emissions, but it should be noted these emissions will be estimates. Rother District Council supports remote working. Staff are not required to formally record how often they travel to work and the method of transport. An employee commuting survey was carried out in spring 2023, the results of which have been used to calculate baseline emissions.

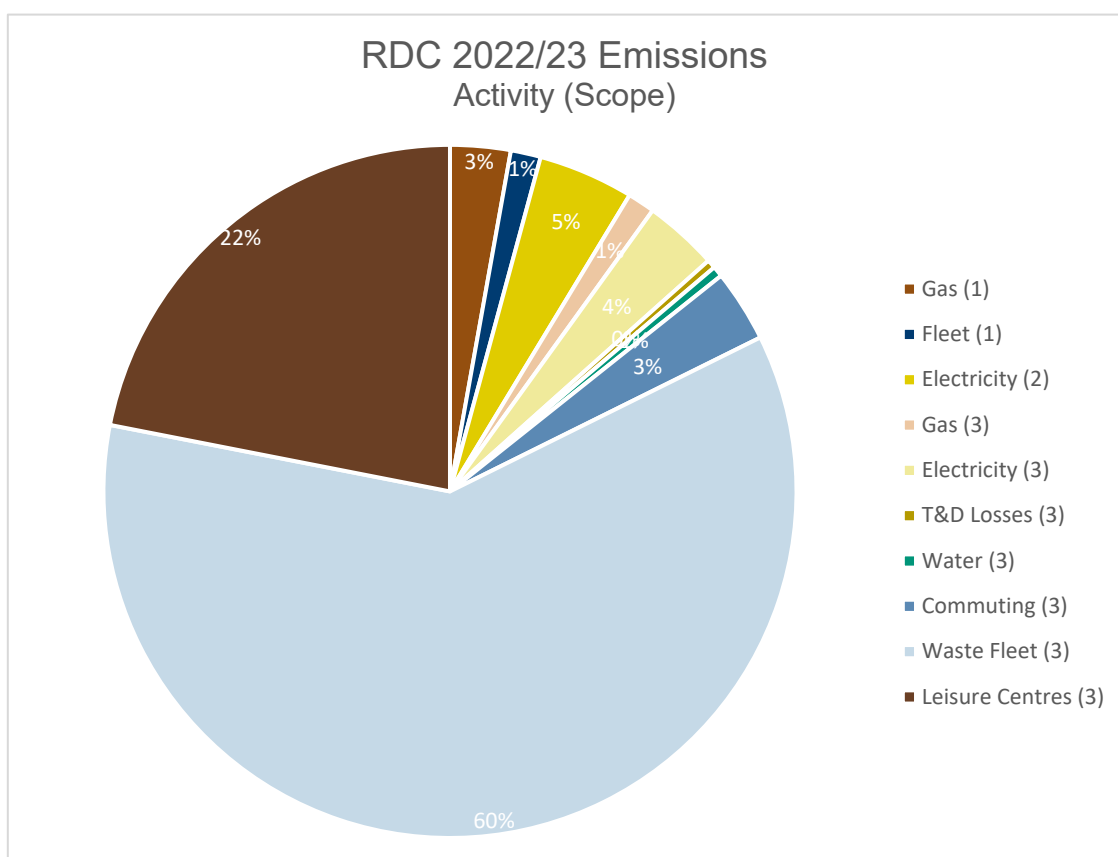
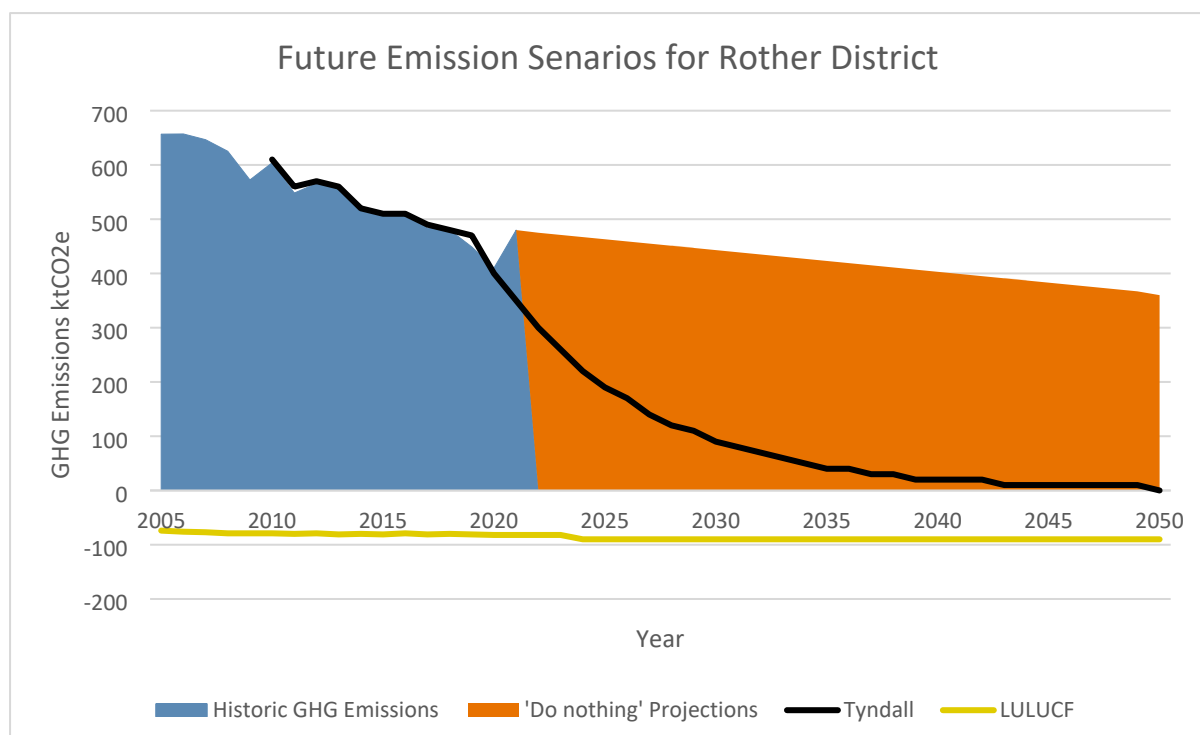


Figure 4 Rother District Council's 22/23 Emissions by Activity (Scope)

Scope 3 emissions account for over 90% of the Council's carbon footprint in 22/23. The Council does not have direct control over these emissions but can use its influence through policy and procurement to reduce these emissions. Most Scope 3 emissions are also District-wide emissions.

The Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research has calculated the rate of emission reduction required by Local Authority areas to do their fair share in line with the commitments of the Paris Agreement. The report presents a carbon budget for the District divided into five-year periods and recommends that District-wide emissions should be reduced by 13.8% annually to stay within the carbon budget.



*Figure 5 Future Emission Trajectories for Rother*

To reduce emissions to Net Zero, Rother District Council's operational emissions should be reduced by 50% annually. Organisational Scope 1 and 2 emissions are on track (Figure 6) but Scope 3 emissions are not currently (Figure 7). It should be noted that decarbonising Scope 3 emissions will happen in large steps and as such the decarbonisation trajectory is a long-term guide. Switching the refuse fleet from diesel to a low-carbon alternative will result in a reduction of almost 60% in Scope 3 emissions at 22/23 levels.

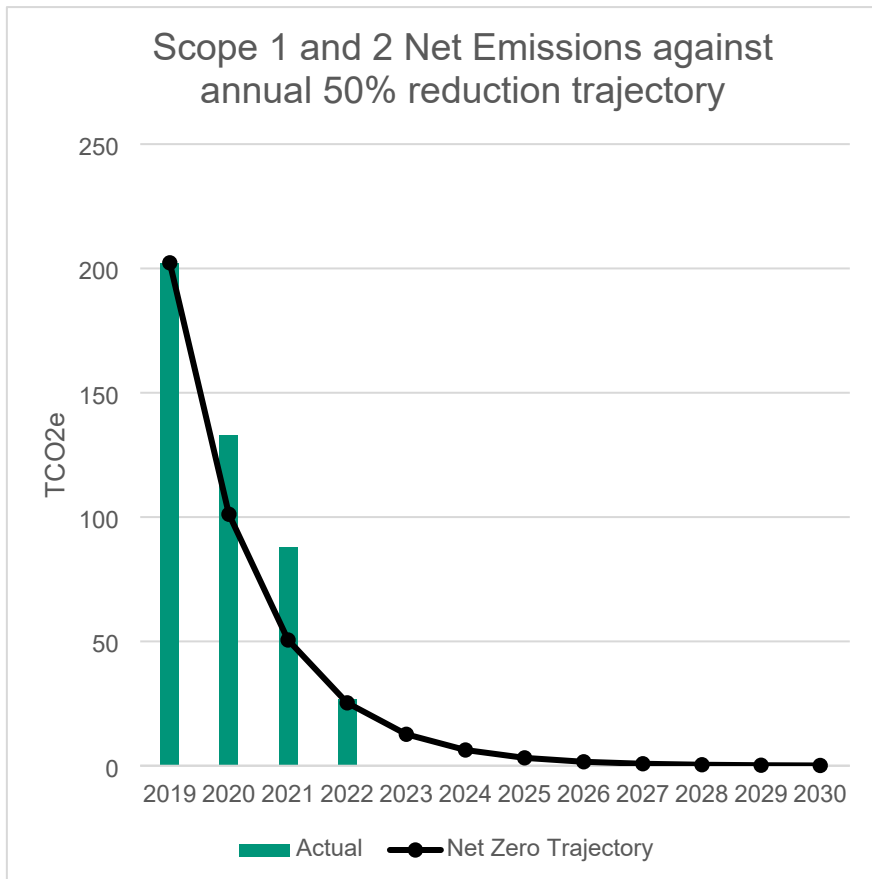


Figure 6 Organisational Scope 1&2 emissions against Net Zero trajectory

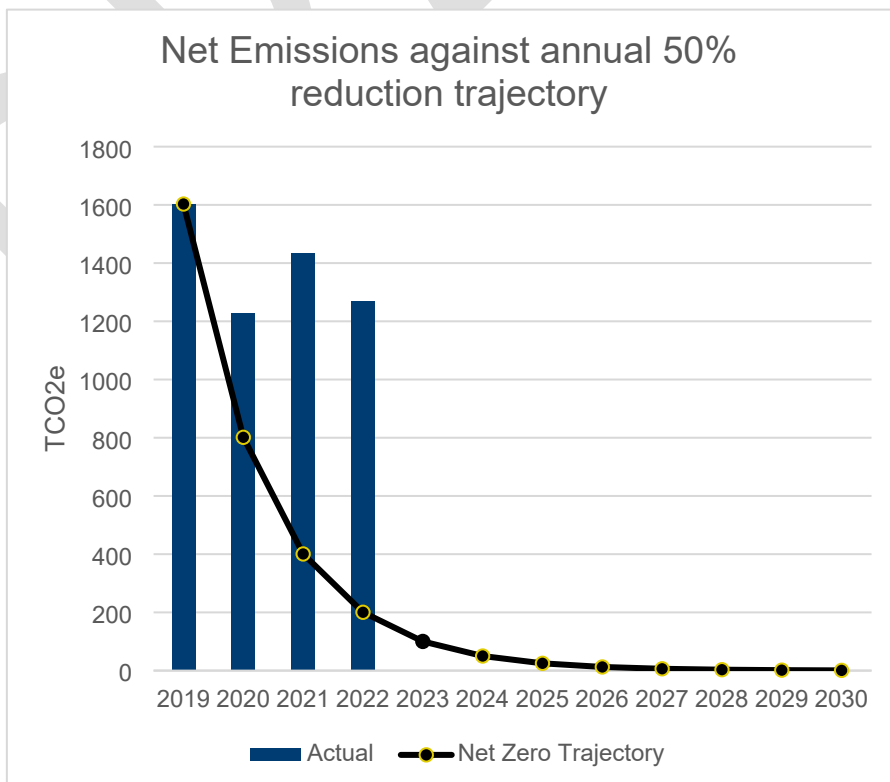


Figure 7 Organisational Scope 1,2 &3 emissions against Net Zero trajectory

## Climate Resilient Communities

The Council's vision of climate resilience stems from the need to mitigate and adapt to climate change. Climate-resilient communities are no longer contributing to global warming, and they are prepared for the changes yet to come from decades of past greenhouse gas emissions.

We each have a role to play and through mitigation, we will reduce the future impacts of climate change. By reducing the release of greenhouse gases into the earth's atmosphere, we can limit future global warming. Through climate adaptation, we can be prepared for the effects of climate change which are yet to come.

Climate-resilient communities are engaged and understand the power they have collectively and as individuals to bring about change. Research carried out by the IPCC in 2023 suggests 'society could deliver 40 – 70% of low carbon transformation through demand reduction and behavioural change'. In Rother, we are fortunate to have many experienced individuals and community groups already working towards building climate-resilient communities. The Council's Climate Strategy looks to build upon these foundations and drive further action.

## The Role of Local Authorities

Local Authorities play a crucial role in achieving the UK's Net Zero greenhouse gas emissions target. Through policies and partnerships, local authorities have a strong influence on more than a third of emissions in the local area. Local authorities can also lead by example, decarbonising public buildings and reducing emissions across the area.

There are significant challenges ahead and the Skidmore review highlights the need for a 'step change in the government's approach'. There is, however, no time to delay and whilst the route to Net Zero will require all of us to take personal responsibility, local authorities have a particularly important role to play.

With only seven years left until 2030, the date by which the Council aims to achieve Net Zero as an organisation and be a carbon-neutral District, the Council recognises the scale of the challenge. However, the pandemic response demonstrates how communities can dramatically change their behaviour when supported by the right policies.

## UK Policy Context

Since the adoption of the Environment Strategy (2020), there have been several key policy and legislative changes that support the Council's climate ambitions. These are presented below and should be included in addition to the policy context presented in the Environment Strategy (2020).

In December 2020 the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) published the [Sixth Carbon Budget](#) which made recommendations to help the UK reach Net Zero emissions by 2050. One of the actions was to deliver a 78% reduction in emissions from 1990 to 2035.

The [Environment Act 2021](#) is the UK's framework for environmental protection. The Act offers new powers to set binding targets for air quality, water, biodiversity, and waste



reduction. The Act sets out the legal framework for significant reforms to local authority waste and recycling services as well as new statutory duties on nature recovery.

At COP26 the [Glasgow Climate Pact](#) was adopted. This package of decisions was agreed upon by all countries who signed the Paris Agreement and aims to turn the 2020s into a decade of climate action and support.

In 2021 the Government published the [Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener](#). This is a 10-point plan for a green economic recovery from the impact of COVID-19. The plan includes the decarbonisation pathway to Net Zero by 2050, policies and proposals to reduce emissions in each sector, and cross-cutting action to support the transition.

[Nature Positive 2030](#) was published by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee in 2021. The report highlights the critical role of nature recovery and the critical role the UK's nature conservation bodies can make in the recovery of the UK's nature.

The Climate Change Committee's [Independent Assessment of UK Climate Risk](#) provides advice to the Government for the UK's third Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA3). The UK Government is required to publish a CCRA every five years under the 2008 Climate Change Act.

In 2022 the Government published the [UK Climate Change Risk Assessment](#) which outlines the key climate change risks and opportunities the UK faces.

The Climate Change Committee's [2022 Progress Report to Parliament](#) is a statutory report providing an overview of the UK Government's progress to date in reducing emissions. This report noted the risks to meeting the UK's Net Zero target and the national policy changes needed to mitigate those risks.

In January 2023, Rt Hon Chris Skidmore MP published [Mission Zero: Independent Review of Net Zero](#) – The former Energy Minister led an independent review of the government's approach to delivering its Net Zero target. The review presented opportunities and benefits to individuals and the economy alongside recommendations to deliver on this target.

The [Environmental Improvement Plan 2023](#) was also published in January 2023. This builds on the Government's 25 Year Environmental Plan from 2018 and sets out how the Government will work with landowners, communities, and businesses to improve the environment in England.

The Government published the third [National Adaptation Programme](#) (NAP3) in July 2023. The report presents the Government's approach to protecting society from the impacts of climate change. Key elements of the programme include protecting the natural environment, supporting businesses in adapting to climate change, adapting infrastructure, protecting buildings and their surroundings, protecting public health and communities, and mitigating international impacts on the UK.

## Opportunities and Challenges for Rother

Building climate-resilient communities is a challenge and Rother is no exception. In the past three years, we have experienced a global pandemic, an energy crisis, an ongoing housing crisis, and a cost-of-living crisis all whilst coping with the increasing impacts of climate change.

As with the intertwined Climate and Ecological Emergencies, the impacts of climate change will continue to exacerbate the challenges society faces. As resources become scarcer and prices rise, it will be those who are less financially able to cope who will feel the effects the hardest. The Council is committed to ensuring an equitable transition to a low-carbon future and will ensure all future projects are assessed in terms of their social and climatic impact.

Alongside climate risks are the opportunities a transition to a low-carbon society will provide. Often referred to as co-benefits, these include enhanced health and wellbeing, economic and ecological benefits as well as greater energy security.

In 2022, the government published the latest CCRA3 which considered 61 climate risks and opportunities for the UK. All 61 risks and opportunities are applicable to Rother. The demography and character of the District make temperature increase, rising sea levels, increased flooding, energy security, and ecological collapse particularly relevant.

### Health and wellbeing

Hotter summers are a greater risk to health for the elderly and the very young. The 2021 census results show almost a third of Rother residents are age 65+ (32.3%), ranking second highest in the country. Rother also has the second highest proportion of over 85s in the country. By comparison, 20.7% of the Hastings population is aged 65+. East Sussex County Council estimates the population of Rother to increase by approximately 12.5% by 2035. The number of households aged 65+ is anticipated to increase by up to 37%. This means more households will be dependent on the working-age population.

An increasingly dependent population will have a knock-on effect on climate resilience as older people can be more adversely affected by climate change. The elderly are more likely to suffer from extremes in temperatures and an increase in single occupancy homes with low income are less likely to be able to afford to make the necessary changes to their homes.

The health and wellbeing co-benefits associated with climate action are numerous and well-documented. Changes to methods of transport will improve air quality, physical, and mental health. Better insulated and ventilated homes are also known to improve health and wellbeing.

### Economy and Energy Security

Climate change can have a financial impact on residents, businesses, and the Council. Risks including more intense, extreme weather events such as river and coastal flooding, higher temperatures, drought, or intense rainfall, are already causing disruptions. In 2022, the District saw businesses and school closures due to disruptions to the water supply following severe storms. Businesses were affected by the extreme heat and residents were put under

hosepipe bans to deal with water shortages. Flooding also adversely affects parts of the District with local businesses and residents feeling the impact.

The economic impacts of climate change could lead to further inequality as those most vulnerable are often the least able to make changes to their homes, enjoy access to nature, and enjoy a good quality of life. In 2022, Friends of the Earth identified 20 energy crisis hotspots in Rother. These communities are those most affected by soaring energy prices with high energy usage and lower than average household income.

Adapting to changes in the climate can build resilience, provide opportunities, and support long-term growth. The National Adaptation Program (NAP3) identifies supporting businesses to adapt to climate change as one of the top priorities and businesses of all sizes are realising the benefits of moving to a low-carbon economy.

The energy crisis has shown how vulnerable we are as a society to international energy pricing and supply. Huge increases in energy bills saw families fall into fuel poverty, businesses forced to close, and slowed economic growth. Locally produced renewable energy is an opportunity to reduce bills and build energy security across the District.

Other economic opportunities relating to the low-carbon transition include new green jobs in Rother. It is estimated over 700 new jobs will be required to meet renewable energy and decarbonisation demand in [Rother](#) by 2030. By 2050 this figure is estimated to rise to over 1,100 jobs.

### Flooding

There have been many recorded flood incidents across Rother in the last 10 years and increased flooding from rivers and surface water, as well as increased coastal flooding, are among the climate-related risks identified in the UK Climate Change Risk Assessment.

There are fluvial, tidal, fluvial/tidal, and coastal flood defences located along most of the coastline and main watercourses in the District. East Sussex County Council, as the Lead Local Flood Authority, sets conditions to ensure surface water management and the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) is included in development proposals.

The Council enforces flooding-related policies to mitigate flooding. The policies are informed by the [Strategic Flood Risk Assessment 2021](#) which relates to both the current risk of flooding from rivers and surface water and where available the potential effects of future climate change.

### Our coastal community

Rother is a coastal District with half the population living in Bexhill-on-Sea. All future projections carried out by the Met Office in the [UK Climate Projections](#) (UKCP18) report (2023) show some degree of sea level rise and, as the Coastal Protection Authority, the Council is responsible for managing the District's coastline. The Environment Agency is the body responsible for carrying out works to prevent flooding of land that lies lower than the shoreline, which includes parts of the District. There is a Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) for the area which sets out the strategy for managing the coastline. The SMP policy for the coastline which includes Rother is to Hold the Line in all areas except that of:

- a) Cliffe End to Fairlight Cove and Fairlight Cove West where there is a no intervention policy
- b) Fairlight Cove East and Central where there is a managed realignment policy

The discharging of sewage into the sea has been a problem nationally for many years and came under increasing public scrutiny in 2022. The health of our coast is not only important for nature and biodiversity, but it also plays an integral part in the local economy. The local economy is reliant on tourism, a sector which was hit particularly hard by the Covid response, and which is only just emerging. A decline in tourism due to a decrease in bathing water quality would be detrimental to a recovering sector.

### Ecology

The Ecological Emergency is closely linked to the Climate Emergency. Climate change is one of the top causes of habitat loss and habitat loss is further driving climate change. Nature, when given the space to do so, plays a key role in mitigating and adapting to climate change. Our natural environment can lock up carbon, store water, provide cooling shelter and more.

Much of the District falls under environmental protection with 82% of the District covered by the High Weald AONB and a further 7% covered by other protected status including SSSI and European Protected Designations. The High Weald AONB Management Plan is a statutory guide for conserving the nationally important landscape and provides a framework for addressing the major issues faced including food and energy security, housing provision, biodiversity and climate change resilience, and the transition to the low carbon economy. The Council has formally adopted the High Weald AONB Management Plan and continues to collaborate with the High Weald AONB.

The High Weald AONB has some of the darkest skies in the Southeast but light pollution is a growing issue. Light pollution negatively impacts wildlife and affects people's health and wellbeing. Dark Skies policies will be integrated into the next High Weald AONB Management Plan and the Council's Local Plan.

Along the coast, the District is covered by a Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ), Beachy Head East, and a Special Protected Area (SPA) with marine components which extends from Bexhill along the coast past Dungeness. The ecological status of the coastline from Beachy Head to Dungeness was classified as 'Moderate' in 2019.

The District includes two river catchments, the Rother and the Cuckmere. These rivers are fed by tributary rivers and streams across the area. Research carried out by The Rivers Trust in 2019 highlighted the condition of all rivers in the UK. Only two streams and one tributary in the District were categorised as 'good' with the remainder categorised as 'moderate', 'poor' or in 'bad' condition. Factors contributing to these results include sewage, pollution, chemical pollution, climate change, habitat loss, drought and water scarcity, and flooding.

Trees naturally capture and store carbon dioxide, making them an incredibly important tool in the fight against climate change. The right trees in the right places can help us to mitigate climate change by sequestering carbon, but they can also help us to adapt to the changing climate. Trees help to reduce flood risk, provide shade and UV protection, trees prevent soil

erosion, and act as windbreaks and sound barriers. Access to trees and green spaces benefits health and wellbeing and trees provide habitats for nature.

In 2021 the Council published the Urban Tree Forest 1066 report on the structure and composition of its urban forest in Bexhill. The Council subsequently commissioned Treeconomics to produce a Tree Planting Strategy for Bexhill. The aim of the Tree Planting Strategy is to increase tree cover in the urban area and ensure equitable access to all in Bexhill.

## Transport

Emissions from transport equate to a third of Rother's carbon footprint. This is not unusual for a rural District and the reduction of these emissions is a key priority for Rother. The District does not have any motorways, but most transport emissions come from A roads. A low-carbon Rother will require improved infrastructure for walking and wheeling, better public transport, and more electric vehicle (EV) charging points to support residents and encourage behavioural change. The number of EVs registered in Rother in 2022 was more than double the number registered in 2020 (Figure 8).

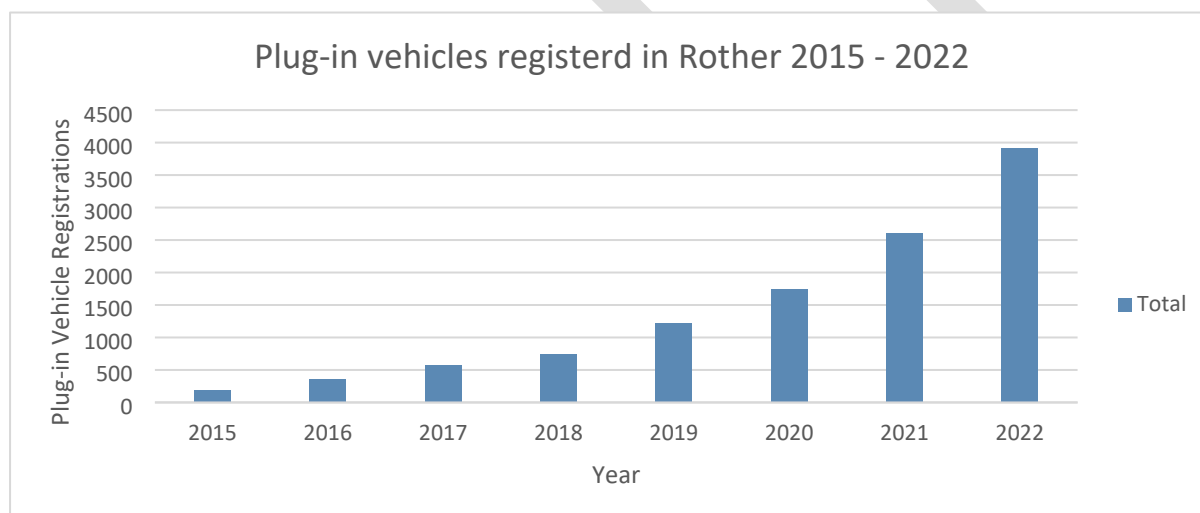


Figure 8 Plug-in vehicles registered in Rother (Source: DVLA)

The government has committed to reducing transport emissions to Net Zero by 2050. In response to this commitment, the government has published several key documents including [Decarbonising Transport: A better, greener Britain](#); [Transitioning to zero emission cars and vans: 2035 delivery plan](#); the [UK electric vehicle infrastructure strategy](#).

East Sussex County Council is the Local Transport Authority (LTA), responsible for the Local Transport Plan (LTP). The LTP is integral to the decarbonisation of transport in Rother as it establishes the transport policies and priorities for the County. Net Zero carbon is a key priority of the developing LTP4 which will run from 2023 – 2050.

## Air Quality

The air quality in Rother is generally good. When there is an exceedance or likely exceedance of an air quality objective, local authorities are required to declare an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and establish an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP). There

are no AQMAs within the District and no formal AQAPs. Full details about the Council’s air quality monitoring can be found in the annual [Rother Air Quality Reports](#).

The Council continues to focus on improving air quality across the District and the transition to a low-carbon society will accelerate this work. Cleaner air is a well-recognised co-benefit of decarbonising transport. Air quality in homes will also be improved through retrofitting and switching to low-carbon heating.

### Rother Climate Action

We are fortunate in Rother to have many community groups and individuals who have been taking climate action for decades. This Strategy recognises the opportunity to build upon this local action and engage all residents, businesses, and organisations. The impacts of climate change are being felt by everyone and we together we can have a greater impact.

Established groups such as Rother Environmental Group, Bexhill Environmental Group and Energise Sussex Coast have long been raising awareness and taking action. More recently we have seen increased interest from Parish and Town Councils, the forming of new environmental groups and new ‘Wild About’ groups appearing across the District.

### Local Offsetting

To meet the Net Zero ambitions of the Council, it is likely offsetting will be required for residual emissions. When considering offsetting it is important to consider the mitigation hierarchy of calculate, avoid, reduce, and finally offset. Without the hierarchy, offsetting can be seen as a license to emit with organisations relying on carbon credits instead of decarbonising.

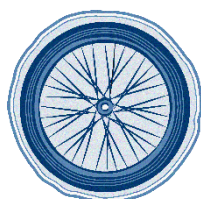
As such, the Council’s offsetting policy will be developed in the 2026-30 Climate Action Plan once organisational emissions have been reduced. The policy will prioritise local, nature-based solutions for the benefit of residents and the environment.

### Action Areas

The emissions data, along with the Rother-specific challenges and opportunities discussed above has identified five action areas for the refreshed Climate Strategy. Emissions from buildings, transport, and resource consumption need to be drastically reduced whilst biodiversity enhancements and clean energy generation provide opportunities for nature recovery, carbon sequestration and avoiding emissions. Each action area contains Rother-specific opportunities and challenges.



**BUILDINGS AND  
ENERGY  
EFFICIENCY**



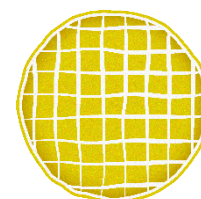
**TRANSPORT**



**RESOURCE  
CONSUMPTION  
AND WASTE**



**BIODIVERSITY  
AND LAND USE**



**ENERGY  
GENERATION**

## Guiding Principles

The Climate Strategy is ambitious, and the Council has developed the following Guiding Principles to direct the delivery. The Guiding Principles ensure the Council is using its position and influence to lead by example, work in partnership and ensure no one is left behind. The Council recognises the scale of the challenge and the role it plays in encouraging behavioural change across the District.

The impacts of climate change are not felt equally across society and the Council recognises it is often those who have contributed the least who are less able to afford the changes required. The [carbon footprint](#) of parishes varies across the District with more affluent areas responsible for greater emissions. Those least able to afford energy efficiency measures to their homes are often those most in need.

Act now	Work in partnership	Continuously improve	Communicate impact	Be Fair
The Council recognises the urgency and will take action commensurate to the challenge.	The Council recognises its own limitations and the scale of the challenge. The Council will continue to work in partnership to achieve its goals.	The Council will measure, review and update the Climate Strategy and Climate Action Plan regularly to ensure it remains relevant and effective.	The Council will communicate its impact and climate action to encourage others.	The Council will ensure the transition is fair. This means ensuring the benefits of climate action are accessible to all and no one is excluded.

## Funding Rother Climate Action

Funding local authority climate action is a challenge. The Skidmore review and UK100's [Powers in Place](#) report alongside many others have highlighted the problems with the current funding mechanisms. Climate action is not a statutory requirement and funding thus far has been on a competition basis which favours those authorities who are more advanced with their Net Zero journey.

Like many local authorities, Rother District Council is under financial pressure to deliver with increasing demand for services and rising inflation. The Council has an Environment Strategy budget to coordinate and deliver operational and District-wide emission reduction, but it will need to secure alternative funding to deliver on the ambitious 2030 target.

The Council has introduced the Climate Emergency Bonus Fund, ringfencing 20% of the Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) for eligible projects that have distinct environmental benefits. Community groups and charitable organisations are able to apply to the Rother Reduce, Re-use, Recycle Grants scheme to fund projects which reduce waste in the District.

Government grants, when they become available, are also sought by the Council to deliver climate action. Shared purchase schemes, private finance, and community crowd-funding initiatives will also be required to fund delivery.

## Our Climate Strategy

### Vision

By 2030, Rother will be a carbon-neutral District where climate-resilient communities are well-equipped to deal with the challenges of climate change and are no longer contributing to global warming.

### Aim

The aim of this strategy is to enable, encourage, and accelerate the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions across the District.

### Objectives

1. The built environment will be low carbon and climate resilient.
2. The need to travel will be reduced, those that do will be on foot, bike, public transport, or in a low/zero carbon vehicle.
3. The District will produce less waste and support a thriving circular economy.
4. Nature will be in recovery across the District.
5. Clean, renewable energy will be produced locally.

Vision	A carbon neutral District where climate-resilient communities are well equipped to deal with the changing climate and are no longer contributing to global warming				
Overall Impact Measure	Greenhouse Gas Emissions align with sequestration across the District and organisational emissions are reduced to 10% of 2019/20 baseline. Nature is in recovery across the District				
Action Area	Buildings and Energy Efficiency	Transport	Resource Consumption and Waste	Biodiversity and Land Use	Energy Generation
Objectives	1. Built environment will be low carbon and climate resilient	2. Need to travel will be reduced, those that do will be on foot, bike, public transport or EV	3. The District will produce less waste and support a thriving circular economy	4. Nature will be in recovery across the District	5. Clean, renewable energy will be produced locally

## Buildings and Energy Efficiency

### The Challenge

Most buildings already in place will still be here in 2050 and almost all of them will require some degree of retrofitting to be carbon neutral. There are over 42,000 homes in Rother and the way we heat and power our homes accounts for 32% of emissions in 2021. Added to this are commercial, industrial, public sector and agricultural buildings. Decarbonising the built environment is an enormous challenge.



Rother has a highly valued historic environment with over 2,000 listed buildings and many non-designated historic buildings such as farmsteads. Listed buildings can present more challenges for decarbonisation, but guidance and case studies are available from Historic England.

The District has a much higher proportion of owner occupancy and much lower proportion of social housing compared to the regional, county and national average. The 2021 census, in Rother District, shows 72.7% owner occupied - including mortgages, 10.2% social rented and 17.1% private rented including shared ownership. The tenure composition for the District will influence what funding mechanisms are available to support decarbonisation.

Over two-thirds of domestic properties in Rother have a gas central heating system with the remainder described as off-gas. The remaining 30% is broken down into properties with two or more fuel types, not including renewables (10%), electric heating, either storage heaters, heat pumps, underfloor heating, or electric boilers (10%), and almost 8% are fuelled by oil. Decarbonising off-gas properties is a priority as oil, LPG and gas are both high emitters of greenhouse gasses and they are expensive to run. Residents and businesses fuelled by these sources are more susceptible to volatile energy prices and the buildings are often less energy efficient due to their age.

The population of Rother is predicted to increase by 12.5% in the period between 2020 and 2035. A key challenge to becoming a carbon neutral District will be managing this growth through the planning system. New housing and commercial buildings will need to be carbon neutral and climate resilient. With the projected climate changes, buildings will need to be designed to prevent overheating and increased flood risk.

To meet the demands of decarbonising the built environment, we need to address the green skills gap. The workforce in Rother is not yet equipped to deal with the scale of the decarbonisation required. This is a nationwide challenge, and the government is being urged to develop a skills strategy.

The Council will focus on reducing emissions from existing buildings through retrofitting following the energy hierarchy, sometimes known as the 'fabric-first' approach. This entails reducing the demand for energy and increasing energy efficiency before considering a switch to a decarbonised form of heating.

### Our Approach

#### Reducing District Emissions

We will ensure new domestic and non-domestic buildings are climate-resilient and policies in the emerging Local Plan positively plan for climate mitigation and adaptation.

The government regularly awards funding for decarbonisation projects which target low-income households and the public sector estate. Where applicable, the Council will bid for this funding and deliver projects across the District.

In 2021, The Climate Emergency Bonus Fund was introduced, setting aside a percentage of the Community Infrastructure Levy for eligible projects that have distinct environmental

benefits. To date this fund has been used to improve the energy efficiency of community buildings across the District and improve the environmental credentials of other community assets. We will continue to use this fund to encourage further decarbonisation of community infrastructure.

### Reducing Council Emissions

The Council will continue to retrofit operational buildings to improve energy efficiency and where suitable, solar PV will be installed. Once the energy performance of the buildings has been improved, and at the end of existing plant life, gas boilers will be replaced for low carbon heating alternatives.

Responsibility for energy efficiency measures in leased buildings lies with the tenant however the Council will work with businesses to raise awareness and promote funding opportunities for businesses in Rother looking to take action.

A retrofit program will support local jobs and businesses addressing the current skills gap across the sector.

<b>Objective 1. The built environment will be low carbon and climate resilient.</b>	
<b>Output 1. Mass retrofit of existing buildings</b>	<b>Output 2. Ensure all new buildings are carbon neutral or carbon negative</b>

## Transport

### The Challenge

Transport has been the largest-emitting sector in the UK since 2015, accounting for 26% of total UK emissions in 2021. In Rother, transport was responsible for 166 ktCO<sub>2</sub>, 30% of all emissions in 2021. As a council with a small fleet, 19.05 tCO<sub>2</sub>e were emitted as Scope 1 emissions in 22/23 and an estimated 45.8 tCO<sub>2</sub>e commuter mileage in 22/23 and 41.04 tCO<sub>2</sub>e business mileage in 21/22. Business mileage data for 22/23 was not available at time of writing.

Rother is a rural District, with 50% of the population living in the main urban area of Bexhill. 84% of households in Rother have access to one or more vehicle with 12.7% of household with three or more vehicles and 16% with no vehicles. The coastal town is linked east-west to Hastings and Eastbourne via the A259 and to the north via the A21. By rail the East Coastway route provides links to Brighton and Kent and the Hastings line links to London. Bus services in Rother are provided by Stagecoach and a number of community bus partnerships that receive funding from East Sussex County Council (ESCC). ESCC recently received £41.4m to implement the [Bus Service Improvement Plan](#).

ESCC is the Local Transport Authority (LTA) responsible for developing the Local Transport Plans (LTP). [LTP4](#) is currently in production and will run from 2023 – 2050. LTP4 sets out how the County Council plan to improve transport across the county with Net Zero carbon, health, wellbeing, and social inclusion, and sustainable economic growth among the top priorities. Rother District Council is a Stakeholder in the LTP4 and officers actively engage in workshops to ensure the interests of Rother residents are best met.

Although Rother District Council is not the LTA, the Council can use its influence to reduce transport emissions and support the transition to low-zero carbon (LZC) transport across the district.

### Our Approach

#### Reducing District Emissions

Spatial policies in the Local Plan will ensure new domestic and non-domestic development is sustainably located to limit new transport emissions and reduce existing emissions. Policies will also be introduced to ensure active travel routes are available and accessible.

The Council will install EV charging points in Rother District Council owned car parks where grid capacity allows. The Council will also provide charging facilities and incentivise EV uptake for staff.

Through grants and partnership working with businesses and community groups, the Council can encourage others to install EV chargers and promote active travel.

#### Reducing Council Emissions

The Council leases a small fleet. These vehicles are predominately maintenance vehicles with one 4X4 for the Coastal Team and one Environmental Health vehicle. Switching to EVs upon lease renewal will reduce emissions by approximately 19tCO<sub>2</sub>e per year.

Whilst the Council cannot force staff to change their personal vehicle, it can incentivise and promote sustainable choices including active travel and public transport. Many local authorities have introduced pool vehicles and salary sacrifice schemes for EVs to reduce business mileage emissions.

Staff commuting habits have changed dramatically since the publication of the Environment Strategy (2020) due to the increase in remote working during the pandemic. Most staff work from Town hall when in the office. Town Hall is well located for public transport with the trainline providing links on the Hastings – Eastbourne line and to the north of the District via a change at St Leonards. Numerous bus services also operate from Bexhill. The 2023 staff commuting survey established 71% of respondents currently commute by private petrol or diesel vehicle. The measures mentioned to reduce business mileage will also reduce commuter mileage.

**Objective 2. The need to travel will be reduced, those that do will be on foot, bike, public transport, or in a low/zero carbon vehicle.**

Output 1. Sustainable forms of transport supported through the planning system

Output 2. Facilitate the transition to LZC vehicles across the District

Output 3. A programme of activities to promote active travel across the District

## Resource Consumption and Waste Reduction

### The Challenge

Rother currently sends 0.11% of its waste to landfill with 22.95% composted, 26.18% recycled and 50.75% sent to the Newhaven Energy Recovery Facility. Whilst Rother has above average recycling and composting rates, these actions alone are not enough to support a low-carbon transition.

Disposal is only the final part of the process when it comes to resource consumption and waste. To reduce emissions, we must also consider the products we are using, where they come from, the resources required for manufacture, maintenance, use, and the energy used to distribute them.

Resources to be considered include, but are not limited to, water, food, fuel, and building materials. Emissions from services we consume such as leisure, sports, entertainment, and social activities are also to be considered.

The Committee on Climate Change (CCC) identified climate risks relating to food and water supply. The CCC also identified risks to international supply chains relating to food, clothing, and electronic equipment.

The impact of over-consumption is often not visible in the UK. Many of the products we buy are made overseas and imported. Not only does this result in high emission rates for those countries responsible for the manufacture, but it can also result in deforestation which exacerbates climate change. There is a general public awareness of the role palm oil plays in the deforestation of tropical rainforests, but beef, soy and wood products are also driving deforestation. By supporting locally produced materials and food systems, we can all play our part in ending deforestation.

We need to reduce the volume of resources we consume and transition to a circular economy.

### Our Approach

#### Reducing District Emissions

In 2023, the Council introduced the Rother Reduce, Re-use, Recycle Grants which aims to encourage and fund the move towards a circular economy. Businesses, residents, and community groups can be encouraged to follow sustainable practices relating to resource consumption through a programme of corporate communications and engagement.

Local businesses will be encouraged to consider their own Scope 3 emissions and supported in reducing these wherever possible. A programme of decarbonising Rother's SME's will be funded through the UK Shared Prosperity Funding allocation.

The Environment Act requires local authorities and residents to make significant changes in relation to waste and reusing resources. Food waste collections will reduce food waste across the District and preparations are underway to introduce this in Rother in line with the Environmental Improvement Plan.

Through the Planning System, the Council will reduce construction waste and encourage the reuse of materials from buildings at the end of life. The new Local Plan will include policies relating to resource use including waste and water.

Reducing Council Emissions

The introduction of an Environment Management System (EMS) will provide a framework for the Council to reduce its organisational resource consumption and waste. Through the reduction of operational emissions, sustainable procurement policies, supporting local food systems, and raising awareness through corporate communications, the Council can reduce resource-related emissions.

Objective 3. The District will produce less waste and support a thriving circular economy	
Output 1. Reduced consumption of resources and waste	Output 2. Increased repair, reuse and recycling of goods and materials

**Land Use and Biodiversity**

**The Challenge**

The UK is one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world having experienced major changes over the past few centuries and particularly the last 50 years according to the [2023 State of Nature Report](#). We know the role nature plays in tackling climate change as well as the broader benefits for people. We also know what is required to restore nature at scale.

As a predominately rural and coastal District, Rother has a heavily protected landscape. 82% falls within the High Weald AONB and a further 7 % is protected by national/international conservation designations. Ancient woodland covers >15% of the district, more than any District in the South East. Rother is also starting from a relatively high baseline in terms of carbon-sequestration due to the high levels of woodland. While there are opportunities for new woodland creation in urban areas, woodland creation within the AONB and designated areas would not be appropriate. Research carried out by ARUP on behalf of the Council for the new Local Plan evidence base suggests LULUCF will peak and remain stable at 2024 levels.

The Environment Act (2021) introduced a new locally driven approach to expand, improve, and connect places for wildlife across the country, a Nature Recovery Network. East Sussex County Council is responsible for developing the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for the county with support from the Local Planning Authorities which includes Rother District Council. The formal process began in summer 2023 with the final strategy expected in 2025.

As a local planning authority Rother District Council has a statutory ‘Biodiversity Duty’ which was introduced by the Environment Act, 2021. This means the Council must consider what it can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity, agree policies and specific objectives based on the Council’s consideration, and act to deliver the policies and achieve the Council's objectives.

## Our Approach

### Nature Recovery and Carbon Sequestration for the District

Land with high sequestration potential across the District will be protected and enhanced wherever possible. This will be done through corporate communications and engagement, grant-giving opportunities and the planning system.

The new Local Plan will include policies which prioritise land use changes which favour GHG removals like new woodland and the sustainable management of woodlands, wetlands and arable lands.

The development of the LNRS for Sussex will be supported by the Council and decision-making relating to the LNRS will be strengthened in the Local Plan. If deemed feasible by the Planning Inspectorate, the Council will require 20% Biodiversity Net Gain, going beyond the 10% the legal requirement.

The Council will continue to work in partnership with local conservation organisations, government bodies and the wider community to fund and deliver projects across the District, including land management practices and water health.

### Nature Recovery and carbon sequestration on RDC Assets

The Council will assess RDC-owned green and blue assets and implement a programme to enhance these sites for nature recovery and carbon sequestration. This will include the designation of specific areas for wilding, natural flood management, and tree and hedge planting where appropriate.

Management conditions will be added to new leases of Council-owned land to ensure tenants are actively enhancing the sites for nature.

### Objective 4. Nature will be in recovery across the District

Output 1. Halt land and marine species decline

Output 2. Increase biodiversity and carbon sequestration

## Energy Generation

### The Challenge

The UK Government has set a target for the electricity system to be fully decarbonised by 2035. At the same time, it is expected electricity demand in the UK will at least double by 2050 compared to usage at 2018 levels. Whilst grid decarbonisation is not currently in line with the Council's 2030 target, it is now occurring rapidly due to the increase in renewable generation. To meet the future demand for electricity, renewable energy will need to be increased at pace.

Locally produced renewable energy and storage can support energy security and reduce exposure to volatile, international fossil fuel price fluctuations. There is the potential for the Council to generate income through renewable energy. The scale of installation will be dependent on grid capacity and network upgrades. UK Power Networks (UKPN) are the

main Distribution Network Operator (DNO) for Rother and the South East, responsible for maintaining and upgrading the electricity network.

The East Sussex Pension Fund, which Rother District Council contributes towards, currently invests in fossil fuels. In 2022 the Council passed a motion to call on the East Sussex Pension Fund to immediately halt new investment in fossil fuels and withdraw its existing investments within the next five years.

The Council will encourage local generation of renewable electricity to support future demand.

## Our Approach

### Renewable Energy Across the District

Rother can further support grid decarbonisation by participating in smart energy solutions, shifting, and reducing peak demand and storing excess production.

The Council will encourage domestic renewable energy generation throughout Rother through collective buying schemes such as Solar Together. Decarbonisation support and grant funding will also be provided to businesses.

The Emerging Local Plan will include policies which positively plan for renewable energy and District heat networks. There will also be policies to support community energy.

UKPN are continuing to grow the support they offer local authorities. The Council will work closely with UKPN to ensure the needs of Rother residents and businesses are met.

### Renewable Energy on RDC Assets

The Council switched to a green energy provider in 2021 and has installed solar PV where economically viable on operational buildings as well as several commercially leased properties. The Council will continue to install renewable energy systems where viable on existing and future assets, including leased commercial and residential properties.

Council-owned open spaces such as car parks and agricultural land will be explored for solar potential alongside alternative investment opportunities for renewable energy generation and storage.

### Objective 5. Clean, renewable energy will be produced locally

Output 1. Solar PV on all suitable roof space

Output 2. Support renewable energy generation

## Appendices

District-wide 2021 emissions report

RDC 22/23 Organisational Emissions Report

ARUP 2023 Report for the New Local Plan

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## Climate Strategy Engagement Tracker

Name/ Organisation	Meeting Dates	Summary
ESHOG Climate Change and Sustainability Sub-group - Jim Aspdin	3.10.22	Update that Rother are starting the Environment Strategy Refresh
Greg Minns	13.10.22	Intro to Air Quality in Rother and feedback form Environment Strategy - Currently below the UK levels so no Air Quality Management Areas - Could align RC with the WHO targets which are more in line with Rother's levels during the pandemic when travel dropped
Rother Parish Conference	19.10.22	Parish and Town Councils told RDC are refreshing the Environment Strategy
Matthew Bird - Sussex Wildlife Trust	26.10.22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* There appears to be no baseline or evidence base of emissions; and subsequently no strategic prioritisations</li> <li>* Vague pledges which require a more coherent approach linked to outcomes</li> <li>* There appears to be no Action plan for greenhouse gas reductions</li> <li>* Some vague language - for example we would not recommend the use of terms such as 'environmentally- friendly council'.</li> <li>* Does not seem to be a District context - we did not get a sense of wider engagement and the community leadership role in climate change.</li> </ul>
Be The Change	4.10.22	Discussed reusable nappy scheme - wider discussion about the Environment Strategy and what is missing. Discussed enhancing the waste aspect
Stuart Ramsbottom and Adrian Gaylon	7.10.22	Discussed Active Rother and the links with the Environment Strategy
Brian Griffiths	7.10.23	Intro to RDC Parks and Gardens - Relationship with local environmental groups
Lindsay - Community Supporters	16.10.22	Intro to CS and Environment Strategy Refresh
Sussex Wildlife Trust - Henri Brocklebank, Jess Price	18.11.22	Defend Nature Meeting - Intro to Jess and agreed to arrange a separate meeting to update on Environment Strategy
All Staff Event	21.11.22	Update on Climate Action so far and next steps for Environment Strategy
Health and Wellbeing Task and Finish Group	25.11.22	Update on Health and Wellbeing elements of Environment Strategy refresh
Jeff Pyrah	12.12.22	Local Plan climate evidence base discussion

<b>Name/ Organisation</b>	<b>Meeting Dates</b>	<b>Summary</b>
Combe Valley Countryside Park - Annie Brown	13.12.22	Discussed Environment Strategy refresh, CVCP Strategy, Nature Recovery in Rother
Wealden DC - Chantal Lass, Thomas Hood	19.12.22	Discussed Environment Strategy Refresh and WDC's approach - similar timeline
Sedlescombe Parish Council meeting	20.12.22	Presentation to Sedlescombe PC on local Climate Action - SPC declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency
East Sussex Climate Officers	11.01.23	Regular Climate Officers meeting
Wealden DC - Thomas Hood	13.01.23	Unlock Diplocks Project discussion - engaging businesses
RDC Procurement - Charlotte Stephens	16.01.23	Climate Change and Procurement
Rebecca Owen	18.01.23	RDC Green Spaces Management Plans
Dean Morrison - High Weald AONB	19.01.23	Climate Strategy refresh plans and Cuckmere & Pevensey Levels Catchment Partnership, Powdermill Catchment work - Sussex Flow initiative
Wealden DC - Chantal Lass	23.01.23	Climate Action Planning and Climate Awareness Training
Richard Parker-Harding	26.01.23	Environmental Health and Climate Actions for the Climate Strategy
Ute Woodward - Wealden DC Waste	27.01.23	Waste reductions initiatives for Climate Strategy, specifically reusable nappies
Venus Tam, UK Power Networks	27.01.23	Update for UKPN on RDC's Climate Strategy, specifically relating to Local Area Energy Planning
Graham Burgess - RDC Assets	02.02.23	Green Asset Management discussion - BNG potential and sequestration opportunities
Kerry Briffitt - Southern Housing	03.02.23	Climate Strategy and Biodiversity ambitions
Sam Stone	06.02.23	Rother Coastal opportunities for Climate Strategy refresh
Nicola Mitchell	07.02.23	Climate Strategy timeline and plan
Mel Powell	08.02.23	UKSPF and Climate Strategy Action Planning
Sarah Brotherton - High Weald AONB	09.02.23	Climate Strategy Refresh update and HW AONB Management Plan update
Jess Price and Fran Southgate - Sussex wildlife Trust	10.02.23	Climate Strategy - Actions to enhance both Strategy and Action Plan - Policy discussion for new Local Plan
Andrew Wedmore - Brightling Environmental Group	10.02.23	New Environmental Group - update on Climate Strategy refresh including action areas - shared

<b>Name/ Organisation</b>	<b>Meeting Dates</b>	<b>Summary</b>
		ideas for the new Environmental Group relating specifically to energy
Cleo Alper - South East Rivers Trust	16.02.23	Climate Strategy plan and opportunities with new Rother Catchment Partnership
Sam Phyll - Hastings BC	21.02.23	HBC Solar for Business discussion and opportunities to include in RDC Climate Strategy
Kate Davidson - Hastings Furniture Service	22.02.23	Introduction and RDC Climate update - Resource Consumption and Buildings
High Weald OSG meeting	28.02.23	Opportunity to update attendees on RDC Climate Strategy update during round table officer updates
Rother Environmental Group	28.02.23	Presentation given by LB and EM on RDC Climate Strategy update. Lots of discussion about the Council's role, working with partners, grid capacity, grant funding, EV charging. Invited back to present again next year.
Urban Foresight Rother Rural Economy Workshop	03.03.23	Invited as a participant but discussion came back to climate several times and gave an opportunity to update attendees about the Climate Strategy
Sussex Nature Partnership - Kate Cole and Julie Middleton	07.03.23	RDC provided an update for SxNP on the Local Plan development and the Climate Strategy refresh
Local Strategic Partnership	09.03.23	Presentation on the Climate Strategy refresh progress including evidence base
Tracy Dighton and Mike Pelper - 1066 Citizens Advice	13.03.23	Meeting with 1066 CA to discuss CS and fuel poverty. Potential
Bexhill TC - Climate Committee	15.03.23	Presentation to BTC on the CS refresh - discussion around working together to achieve the same outcomes
Dan Bontoft	23.03.23	Climate Strategy - staff car usage
Duncan Ellis	23.03.23	Climate Strategy schemes and budget
Battle Town Council - Climate sub-committee	23.03.23	First meeting of the Battle Town Council Climate Sub-committee - RDC to provide support to BTC in writing a climate action plan. LB provided an update on RDC CS and provided information on BTC's carbon footprint.
Energy Systems Catapult - Michelle Chapunza-Mhindurwa	27.03.23	Discussed RDC plans for decarbonisation and Local Area Energy Plans
Alice Webb - Marine Conservation Organisation	28.03.23	Discussed CS refresh and ways to make it more relevant for marine and coast

<b>Name/ Organisation</b>	<b>Meeting Dates</b>	<b>Summary</b>
Joshua Speer and Lee Furlong - Bexhill College	29.03.23	Discussed Bexhill Tree Planting Strategy and tree planting on college land. Also discussed CS update.
Brett Pearson - Locate East Sussex	31.03.23	CS update and ways to engage businesses in Net Zero in Rother
RALC	12.04.23	Gave key note on RDC Climate Strategy including action areas and PC&TC Climate Action
Local Plan Climate Emergency Workshop	18.04.23	Climate Related Policy Workshop
Anti-Poverty Steering Group	19.04.23	Round table update on CS
Local Plan Environmental Management Workshop	21.04.23	Environmental Management Policy Workshop
Green Team Workshop	24.04.23	CS development presentation to Green Team
Overview and Scrutiny Committee	24.04.23	CCSG Progress report on the Environment Strategy - included progress on refresh
Hannah Martin - Lloyds Bank	25.04.23	Discussion with RDC's Banking Manager about opportunities to fund climate action - discussed emerging Climate Action Plan
Cuckmere & Pevensey Levels CP Meeting	26.04.23	Opportunity to update partners on the Progress of CS refresh. Partners advised against formal consultation due to other statutory consultations they are working on and agreed to support RDC informally.
Roddy Crockett - Sustrans	26.04.23	Update on RDC climate priorities
Rother Romney Catchment Partnership	03.05.23	First meeting of the partnership. Opportunity to update partners on the Progress of CS refresh.
Energise Sussex Coast	04.05.23	Climate Strategy update and partnership opportunities
Bexhill Unwrapped interview	11.05.23	Video interview on the progress of the Climate Strategy refresh - published on FB
Michael Courts and David Bishop - Retrofit Partnership and Strategy	12.05.23	Discussion about the need for a retrofit strategy for East Sussex. Retrofit is a key priority of revised CS.
Battle Town Council Climate Sub-committee	15.05.23	Update for BTC
Ros Clayton - Bexhill Environmental Group	17.05.23	Discussed partnership opportunities - Action Planning
East Sussex Housing Partnership Board	19.05.23	Update in round table
Member Induction Programme	22.05.23	Introduction to the CS for Members

<b>Name/ Organisation</b>	<b>Meeting Dates</b>	<b>Summary</b>
Ollie Hunter - RDC tenant	26.05.23	Site visit and discuss about engaging tenants with nature recovery and the CS
Terry Hume - Public Health	30.05.23	Multifunctional and inclusive green spaces
Battle TC Climate Sub-committee	05.06.23	Progress on Climate Action Plan
HARTAG	06.06.23	Attended meeting and general intro
East Guldeford Parish Meeting	07.06.23	Presentation on RDC Climate Strategy and Parish Climate Action - very enthusiastic
UKSPF Local Partnership Meeting	08.06.23	General intro to CS
Cabinet - UK100 report	12.06.23	UK100 pledge - reconfirm RDC's commitment to Net Zero
East Sussex Energy Partnership	19.06.23	Round table update on Climate Strategy
Nick Hanna - Sussex Greenways	19.06.23	Discussion around funding and alignment with Climate Strategy
East Sussex Retrofit Strategy and Partnership Development	22.06.23	Role of CS in building decarbonisation
CMT	28.06.23	Climate Strategy Presentation
Jo Cobby - East Sussex Energy Partnership follow up	28.06.23	Building decarbonisation in CS
Salehurst and Robertsbridge Parish Council Meeting	10.07.23	Presentation on RDC CS and why S&RPC should declare a climate and ecological emergency - stayed for declaration
Stewart Drew and Patricia Lochans - De La Warr Pavilion	11.07.23	Presentation on RDC CS and aligning DLWP Environment ambitions
Cabinet Away Day	12.07.23	CS Presentation
Ashburnham and Penhurst PC Meeting	26.07.23	Presentation on RDC CS and why A&PPC should declare a climate and ecological emergency
Rother Romney Catchment Partnership	24.08.2	Strategy update
UKPN	25.08.23	Local Net Zero hub - opportunity to input RDC Climate Action Plan
Planning Service Meeting	30.08.23	Climate Strategy Presentation - Internal Engagement
Housing and Regen Managers Meeting	31.08.23	Climate Strategy Presentation - Internal Engagement
Anti-Poverty Steering Group	05.09.23	Round table update on Climate Strategy

<b>Name/ Organisation</b>	<b>Meeting Dates</b>	<b>Summary</b>
Battle TC Climate and Ecology WG	06.09.23	Round table update on CS
East Sussex Climate Change Officers Meeting	11.09.23	Round table update on CS
Olivia Morton - Natural England	18.09.23	Tree Strategies and CS priorities
Corporate Policy and Projects Team Meeting	19.09.23	Climate Strategy Presentation - Internal Engagement
RDC Carbon Literacy Training	21.09.23	Opportunity to discuss Climate Strategy - Internal Engagement
Finance Team	26.09.23	Climate Strategy Presentation - Internal Engagement
Brede Parish Council	26.09.23	Presentation on RDC CS and why BPC should declare a climate and ecological emergency
CCSG	28.09.23	Full CS Presentation
Full Housing Team	04.10.23	Climate Strategy Presentation - Internal Engagement
Regeneration Team	10.10.23	Climate Strategy Presentation - Internal Engagement
Environmental Health full service meeting	11.10.23	Climate Strategy Presentation - Internal Engagement
Revs and Bens and Customer Services	12.10.23	Climate Strategy Presentation - Internal Engagement

**Rother District Council**

**Report to:** Climate Change Steering Group

**Date:** 26 October 2023

**Title:** Rother District Greenhouse Gas Emissions Report - 2021

**Report of:** Lucie Bolton, Environment Strategy Officer

**Ward(s):** All

**Purpose of Report:** To present to the Climate Change Steering Group the District-wide greenhouse gas emissions for 2021.

**Officer**

**Recommendation(s):** It be **RESOLVED**: That:

- 1) the report be noted; and
- 2) district-wide emissions be reported annually to track progress of the Environment/Climate Strategy.

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**Introduction**

1. This report presents the 2021 emissions data for Rother District.
2. The data for the district is collated and calculated by the Government and published annually via the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNEZ), formally the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS).
3. There is an 18-month delay for the publication of this data, hence the delay in reporting district-wide emissions.

**Details of the report**

4. In 2019, the Council declared a Climate Emergency and pledged to do all that was within its powers to become carbon neutral, now more commonly referred to as net zero, in Council operations and as a district by 2030.
5. In June 2023, the UK Government published the annual estimates for local authority and regional greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. This is the second time all GHG emissions have been reported with figures for carbon dioxide emissions only available prior to June 2022.
6. The data provided uses nationally available datasets and provides the most reliable and consistent breakdown of GHG emissions.
7. Full details of the district-wide emissions can be found in Appendix A – Rother District Emissions Report - 2021.

8. In 2021, Rother's territorial GHG emissions were 472.6 kilotonnes CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent (ktCO<sub>2</sub>e), up 15% on 2020 and 4% on 2019.
9. Transport was the largest emitting sector, responsible for 30% of emissions in 2021.
10. The domestic sector was responsible for 29% of emissions and the industrial sector was responsible for 22%.
11. Most sectors saw a rise in emissions from 2020 to 2021, largely due to the COVID-19 restrictions easing and more heating use due to colder weather. This is consistent with the national picture.
12. Unlike the national picture, emissions from the industry, commercial, and public sectors have increased above 2019 levels. The increase in the domestic sector above 2019 levels is smaller than the national increase.
13. Emissions from industry saw the greatest increase above 2019 levels. This has been queried with the DESNEZ data team as the reasons are unclear.
14. The Government publishes data on non-domestic gas consumption at Middle Layer Super Output Area (MSOA). The 2021 data identifies three MSOA where total non-domestic gas consumption is over 10 GWh – Rother 006, Rother 008 and Rother 011. A map showing the location of these areas is included in Appendix A.
15. Overall, district emissions are not on track to meet the Council's 2030 carbon-neutral ambitions.
16. The report shows emission reductions from the transport, domestic, and industrial sectors need to be prioritised.
17. The emissions data in this report has been used in the Climate Strategy refresh and forms the evidence base for Climate Action Plan 2023/24-2026/27.

## **Conclusion**

18. District-wide emissions increased between 2020 and 2021. This was expected due to the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions.
19. Emissions from some sectors have increased above 2019 levels resulting in an overall increase above 2019 levels. For the most part, this reflects the national picture.
20. The data demonstrates district-wide emissions are not on track to meet the Council's 2030 target and emissions from transport, domestic and industrial sectors should be treated as a priority.

## **Environmental**

21. This report provides the annual district-wide emissions data which has been used as part of the evidence base for the Climate Strategy refresh.



<b>Other Implications</b>	<b>Applies?</b>	<b>Other Implications</b>	<b>Applies?</b>
Human Rights	No	Equalities and Diversity	No
Crime and Disorder	No	Consultation	No
Environmental	Yes	Access to Information	No
Sustainability	No	Exempt from publication	No
Risk Management	No		

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Appendices:	A – Rother District Emissions Report - 2021
Relevant previous Minutes:	n/a
Background Papers:	None
Reference Documents:	None

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## Rother District Emissions Report - 2021

### Summary

This report presents the latest data on District-wide, territorial greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) for 2005 - 2021, issued by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNEZ) in June 2023.

In 2021 Rother's territorial greenhouse gas emissions were 472.6 kilotonnes CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent (ktCO<sub>2</sub>e), up 15% on 2020 and 4% on 2019.

Transport was the largest emitting sector, responsible for 30% of emissions in 2021.

The domestic sector was responsible for 29% of emissions and the industrial sector was responsible for 22%.

Most sectors saw a rise in emissions from 2020 to 2021, largely due to the COVID-19 restrictions easing and more heating use due to colder weather. This is consistent with the national picture.

Unlike the national picture, emissions from the industry, commercial, and public sectors have increased above 2019 levels. The increase in the domestic sector above 2019 levels is smaller than the national increase.

Emissions from industry saw the greatest increase above 2019 levels. This has been queried with the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNEZ) data team as the reasons are unclear.

### Introduction

This report presents the latest data on District-wide, territorial GHG emissions for 2005 - 2021, issued by DESNEZ in June 2023.

This is the second time all GHG emissions have been reported with figures for carbon dioxide emissions only available prior to June 2022.

The data provided uses nationally available datasets and provides the most reliable and consistent breakdown of GHG emissions. They cover territorial emissions of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), and nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O). Fluorinated gases are not included in regional breakdowns, though they are included in the [UK territorial GHG emissions national statistics](#). The [Technical Report](#) provides the full methodology and dataset.

### Background

In 2019, the Council declared a Climate Emergency and pledged to do all that was within its powers to become carbon neutral in Council operations and as a District by 2030.

The government publishes data each year on GHG emissions for each [local authority](#) in the UK from a range of sectors including Domestic, Transport, Industry, Commercial, Public

Sector, Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF), Agriculture, and Waste Management.

The data shows 'territorial' emissions, meaning emissions that occur within the UK's borders. The emissions are allocated on an 'end-user' basis meaning emissions are distributed according to the point of energy consumption as opposed to where it is generated. Emissions from the production of goods are assigned to where the goods are produced rather than consumed. Emissions from the production of goods which are imported are excluded.

This report uses the 'full' DESNEZ dataset. This excludes the following types of emissions:

The following types of emissions are excluded:

- aviation, offshore industry, shipping, and military transport, because they cannot be allocated to local areas in a practical way.
- emissions from goods manufactured abroad but consumed in the UK, known as 'embedded' emissions, as there is currently no means to show this at a local authority level. The relative proportion of these emissions is probably increasing as the UK economy continues to transition from manufacturing to services.

The following types of emissions are included, even though they are not considered to be under the influence of local authorities: emissions from motorways, large industrial installations in the EU Emissions Trading Scheme, diesel trains, and from land use, land use change, and forestry. In Rother, these emissions are minimal, due to the lack of any motorways.

There are some important limitations that users of these estimates should be aware of. These include:

- A proportion of national electricity sales cannot be successfully allocated to specific Local Authorities due to lack of information.
- Road transport emission estimates rely on national road traffic estimates, and the distribution of traffic on minor roads has had to be imputed at a local level from regional level data.
- The local distribution of emissions from sources other than gas, electricity generation, or transport is largely estimated from proxy information such as population or employment data.

The data issued in June 2023 for 2020 and earlier has been updated from the dataset issued last year, this is due to the re-calculation of the 2005 to 2020 estimates to reflect the methodological changes used in calculating the 2021 data. This year's data release does not explain all revisions to the historical data series or the year-on-year changes for each local authority, so the changes are taken at face value.

### Overview of Greenhouse Gas Emissions in Rother in 2021

In 2021, Rother’s District-wide emissions of all three GHGs totalled 472.6 ktCO<sub>2</sub>e. This is an overall increase of 15% on 2020 and an increase of 4% on the baseline year of 2019, as seen in Table 1. Figure 1 shows the total 2021 emissions broken down by sector.

	Emissions ktCO <sub>2</sub>			CO <sub>2</sub> e % change from	
	2019	2020	2021	2019 to 2021	2020 to 2021
Rother District	453.5	403	472.6	+4%	+15%

Table 1 Total GHG Emissions (ktCO<sub>2</sub>e)

Year	Industry	Commercial	Public Sector	Domestic	Transport	LULUCF	Agriculture	Waste Management	Total (ktCO <sub>2</sub> e)	Per Capita (tCO <sub>2</sub> e)	Per km <sup>2</sup> (kt CO <sub>2</sub> e)
2019	80.4	14.3	9.2	158.3	188.1	-80.8	76.4	7.5	453.5	4.8	0.9
2020	75.4	12.5	9.4	156.4	154.3	-82.2	72.6	4.2	402.6	4.3	0.8
2021	122.8	16.0	13.7	159.7	166.0	-82.0	72.4	4.0	472.6	5.1	0.9

Table 2 GHG Emissions (ktCO<sub>2</sub>e) by Sector

The Tyndall Centre for Climate Research has developed a science-based approach for local authority area-wide carbon targets that align with meeting the UN’s Paris Agreement goal of “limiting global warming to well below 2°C and pursuing efforts to limit it to 1.5°C”. The method is outlined in the Centre’s [carbon budget tool for local authorities](#). The tool sets an overall area-wide carbon emissions ‘budget’ for local authorities through to 2100 and divides these into a series of 5-year budgets. The Tyndall Centre carbon budget for Rother District sets out the annual carbon reduction required to keep within the respective carbon budgets. For Rother, this equates to a reduction of 13.8% year-on-year.

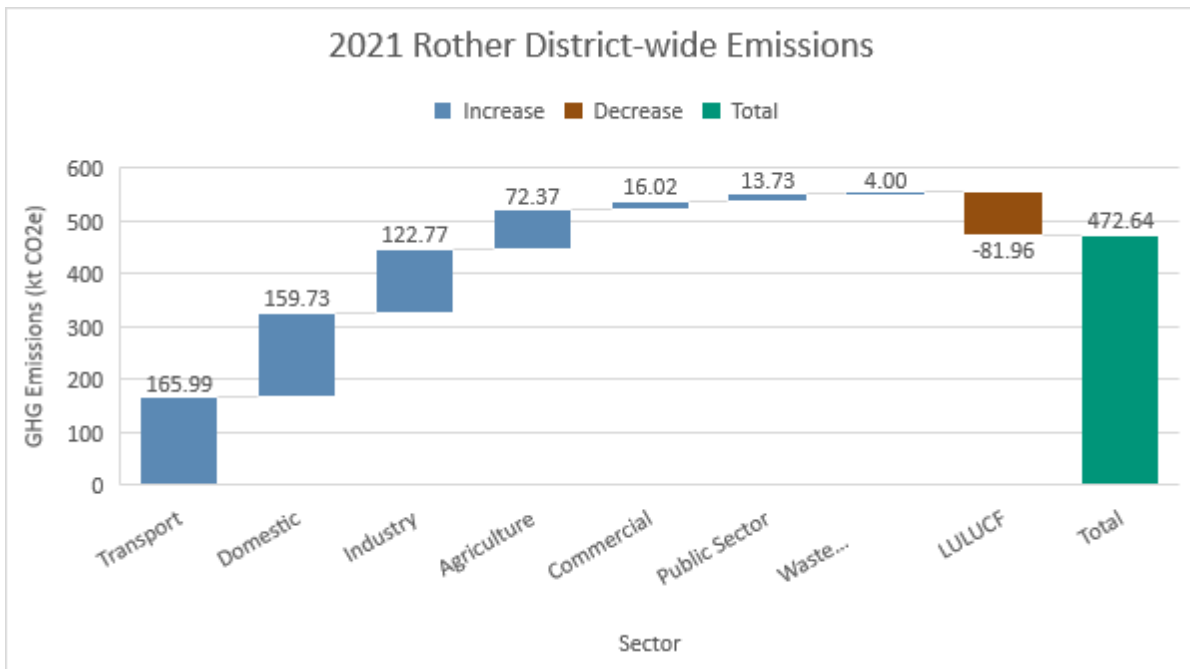


Figure 1 2021 Rother District-wide GHG Emissions by Sector

Since the baseline year of 2019, emissions from Transport, Agriculture and Waste Management have decreased whereas emissions from Industry, Commercial, Public Sector and Domestic sectors have increased, See Table 2 and Figures 1 and 2. Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF) shows an increase in the sequestration of emissions from the baseline year.

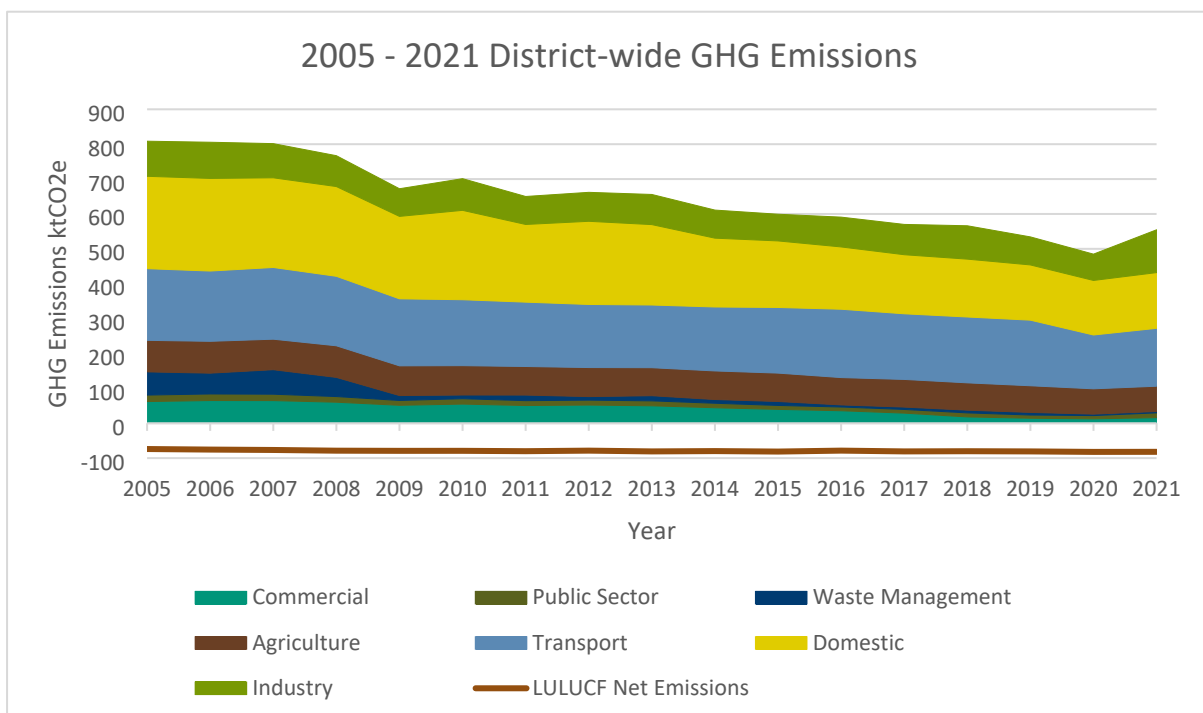


Figure 2 2005 - 2021 District-wide GHG Emissions by Sector

GHG emissions have risen between 2020 and 2021 across all parts of the UK, except for the northeast, and Rother is no exception. The dataset indicates a particularly significant

## Appendix A

increase in Rother between 2020 and 2021 mostly as a result of a large increase in industrial gas usage. A post-COVID rebound in transport emissions was seen in Rother, like all district and borough areas in East Sussex, though transport emissions remained below pre-COVID levels.

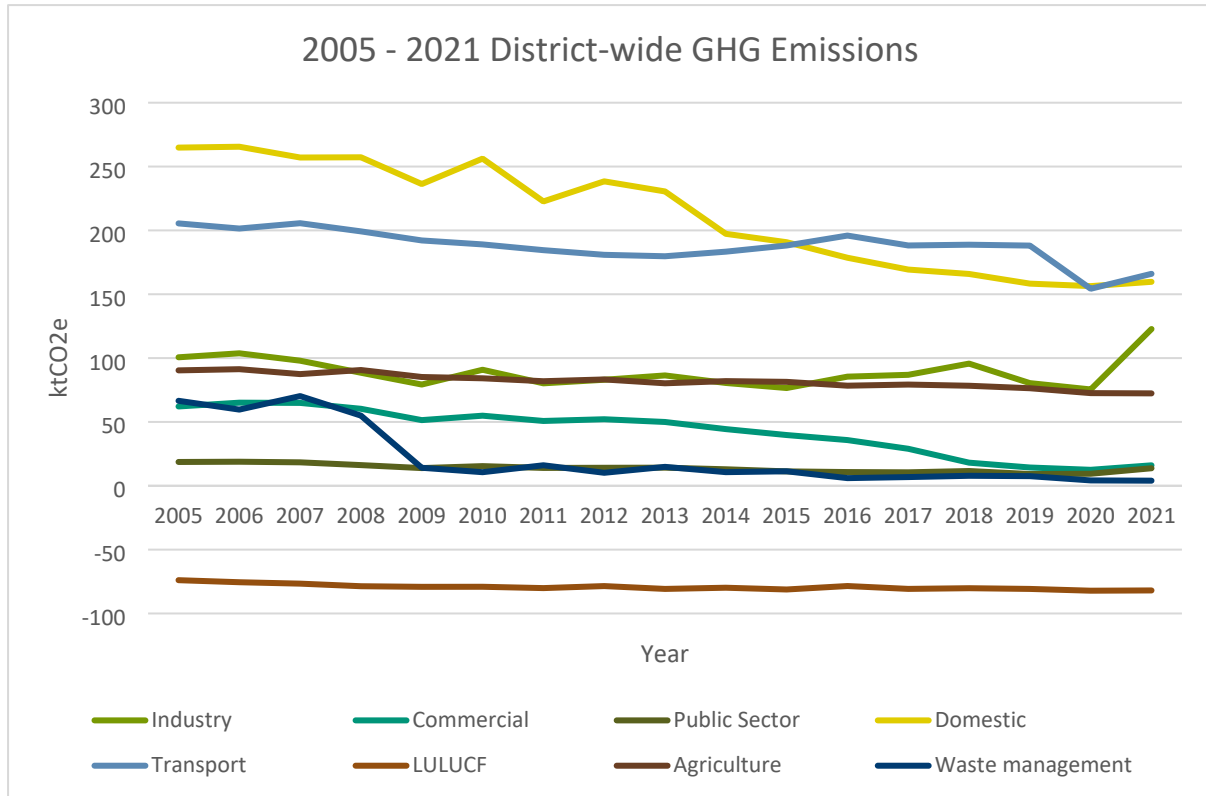


Figure 3 2005 - 2021 District-wide GHG Emissions

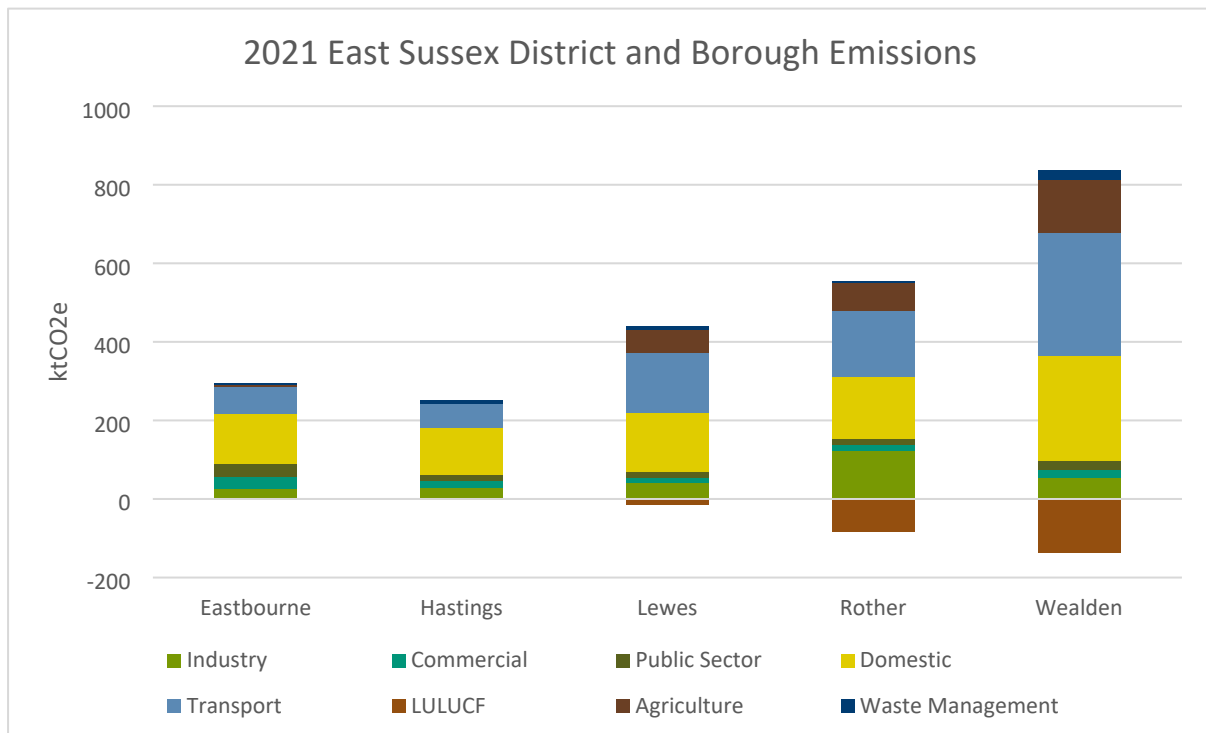


Figure 4 East Sussex District and Borough Emissions

East Sussex currently has one of the lowest per capita GHG emissions of counties in England, which is mainly due to the lack of motorways, the relative lack of heavy industry and relatively higher carbon removals from LULUCF. Rother has the highest per capita GHG emissions in East Sussex, see Figure 5. However, it's important to note that, whilst benchmarking on a per capita basis is a useful measure for domestic emissions, emissions from industry and transport are largely driven by national factors, so comparisons for these sectors should be treated with caution.

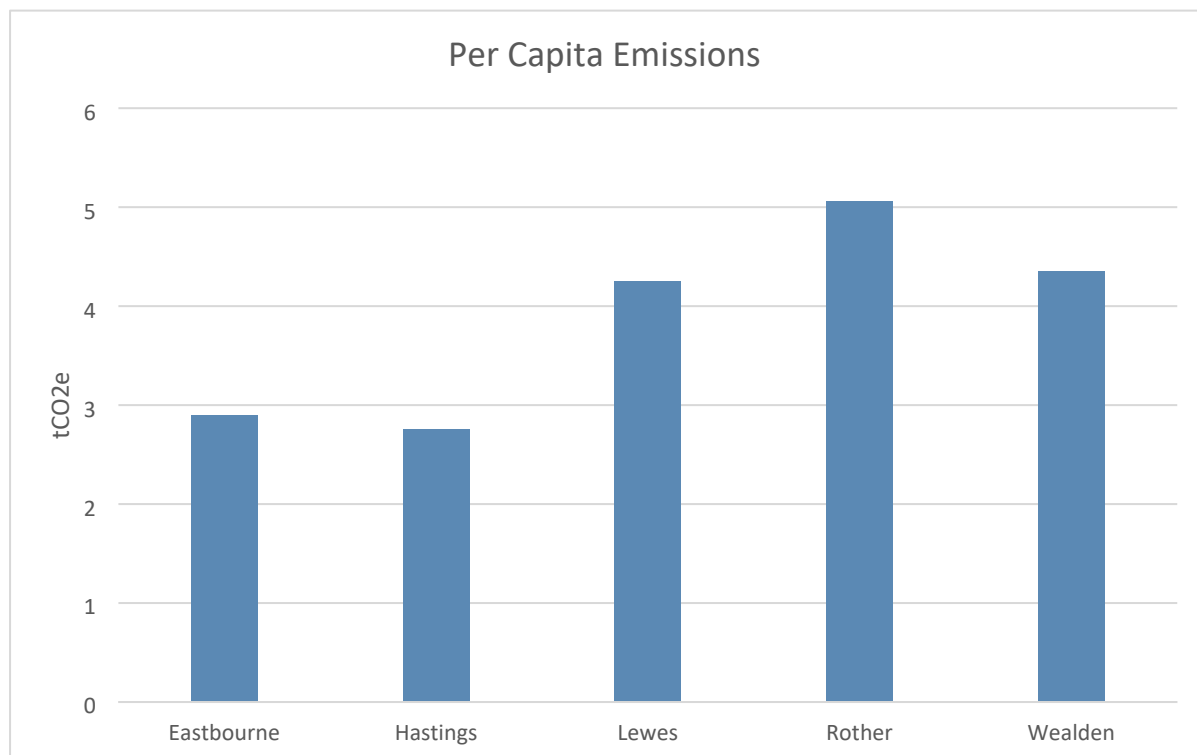


Figure 5 Per Capita Emissions in East Sussex

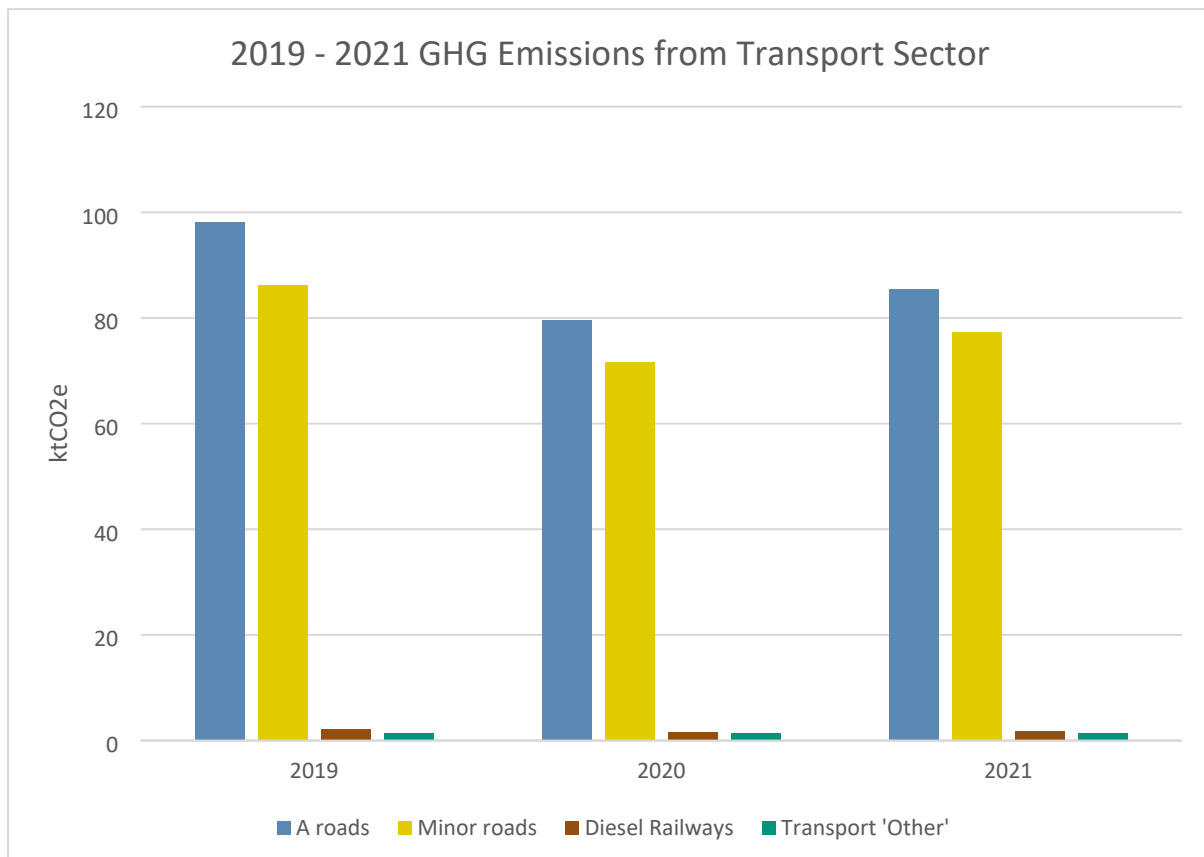
### Transport Emissions

Transport emissions include freight and passenger transport, both for private and business purposes. The DESNZ data is broken down into 5 categories: motorways, A roads, minor roads, diesel railways, and transport 'other'. The category of transport 'other' includes the combustion of lubricants, LPG vehicles, inland waterways, coal railways, and aircraft support vehicles. Note that transport emissions do not include electric railways.

At a national level transport GHG emissions fell by 22% between 2005 and 2021 and in Rother, they fell by 24% over the same period. However, GHG emissions increased nationally between 2020 and 2021 by 9% and in Rother by 7%, though emissions remained significantly below the pre-pandemic levels.

Figure 6 shows the emissions split by different transport categories in Rother from 2019 - 2021.





*Figure 6 2021 GHG Emissions from Transport*

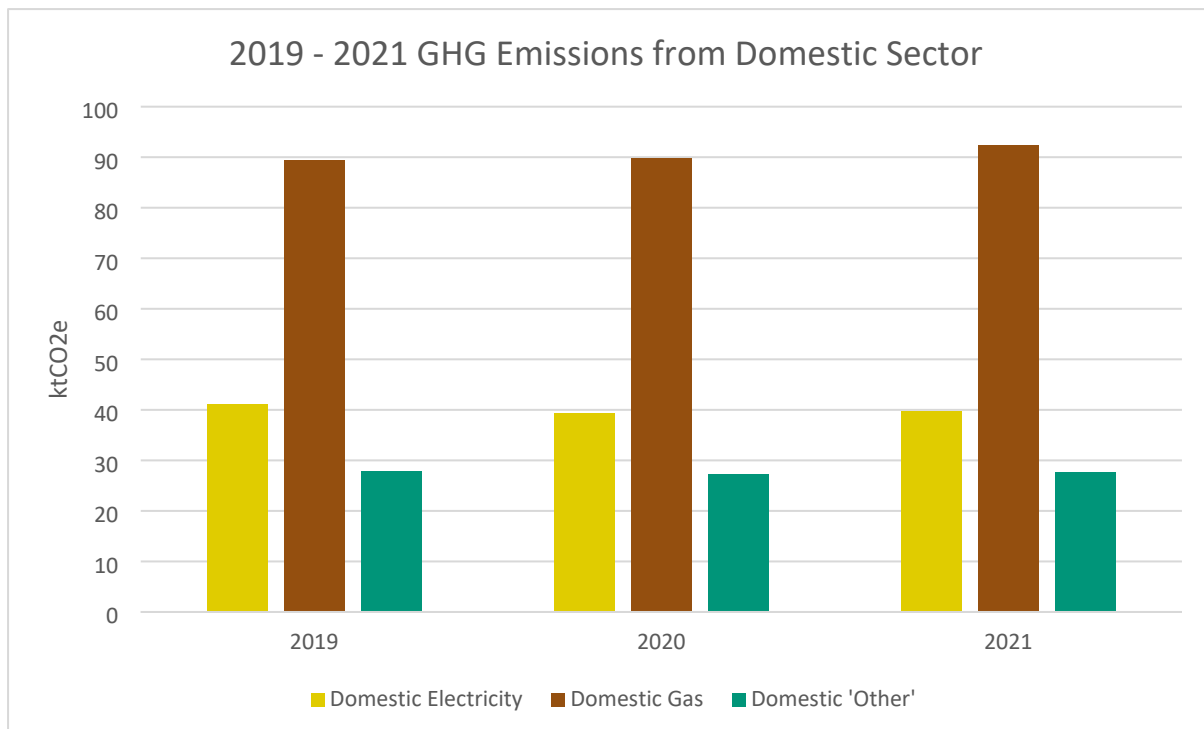
### Domestic Emissions

Emissions from the domestic sector are influenced by the fuel types used, the type and condition of housing, the average temperature, average household size, type of household and the income and preferences of the occupiers. Emissions from urban areas tend to be lower than rural areas, due to smaller homes, a larger proportion of terraced houses and flats, and less reliance on high-carbon heating fuels such as oil and coal.

National emissions of GHGs from the domestic sector decreased between 2005 and 2021 by about 39% and in Rother by about 66%, despite an increase in population and the number of homes. The main drivers for this have been the decarbonisation of grid electricity and a gradual improvement in the energy efficiency of homes.

Domestic GHG emissions have increased by 2% between 2020 and 2021 and an increase of 1% since 2019.

**Error! Reference source not found.** shows most domestic emissions relate to gas central heating systems. Gas emissions are relatively higher in urban areas, as more homes are connected to the gas grid than in rural areas.



*Figure 7 2019 - 2021 GHG Emissions from the Domestic Sector*

### Industrial Emissions

Emissions from Industry are the third biggest contributor to GHG emissions in Rother. Industrial emissions are broken down into the following categories: electricity usage, gas usage, other fuels (eg. oil) and large industrial installations.

There was an increase in industrial GHG emissions between 2020 and 2021, no doubt largely due to the gradual post-COVID economic recovery. There was a particularly large increase in industrial gas usage in Rother, of nearly 100%, which is shown in Figure 9. (This has been queried with the DESNZ data team as the reasons are unclear).

The government publishes data on [non-domestic gas consumption](#) at Middle Layer Super Output Area (MSOA). The 2021 data identifies three MSOA where total non-domestic gas consumption is over 10 GWh – Rother 006, Rother 008 and Rother 011, see Figure 9.

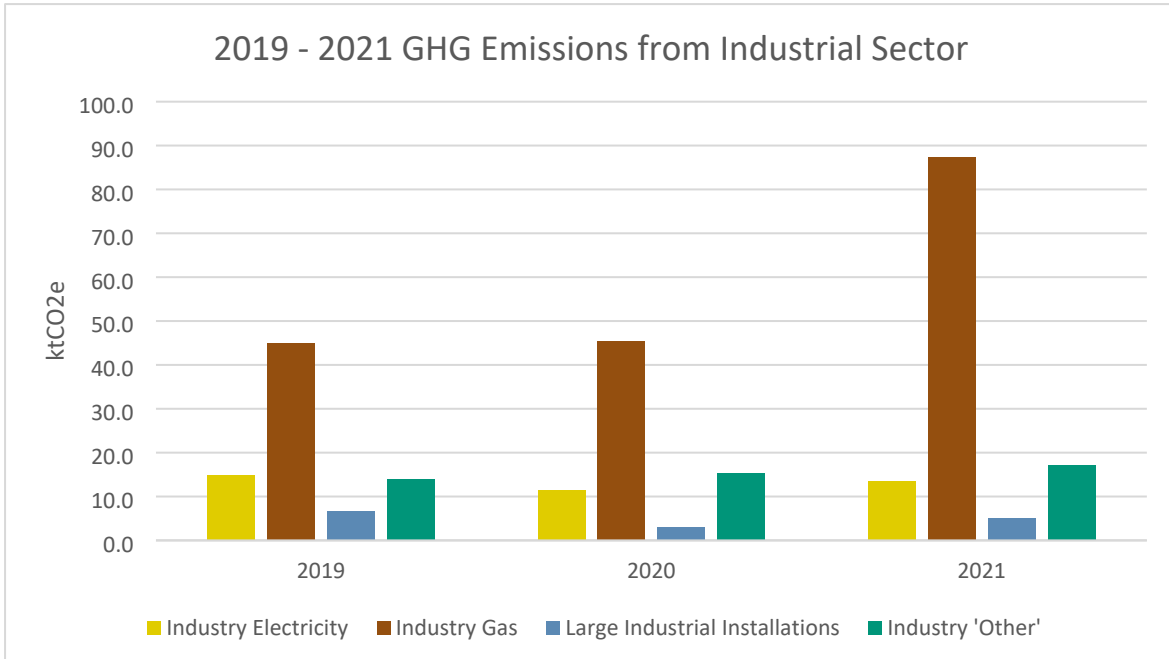


Figure 8 2019 - 2023 GHG Emissions from Industry

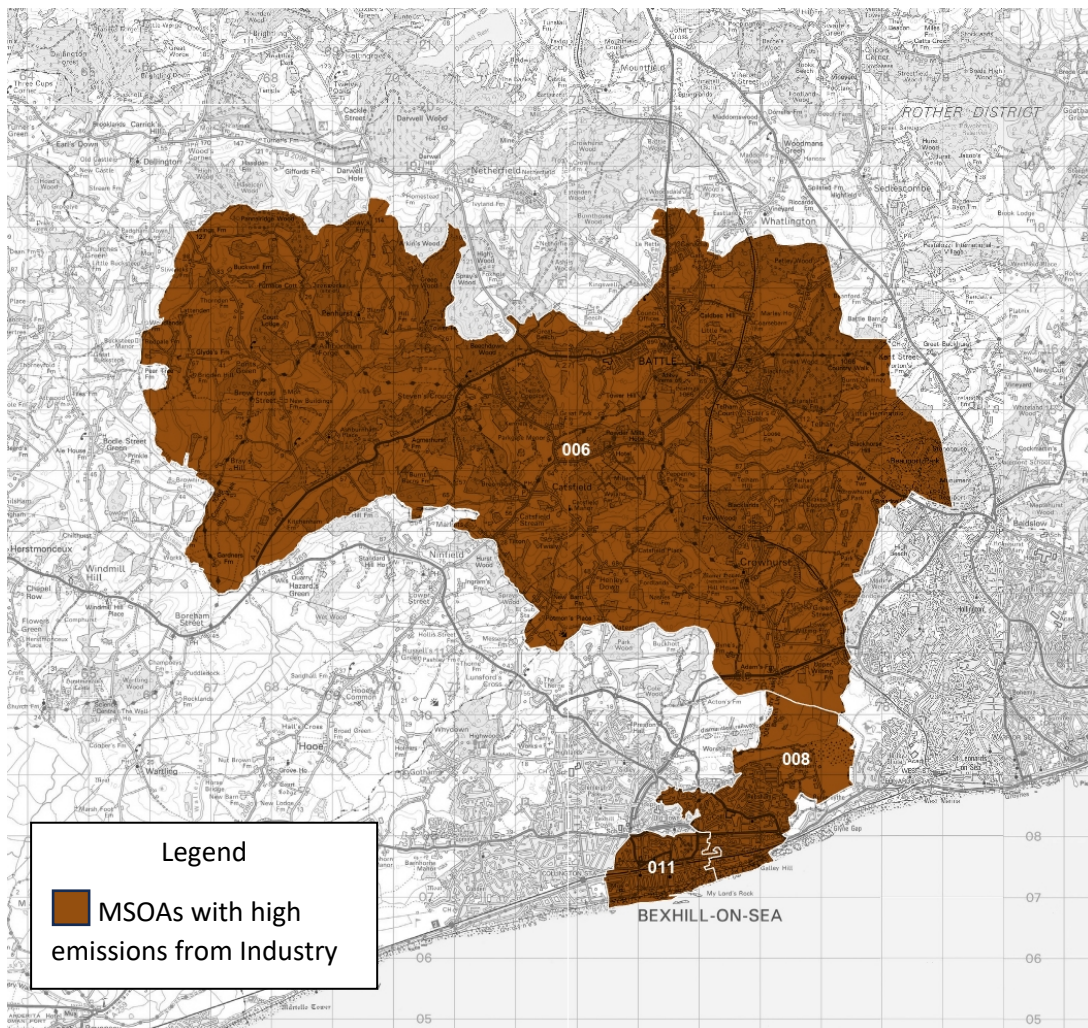


Figure 9 MSOAs in Rother with Industry gas emissions above 10GWh

**Land Use Land Use Change and Forestry**

Land Use, Land Use Change & Forestry (LULUCF) are activities such as liming, farming practices, afforestation/deforestation and changes in vegetative cover that can remove or produce atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub>. For example, changing land from natural woodland (a net absorber of CO<sub>2</sub>) to urban development would mean that the land no longer acts as a carbon sink.

Emissions have remained relatively stable since 2019 with Forested Land and Grassland acting as carbon sinks, see Figure 10. Croplands continue to be the largest source of emissions.

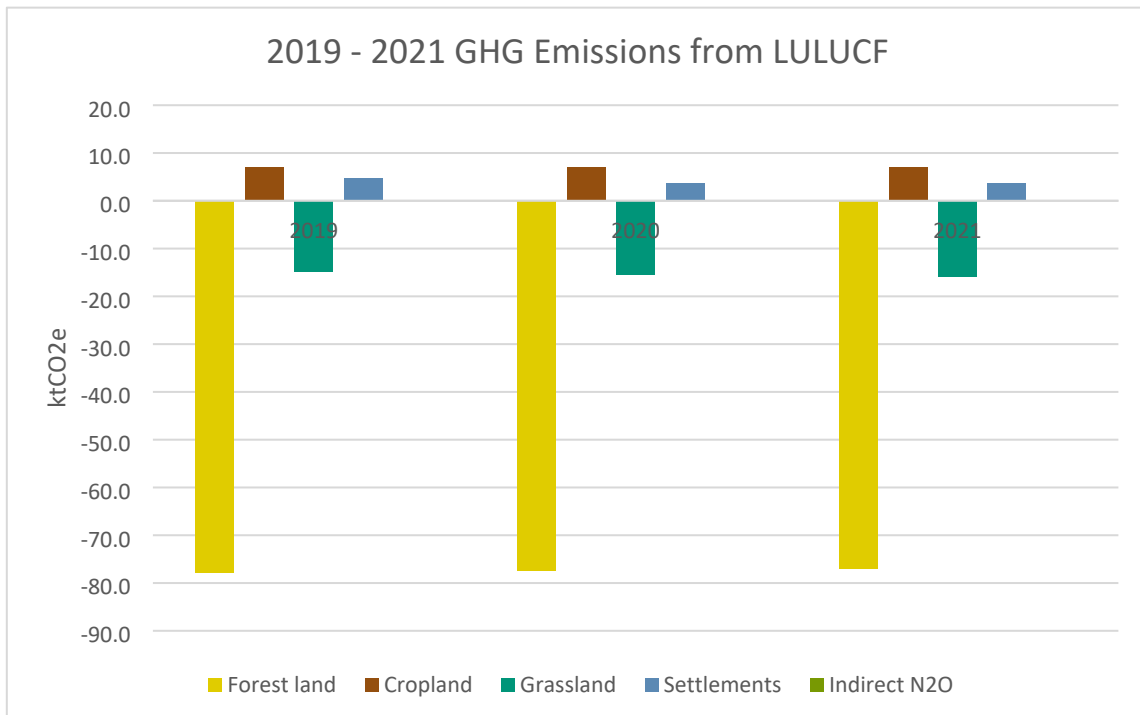


Figure 10 2019 - 2021 GHG Emissions from LULUCF

**Rother District Council**

<b>Report to:</b>	Climate Change Steering Group
<b>Date:</b>	26 October 2023
<b>Title:</b>	Operational Annual Carbon Emissions Report 2022/23
<b>Report of:</b>	Elize Manning, Project Officer (Environment)
<b>Ward(s):</b>	All
<b>Purpose of Report:</b>	To present to the Climate Change Steering Group the Council's Operational Annual Carbon Emissions for 2022/23.
<b>Officer</b>	
<b>Recommendation(s):</b>	It be <b>RESOLVED</b> : That the Operational Annual Carbon Emissions Report 2022/23 be noted.

---

**Introduction**

1. The Operational Annual Carbon Emissions Report 2022/23 is the first annual emissions report of Rother District Council, at Appendix A. The report outlines the Council's Scope 1 and 2 emissions, as well as Scope 3 emissions where such data is available.
2. The annual data for 2022/23 is presented within the report alongside that of the previous year, as well as the Council's baseline year (2019/20), in line with the Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs' recommended protocols for greenhouse gas emissions reporting.

**Details of the report**

3. The report shows the Council's Gross operational emissions in 2022/23 to be 1,359.9 Tonnes of Carbon Dioxide equivalent (TCO<sub>2</sub>e), which is 15.4% lower than the baseline year.
4. Once the 100% renewable energy tariff and solar generation are considered, net emissions can be seen to have reduced by 20.8% since the baseline year, to 1,268.8 TCO<sub>2</sub>e.
5. Net emissions for Scopes 1 and 2 (the activities over which the Council has direct influence) were 86.7% lower in 2022/23 than 2019/20. This is due to a significant reduction in the Council's consumption of electricity, particularly within administrative buildings, coupled with the switch to a 100% renewable energy tariff in November 2021.
6. Over 90% of the Council's 2022/23 emissions arose from Scope 3, which includes activities that produce indirect emissions over which the Council has little control, including outsourced services.

7. The largest contributors to 2022/23 operational emissions were the fleet of the Joint Waste Contract, at 821.5 TCO<sub>2e</sub>, followed by gas and electricity consumed by Leisure Centres, at 298.2 TCO<sub>2e</sub>.

## Conclusion

8. The report is presented to the Climate Change Steering Group for the annual emissions data to be noted.
9. It is intended that future operational annual carbon emissions reports will follow the same format.

## Implications

10. The Annual Carbon Emissions Report 2022/23 contributes to the evidence base that has been used in the Council's revised Climate Strategy and Climate Action Plan, due for publication by the end of 2023.

Other Implications	Applies?	Other Implications	Applies?
Human Rights	No	Equalities and Diversity	No
Crime and Disorder	No	Consultation	No
Environmental	Yes	Access to Information	No
Sustainability	Yes	Exempt from publication	No
Risk Management	No		

Chief Executive:	Lorna Ford
Report Contact Officer:	Elize Manning
e-mail address:	<a href="mailto:Elize.manning@rother.gov.uk">Elize.manning@rother.gov.uk</a>
Appendices:	A – Operational Annual Carbon Emissions Report 2022/23
Relevant previous Minutes:	None
Background Papers:	None
Reference Documents:	None



## Rother District Council Annual Operational Emissions Report 2022/23

### Executive Summary

Rother District Council's Gross operational emissions for all currently reported activities have fallen by 15.4% since the baseline year of 2019/20, with Net emissions reduced by 20.8%.

Scopes 1 and 2 include the activities over which the Council has direct influence. In 2022/23, Net emissions for these activities were 86.7% lower than 2019/20. This is due to a significant reduction in consumption of electricity, particularly within our administrative buildings, coupled with the switch to a 100% renewable energy tariff in November 2021.

Over 90% of the Council's 2022/23 emissions arose from Scope 3, which includes operational activities that produce indirect emissions over which the Council has little control, such as those arising from water supply and treatment, commuting and business travel, as well as services outsourced to other providers. The largest single contributor to 2022/23 emissions is the fleet of the waste contract, at 821.45 TCO<sub>2</sub>e, followed by Leisure Centres at 298.18 TCO<sub>2</sub>e.

## Introduction

In September 2019, Rother District Council declared a climate emergency and pledged to do what is within our power to become carbon neutral by 2030. This report sets out the Council's annual operational emissions for 2022/23, to monitor progress against this pledge. (District-wide emissions are reported separately.)

## Methodology

The Council measures its emissions in line with DEFRA protocols, taking an operational control approach. A summary of the activities which contribute to the 2022/23 data is as follows:

Scope 1 (Direct emissions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gas (supplied to operational assets)</li><li>• Fleet</li></ul>
Scope 2 (Indirect Emissions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Electricity (supplied to operational assets)</li></ul>
Internal Scope 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Electricity losses from transmission and distribution (supplied to operational assets)</li><li>• Non-operational assets (gas and electricity supplied to any other asset where the Council pays the bill)</li><li>• Water supply and treatment (to operational assets)</li><li>• Business travel and commuting (by Council officers and elected Members)</li></ul>
Outsourced Scope 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Waste Contract Fleet</li><li>• Leisure Centres (gas and electricity)</li></ul>
Deductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Green Tariff (100% renewable electricity tariff)</li><li>• Solar energy exported to the grid</li></ul>

The baseline for all activities is 2019/20, except for activities where data from that year is unavailable. For these activities, the earliest annual dataset available is used as the baseline. It is expected that as reporting procedures advance, the range of Scope 3 activities included in the Council's annual emissions reporting will expand.

Deductions contribute to the offsetting of Scope 1 and 2 emissions only, as these are made up of the activities over which the Council has direct influence.

Baseline year data (and that of subsequent years) was recalculated in 2023 to reflect the framework of activities outlined above, and therefore figures reported here may differ to those previously published.



## Emissions Summary

Table 1: RDC GHG Emissions in Tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> e	BASELINE (2019/20)	Previous Year 2021/22	2022/23
Scope 1 - Gas (Operational)	48.03	44.09	38.31
Scope 1 - Fleet	16.44	16.25	19.05
Scope 2 - Electricity (Operational)	141.87	76.36	60.62
Scope 3 - Gas (non-operational)	9.58	14.67	17.31
Scope 3 - Electricity (non-operational)	57.55	41.98	46.95
Scope 3 - T&D Losses (on Scope 2 Electricity)	12.04	6.76	5.55
Scope 3 - Water (Operational)	15.16	6.50	6.75
Scope 3 - Business Miles	73.85	41.04	Not yet available
Scope 3 - Commuting	45.70*	Unavailable	45.70
Scope 3 - Waste Contract	699.87*	849.64	821.45
Scope 3 - Leisure Centres	486.80	385.05	298.18
<b>Total Gross Emissions</b>	<b>1,606.90</b>	<b>1,482.33</b>	<b>1,359.86</b>
Green tariff	0.00	45.52	88.11
Solar Energy exported to grid	4.08	3.27	2.99
<b>Total Net Emissions</b>	<b>1,602.82</b>	<b>1,433.54</b>	<b>1,268.76</b>

\*Baseline year for Commuting is 2022/23. Baseline year for Waste Contract is 2020/21.

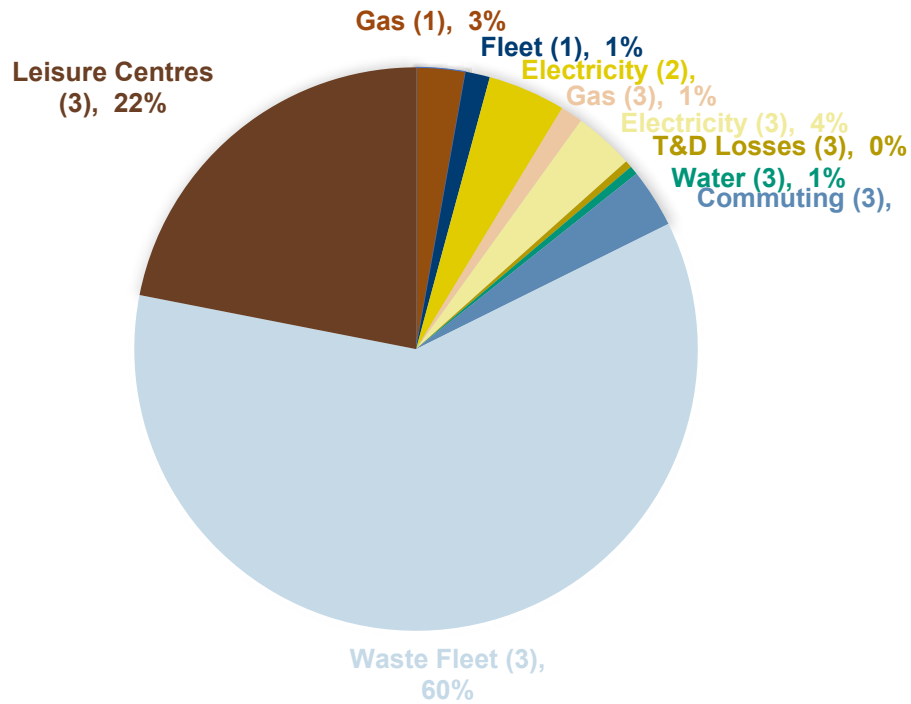
Gross Emissions have fallen by

15.1%

Net emissions have fallen by 20.8%

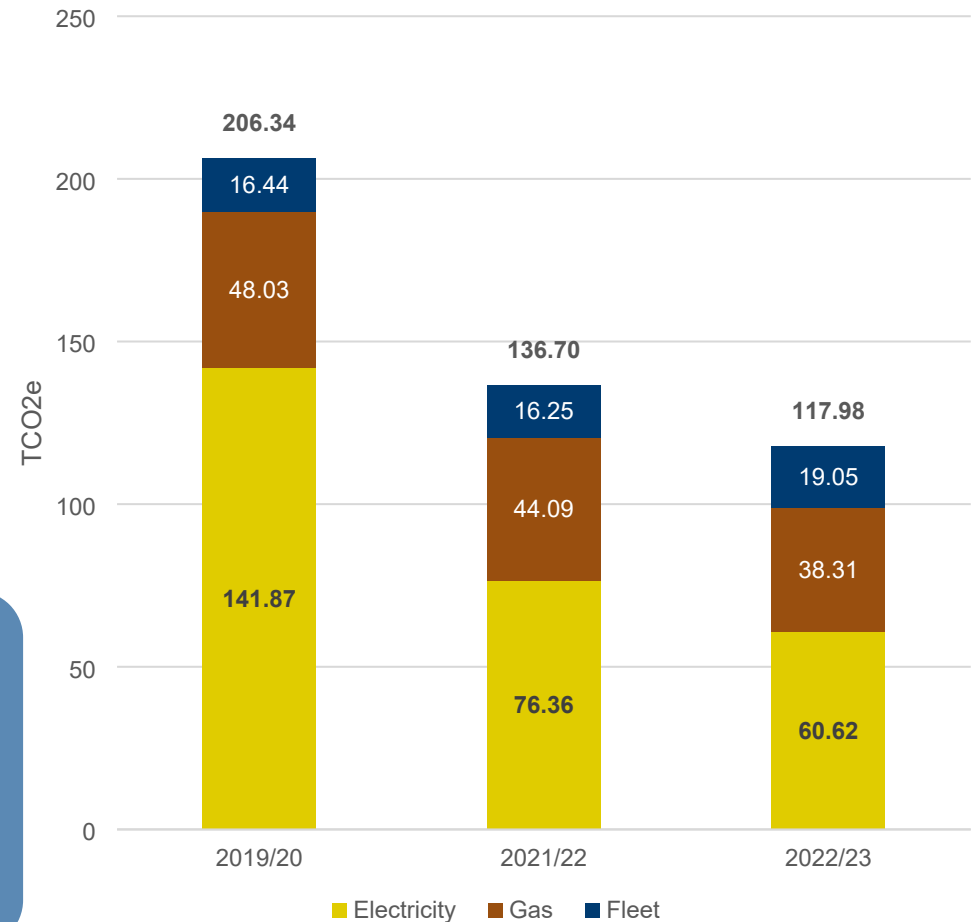
# Scope 1 and 2 Emissions Activities under the Council's direct influence

Fig 1: 2022/23 Gross Emissions Activity (Scope)



Scopes 1 & 2 make up 8.7% of the Council's gross emissions.

Fig 2: Scope 1 & 2 Gross Emissions



Scope 1 & 2 Gross emissions have reduced by 42.8%.  
 After solar and renewable tariff deductions,  
 Scope 1 and 2 Net emissions have reduced by

# The Path to Net Zero

A 50% reduction year on year from 2019/20 will result in 0.0% emissions by 2030.

Fig. 3: Scope 1 and 2 Net Emissions against annual 50% reduction trajectory

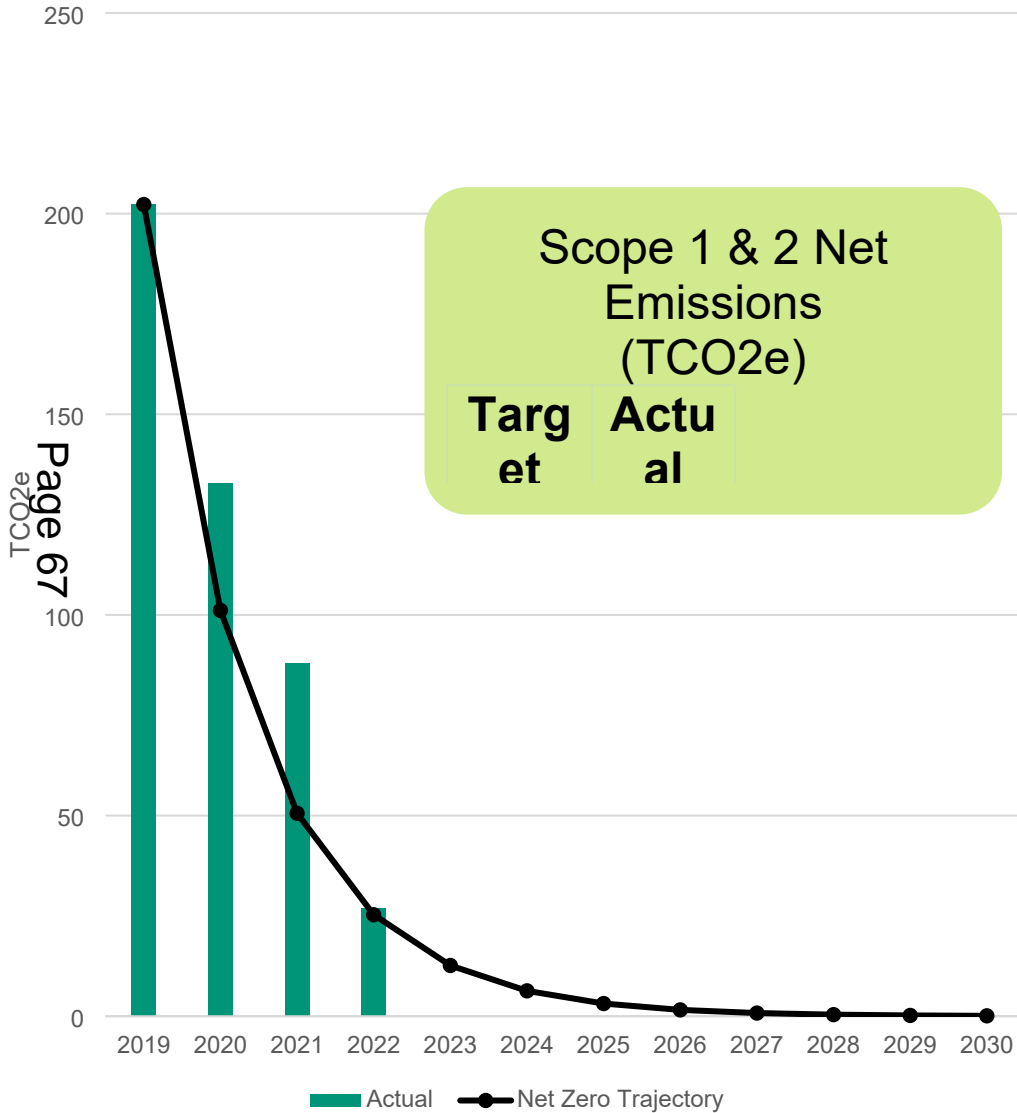
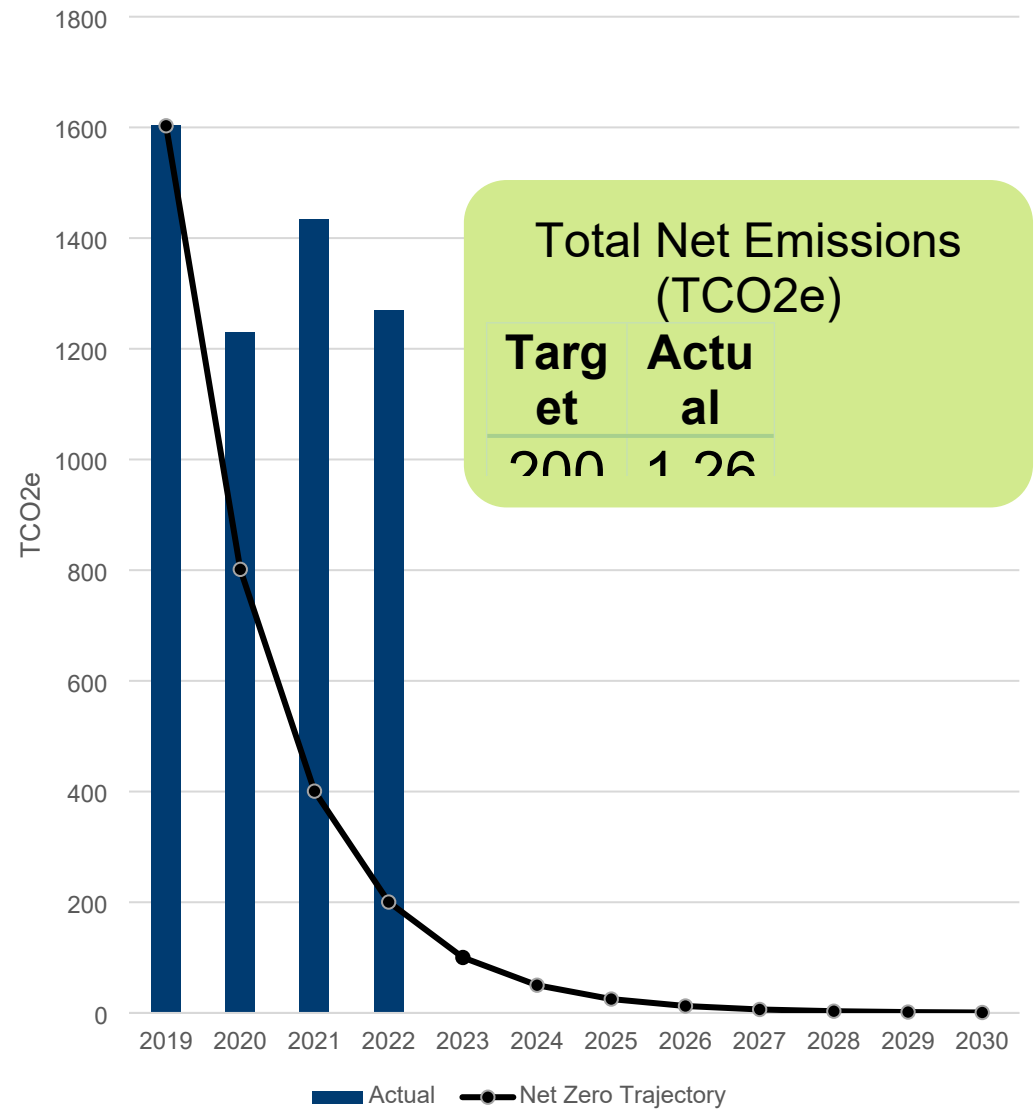


Fig. 4: Net Emissions against annual 50% reduction trajectory



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## Gas (operational)

3 sites contribute to this data, which are all administrative Council buildings, namely Town Hall, Treasury and Print Room. Town Hall accounts for 83.7% of operational gas use.

Operational gas emissions in 2022/23 were 38.3 TCO<sub>2</sub>e, which is 20.2% lower than baseline year.

Gas consumption is affected by external temperature and boiler efficiency. The exact date boilers are switched on and off will also differ year to year impacting total usage. Generally, they are operational from September/October – April/May.

No significant fabric changes have been made to any of these buildings since baseline year.

Occupancy of the Treasury and Town Hall by RDC staff has varied, which has impacted on operational gas usage at these sites; In 2019/20, two floors of the Treasury building were occupied by RDC staff but were vacated during the pandemic of 2020 to make space for other public service staff. No further operational emissions are therefore reported at the Treasury until January 2023, when staff returned to occupy the first floor, due to the Villas of Town Hall being closed.

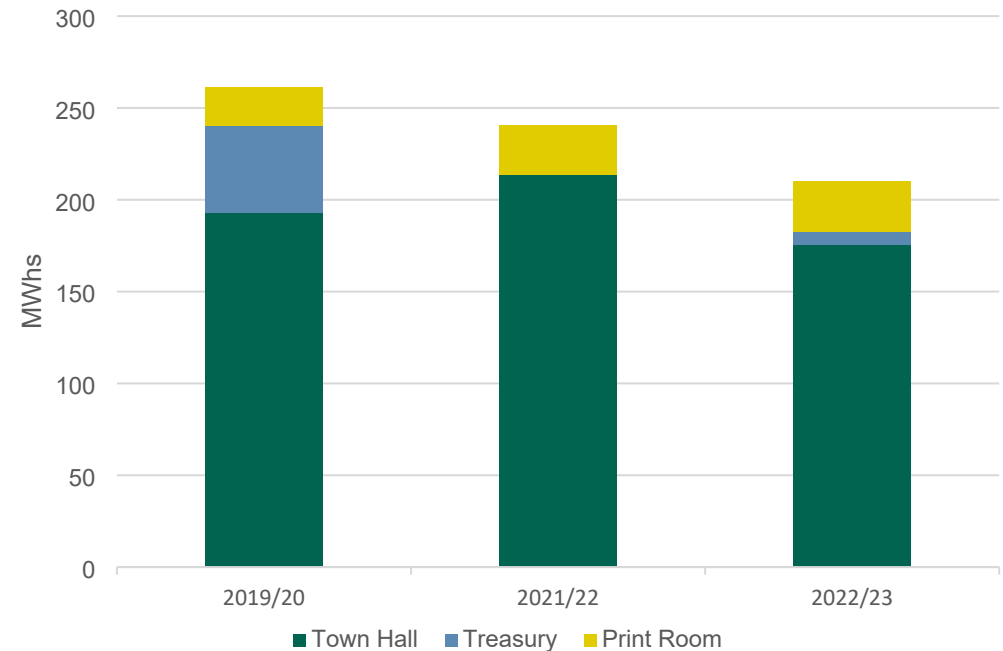
Despite radiators in the Villas being switched off on closing, hot water continued to circulate through the heating system in this part of Town Hall as it was not segregated from the operational side of the building. The un-used part of the system has since been isolated and therefore a reduction in gas consumption at Town Hall is expected to be evident in future years.

In September 2023, the Treasury's gas boilers reached the end of their operational life and were replaced with more efficient condensing gas boilers. The boilers at Town Hall are also due for replacement before Winter 2023. These replacements should result in a tangible reduction in gas consumption going forward.

## Fleet

Fleet emissions have increased by 15.9%, in line with increased fuel consumption. In 2021/22 fuel consumption was almost the same as 2019/20 (+1.6%) however due to improved fuel efficiency, the resulting emissions were just over 1% lower than baseline level. The number of fleet vehicles has remained constant. The vehicles are generally replaced every 3 -5 years, therefore the exact vehicles contributing to data annually will change. Engine size, driving style, distance travelled, and weight/load of vehicles will affect fuel use. Regular replacement of the vehicles ensures the highest performance and efficiency possible.

Fig 5: Operational Gas use by building



## Electricity (Operational)

The National Grid has decarbonised by around 25% since 2019/20. Combined with a 241.6 MWh reduction in electricity consumption, the Council’s operational electricity emissions have reduced by 57.3%. The greatest reduction has been within administrative buildings, where emissions have dropped by 66.1%.

### Administrative Buildings

Fig. 6: Electricity use by administrative buildings

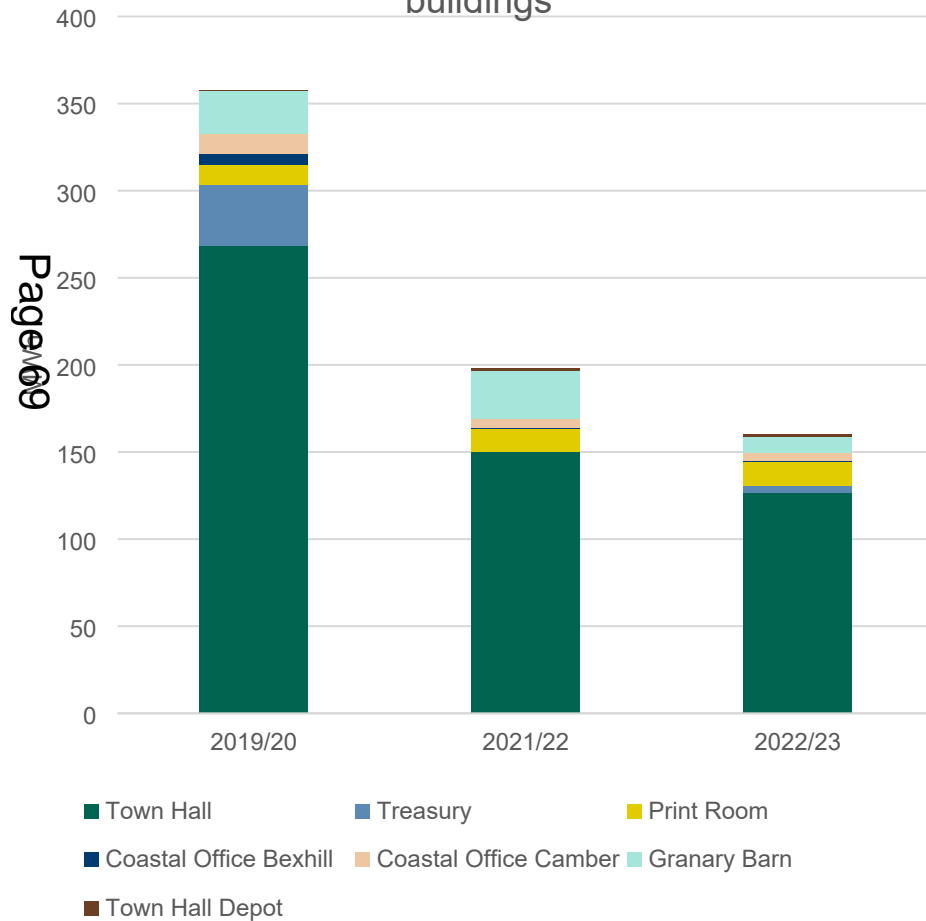


Table 2: Electricity Emissions by asset type (TCO2e)	2019/20	2022/23	%age change
Administrative Buildings (7)	91.48	31.02	-66.09
Public Conveniences (26)	17.19	11.20	-34.83
Other Operational (30/23)	33.21	18.40	-44.51
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>141.88</b>	<b>60.62</b>	<b>-57.27</b>

Most administrative sites have seen emissions fall by between 64% and 88%, with the exceptions of the Print Room, which has seen only a modest reduction of 13%, and Town Hall Depot, where emissions, albeit still very low, rose from 0.11 TCO2e to 0.3 TCO2e.

Overall, electricity consumed for administrative purposes has decreased by 55.18% since 2019/20, from 357.9 MWh to 160.4 MWh.

The reduction can largely be attributed to staff working from home since the pandemic of 2020. According to a recent staff survey, on an average day in 2022/23, 46% of staff worked from home, whereas all staff were office based in the baseline year. The outsourcing of some energy intensive IT systems will have also contributed to reductions at Town Hall. These activities will still be producing emissions, but they are now defined as indirect and therefore not included in the Council’s Scope 2 activities. They cannot currently be quantified for inclusion in our Scope 3 reporting, but this may become possible in the future.

As detailed above, occupancy levels of the Treasury and Town Hall by RDC staff has varied over the reporting period, affecting the proportion of emissions arising from those sites annually.

Additionally, more efficient LED lighting was installed in the Treasury building prior to staff returning in January 2023, and a programme of behavioural change has recently been implemented by the maintenance team at Granary Barn to reduce energy costs and emissions.

### Public Conveniences (PCs)

Since 2019/20, water heating equipment has been removed from some PCs as general maintenance is carried out, which will have contributed to the 13.9% reduction in electricity consumption.

In the baseline year PCs accounted for 12.1% of the Council's operational electricity use. Although electricity used by PCs has decreased, this has occurred at a lesser rate than other assets. As a result, PCs now account for 19% of the Council's electricity use and emissions.

### Other Operational

For the purpose of this report 'Other Operational' assets are defined as any Council controlled assets not assigned as Administrative Buildings or PCs, i.e. car parks, parks, gardens and open spaces including the street lighting, sports pavilions, pumping apparatus etc. therein.

The Council's portfolio of such assets changes over time. 30 assets contributed to the 2019/20 data and 26 in 2022/23.

After Town Hall, the Compressor Station at Fairlight consumed more electricity than any other asset in the baseline year, making up 7.56% of total electricity usage (42 MWh). In 2021/22, this had reduced by 39.92% (to 25MWh), and in 2022/23 was 63.03% lower than the baseline (15.5 MWh).

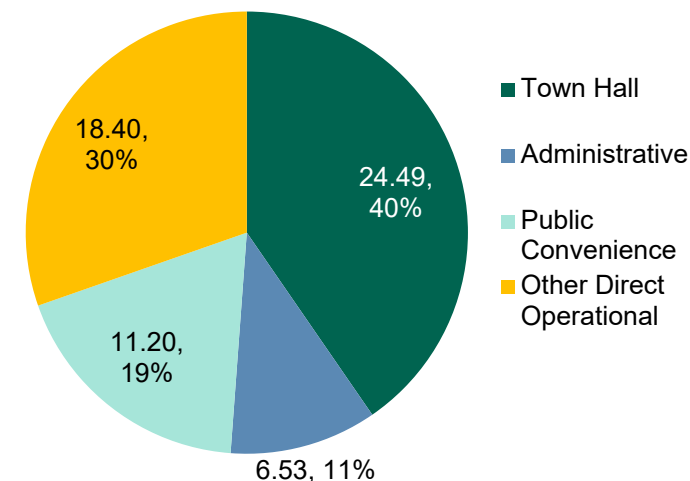
The reduction could be due to both a water leak (which has now been fixed) and recent droughts, which will have reduced demand on the pump. As such, it is likely usage could return to baseline levels; 42 MWh in 2022/23 would add 12% to operational electricity use and over 5 TCO2e.

The other high consumer of electricity in this category is Bexhill Museum, for which the electricity meter also covers the Egerton Park toilets and the kiosk. In 2019/20, this group of assets made up 6% of total operational electricity usage (33MW). Due to some gaps in available meter readings (where the account was transferred to the museum for a time), data spanning a two-year period was averaged to give annual estimates for 2021/22 and 2022/23, coming to 48.6 MWh per year. This makes it the second highest asset contributing to operational electricity emissions after the Town Hall, at 15.5% of the total.

The museum has developed a forward plan which includes making sustainability improvements to the main building. To help them to achieve these ambitions, the electricity account is due to be transferred back into the ownership of the museum. This will take the main building out of the Council's Scope 2 emissions in the future. The museum will recharge the Council for electricity used by the toilets and kiosk, therefore these aspects will remain within the Scope 2 portfolio.

Electricity use by car parks was low in baseline year at around 3.5 MWh and has reduced by 30%. This may be due to streetlights in car parks being replaced with low-energy LED alternatives at end of life and the number of visitors who pay to park via the RingGo app having doubled from roughly 20% in 2019/20 to 40%. (Pay machines are dormant until activated by a user to make a payment, with card payments using more electricity than cash payments).

Fig. 7: 2022/23 Scope 2 Emissions by asset type (TCO2e)



## Deductions

A 100% renewable energy tariff was adopted in November 2021, supplying both operational and non-operational assets. In its first full year, this has saved 88.11 TCO2e.

Annual solar generation by the Treasury and Bexhill Museum arrays has been consistent, yet as the national grid decarbonises emissions savings from exported energy decreases. The 15.96 MW exported to the grid in 2019/20 resulted in a carbon saving of 4.08 TCO2e, whereas the 15.48 MW exported in 2022/23 saved only 2.99 TCO2e.

## Gas (non-operational)

Treasury's leased office space is almost solely (99.7%) responsible for non-operational gas use, which has almost doubled since 2019/20. This is due to the building not being previously fully occupied as it was throughout 2022/23. As stated above, the boilers were replaced in September 2023, so future reductions in emissions are expected.

## Electricity (non-operational)

The Council's portfolio of assets that contribute to non-operational electricity emissions fluctuates. There were 14 assets included in the baseline data, of which 5 have been removed (as they have either been disposed of or accounts transferred from the Council to the tenant), and 8 have been added (either newly acquired assets or accounts transferred from tenant to the Council).

Non-operational electricity usage has increased by 7.8%, however due to the decarbonisation of the grid, the resulting emissions are 18.4% lower.

## Water

The total amount of water consumed by the Council has stayed relatively constant, however emissions arising from water use have significantly decreased, resulting in an overall 55.5% reduction in emissions.

Table 3: Emissions relating to water consumption	2019/20		2022/23	
	Consumption (M <sup>3</sup> )	Emissions (TCO2e)	Consumption (M <sup>3</sup> )	Emissions (TCO2e)
Supply	18, 833	6.5	17, 640	2.6
Treatment	12, 262	8.7	15, 160	4.1
Total	31, 095	15.2	32, 800	6.7

## Waste Contract

The baseline figure of 699.87 TCO2e (2020/21) was provided by Biffa as a complete figure, whereas emissions for later years have been calculated from raw data. It is possible a different methodology was used for this first year, which may account for the +21.4% difference in 2021/22, yet only 3.3% difference the following year when reporting methodologies were certainly comparable.

## Leisure Centres

Emissions reductions have been realised by all three of Rother's Leisure Centres. Closure of the pool in 2022 has resulted in Rye achieving the greatest percentage reduction in emissions, yet Bexhill Leisure Pool has reduced its emissions by 83 TCO2e, compared to Rye's saving of 75.5 TCO2e.

Table 4: Emissions by Leisure Centre (TCO2e)	2019/20	2022/23	%age change
Bexhill Leisure Centre	68.31	38.39	-43.8
Bexhill Leisure Pool	270.61	187.65	-30.6
Rye Sports Centre & Pool	147.87	72.15	-51.2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>141.88</b>	<b>60.62</b>	<b>-57.27</b>

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**Rother District Council**

**Report to:** Climate Change Steering Group

**Date:** 26 October 2023

**Title:** Home Upgrade Grant 2 – October 2023 Update

**Report of:** Lucie Bolton, Environment Strategy Officer

**Ward(s):** All

**Purpose of Report:** To provide details for Members on the Home Upgrade Grant 2 rollout.

**Officer**

**Recommendation(s):** It be **RESOLVED**: That:

- 1) progress of the Home Upgrade Grant 2 and the report be noted; and
- 2) a progress report be presented to the Climate Change Steering Group in April 2024.

**Introduction**

1. The Home Upgrade Grant (HUG2) provides energy efficiency upgrades and low-carbon heating via local authority funding.
2. Rother District Council (RDC) was part of a consortium bid, led by Lewes District Council (LDC), and was awarded £6,230,700 to be spent in 2023/24 and 2024/25.
3. LDC is administering the scheme with support from officers in each authority.

**Details of the proposal**

4. HUG2 is now live.
5. HUG2 offers 100% energy efficiency grants to people living in private homes.
6. The grant is just over £6m and has to deliver 300 energy efficiency upgrades to homes in Eastbourne, Lewes, Rother, and Hastings; LDC is administering the scheme, and the main contractor is Retrofit Works.
7. We are aiming to upgrade 40 homes this financial year (up to 31 March 2024) and 260 homes next financial year – spread across all four local authorities.
8. The criteria for these grants is:
  - a) Household income less than £31k or in IMD bands 1-3.
  - b) Property is EPC D or worse.
  - c) Does not have a gas boiler.

9. Flats get the least money (£8k), semi-detached, detached, and end terraces get the most (up to £38k). Park homes are capped at £15k per property and collectively cannot be more than 10% of total homes upgraded. Rented accommodation can also benefit but landlords need to contribute 33% of the costs and they must have four or fewer properties in their portfolio.
10. The Government's Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) has provided a list of properties that are pre-approved as they have access to both building and IMD data. We are using this list to target homes.
11. For areas that are dominated by gas, HUG2 will have little overall impact to the overall area but from the data we have there are still properties we can help.
12. The first wave of targeting will be homes that have an EPC rating of F & G and are either semi-detached, end of terrace, or detached as these homes will have the highest energy bills. We can widen this scope if take-up is slow. Year two will approach all eligible properties.
13. All properties will receive a letter, and any interested residents will need to call the Warm Homes Check service.
14. For this year, we are targeting homes first with a letter drop and then if needs be we will use our social media and PR channels if take-up is slow, or homes are unsuitable. This will be reviewed weekly.
15. Overall, we will be ensuring that we reach as many people as possible that are eligible and will be working up a programme for next year to target the private rented sector.

## **Conclusion**

16. The HUG2 scheme will provide energy efficiency measures and low-carbon heating to eligible properties across Rother.
17. The Environment Strategy Officer is the named RDC officer for HUG2 and will be supported by the named Environmental Health officer, where necessary.

## **Legal Implications**

18. A partnership agreement between the four local authorities may be required by DESNEZ. LDC, as administrator for the scheme, is seeking clarification from DESNEZ on this matter.

## **Environmental**

19. The HUG2 scheme provides energy efficiency upgrades and low-carbon heating to households in England that meet the requirements. The scheme will reduce district-wide emissions from the domestic sector and help the Council meet its climate ambitions.

## **Equalities and Diversity**

20. To be eligible for HUG2, households must have an income of less than £31k or in IMD bands 1-3. This scheme supports the Council's Anti-poverty Strategy.

<b>Other Implications</b>	<b>Applies?</b>	<b>Other Implications</b>	<b>Applies?</b>
Human Rights	No	Equalities and Diversity	Yes
Crime and Disorder	No	Consultation	No
Environmental	Yes	Access to Information	No
Sustainability	No	Exempt from publication	No
Risk Management	No		

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Appendices:	n/a
Relevant previous Minutes:	n/a
Background Papers:	n/a
Reference Documents:	n/a

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**Climate Change Steering Group: Environment Projects Summary**

Updated October 2023

Strategic Priorities (Environment Strategy 2020):  
 1 – Becoming a Smart digital district. 2 – Green Economy. 3 – Air quality & sustainable transport. 4 – Sustainable waste management.  
 5 – Sustainable Energy. 6 - Protecting & enhancing bio-diversity. 7 – Construction & existing buildings. 8 – Environmentally friendly council

PROPOSALS TO AMEND / DISCHARGE: None

**Updates since last circulated are highlighted in bold.**

1. Ongoing / planned Projects

Priority Level	Project/Objective	Category	Strategic Priority								Status summary	
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		
Page 77  Tier 1  Immediate Action	Evaluate & reduce Council staff travel emissions	Corporate			x							<u>Lead: Environment Project Officer/Green Team</u>  18/09/23: Building on the work completed in 2022/23, the Green Team have set Reducing Staff Travel Emissions as one of their priorities for 2023/24. Objectives are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publish a report on the staff commuter survey findings to SMT and then the wider organisation (completed).</li> <li>• Promote the benefits of active travel, public transport and low emission vehicles, providing information on local provision and costs. (Comms planned WC 25/09/2023)</li> <li>• Explore adopting staff benefit packages that support active travel, public transport, and low-emission vehicles.</li> <li>• Ensure Team Agreements support effective working from home or office processes that take into account the environmental impact of travel.</li> </ul>
	Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Points in Council Car Parks	District			x							<u>Lead: Neighbourhood Services Manager.</u> On 28/03/22 Council approved procurement of a provider to complete feasibility studies to install charging points at nil capital cost to the Council. Installations to be completed in at least 3 car parks by May 2023. By November 2022 feasibility had been completed in 9 car parks, with 7 approved by the DNO.  Full costings were received on 04/04/23, however, although it has been announced ORCS funding has been extended for 2023/24, they are yet to open for applications. We are therefore ready to submit the funding application as soon as details are released by OLEV.

Agenda Item 8

Priority Level	Project/Objective	Category	Strategic Priority								Status summary	
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		
Page 78											18/09/23: ORCS funding still yet to be released. Enquiries are underway to explore 100% supplier funded models that do not rely on funding.	
	Electrification of Community bus service	District			x						<u>Lead: Environment Project Officer.</u> Project suggested for application to CIL Climate emergency Bonus Fund.	
	Improve Tree cover in Bexhill	Partnership							x		<p><u>Lead: Project Manager – Highways Funding and Development (ESCC).</u> RDC submitted a bid to UTCF for tree planting on roadside verges at 31 locations in Bexhill. ESCC took over working with Trees for Cities to progress this project.</p> <p>18/09/23: Over 200 trees were planted on Bexhill streets in Spring 2023: <a href="#">New Street Trees for Bexhill   Trees for Cities</a> confirms the locations and species. Around 100 more street trees are due to be planted in Autumn / Winter 2023.</p> <p>Bexhill has also been recognised as a Tree City of the World.</p> <p><b>Applications have been submitted to the Coronation Living Heritage Fund, for 'Micro Woods' in urban areas and a grants scheme for community orchards.</b></p>	
	Biodiversity Audit	Corporate							x		<p><u>Lead: Environment Strategy Officer</u></p> <p>Provider has been secured to undertake a biodiversity audit on 23 rural RDC sites - verbal update to CCSG by Environment Strategy Officer at March 2023 meeting.</p> <p>18/09/23: Site audits complete, reports with findings and recommendations due by Nov 2023.</p>	
Tier 2 Short Term (Complete within 2 years, by 2024)	Reduce Village Hall carbon emissions & install EVCPs: Village Halls Energy Project	Partnership						x		x	<p><u>Lead: Environment Project Officer.</u> This project was signed off by full Council on 07/09/22 having secured £500k funding from CIL Climate Emergency Bonus Fund.</p> <p>Phase 1 was completed in June 2023 with bespoke Net Zero Plans issued to 39 participating halls.</p> <p><b>Pre-grant funding offers have been made to 34 halls for measures that would save an expected 2250+ Tonnes of CO2e over the next circa. 25 years.</b></p>	
	Ensuring the new Local Plan (2019-39) includes policies that demand higher biodiversity net	Corporate							x	x	x	<p><u>Lead: Planning Policy Manager.</u> The existing Local Plan came into effect in 2014. The emerging plan, which was hoped to be drafted by late 2022 and adopted in 2024, sets out our response to the climate emergency with a vision of 'Green to the Core', as presented to the CCSG by the Planning Policy Manager on 12/05/22.</p>

Priority Level	Project/Objective	Category	Strategic Priority								Status summary	
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		
	gain measures than required by National Planning Policy.											<p>RDC have committed to liaising with town and parish councils before we formally consult. Due to elections in May 2023, the public consultation is now anticipated in June/July 2023.</p> <p>August 2023: The latest update on the New Local Plan is available here: <a href="#">Local Plan Review – Update August 2023</a>.</p>
	Plant more wildflower areas on green spaces	Corporate / District							x			<p><u>Lead: Parks Development Officer.</u> From May 2023 seasonal bedding is to be replaced with Herbaceous perennials, shrubs, hedges or pine trees at Bexhill Cemetery Garden of Remembrance, Polegrove Bowls Club, DLWP Car Park, East Parade and Lanes Gardens.</p> <p><b>Further planting to prolong the aesthetics of the Marina Gardens wildflower meadows whilst retaining or enhancing opportunities for biodiversity have been agreed.</b></p>
	Real time display on Town Hall to show solar power generated	Corporate						x			x	To be progressed in line with Town Hall Renaissance programme, if pursued.
	Meet the Target page on the Council website for Tree Coverage	Corporate									x	<p><u>Lead: Environment Project Officer.</u> At August 2022 previous progress was made available to the current EPO. To be progressed with Environment Strategy Officer.</p> <p>18/09/23: Project page for Trees has been added to RDC website: <a href="#">Trees – Rother District Council</a></p>
	Electric bike hire	Corporate / District			x						x	
	Rother Carbon Reduction Award for businesses	District		x								
	Increase the proportion of waste that is recycled by Rother residents.	District				x						<p><u>Lead: Neighbourhood Services Manager.</u> The UK Environment Bill obtained Royal Assent in Nov 21 and we await secondary legislation regarding food waste collections and the deposit return scheme. Until these are implemented - perhaps 2025 - a realistic target for recycling percentage remains at approx. 50%.</p> <p>Members and Officers visited the Energy Recovery Facility (Newhaven) and the In Vessel Composting facility (Lewes) in Nov 2022.</p>

Priority Level	Project/Objective	Category	Strategic Priority								Status summary
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
Page 80											Environment Strategy Officer attended Strandliners “Love our Rother” Event in Rye on 18/02/23.
	incentivise Parish and Town Councils to adopt Climate Emergency Policies and Encourage Biodiversity audits	Partnership			x				x	x	<p><u>Lead: Environment Strategy Officer:</u></p> <p>Environment Strategy Officer contacted all P&amp;TCs offering to assist with Climate Emergency declarations. She has since attended meetings of Sedlescombe, Salehurst and Robertsbridge, Ashburnham and Penhurst, East Guldeford and Brede PCs to provide information and also supported Brightling, Icklesham and Udimore PCs, as well as Brightling Village Environmental Group.</p> <p>ESO gave Keynote presentation at RALC meeting on 12/04/23, and was invited to attend future meetings as a regular feature to encourage and support Parish and Town Councils with their Climate Emergency declarations and Action Plans.</p> <p>By September 2023, ESO has attended three Battle TC Climate and Ecology Committee meetings. Battle TC have identified key action areas to reduce emissions as a Council and use their influence to reduce emissions in the Parish. BTC have started to calculate their operational emissions using the LGA accounting tool with support from EPO.</p> <p><b>16/10/23 8 town and parish councils have now declared a climate emergency and at least 3 more are considering making a declaration having received support from RDC Environment Strategy Officer.</b></p>
Tier 3	Solar panels on leisure facilities & other Council buildings	Corporate						x		x	<p><u>Lead: Environment Project Officer.</u> As of August 2022, previous reports and surveys detailing solar feasibility at RDC sites have been collated and will be reviewed. A memorandum of co-operation is being drafted between RDC and Energise Sussex Coast.</p> <p>Following temporary closure of Rye swimming pool in November 2022, RDC officers working with Freedom Leisure and ESCC to review solar and heat pump options. Until decisions are made regarding RDC / Freedom Leisure involvement in operating the pool beyond 2026, unlikely any commitments to de-carbonisation can be made.</p>
(Complete up to 5 Years, by 2027)	Pollinator and pesticide policy review	Corporate							x		Deferred awaiting outcome of possible devolvement of responsibilities.



Priority Level	Project/Objective	Category	Strategic Priority								Status summary
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
	Supply composters	District				x					<p><u>Lead: Environment Project Officer.</u> As of August 2022, RDC website has a composting page which links to resources, including ESCC guidance with link to a provider. The UK Environment Bill obtained Royal Assent in Nov 21 and we await secondary legislation that will introduce food waste collections, expected 2023.</p> <p>20/03/23: Environment Bill introduction of food waste collections now expected 2025.</p>
	Verges campaign	District						x			
	Incentivise drivers to go electric	Partnership			x						
Page 81 Tier 4 Longer Term (Complete by 2030)	Green Asset Management Plan	Corporate						x		x	<p><u>Lead: Corporate Programme and Projects Officer:</u></p> <p>18/09/23: Conversations are underway to define “Green Asset management” and how this may align with the strategic asset management plan due to be developed.</p>
	Develop a plan to ensure all Rother District Council assets are carbon neutral	Corporate								x	<p><u>Lead: Economic Development Manager:</u> Deferred awaiting outcome of possible devolvement of responsibilities to Parish Councils.</p> <p>Where tenants of Council properties are responsible for heating systems, there is limited influence we can have to make them de-carbonise.</p> <p>18/09/2023: Environment Strategy is undergoing a refresh, due to be published by end of 2023, including decarbonisation strategy.</p> <p>Boilers at Amherst Rd and Town Hall required emergency replacement in September 2023, and efficient condensing gas boilers have been installed. This is expected to make significant savings to carbon emissions.</p>
	Low carbon energy / Heat pumps on new housing and retrospectively	Corporate/ District / Partnership						x		x	<p><u>Lead: Planning Policy Manager.</u> Renewables feature heavily in the Emerging Local Plan, expected to be drafted by end of 2023.</p> <p>East Sussex Housing Group (ESHOG) have formed a Climate Sub-group in October 2022 to discuss joint bids for retro-fit grant applications for housing stock.</p> <p>The HUG2 funding application made jointly with EBC/LDC for off-gas low-income housing was not accepted.</p> <p>18/09/23: Solar Together Spring 2023 saw a record 566 registrations by Rother residents. 115 households have since paid for installations with 23 completed to date.</p>

Priority Level	Project/Objective	Category	Strategic Priority								Status summary	
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		
Page 82	Promote Repair swap shop/s	District / Partnership		x		x						Repair Café features in Bexhill Town Council Climate Action Plan. 18/09/23: Robertsbridge Repair Café promoted in 08/09/23 EcoTip
	Promote re-usable Nappy Scheme/s	District / Partnership				x						<u>Lead: Environment Strategy Officer.</u> Initiatives at WDC and LBC reviewed in August 2022 - these require significant resources and funding respectively. 27.01.23 ESO met with WDC Officer responsible for the re-usable nappy scheme. WDC are reviewing if this is a service - issues relating to Officer capacity.
	Become a veg first District	District							x			
	Increase use of public transport and active travel	Partnership		x	x							18/09/23: Flexi bus and Govt £2 bus fare cap have been promoted via RDC comms channels.
	Pedestrianise streets in Town Centres	Partnership		x	x							
	De-carbonise Waste Fleet	Partnership				x	x					<u>Lead: Neighbourhood Services Manager.</u> The Joint Waste Members and Officer working group held an inception meeting in July 2022 to discuss decarbonising the waste fleet. Lead Cllrs agreed to explore a switch to HVO from diesel. Consultants were employed to progress this, with a report in Jan 2023 outlining the significant costs that would be involved.  <b>At a senior and strategic level, discussions have started across the Joint Waste Partnership regarding potentially extending the current contract from 2026, for up to 7 years (up to 2033). Any switch to HVO is to be negotiated within contract extension discussions, as the best the time to agree a way forward and negotiate best value for money with the provider.</b>

## 2. Completed Projects / Achievements: 2023/24

Project/Achievement	Category	Linked Strategic Priority								Status / Update summary	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		
Bexhill: Tree City of the world	District / Partnership			x				x			Bexhill has been recognised as a <a href="#">Tree City of the World</a> .

Project/Achievement	Category	Linked Strategic Priority								Status / Update summary	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		
Carbon Literacy Training for RDC Officers	Corporate									x	<p>On 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> September 2023, the Environment Strategy Officer and Projects Officer (Environment) delivered Carbon Literacy Training to 8 Council Officers. This is the first course that was delivered in house, and brings the total number of officers to have completed this training to 30.</p> <p>CMT have since approved a programme to roll out Carbon Literacy training to all staff, and adopt it into the induction package as mandatory training for new starters.</p>
Phase 1 of the Village Halls Energy Project completed	District / Partnership					x				x	<p>Phase 1 was completed in June 2023 with bespoke Decarbonisation Plans issued to 39 participating halls.</p>

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