

## **Somerset Council Journey to Net Zero High Level objectives and commitment:**

*Leading the way to tackle the Climate Emergency and creating a greener and more sustainable Somerset.*

Dealing with the climate and ecological crisis and reaching carbon neutrality is the Council's overarching priority. Recent extreme weather events have demonstrated urgent action is needed to avoid catastrophic climate change and the associated nature crisis.


We all need to play our part in tackling this challenge and hand our County to our children and grandchildren in a better state than it is now.


### **Strategic Aims and objectives:**


1. We will develop an interactive visual and transparent performance dashboard of our progression in carbon emissions baseline data for Somerset Council and communicate this to our Somerset residents by 2025.
2. Take a leadership role on the climate emergency and the journey to Net Zero in Somerset, working with, influencing and inspiring partnership working across the County and region through the creation of a 'One Somerset Climate Strategic Partnership' to help deliver our collective climate ambitions and commitments to enhancing Somerset habitats and environment aiding the county to adapt and be more resilient and ensure we collectively make Somerset County Net Zero by 2030 or before.
3. To work collaboratively with the One Somerset Climate Strategic Partnership to create a Somerset wide Climate Emergency Strategy and action plan.
4. Create and engendering meaningful and lasting behavioural change within our communities; providing individuals and communities with the ability and knowledge to make changes to the way they work, live, travel"
5. Develop a land use strategy to mediate between the multiple and often conflicting demands for the use of land within the county, identifying opportunities for delivering multiple benefits and minimising unintended consequences.
6. To ensure that when the Local Plan is adopted that the ecological emergency and nature recovery (including the Energy Investment Plan, renewable energy generation and consumption, food security, infrastructural resilience, low carbon transport, flood and drought risk, green economy and design standards) are strategic priorities for planning and new development, through site allocations, policies and an up-dated Somerset Design Guide.
7. Both within Somerset Council and with our wider Somerset community reduce energy demands and increase local renewable energy provision and consumption.


8. Provide and promote through our planning policy guidance and local standards upheld by building control, high quality insulated homes with local energy bills.
9. Somerset Council will work with our partners and communities to develop and deliver a resilience and adaptation strategy & action plan to protect our communities' homes and businesses from against extreme climate events.
10. Somerset Council will reduce levels of household waste and increase recycling and opportunities from the circular economy, exceeding national targets.
11. Facilitate the implementation of national initiatives e.g. Extended Producer Responsibility, Deposit Return Scheme
12. Anything about working with partners to reduce commercial waste and promote a more circular economy.
13. Somerset Council will develop a strategy and action plan to deliver cleaner air for Somerset than national targets.
14. Somerset Council will work develop a strategy and action plan to deliver a Transport Plan for Somerset, which will encourage active travel by foot, bike and public transportation.


#### Somerset Council Action Plan:


 <p><b>Housing and Buildings</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a Somerset social housing retrofit project to an average of EPC-B by 2030.</li> <li>• Support and encourage homeowners to retrofit, decarbonise and future proof their homes</li> <li>• Ensure that any new Council social housing and community infrastructure is Net Zero by 2030.</li> <li>• Empower residents, businesses and other groups to cut their energy use, adopt Renewable energy and make more sustainable decisions supported by guidance, training and education, signposting to grant funding and through the development of local markets.</li> </ul>
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 <p><b>Transport</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a greener public by facilitating &amp; promoting greater use of active travel methods.</li> <li>• Support and enable the uptake of sustainable travel modes.</li> <li>• Live Labs 2 - Support and adopt best practice from the various Live Lab projects into highway and transport service delivery</li> <li>• Lead and support the decarbonisation of the new Somerset Council Highways contracts by 25% over the next 4 years</li> <li>• Support and enable the councils own fleet transition from ICE engine vehicles to low carbon alternatives</li> <li>• Support the wider rollout of electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure within Somerset</li> </ul>
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 <p>Renewable Energy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand Somerset’s current and future energy position – Somerset Energy Investment Plan 2024.</li> <li>• Transition Somerset Council to a clean energy supplier.</li> <li>• Make Council energy use more sustainable, green and affordable and put mitigation in place to reduce overall consumption where possible.</li> <li>• Support residents, businesses and other groups to access grants and funding to increase uptake of green energy solutions.</li> </ul>
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 <p>Waste</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work to ensure the Council waste fleet is decarbonised and energy efficient.</li> <li>• Work with organisations to reduce the quantity of general waste produced by commercial businesses and households and promote opportunities through circular economy.</li> <li>• Increase recycling rates, both across the Council and schools’ estates and the wider public realm.</li> </ul>
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 <p>Business and Skills</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understand green economy opportunities and access to green finance to support our climate and ecological aspirations across Somerset.</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for residents to train for green skills jobs.</li> <li>• Support the growth and availability of green jobs across the county.</li> <li>• Nurture a green business sector and create a viable business environment for sustainable enterprises.</li> <li>• Support the sharing economy and sustainable business practises.</li> <li>• Encourage SME’s to track energy use and adopt energy efficiency measures to save money and carbon – Zellar Scorecard</li> </ul>
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 <p>Communities and Partnerships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a ‘One Somerset Climate Strategic Partnership’ and board and partnership action plan.</li> <li>• Implement the recommendations of the Citizens Assembly programme with partners and the community.</li> <li>• Explore innovation through appropriate partners and academic research.</li> <li>• Engage with and support residents to be more sustainable.</li> <li>• Take a place-based approach in our programme of work.</li> <li>• Embed principles of equality &amp; fairness in line with Somerset Council Corporate Plan.</li> <li>• Empower communities to identify priorities and take action at a local level.</li> <li>• Support and enable community level action on climate adaptation and resilience with regards to local emergency (including flood) plans.</li> <li>• Promote and embed positive behaviour change within our communities through a climate communications and engagement strategy &amp; action plan.</li> </ul>
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 <p>Supply Chain and Investments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopt sustainable procurement policy guidelines for Somerset Council.</li> <li>• Improve data collection and monitoring of our supply chain by 2030.</li> <li>• Refocus treasury management to promote sustainable investment and incorporate green objectives.</li> <li>• Trail carbon budgeting and carbon / climate impact assessments for all investment decisions across Somerset Council.</li> </ul>
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**Staff, HR and  
Policy**

- Ensure the Council is internally committed to net zero transport.
- Strive to reduce the councils own internal waste generation whilst increasing Council operated building's recycling rates.
- Align councils' employees understanding and importance of sustainability and decarbonisation through online learning training and through best practise across our services and office estate.
- Imbed a triage system / climate & ecological impact assessment across council for all reports, project documents and decision making.
- Provides tools and resources to enable services/ departments to maintain local records of energy use / consumption to enable consolidation of energy use at corporate levels.
- Work across the council to promote and support ways of working that deliver the councils net zero ambitions.

