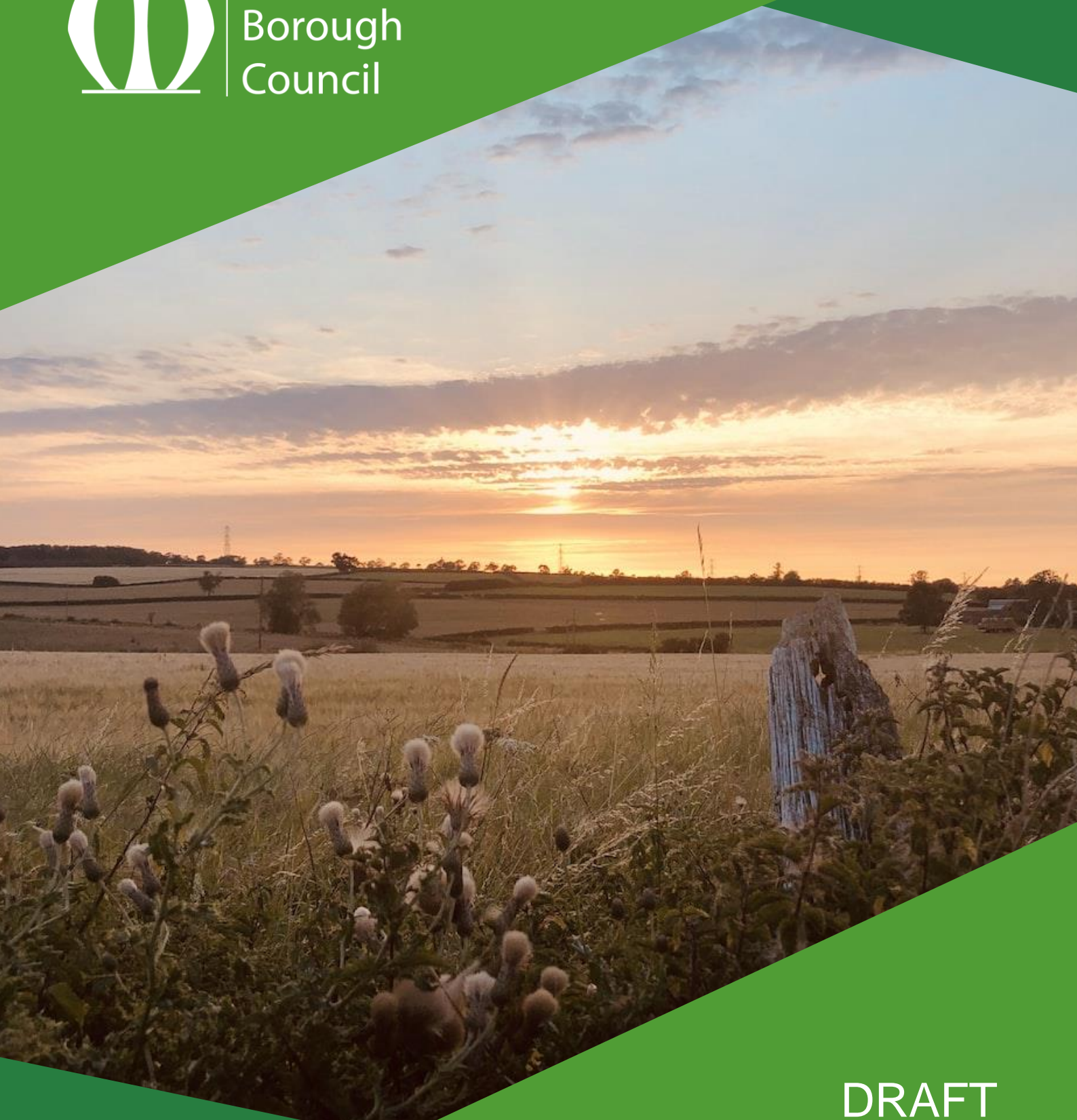




Melton  
Borough  
Council



**DRAFT**  
**Climate Change Strategy**

A Community Plan for Climate Action

2024-2036

# Introduction

Scientific evidence, built up over many years, shows that the planet's climate is changing as a direct result of human activity which has increased greenhouse gases in the atmosphere by around 45% since the industrial revolution. The main causes of this are the burning of fossil fuels for energy, agriculture and deforestation, and the manufacture of cement, chemicals, and metals. How we and the natural ecosystems around us, that support us, cope with the changing climate is the biggest single challenge that we face.

In 2019, against a backdrop of increasing concern over climate change, Melton Borough Council acknowledged the climate emergency and committed to reduce its own emissions and become a net zero and more sustainable organisation. It also made a commitment to work towards making Melton borough a more sustainable place.

The Council has now developed this strategy document to set out how it and others can work together to tackle climate change across Melton borough. It sets a framework for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and for making the borough more resilient to the impacts of climate change.

This strategy reflects local people's views, as expressed in a widescale public consultation on climate change undertaken in 2022. Most local people told us that they are really concerned about climate change. They gave their overwhelming support for tackling climate change locally, with a strong desire for local council's and others to show local leadership and do more, faster. Local people also felt strongly about wider sustainability ambitions, including the need to reduce waste, litter and plastic pollution and to protect and enhance nature and the local natural environment. These are also considered in this strategy.

**A report from the community consultation alongside further local information about the climate change is available to view on the Council's [climate change webpages](#).**

# About this Strategy

This strategy document has deliberately been kept strategic, high level and simple to encourage a wide readership. The Council's [climate change webpages](#) complement this strategy, they include a fuller discussion of the local issues, challenges and evidence about climate change alongside to links to further information.

This strategy takes into consideration the individual characteristics of Melton borough, and its resources, to set out local opportunities to tackle climate change that align with local peoples aspirations. It highlights areas where we can best influence change at a local level, to both reduce local area greenhouse gas emissions and prepare and adapt to climate change.

Although this strategy is not a statutory document, Melton Borough Council will use it to influence its work, services and plans and will encourage others in Melton borough to do the same. It is not just a 'council' strategy, rather we are asking everyone to support it and work together to deliver the actions and changes needed locally to tackle climate change.

This Strategy is intended as a foundation for considering how we can come together to tackle climate change across Melton borough as effectively as possible. It is considered a starting point for action, that will be delivered in many different ways and by many different people, and we expect it will evolve as we learn.

## **This is a community plan for local climate action**

The local community have told us that they are concerned about climate change and a growing number of local people, businesses and other organisations in Melton borough are already taking action individually to tackle it. But no single person or organisation can tackle it alone. It requires a whole community response. And whilst climate change is a global problem, it is in our local communities, workplaces, schools and families, where both the impacts are felt and where many solutions lie.

People can feel overwhelmed when we focus on the enormity of the global challenge, it can make people feel helpless and reduce our motivation to act. This strategy recognises the power of local action, powerful because it can make climate change relatable and the solutions tangible. This strategy promotes a focus on local actions and achievements that can help us all feel like we can make a difference.

The central theme of this strategy is that we need to collectively work together to respond to the climate challenge across Melton borough. We need to listen to local people and collaborate to tackle climate change together, to engage and encourage participation, so we do things 'with' rather than 'to' others. This is why this document seeks to provide a framework for the whole community, not just the Council to reduce local greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to our changing climate.



**“To create a resilient, biodiverse, fair and more sustainable future for everyone in Melton borough ”**

**This vision can only be achieved if we adopt the key principles set out below, which have influenced the development of this strategy;**

- **Work together** and collaborate and develop partnerships at all scales, with local people, businesses, organisations and wider partners.
- **Empower the local community** to make sustainable choices. Communication, education and behavioural changes will be fundamental in nurturing this.
- **Be fair for everyone** and recognise that we do not all have the same ability to take action and that the impacts of climate change will not affect us all in the same ways. No one should be unfairly burdened and we need to provide support to those who need it most.
- **Recognise and secure the wider benefits** that can come from climate action, to improve our health and wellbeing, reducing our energy costs, provide new green job opportunities and help to protect and restore nature. We need to recognise that these benefits, particularly cost savings, may be the main reason that many people are willing to make changes to how they currently do things.
- **Accelerate where possible.** We want to achieve net zero as soon as possible, but to do this we need to secure significant levels of additional funding and see a much stronger approach and policies from the Government, backed with real support to tackle our most challenging issues. We also need a local workforce with the right skills, alongside increased supply chain and manufacturing capacities, to be able to practically achieve our vision faster.
- **Adopt a focus on avoiding and reducing.** We should focus our actions on what we can do to avoid and reduce emissions, waste and our use of resources before we consider actions such as carbon offsetting or recycling. We should also not promote actions that only move emissions from the borough to other places.

**These key principles are discussed further in the delivery section of the strategy.**

# Strategy Overview



## Local Context

In Melton borough, climate change is expected to bring hotter, drier summers and warmer, wetter winters. Extreme weather events such as heatwaves and heavy downpours are expected to become more frequent and more intense, with an increased risk of both flooding and periods of drought. Climate Change will impact us all differently, depending on our circumstances, but overall the key local challenges are likely to be;

- A lack of water supply to meet local demand.
- Impacts on people, from increased ill health due to overheating to an increased risk of flood damage to local infrastructure, homes and businesses.
- Increased stress on the natural environment and local food production.

Around two thirds of local area greenhouse gas emissions, that are driving climate change, come from the energy used to power transport and power and heat local homes, businesses and other buildings. These are the emission over which we have the greatest level of influence at a local level to change. The remaining emission largely come from agriculture, reflecting the rural character of the borough. However, local agricultural emissions are much harder to influence at a local level, as they are influenced by global and national economic factors, national regulations and wider consumer demand.

Local people have told us that they want to see urgent action to tackle climate change, by reducing local greenhouse gas emissions, adapting to our changing climate and through supporting nature recovery.

Many of the solutions we need are already understood and available. They include solar and wind power, energy efficiency buildings, electric cars and more walking, cycling and public transport. So this initial strategy focuses on the things that we can do now and on where we have the greatest influence at a local level; where we can most quickly make a positive change to local people's lives, these have been set out across following five key delivery themes;

- Transport and travel
- Homes, buildings and the built environment
- Natural environment and farming
- Local economy
- Waste and the use of resources



## Transport and Travel

Transport produces around a quarter of emissions in Melton borough. Achieving zero emissions from transport is a tough challenge because we are a sparsely populated and large rural area. To tackle transport emissions, we need to look at how we can reduce the need to travel and make alternative ways to get around including public transport, walking and cycling a realistic and attractive alternative. But we also need to be realistic and acknowledge that for a rural area like Melton zero emissions vehicles will be a significant part of the solution, including chargepoint infrastructure to meet everyone's needs.



## Homes, Buildings and the Built Environment

The local population is growing and there is a need to build more homes. New homes and buildings need to use much less energy and run on low carbon energy sources if they are to align with net zero targets. Our biggest challenge however is our existing homes and buildings, which need to be retrofitted along the same principles. Existing local homes and buildings are overall older, more diverse and less energy efficient than average. Only a third of local homes are reasonably energy efficient and few have low carbon heating systems. It is a huge financial and practical challenge. It is not just buildings but also the places where we live, they also need to adapt to be able to cope with the impacts of climate change.



## Natural Environment and Farming

A healthy natural environment is crucial to achieving net zero, and providing ways for people and wildlife to adapt to the stresses of climate change. Protecting and enhancing our natural environment is something that local people feel strongly about and a key part of this strategy.

Agriculture is both the single largest source of local greenhouse emissions in Melton borough and also the sector most likely to be impacted by climate change. Central to our challenge as a rural area is the efficient and sensitive use of land for all our needs, maintaining local food production, preserving and enhancing nature and wildlife habitats, generating energy and storing carbon.



## A Greener Low Carbon Economy

Many of our needs are satisfied through the local economy, so the climate impacts and wider sustainability of local businesses and their products and services is important. Many local businesses want to become greener, less wasteful and more sustainable, and many have already taken steps to do so.

We have a global economy and becoming more sustainable will likely be different for every business. There is however a role for local action, which will include ensuring local strategic plans support us to move towards a greener and lower carbon economy.

There is expected to be opportunities for hundreds of new jobs in green sectors, in particular retrofitting local buildings, that we want local people to be in a good position to take advantage of, not only for their economic success, but so we be in a position to retrofit local buildings faster too. Training will be a key part of ensuring this.



## Resources and Waste

We need to stop sending waste to landfill and change how we use things, to move from a 'create, use, dispose' mindset to one that promotes us to all 'reduce, reuse, recycle and recover', in line with the waste hierarchy and ideas for a more circular economy. This will help us reduce emissions from waste as well as reduce the energy and emissions associated with extracting materials, manufacturing, transporting and storing all the things we buy.

The most pressing local resource issue is water. Melton borough is already considered a water stressed area, and unless action is taken public water supplies are predicted to fall below what is needed to meet local needs before 2050. So we all need to take steps to use water more efficiently.



## Delivering the strategy

This strategy sets out an approach for action to be done with the support of the community. It is a positive framework to help the community to share knowledge, take action together and support and learn from one another.

Melton Borough Council is committed to doing its own part and will take the strategy into account when developing policies and making decisions. It will develop two action plans, one to reduce its own emissions and become a more sustainable organisation and a second that sets out how it will work with the wider community to achieve the objectives of the strategy across the Melton borough.



## How climate change will likely impact Melton borough

Predictions for Melton borough indicate hotter, drier summers and warmer, wetter winters, with extreme weather events such as heatwaves and heavy downpours expected to become more frequent and more intense.

### In Summer we should expect



More hot summer days with increased risks from overheating and less overall rainfall, which will mean periods of drought conditions are more likely.



An increased risk of summer storms bringing heavier summer rainfall when it does rain, which increases the risk of flash flooding, due to heavy rainfall running off hard dry ground.

### In Winter we should expect



Broadly the same number of rainy days, but total winter rainfall is expected to increase and with it the risk of fluvial flooding, due to more rain falling on already saturated wet ground.



Warmer winter temperatures, which will also mean that cold spells and snow are likely to become much less frequent, which can throw our natural systems out of balance.

Not every winter will necessarily be rainier than the one before, and not every summer will be hotter, but these predicted trends could have big impacts locally. The key impacts in Melton borough are likely to be increased damage and disruption from flooding and other extreme weather events, ill-health from overheating in heatwaves, a lack of water to meet local needs and increased stresses on nature, farming and food production.

### Reducing greenhouse gas emissions to limit the impacts of climate change

The overall impacts of climate change will depend on how much more global warming there is. The more global temperatures continue to rise the more severe the impacts are likely to be. By reducing greenhouse gas emissions now we can limit further global warming and avoid the worst potential impacts of climate change. Unless we reduce emissions rapidly, the world is likely to exceed 2°C of warming by the end of this century, but warming could potentially reach 4°C, possibly more, if we take no further action. The local impacts of higher levels of global warming are predicted to be much more significant, as the table below sets out.



## Climate impacts in Melton borough under different levels of global warming

	Low emission scenario <b>+ 2°C warming</b>	High emissions scenario <b>+ 4°C warming</b>
Hottest summer day	+3°C warmer	+5°C warmer
<b>Wettest summer day</b>	<b>3% more rainfall</b>	<b>17% more rainfall</b>
Hottest winter day	0.4°C warmer	2.1°C warmer
<b>Wettest winter day</b>	<b>18% more rainfall</b>	<b>45% more rainfall</b>

Source: 12Km MET Office climate data projections; compared to 2009-2019 weather

## Adapting to climate change

Due to the long life of gases such as carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, it is predicted that even if emissions were brought to zero tomorrow, the earth will still increase in temperature for decades to come. So we need to prepare for future climate change.

### How can we prepare and adapt to climate change?

It is essential that we develop and promote a focus on adapting and becoming more resilient to climate change across local organisations and the local community. We should encourage everyone to prepare for the impacts of a 2°C rise in global temperatures, whilst also understanding the potential impacts of a 4°C rise too, to protect us from the uncertainties that remain around the total level of warming and severity of the impacts we might face.

Local leaders from all sectors need to be seen to take the impacts of climate change seriously and involve themselves in planning for the future. Local councils and wider partners have an important role to ensure that their strategic plans take into account of the risks. We need to ensure that we plan for appropriate flood defences, use local water resources more efficiently, restrict development in vulnerable areas and adapt farming practices as well as our homes, other buildings and the places where we live to reduce the impacts on us all. By doing so now we can build resilience within our communities and be better able to respond to these challenges ahead of time.

It is also important to recognise that we will each face different and varied impacts, based on our individual circumstances. Some homes and villages will have a higher risk of flooding and those with existing health conditions, as well as our youngest and oldest residents, will be more vulnerable to ill health due to overheating. We should seek to ensure that everyone is supported fairly, so that adapting to climate change does not unfairly impact or burden anyone, particularly those least able to do without support.

# Key Actions: Adapting to climate change

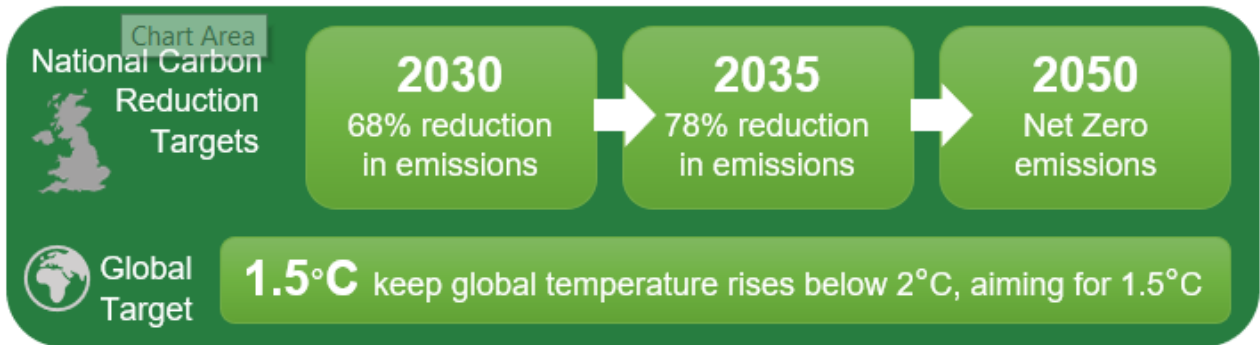


We can be better prepared for the impacts of climate change if we;

- Encourage everyone to prepare for the impacts of a 2°C rise in global temperatures, while assessing the potential impacts of a 4°C rise;
  - Encourage business continuity planning for local farmers, businesses and organisations, to consider the likely impacts of climate change on their operations and services and how they may need to adapt.
  - Ensure local communities are aware of the impacts of climate change, how it may impact them and how they can be more resilient.
- Improve joint working and knowledge sharing to better understand local risks.
- Ensure that we have the right local emergency plans in place, which prioritise vulnerable people and places.
- Ensure local flood assessments are regularly reviewed and updated, so we understand current and future risks of flooding and have suitable management plans in place.
- Ensure local organisations that undertake local assessments and plan for the future, particularly those for key services and local infrastructure take into account future climate risks.
- Work with our local water companies (Severn Trent and Anglian Water) to reduce water leaks, promote more efficient use of water and ensure we have the right infrastructure to meet our future water needs.
- Ensure existing buildings, infrastructure and new development is resilient, to minimise and mitigate storm, flood and overheating risks as well as use water efficiently.
- Seek funding to undertake a comprehensive local area energy assessment, to investigate the potential for all types of renewable energy and help us to better understand future energy demands, to ensure our energy supply is able to keep up with demand and not a barrier to moving to low carbon energy.

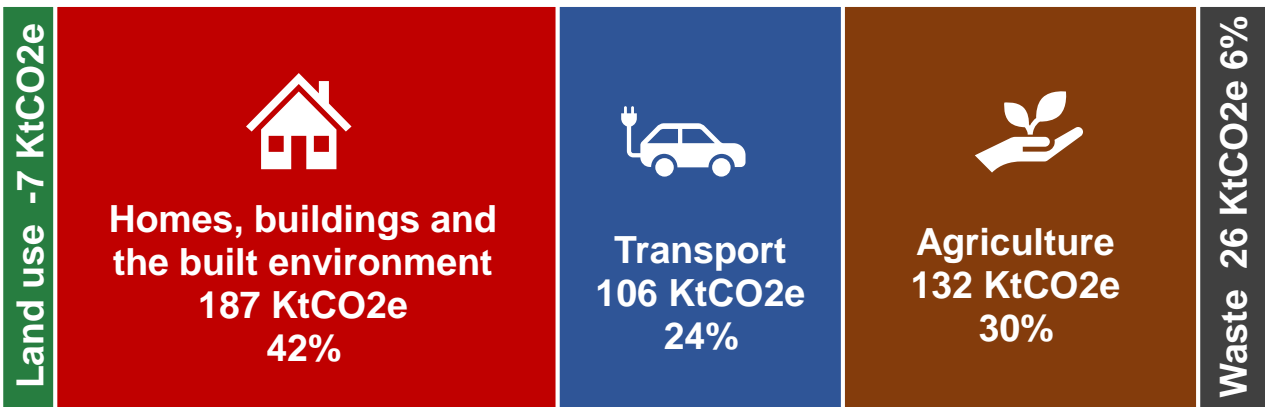
# Reducing local area greenhouse gas emission

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions is key to limiting us from the worst impacts of climate change. Nationally we have already reduced emissions by around 50% since 1990, but we have a duty to future generations to do more, do to our part locally to work towards the UK's national and legally binding carbon reduction targets including reaching 'net zero' emissions by no later than 2050.



The Government produces annual estimates for local area greenhouse gas emissions, including those created in Melton borough. This helps us to understand of where local emissions are being created and where actions to reduce these emissions will have the biggest impacts.

## 2021 Melton borough area based greenhouse gas emission estimates in KtCO<sub>2</sub>e<sup>1</sup>



440 KtCO<sub>2</sub>e is the estimated amount we need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions created within Melton borough each year to reach net zero.

<sup>1</sup> All figures are quoted in carbon dioxide equivalent (CO<sub>2</sub>e) which relate to all greenhouse gas emissions, those from carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons and sulphur hexafluoride. Kt or Kilotons is equal to 1,000 tons. This document refers to 'emissions' as shorthand for all greenhouse gas emissions.

## Summary of where local emissions come from



### Homes, buildings and the build environment

The most important and main source of local emissions is carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>). Overall it accounts for around two thirds of emissions created in the borough. CO<sub>2</sub> is mainly created when we burn fossil fuels for energy that is used to power homes, buildings, industrial processes and vehicles that travel on local roads in the Melton borough.



### Transport

These emissions are the ones that we have the greatest level of local influence to reduce as they largely depend on decisions and choices made locally.



### Agriculture

Most of the remaining third of emission come from agriculture, mainly from methane produced by livestock (66%) and from nitrous oxide released from the use of fertilisers on soils (21%). Agricultural emissions are hard for us to directly influence locally, as they are strongly influenced by global and national economic factors, national regulations, Government policy and wider consumer demand.



### Land use

Our rich green natural environment means that overall land across the borough acts as a small carbon sink. It currently absorbs around 2% of total area emissions, mainly in woodlands and grasslands, where carbon is locked up in soils, vegetation and trees. There is potential to increase carbon storage, how we manage our farmland, gardens, streets, nature sites and other green spaces will influence the how well we can do so.



### Waste

Around 6% of local area emissions come from our waste. The vast majority of local waste emissions comes from methane which is released from landfill site storage of our waste. We can tackle most of these emission if we stop sending waste to landfill. We have a degree of local influence over these emissions, however what we throw away is influenced by the decisions of both manufacturers and consumers.

**More information, including a more detailed breakdown of where local area greenhouse emissions come from can found on the Council's website;**

[Climate Change Webpages](#)



Local transport emissions come from the way that people travel and how goods are transported within and through the borough. Transport emissions typically make up just over a quarter of all locally created emissions. The vast majority come from the use of petrol and diesel vehicles on local roads. Diesel trains that run on local railway tracks also contribute a small amount. These local area emissions do not include travel local people do outside the borough, including to commute for work or to go on holiday. Individuals and businesses should also consider them if they want to reduce emissions.

Local people recognise the impact their cars have and have told us that they want to use them less, but they feel dependant on them, particularly if they live or work in rural areas. They do not feel like they have a real choice other than to own and regularly use a car, due to the distance they need to travel to access work and local services and because there are limited options to use public transport. Even people in Melton Mowbray and our most well connected and largest villages feel a need to own a car to access hospital health services, to visit family and friends and access evening entertainment and wider retail services which are only available outside the borough. Local people have also told us that they cannot walk and cycle as much as they would like to because of a lack of safe and attractive footpaths and cycle paths, especially into and around Melton Mowbray town centre.

Reducing emissions from transport is a tough challenge locally because we are starting from a point where we are highly car dependent and our population is spread out across a large rural area, which makes doing things like introducing new bus services and cycling infrastructure harder and more expensive. We need to acknowledge that for a rural area like us zero emissions vehicles will likely be an important part of the future. Electric vehicles are currently the quickest and most practical alternative for most road users, although alternative fuels such as green hydrogen may prove useful for some, particularly for high energy commercial uses. Electric cars are not a perfect solution; due to their costs, space required to charge them and the environmental impacts associated with their production. They also like standard cars produce polluting fine particulates from tire friction which can impact air quality and health.

Our immediate goal then should be to make households feel less car dependent, to use cars for less journeys and reduce the need for households to own as many cars. This can take many forms from improving rural broadband, so more people can work from home, to providing more attractive and safer cycling and walking routes to local schools. We know that people tend to use the easiest and most attractive form of transport, so we should take action to try to make cycling, walking, local buses, car sharing and other alternatives more attractive and convenient than using the car. The key is to make alternatives convenient, safe, attractive, affordable and inclusive.

## Highlighting the wider benefits

- Positive impacts on local people's health and well-being, by increasing opportunities for physical activity and improving local air quality.
- Reduce local traffic congestion and noise as well as limiting the need to further expand and upgrade local road networks.
- Reduce economic disadvantages faced by those who cannot afford to own a vehicle, including for young people, enabling everyone easier access to education, work and other services and facilities.

## How can we do this?

Reducing local transport emissions locally is a big and long term challenge. There is a role for building local knowledge, supporting community action and encouraging people to change how they get about, but it is hard for local people and businesses to make different transport choices without wider changes. Many will need better infrastructure in place to have confidence to change how they currently get around, from better rural broadband connectivity to introducing safer walking and cycling routes and delivering affordable public electric vehicle chargepoints where needed.

This is largely the role for local organisations, in particular Leicestershire County Council, who are the Local Highway Authority, and are responsible for all adopted roads and footways within Melton borough and for the management, maintenance and improvement of Leicestershire's wider highway network. The key will be for them to listen to local people and work together with them to develop new approaches for transport that work well locally. We all need to work with the County Council to ensure their strategic transport guides, plans and strategies help to deliver the local infrastructure needed and ensure that they set out carbon reductions ambitions in line with reaching net zero as soon as possible.

Other local strategic plans for health, the economy and planning (including the Melton local plan) can also make an important contribution to improving local transport sustainability, including within new developments.

## Key Actions: Transport and Travel



- Improve rural high speed broadband access and online services, so more people can choose to work from home and meet their needs online.
- Maintain and where possible improve local services and amenities, particularly for health services, entertainment and retail, to reduce the need to travel.
- Take advantage of opportunities created by the Melton Mowbray distributor road (MMDR) to make travel across Melton Mowbray and surrounding villages safer and more attractive for walking and cycling.
- Support Leicestershire County Council to develop a Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan for Melton Mowbray and encourage rural communities to take up their offer to create one with them, where appropriate.
- Support and work with rural communities to explore new cost effective ways to access community transport options, including responsive on demand transport schemes, community car clubs and car share schemes.
- Work with Leicestershire County Council and wider partners to develop a local EV infrastructure plan to ensure there are sufficient electric vehicle charging facilities, of the right kind and in the right places, at key destinations and for people who cannot easily charge electric vehicles at home.
- Use local planning powers effectively, to ensure new development promotes low carbon travel and is designed for people not cars; where it is easy, safe and convenient to walk or cycle, including for journeys to local schools and shops.
- Encourage businesses, including local taxi and transport companies, to transition their fleets to zero emission vehicles and encourage all local organisations and businesses to consider how they can support low carbon staff and visitor travel.
- Support opportunities to promote 'last mile' distribution solutions, collection points to collect online deliveries on foot or by cycle, that can cut down local online delivery van journeys.
- Ensure the local transport network is resilient to future impacts of climate change, including damage from flooding, storms and overheating.
- Lobby for full electrification across the local and wider regional rail network.
- Develop and promote programmes that support healthy and active lifestyles and make people aware of travel options they have, so they can make an informed choices in how they get about. This should include projects that improve cycle confidence and increase access to cycles as well as user friendly information to help people plan their journeys and explore the local area.



The local population is growing and there is a need to build more homes. New homes and buildings need to use much less energy and water and be powered by low carbon energy if they are to align with net zero targets. Our biggest challenge however are our existing buildings, in particular the borough's housing stock of around 23,000 homes, which need to be retrofitted along the same principles.

We estimate that in order to meet net zero targets around two out of three existing homes need to have works done to improve their energy efficiency and more than nine in ten homes need to move to a low carbon compatible heating system, mainly to replace natural gas and oil heating. This retrofitting challenge is made more complex because of the older age, condition and mix of homes and buildings we have. This includes many listed, historic and characterful buildings, which will require more varied and specialist retrofitting considerations, to ensure they preserve their valued local heritage and character. This is a huge financial and practical challenge which the non-residential sector also faces, as there are many typologies of buildings, each with different challenges, in the industrial, commercial and public sectors too. To keep on track to meet net zero we will need to significantly increase both the speed and scale of retrofit in the borough, but this will be reliant on both sufficient skilled local workers and manufacturing supply chains.

More widely, the places and streets where we live also need to be designed to be able to cope with the impacts of climate change, including increased flood risks as well as periods of drought and to protect us from overheating in summer. Local people told us that they want the places where they live to be greener, to make them more enjoyable places for people and better for nature. They told us that they want climate change, sustainable lifestyles and enhancing the natural environment to be a key consideration for planning and new development and they want to see new development that delivers net zero new homes and buildings as soon as possible. There are however barriers to overcome to achieve this, particularly current limits to local planning powers.

Local people also told us that they are keen to retrofit their homes but they do not know how they can afford to do so. They also told us that they need more trusted information and support to increase their confidence that they are doing the right things. They told us that they prefer actions and measures that they understand well and those which can help them save money, in particular improving home insulation and installing roof top solar panels. Householders were less confident and more cautious about undertaking actions such as changing their heating systems, many were concerned about the potential costs and disruption or unsure about whether new unfamiliar technologies, such as heat pumps, would work well for them.



## Highlighting the wider benefits

- Reducing energy use will reduce energy costs, this is particularly important for households already struggling with their energy bills as well as public sector organisations, including schools, looking for ways to stretch their budgets and also to help businesses cut costs to remain competitive.
- Improving water efficiency helps to ensure the longer term security of local water supplies and saves money on both water and energy bills, as much of the water we use, particularly at home is heated.
- Improving all homes, so they are energy efficient will effectively eliminate fuel poverty, which was estimate to impact around 13% of local households in 2021.
- Well insulated homes are warmer in winter and should not overheat in summer, they can help to reduce excess deaths and hospital admissions due to both cold winter weather and summer heatwaves. This can help to reduce pressure on local health and care services and save health and care services money too.
- Nature based solutions to climate change in parks, streets, gardens and other open spaces can provide a better quality environment for both people and nature.

## How can we do this?

We have already started, over one in ten local homes have had some type of energy efficiency works undertaken as part of a local or national energy efficiency scheme over the last decade, with many more undertaking works to buildings outside these funded schemes. Local councils have also come together to accelerate progress across Leicestershire and formed the Green Living Leicestershire partnership, which is working hard to bid for and secure more funding to improve more buildings.



We need to continue this, with a focus on what we can do to accelerate and upscale local retrofitting action. What is needed is of course is much more funding but also buy in from local people to take part and improve their homes and business premises, and undertaking works to other local buildings, including local schools and parish halls.

Retrofitting promotion, funding and schemes are most likely to be taken up if they align with what local people want. It suggests a focus on getting as many homes as possible up to a reasonable standard of energy efficiency to help to drive down energy costs. This will also help people be ready to change to low carbon heating systems, such as heat pumps, when they feel it is right for them to do so. Roof top solar panels are popular and projects that build such public demand, like the successful Leicestershire

Solar Together scheme, should be supported. Local organisations need to work together to maximise funding and engagement opportunities. A focus now on partnership working and awareness raising will allow us to build supply chains and confidence, to enable higher levels of retrofit in future years.

Access to funding, whether this is in the form of grants or the ability to borrow, will be key. What local people told us is that there is a need for a greater range of funding and for more types of buildings and wider groups of people. Although there will continue to be a need for targeted support for those who face the biggest personal challenges, including our most vulnerable and fuel poor households.

It is not just about funding, successfully retrofitting local homes and buildings is dependent on a skilled local retrofit workforce supported by good quality supply chains and manufacturing base, which strongly links to local economy section of this strategy (see page 22).

28% of local households rent their home, they and many local businesses will depend on their landlords to make changes to their buildings. All local residential and commercial landlords, which includes Melton Borough Council and local housing associations (who own 11% of all local homes), will need to develop a long term programme of works to retrofit their buildings. Landlords should also be encouraged to consider their wider role to support and encourage their tenants to use any new technologies they install effectively and how they can more widely help their tenants to reduce emissions associated with the use of their buildings.

We will build thousands of new homes and many other buildings before 2050, we need to, to meet the needs of our growing population. The review of the Melton Local Plan is one way to influence local development standards, it provides local people an opportunity to help shape local planning policies around tackling climate change including standards in new homes and buildings. However there are constraints from the national planning system and housing market that need to be overcome to realise the types of development that local people want to see. We need to work with the local development industry to help them introduce new low carbon technologies and higher building standards, including the Government's Future Homes and Future Buildings Standards. These new buildings standards are expected to end the use of gas boilers for heating and make new homes much more energy efficient and able to operate with net zero emissions. The Government can also do more by providing a clearer long term policy pathway around raising new and existing building standards, that can increase confidence in investment decisions, including those of landlords and developers.



- Aim for as many existing homes and buildings, as is practically possible, to reach a decent standard of thermal efficiency (an EPC rating of A-C) by 2035.
- Build public confidence in new technologies, in particular heat pump systems.
- Work with our local water companies to help them implement their local water management plan ambitions to improve water efficiency.
- Alongside improving energy efficiency promote consideration for additional works so homes are not at risk of overheating in summer, for our wellbeing and to minimise future additional energy demand for fans and air-conditioning.
- Help all households, across all tenures, understand what measures are required in their homes and how they can practically undertake them, particularly for works to heritage buildings and within conservation areas.
- Target current limited funding and support to the worst performing homes, for the most vulnerable, the fuel poor and other low income households. Lobby Government for more powers and funding to improve buildings and places faster. Lobby government for long term funding and regulatory certainty required to drive business and landlord investments that can help accelerate action.
- Use local planning powers effectively to ensure low carbon new development, that supports nature, active lifestyles and makes effective use of land, including previously-developed 'brownfield' land. Ensure all new buildings are at a minimum able to operate with net zero emissions from no later than 2025.
- Use nature based green and blue infrastructure solutions to offset the emissions from built up areas and help places be more resilient to climate change; to cool built up areas in summer, manage water resources better, reduce flood risks, store carbon and help nature.
- Encourage all landlords, of both housing and commercial assets, to develop and implement plans to retrofit their assets and encourage their tenants to reduce emissions associated with their use of their buildings.
- Support the construction and development industry to adopt low carbon new development standards, sustainable construction methods and expand capacity within the retrofit sector.
- Encourage local businesses, organisations and households to share their projects and experiences with one another, to inspire one another and learn about how to practically undertake projects.



Melton borough has a rich natural environment which is valued by residents and visitors alike for its pleasant and tranquil setting and accessible countryside. With its gentle rolling landscape, pastureland and extensive networks of hedgerows and country lanes, our rural borough, as you might expect, benefits from many local nature sites that create a vital network reaching across the borough and beyond. It is a key part of what makes Melton borough a great place and it is highly valued by local people, who want to tackle climate change alongside protecting and enhancing the natural environment. They understand that tackling climate change and restoring nature are co-dependent, that it is impossible to address one without addressing the other.

Agriculture and food production is a key part of our local economy and is vital to feed us all. Agriculture is the single largest source of local greenhouse emissions but also the sector which is most likely to be impacted by climate change. Farmers are in the frontline of climate change and will likely have to adapt more than most of us. A lack of water, higher temperatures and more unpredictable and extreme weather events are key risks to both local crop yields and livestock welfare. Local agricultural emissions are also the most challenging for us to directly address, they are considered hard to influence at a local level, because the sector is highly dependent on global economic pressures, national regulations, Government policies and wider consumer demand.

The National Farmers Union estimate that agricultural emissions could be reduced by around a quarter by adjusting farming practices, and that many changes are likely to be win-win solutions, that can help increase farming productivity and efficiency. To do this however new technologies and skills are needed in our rural economy and the training, skills and investment required to introduce them can be a barrier for individual farmers.

Farming is also uniquely placed to be part of the solution, farmland already has an important role in storing carbon and our farmers already manage carbon stored in local hedgerows, trees, woodlands, grasslands and soils. Farmers are becoming more knowledgeable about their ability to store carbon and could do more if they get the right support, which takes into account management and maintenance costs.

We all need to eat and in the context of a growing global population we need to increase not reduce food production. This strategy supports farmers and their work to produce food more sustainably, rather than solutions to climate change that take our most productive local farmland out of use, unless there are exceptional reasons to do so, for example if it is critical for local nature recovery. It would simply shift emissions from our food elsewhere, and if overseas, then this is likely to somewhere where food is not produced to as high a standard or as sustainably. Instead we should encourage local people to be aware of the climate impacts of their diets, so they can make informed choices on what to eat.

## Highlighting the wider benefits

- Help to stop ecological decline and supporting local nature recovery.
- Improving the local natural environment makes the borough more enjoyable for all, it has also been shown to be beneficial to our mental health and wellbeing.
- New farming practices can increase productivity and help reduced farming costs. Nature based climate change solutions can also benefit farmers. Silvo-pasture (blending trees into pasture land) can provide cost effective cooling shade for cattle in summer and setting aside small pieces of land for pollinating insects can help to reduce their decline and benefit crop pollination.
- A planet friendly diet is typically also good for people; if done well, can be both lower cost and better for our health.

## How can we do this?

Central to our challenge as a rural farming area is the efficient and sensitive use of land for all our needs, maintaining local food production, preserving and enhancing nature, generating energy and storing carbon.

We need to support local farmers and champion the work they are doing to support nature and produce food more sustainably. We need to listen to the farming community to understand how we can help them boost productivity, reduce their emissions and water use and increase carbon storage on their farmland. At a local level we can ensure that the right policies, systems and infrastructure are in place to enable them to make changes. For example, high speed rural broadband will enable farmers to take full advantage of new data driven smart technologies and a reliable and affordable low carbon energy supply is essential to support the electrification of farming operations.

There is lots of potential across the borough for nature based solutions to help tackle climate change whilst also protecting and enhancing nature. Many local residents, businesses, organisations, parish councils, community groups and local farmers have told us that are already taking steps to help nature or want to do more. To be successful, we need to ensure a joint approach between the many organisations working to support nature in the borough, including, nature conservation organisations, local wildlife charities, farmers, land managers and local people.

Key to doing this well is developing local evidence and sharing knowledge so we can all ensure that we are using our limited resources to do the right things in the right places to best support nature recovery alongside tackling climate change. The planned local Nature Recovery Strategy for Leicestershire is great opportunity to ensure we do this well. Other local plans and strategies, including the Melton Local Plan, should also seek to promote nature based solutions to climate change that help to protect and enhance nature.



- Support Leicestershire County Council to develop and adopt a Local Nature Recovery Strategy and action plan, based on robust local evidence, that prioritise the geographic areas, habitats and most urgent actions required to protect, restore and enhance local nature.
- Explore opportunities to work with the local community to develop a plan to 'green' Melton Mowbray town centre; to reduce emissions, be more climate resilient and explore a community suggestion to become a 'bee friendly' town.
- Encourage all landowners to adopt more nature and climate friendly land management practices. Including actions that can be done at small scales, in local parks and green spaces, in streets, gardens and around workplaces.
- Promote natural water management measures that can benefit nature and improve climate resilience by reducing flood and summer drought risks.
- Ensure new development works well with the natural environment in which it sits and that it delivers biodiversity net gains. Ensure local planning approaches also work well to support farm building modernisation and retrofitting which can help farmers reduce their environmental impacts.
- Support conditions to enable farming to innovate and take advantage of new technologies, by supporting high speed rural broadband, rural mobile network connectivity and reliable and affordable low carbon energy.
- Encourage partnership work across local food, drink and farming sector, to share knowledge, expertise and experiences in tackling climate change with one another and with local policy and decision makers, so they can better understand the evolving needs of the sector.
- Raise awareness of healthy food choices and how these can also be good for the environment alongside the benefits of supporting sustainable, local food growing and buying, so local people can make informed decisions about what to eat.
- Ensure we have sufficient local allotments to meet current and future demand.
- Lobby Government for more ambitious plans backed by sufficient funding, to secure the long term production of high-quality sustainable local food, to build resilience and confidence in the farming sector and encourage future investment.
- Work in partnership with existing local education and training providers, including Brooksby Melton College, to ensure training and educational opportunities that support climate friendly farming and land management.



Many of our needs are satisfied through the local economy, so the climate impacts and wider sustainability of local businesses and their products and services is important. Climate change considerations for local businesses go beyond local area emissions, those directly from their buildings and operations. We have a global economy and local businesses rarely work in isolation, for them climate change requires wider consideration around their products and services, which may be reliant on global supply chains alongside meeting the needs of a wide variety of customers. They will need to work with their clients, customers and supply partners, to successfully implement change.

Companies also need to understand the climate risks they might face, to help safeguard their business and identify opportunities to compete in a future greener low carbon economy. As the 'rural capital of food' there may be specific local opportunities for our food economy, producers, events and markets to take advantage of increasing consumer demand for more sustainable, high standard and locally sourced foods.

Many local businesses have told us that they want to become greener, less wasteful and more sustainable, many have already taken steps to do so. Their top interests are actions around reducing energy use, packaging (including single use plastic), and influencing their supply chains; actions that can help businesses save money seem the most likely to be of interest. Many said that they costs were not a direct barrier, that they could potentially make investments to operate more sustainably, the key barrier was around concerns that the costs associated doing so would have to be passed onto customers, and uncertainty about how this may impact their competitiveness, affordability and consumer demand.

Being more sustainable requires greater consideration of how we all use resources, in line with circular economic ideas (see page 25), to reduce, reuse and continually recycle materials across supply chains rather than dispose of them as waste. This may provide new income generation and economic opportunities for local businesses, but there is a need for innovation and investment to support such actions. Local businesses have expressed disappointment that they have not seen much support at a national or local level to help them so far.

If we want a prosperous future economy we need to be a strong position to take advantage of future green jobs. 'Green jobs' are any jobs that have a direct, positive impact on the planet and that are expected to form part of the low carbon economy of the future. They includes roles in renewable energy, manufacturing low carbon technologies as well as jobs in environmental management and retrofitting buildings. They have the potential to provide new types of long term employment to hundreds of local people in the borough, estimates suggest a need for over 400 new green jobs in Melton borough by 2030, rising to more than 600 by 2050. We also need to encourage employers to think about how every job can become a green job, how every business and worker needs a good understanding of

climate change, the impact their work has and what they can do to help their organisation to reduce it.

## Highlighting the wider benefits

- The efficient use of energy and resources can help to reduce business costs and increase productivity.
- New economic opportunities and 'green jobs' which can help to build wealth and prosperity within our local communities alongside increasing local capacity to accelerate climate action.
- Planning for climate change can help businesses to plan more effectively, and develop better investment and business continuity plans.
- Health and wellbeing benefits from wider climate action can have positive impacts on the economy, such as fewer illness-related days lost at work which can also help to improve productivity.
- Businesses that care about the environment and demonstrate a real commitment to tackling climate change have been shown to be more attractive employers, better able to retain their workforces and increase consumer loyalty.

## How can we do this?

The changes required to move to a low carbon economy will look different for every business, for some the support might best come from their own sectors rather than the local area or community. Some might need local area based support, and this is where there is most likely to be a role for local public sector organisations, including the local economic partnership and local councils who develop local economic and other strategic plans. The Government as well as local public sector organisations can also help by providing clear and consistent policies and direction, to help increase confidence and enable local businesses to make long term investment decisions that ultimately will help us to all tackle climate change faster. Longer term funding guarantees for retrofitting homes in particular will help to drive confidence and local investment where it is most needed and support growth in local green jobs.

Businesses will also need people with the right experience, skills and qualifications which are ready for the future to implement changes they need, particularly for jobs associated with the retrofitting of buildings. If we want the local economy to thrive over the long term then local businesses need to be prepared for climate change and understand the potential impacts climate change may have on their operations, both directly and indirectly, including to their supply chains, due to changing consumer demands or keep up with new environmental and emission regulatory requirements.





- Encourage local businesses to incorporate climate change into their business plans, to consider how climate change may impact them.
- Encourage businesses to consider their own leadership role and how they can engage with and encourage their staff and customers to make changes as well.
- Ensure local economic strategies and plans provide a clear commitment to net zero and a more sustainable local economy that values nature. They should support local businesses to adapt to a low carbon and more circular economy and help connect businesses to the training, funding and support they need to do so.
- Encourage local education and skill providers to embed learning about climate change into local skills, training and adult education programmes and support local apprenticeships, particularly for developing retrofitting and environmental management skills.
- Encourage local business partnerships and networks to help local business demonstrate their commitment to more sustainable business practices and share knowledge, experiences and learning with one another.
- Ask local businesses to invest in local climate change and environmental projects within Melton borough as part of their social value programmes, community investment strategies or to mitigate their local environmental impacts (over the short term, until their operations become more sustainable).
- Work with the sustainable food partnership and other partners to take build economic opportunities within the local food sector that can help to build demand for more sustainable, high standard and locally sourced food.
- Encourage all local businesses and organisations to adopt procurement processes that support sustainable procurement, including local farming and food production within their catering decisions.
- Seek to increase demand for sustainable products and services, showcase and champion local businesses who are taking action and raise awareness amongst consumers, so they can make informed decisions about what they buy.



Emission from waste account for around 6% of local area emissions, this is largely from methane emitted from bio-degradable waste placed in landfill (80%) and the emissions that arise from the treatment of our waste water. The most effective way to reduce our waste emissions is to avoid creating waste. This will reduce the need for waste to go to landfill and if we can use water more efficiently, there is less to treat and dispose of. But it is more than just considering the emissions that arise from processing waste, it is about recognising and valuing the energy and resources that go into producing goods, services and food.



The waste hierarchy (left) provides a simple framework to reduce waste that the whole community can use. It aims to reduce and recycle waste as much as possible, while dealing with residual waste in the most sustainable way. It encourages us to consider how we can shift from meeting our needs through our current linear 'take, make, consume, throw away' approach to something more sustainable, like a circular economy approach.

A circular economy approach is one where resources are used as efficiently as possible, again and again, for as long as possible. Where products are designed to last as long as possible, to be easy to repair and made out of materials that can be recycled repeatedly. This approach also support sharing, leasing, reusing, repairing and refurbishing rather than us all buying new things that we will not use many times.



Local people told us that they care deeply about rubbish; their own waste, fly-tipping and litter, particularly when it impacts the natural environment. They want more support to reduce their own waste and ensure their waste is recycled and disposed of correctly. Local people are also concerned about single use plastic packaging and plastic pollution. Many recognise how we as a society consume things is not sustainable and that we need to change how much and what we buy, but sometimes costs are a barrier to make the most sustainable choices.

## Highlighting the wider benefits

- Reducing how much we need to buy and how often as well as buying more efficient appliances can over the lifetime of products normally save local people and businesses money
- Nature benefits, from less litter and waste to a reduced need to extract resources from the natural environment

## How can we do this?

Melton Borough Council has a direct role as it is responsible for the collection of local household waste, as do Leicestershire County Council, who are responsible for local waste disposal. They are both members of the local Waste Management Partnership and they need to continue to work together, with others across the county, to encourage the most environmentally sustainable options for the future processing and treatment of our waste. The local Waste Management Partnership has developed its own strategy, The Leicestershire Waste and Leicestershire Resources and Waste Strategy and Action Plan, to reduce waste and better use resources, promoting the use of the waste hierarchy and circular economy principals set out above. So there is already in place a partnership taking responsibility for the key actions we need to do.

Wider local strategies and plans can do their part to, the Melton Local Plan can help ensure new development minimises waste and uses resources efficiently and Severn Trent and Anglian Water both have Water Management Plans and action plans to support us all to use water more efficiently.

The local community has also already taken a lead, from the Melton Wombles working hard to tackle local litter to Melton Space who run regular local repair cafes. Part of the solutions is to encourage more community awareness and projects and expand them across the whole borough.

The Government needs to do its part too, it needs to follow through with more promised regulations and funding, especially to further reduce single use plastics and provide the funding promised to enable local council's to start to collect food waste.

## Key Actions: Waste and the use of resources



- Raise awareness and increase participation in initiatives, services, activities and campaigns that support and encourage water efficiency and waste prevention.
- Support and encourage people to grow, cook, buy and eat good, local and seasonal food and minimising food waste.
- Seek to reduce fly-tipping and litter by educating residents and businesses about their legal duty of care to dispose of their rubbish responsibly and support enforcement where appropriate.
- Aim to increase local household recycling rates from 45% to 65% and explore the viability of adding extra materials, including food waste, to local recycling collections.
- Raise awareness and opportunities for people to reuse, repair and recycle more. Support local repair and reuse community projects. Explore opportunities to expand reuse services and improve the collection of items that could be reused or recycled.
- Remove recoverable food waste from waste stream, by encouraging home composting and implementing separate household food waste collections where appropriate.
- Reduce carbon emissions from waste management services by developing lower carbon solutions for waste collection and disposal.
- Support the economic opportunities to develop local supply chains and markets, to increase reuse and recycling of waste and secondary raw materials.
- Support the Leicestershire County Council in its aim to reduce waste sent to landfill, and its target to send less than 5% of the waste the County processes to landfill by 2025.
- Support local water companies water management plans to conserve water and encourage them to go beyond current targets to reduce water leaks by at least 50% by 2050.
- Minimise waste and support the efficient use of resources in new development.
- Explore the possibility of a grant or loan scheme, that can help those with low incomes afford to access more efficient and longer lasting appliances and products, where the initial cost to purchase is recouped through reduced running costs and longer lifetime of the product.



It is expected that this strategy will evolve over time, through engagement with local people, as new opportunities are discovered, as new initiatives come forward, and as our knowledge, understanding and technology advances. So this strategy should be considered a foundation for local action and should not stand in the way of pursuing new opportunities which may arise. This required us to adopt flexible, pragmatic and dynamic approaches particularly so we can maximise investment for any new funding opportunities.

## **How Melton Borough Council will use this strategy**

The Council is committed to do its part. The Council's ambition is to become a net zero organisation and to lead by example in promoting sustainable practices across its operations and wider estate, including its housing stock. In addition to this the Council is committed to use its local powers and leadership role to help the Melton borough to reduce emissions and become a more sustainable place. To help achieve this it will ensure this strategy becomes a key consideration in the Council's decision making processes and in how it delivers its services.

The Council will develop two action plans to help to deliver this strategy. One will set out the actions required to reduce the Council's own operational emissions and ensure its services are resilient to the impacts of climate change, in line with the Climate Emergency pledge it made in 2019. It will drive change in areas such as energy use, procurement, waste collection service and the management of its assets, including the Council's housing stock.

A second action plan will focus on using the Council's powers and its local leadership role to help deliver the actions set out in this strategy across the whole borough. This is viewed as a key part of the Council's wider role to protect and improve the lives and livelihoods of its residents, communities and businesses. The Council's role in the boroughwide action plan will not be to control or lead on all actions, projects and issues, rather it will set out how the Council can use its powers and limited resources effectively to empower and support everyone to take action themselves. The boroughwide action plan will also reflect what local people have said that they want the Council to do, to focus on prioritising its efforts to where it has the greatest power and influence.

The Council will also ensure that it embeds this strategy into the strategic plans it leads on including the Melton Local Plan, its Housing Strategy and Corporate Strategy and it will encourage others to do the same.

## Collaborating and working together

A key theme throughout this strategy is that no one has the resources and powers to reduce local area greenhouse gas emissions as quickly as needed or successfully manage the impacts of climate change alone. Our individual actions can however collectively have a big impact and will likely be how we can successfully tackle climate change locally.

Many local people, businesses, organisations and wider partners have stated that climate change is a key priority to them. There is clear commitment by many to work together to tackle climate change across the borough, county and region. What we now need to do is start to work better together, to collaborate and develop working partnerships, networks and agreements, at all scales and across different sectors. We have already started to do so, the Green Living Leicestershire partnership and the development of the Leicestershire Climate and Nature Pact being just two examples of developing new ways to work together locally to tackle climate change and support nature. This approach can help us to;

- Build community awareness.
- Better identify local problems and local solutions.
- Maximise funding and investment opportunities.
- Enables us to learn from each other's experiences and share expertise and resources.
- Ensuring a more holistic joined up consideration of actions, to boost wider benefits and reduce duplication.

Public organisations, including both local councils, also have a wider local leadership role, with indirect collective influence on around an estimated third of all local emissions, through their various planning, licencing, housing, waste management and transport powers. It is important for them and wider partners to demonstrate leadership and embed carbon reduction and climate resilience into their policies and services, to help make it easier for the community to take action themselves. This will require commitment from a range of local organisations to change their working practices, behaviours, policies and investment decisions.

We must acknowledge that we are somewhat dependent upon national and global political, organisational and societal changes; we cannot reach net zero emissions locally without the decarbonisation of the National Grid, without clear national policies and regulations, nor without sufficient funding to support local projects and initiatives. By working together we can amplify our individual voices to help each other secure the wider help and change that we need.

## Encouraging community buy in

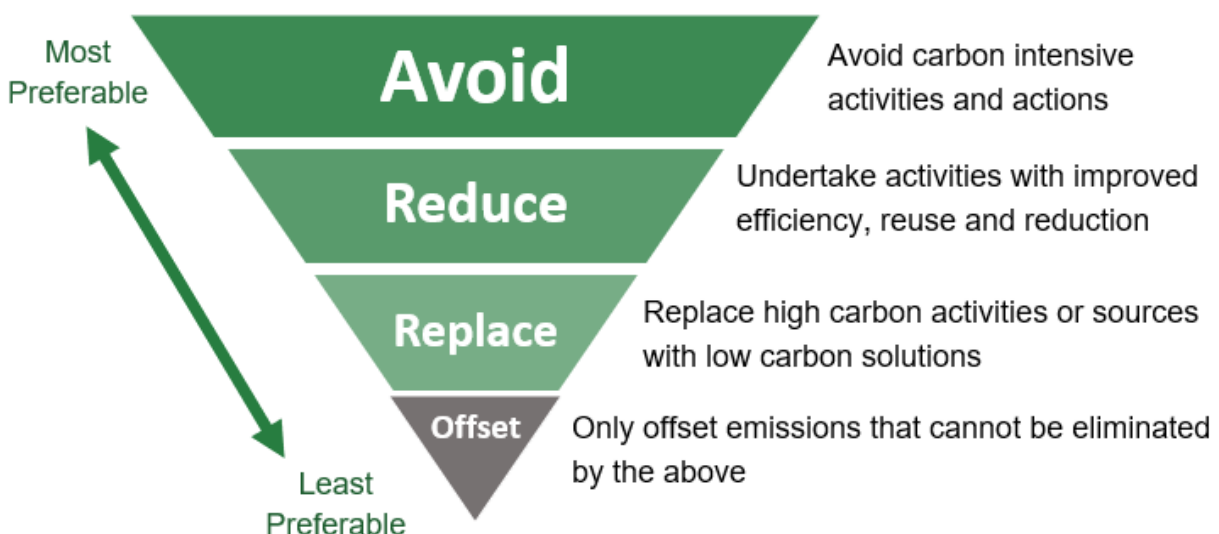
Everyone will be impacted in some way by climate change and we all have a part to play to tackle it. So everyone should be able to contribute and deserves to have their views heard. The views of all members of the local community are important, this includes those of our young people and children. Local people are clear that it is important to hear from them, as they are the generation that will be most impacted by climate change. Local School leaders have also told us they would welcome expertise and support to help them become more sustainable.

Encouraging people to act now for climate benefits, that may occur in the future can also be challenging, however the wider benefits are often experienced much quicker. To encourage community buy in we must communicate what individuals stand to gain personally. For example, better insulating our homes will help to cut emissions, but the conversation should focus on return on investment, lower energy bills and warmer homes, rather than abstract climate targets. Ensuring that such wider benefits are clearly understood and highlighted can help to increase engagement and participation. They provide a way to get more local people, businesses and organisations on board. They should be understood as a key motivator, as people are simply more likely to do something because it is good for their health or finances, rather than just for the planet.

## Focus on avoiding and reducing

This strategy promotes climate action that follows the principal of avoiding and then reducing the use of energy, water and other resources. Where this cannot be done it promotes the use of the best and most sustainable options, be that lower carbon solutions or products that are easier to repair or recycle. This is in line with the Carbon Reduction Hierarchy, shown below, and the Waste Management Hierarchy and the principles of a circular economy, both discussed on page 25.

### The Carbon Reduction Hierarchy



## Go faster where possible

We recognise that the science increasingly suggests that we should reach net zero as soon as possible and by no later than 2040 and we would like Melton borough to achieve this, but there is not a clear pathway at this point in time that makes this realistically achievable. This is due to a variety of factors including;

- Insufficient funding, especially for lower income households
- A need for the Government to clarify and strengthen national policy and regulatory approaches.
- The specific local and rural challenges, particularly around decarbonising local transport, agriculture and the housing stock that this strategy sets out.
- Local economic gaps in relation to the right skills within the local workforce and a need to increase supply chain and manufacturing capacities to accelerate action, particularly for retrofitting of local buildings.

Addressing these challenges, so we are in as strong a position as possible to reach net zero faster is considered a key part of this strategy and Government asks have been highlighted within the key actions of the strategy's five themes.

We need further Government action to better align local capacity for change with local ambitions. Specifically we need to seek leadership from the Government and others;

- To lay out clearly the funding mechanisms to finance the transition, fairly for all.
- To clarify and strengthen national policy and regulatory approaches, to clearly set out how we as a nation will achieve net zero, and to be consistent to increase certainty, not least so we can all plan more confidently for the future.
- To devolve more powers and funding directly to local people and organisations, so we can drive forward local change faster, without the time and expense of uncertain and competitive bidding funding processes.
- To help improve communications and information sharing, so we can all better understand local challenges and assist with coming up with local solutions.
- To fund rural research, such as pilot projects and projects to help test new technologies and ways of doing things, to help demonstrate what can work for rural places like Melton borough, which often have different challenges and opportunities to urban areas.



## Promoting a flexible evidence led approach

We want this strategy to be flexible and adaptive to accommodate new legislative and policy issues, technological advances and data-based evidence. This is why it is set out as a high level strategic document, rather than prescribing all the solutions, which are many and will vary for each of us. So it promotes actions to be delivered in many ways and by many different people. The Council's action plans will set out the specific actions the Council will work towards and it will encourage others to develop their own action plans or otherwise make commitments to do their fair part.

Data and behavioural insights, digital platforms and interactive mapping are increasingly used to maximise impacts of interventions. They can help to develop business cases for making change, demonstrate wider benefits and ensure more confident investment and decision making. This strategy supports local organisations sharing their knowledge and evidence, to work together to pool their resources so we are working collectively from accurate and robust information, that local people can have confidence in. As part of the Council's boroughwide action plan we will examine how we can work better with other local organisations who also report local area greenhouse gas emissions, to see if we can develop better ways to report local area emissions and other data more accurately and more consistently.

There is an identified need for more and better tools to help farmers, businesses, organisations and individuals better understand where they most need to make changes. Here there is a role for the Government and leadership across all sectors to help provide such tools and information in a way that is easy to use and understand.

## Monitoring, evaluation and reporting

A [climate change section on the Council's website](#) has been created where details of this strategy and the Council's action plans will be shown, alongside key information for residents and businesses, to act as a useful local resource.

This strategy will be reviewed after five years, to consider any opportunities to accelerate delivery, to ensure that the focus is still valid and that any new risks are taken into account. The Council will report annually on its activities and progress on its action plans. In addition individual council led projects will be subject to their own standard monitoring and evaluation processes.

To ensure it fully and transparently considers the impacts of its decisions on climate change and nature, a decision-making tool will be developed and implemented by the Council for the decisions it makes. This will be applied to all key decisions taken by the Council. Other businesses and organisations will be encouraged to do the same.