

There is strong scientific evidence to show that our climate is changing as a direct result of human activity.

The impacts are being felt across the globe, and the need for co-ordinated world action is clear. The world will need to change what it produces and consumes and how it mitigates actions.

Coventry City Council is committed to playing its part in the drive to zero carbon while making sure the most vulnerable and at risk from climate change are engaged and supported, and that the opportunities for the green industrial revolution with all the jobs and economic benefits it brings are maximised.

Over the last ten years, we have delivered a range of projects and activities to help reduce carbon emissions. This includes creating solar farms, improving the energy efficiency of public buildings, and pioneering ground-breaking, low-carbon transport like the Coventry Very Light Rail.

This new strategy, which will remain under review to ensure it is a living, responsive document, sets out what we will be doing to help mitigate climate change and build local resilience to the impacts.

We have set up a Climate Change Board made up of senior representatives from local charities, businesses and public agencies who are working together to find solutions to the challenges alongside creating opportunities for boosting jobs and the local economy.

We have developed a draft strategy for creating a sustainable zero carbon city, and we would like to hear your views about the strategy and what it is aiming to achieve.

One thing is clear – Coventry alone cannot fix the global climate crisis. But like cities across the country and world, we need to play our part, and we have to encourage and enable you to play your part too.

We will be working to raise awareness of the issues across the city, encouraging grassroots activities that will help us address practical issues on the ground.

The City Council and its partners will be working with communities to make changes across the city. The Government has the major responsibility in helping the country deliver its target for creating net zero emissions by 2050, so we will be playing an active role with our partners and local communities in lobbying the Government for change.

There are things that we can and should do now and in the future, and these are all focussed on five areas of work or pathways to change:



**Low emission development**

Low emissions and new economic opportunities



**Circular development**

Recycling and reusing our resources



**Nature-based development**

Protecting habitats and our city's wildlife



**Resilient development**

Coping with the consequences of climate change



**Equitable development**

Addressing the effects of climate change on vulnerable low-income families





# Low emissions and new economic opportunities

Carbon emissions are one of the principal causes of climate change whether from buildings, transport or business activities such as the manufacture of products.

Reducing our use of fossil fuels and hydrocarbons as sources of energy is critical to our future. The Government has set one of the most ambitious targets in the world to phase out their use by 2050 whether it is to heat our homes, power our transport, commercial and industrial processes.

## What we are doing:



Seeking to partner with an organisation or organisations to invest and develop renewable technologies, heat networks and the future zero carbon infrastructure to meet the city's future energy needs for existing and new homes and business developments such as providing the power needed for the development and running of the new Gigafactory.



Creating a solar farm using the power from the sun to generate zero carbon electricity for our homes and electric vehicles.



Improving the energy efficiency of public buildings and also increasing the use of renewable energy sources (such as solar), district heating and heat pumps, etc.



Building upon our energy from waste programme by expanding Heatline to more offices and homes. Future heat networks will link properties across the city.



Using Government funding to work with housing associations and householders to retrofit homes to make them more energy efficient.



Working towards making Coventry the UK's first Electric Bus City.



Creating the Coventry Very Light Rail – a lightweight alternative to the tram.



Continue to create top-class segregated cycleways to reduce the number of trips made by private motor vehicles. Two routes are virtually completed – with plans for more.



Working with businesses and schools to create commuter plans to reduce traffic and congestion.



Supporting businesses to become more energy efficient with guidance, advice and grants to make offices and factories more energy efficient and encouraging them to invest in electric vehicles for transporting goods and services.

## In the UK



45% of all urban trips in 2019 were under two miles, and journeys below five miles made up 58% of all car trips. Many of these trips could have been walked, cycled, or used public transport instead.



We travel around 135 miles per year for our food shopping, but this doesn't account for the miles our food travels to the supermarket first. Food miles add up quickly, leaving a heavy carbon footprint.



The typical household uses 2,900kWh of electricity and 12,000kWh of gas in a year. The Government will be phasing out the use of gas in new homes after 2025 (Ofgem estimate).



Average cycling miles travelled increased from 2002 to 2019, with a sharp rise in 2020, a positive sign that we're looking at alternative travel.





# Recycling and reusing our resources

The planet has a finite number of natural resources and it's important that these resources are protected.

One of the ways these resources can be preserved is by ensuring that people reuse products and recycle materials where they can.

By doing this, we can reduce the strain on natural resources and also cut down on the environmental damage that is caused by the production of new goods and materials. A car that is crushed at the end of its life for example does little to reuse any of the materials.

## What we are doing:



Establishing ways of finding areas of the city where people aren't recycling so we can actively promote the benefits of recycling to them.



Working in partnership with neighbouring authorities to construct new materials recycling facilities which will help us, and private businesses, recycle and reuse materials more effectively.



Supporting the development of social enterprises focused on promoting recycling and the reuse of goods and materials. These enterprises will in turn provide valuable work experience and opportunities for employment.



Providing practical advice and support to businesses to help them recycle and reuse materials and energy in efficient, cost-effective ways.



Supporting the development and promotion of new green technologies products and services.

## In the UK



Every home in Coventry produces over 900kg of waste. This is the equivalent of a small family car.



300,000 tonnes of reusable furniture are disposed of each year (Statistics from The Great Recovery Report "Re-arranging the future" 2016).



The average lifespan of a mobile phone is two and a half years. This isn't because the phone is no longer usable, but because people want to own the latest phones. Around 1.4 billion new smartphones are used each year.



The number of people buying new smartphones is reducing and refurbished smartphone purchases are on the rise, with an annual growth of 11.2%.





# Protecting habitats and our city's wildlife

Nature has a big role to play in tackling climate change. Green spaces can help cut greenhouse gases by absorbing carbon and can help deal with the existing consequences of climate change.

As a result, it's essential that we protect and enhance our city's habitats to enable them to be healthy and diverse.

By protecting these habitats, we'll be tackling climate change and ensuring our city is a cleaner, greener and a more pleasant place to live, work and study.

## What we are doing:



Identifying the habitats and wildlife that need to be protected.



Protecting and managing ecosystems so they can thrive.



Enhancing our green spaces to attract more wildlife into the city.



Ensuring that our Local Plan protects wildlife.



Creating new habitats in the city for wildlife to inhabit.



Supporting local community groups with a focus on community gardening and wildlife conservation.



Planting more trees and flowering plants on roadside verges, in parks and areas of green space.



Communicating the importance of natural habitats and wildlife conservation to our residents and businesses.

## In the UK



21 out of 47 species of British mammals are at threat of extinction.



Regular garden visitors, like hedgehogs are also in decline due to the impact of human activity.



16 out of 20 garden bird species are declining in numbers. The starling population, one of our most common bird species, has declined by 83% since 1979.



There are estimated to be 500,000 large ponds, in addition to three million garden ponds. Ponds are a great way to encourage wildlife such as frogs, toads, newts, dragonflies, birds, and many more into your garden. They also act as watering holes and breeding grounds for wildlife.





# Coping with the consequences of climate change

The planet is already experiencing the consequences of climate change. Climate threats, like flooding and heatwaves, are becoming more regular and this rapid environmental change poses a real threat to us all.

In order to mitigate these events, we have to ensure that we have the infrastructure in place to cope with the effects of these extreme weather events.

## What we are doing:



Working with our partners to develop a multi-agency Resilience and Adaptation Plan to help us all minimise the effects of these extreme weather events.



Identifying the areas most at risk of flooding and putting in appropriate defences.



Creating initiatives to reduce water consumption, especially during the summer months when supply is likely to be low.



Cooling down our city centre. We'll be introducing a number of planting schemes which will make our city centre greener and will help keep it cool during heatwaves.



Working closely with all our partners to ensure we minimise the risks of extreme weather on the most vulnerable.

## In the UK



Severn Trent supplies 1.8 billion litres of water every day to 4.2 million customers.



77% of people think Great Britain is a wet and rainy country, and 72% believe we have enough water to meet our needs in the future, but this is sadly untrue (Statistics from the Great British Rain Paradox report).



Climate change and population growth mean we could face significant water shortages in less than 25 years (Statistics from the Great British Rain Paradox report).



If we fail to act on climate change, we will see an average temperature rise of 2.20°C by 2025, and 3.70°C by 2050 with a 2% drop in water availability by 2060. This slight increase in temperature could cause extreme weather events to become increasingly common, with more severe consequences.





# Addressing the effects of climate change on vulnerable low-income families

Across Coventry, more and more people are feeling the pressure from the increasing cost of living thanks to an increase in fuel, energy and food prices. As the planet's natural resources dwindle and extreme weather effects become more common, these pressures will be amplified.

These pressures will affect everyone, but they'll have a massive impact on the most vulnerable. As a result, we must work with all our partners to address the crisis and tackle the inequalities in our communities.

## What we are doing:



Supporting the development of food growing areas in the city.



Teaching our residents, the skills needed to grow and cook affordable local produce.



Promoting the benefits of energy efficiency in the home.



Providing access to home energy efficiency improvement programmes.



Monitoring air quality at the local level and warning those who are vulnerable when the quality is low.



Making it easier, more convenient, and safer to walk and cycle around the city.



Making public transport an attractive and viable alternative to using the private car. This will include promoting the development and use of public transport systems such as the electric bus fleet and Coventry Very Light Rail.



Creating new areas of open space in the city. These new areas will be in sections of the city where there is less open space.



Capitalising on Coventry's position as the leader of the green industrial revolution. This will include providing our residents with training and skills to take advantage of the employment opportunities within this growing industry.

## In the UK



We have 8.4m people living in food poverty, but we throw away roughly 9.5m tonnes of food waste each year (Statistics from Business Waste UK).



Around 60% of food waste is from homes, with bread, dairy products, potatoes, and apples being the most wasted items (Statistics from Business Waste UK).



Only 2% of the child population cycles to school, but 14% said they wished they could (Statistics from a national survey by Sustrans).



On average, an item of clothing is worn only 10 times before it's disposed of. The world now consumes about 80 billion new pieces of clothing every year, 400% more than the amount consumed 20 years ago.



360,000 tonnes of reusable clothes are thrown away each year.

