

Sheffield City Council

Our Statement of Climate Commitments

December 2023



Contents

Our commitment to addressing climate change	3
How climate change relates to our committees	3
Policy Committee Statements	4
Transport Regeneration and Climate Policy Committee	4
Strategy and Resources Policy Committee	8
Finance Committee	10
Housing Policy Committee	12
Economic Development and Skills Policy Committee	15
Communities, Parks and Leisure Policy Committee	17
Waste and StreetScene Policy Committee	19
Education, Children and Families Policy Committee	22
Adult Health and Social Care Policy Committee	23

Draft

Our Commitment to Addressing Climate Change

On 11th December 2023, the Transport, Regeneration and Climate Policy Committee approved the first Annual Climate Progress Report since Sheffield City Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and set an ambitious target to be a net zero city by 2030.

This report highlighted that progress has been made, however it is not at the pace and scale needed to meet our 2030 target:

- 12.03% reduction in Sheffield City CO₂e emissions between 2017 and 2021
- 3% reduction in Sheffield City Council CO₂e emissions between 2019 and 2022
- Sheffield is expected to exceed its recommended carbon budget for 2018-2022

The climate emergency is one of the biggest challenges we will face as a city, region, country and global community. Following the announcement from Government in September 2023 to delay key climate change related legislation, we face a period of uncertainty around the policy levers that will be available in the coming years to support us to deliver our climate action at pace and at scale. Further to this, significant additional resources from central government will be required to help us to meet our ambitions and realise the opportunities that climate action brings. We will continue to work with government and the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority to influence this.

We, as elected Members, wish to restate our support and commitment to the targets that Sheffield has set around addressing climate change. We remain committed to tackling challenges that can be addressed by this council, using the opportunities and levers that are available to us. We also commit to developing council-wide climate adaptation plans within each of our service areas. By working together with Sheffield's communities, businesses, institutions and partner organisations to reduce our carbon emissions and adapt to our changing climate, we can minimise the impact of change, realise the widespread benefits of investing in homes and new technologies, and address issues around social justice.

How Climate Change Relates to Our Committees

It is stated in the Sheffield City Council Constitution under the council functions of each committee that 'when devising policy, evaluating service delivery and taking decisions the committee must consider...climate and biodiversity'. In relation to climate change, each of our committees' work is impacted and affected by other committees' decisions, and we will only succeed if we take a cross-committee approach to climate action.

The following pages set out how climate change relates to the nine policy committees and highlights key activity on the current work plans and service plans that support net zero and address climate change.

Policy Committee Statement

Transport, Regeneration and Climate Change Policy Committee

The Transport, Regeneration and Climate Change Policy Committee's remit is to provide oversight and steer in relation to climate and net zero, as well as for specific regeneration and transport activity.

The latest CO₂e emissions data set released by the Department of Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) in 2023, shows Sheffield's 2017 baseline emissions at 2,580 ktCO₂e, with the largest contributors being the housing sector (30%), followed by industrial and commercial (24%), and transport (22%) sectors. In 2021, the latest year for which data is available, Sheffield produced 2,270 ktCO₂e. This showed a reduction in annual emissions by 310 ktCO₂e (12.03%) since the 2017 baseline, but an annual increase of 89 ktCO₂e (4.09%) since the previous year, 2020.

The impacts of climate change will be very significant for the city. They are many and varied, and include increased extreme weather events, increased risk of flooding and drought, ecological degradation, higher goods, services and energy costs, food and water insecurity, and reduced health and well-being. Those in vulnerable groups, already living in poverty or in deprived communities will be most affected, and the impacts of climate change are likely to further increase the number of people within these groups.

Some of these impacts are unfortunately now inevitable, however any delay in acting will only increase the scale and severity of the impacts in the future. We need to, and can, act now to minimise, mitigate and adapt to the changing climate. This committee will lead the council's response to the climate emergency by taking decisions which:

- support the development and integration of climate action as a cross-cutting issue, embedding climate responsibility across the organisation and city
- take a longer-term approach, particularly where data or funding requirements for future years may be unclear, or where benefit realisation is not immediate
- take a proactive approach to climate leadership and highlight climate as an issue of significant strategic importance
- take a pro-active approach to the management and mitigation of climate adaptation, recognising it as a significant financial and wider risk to the council and city
- are aligned with policy and strategy, backed by robust evidence, and supported by inclusive and balanced public engagement which seeks to reach a wide range of views, including less-heard communities, those likely to be disproportionately affected and the majority of the population who polling evidence suggests are concerned about and want to see action on climate change, but do not regularly engage with the council.

Transport

The Transport sector contributed 572.03 ktCO₂e (22%) to Sheffield's emissions in 2021 and remains the third largest emitting sector in the city. Transport emissions have reduced by 15.9% since 2017, however they increased again by 2.4% between 2020 and 2021. Almost two-thirds of these emissions are from cars and over a quarter from light and heavy goods vehicles, and around 98% of the vehicles in the city are either diesel or petrol.

If the city doesn't act further to shift to low- or zero-emission modes of travel mode and decarbonise its transport system, we could see:

- reduced air quality and increased air pollution-related illnesses such as asthma, strokes, lung cancer, cardiovascular and respiratory disease, and air-quality related deaths
- increasing traffic growth leading to an increase in congestion, journey time, gridlock events and road collisions, and causing disruption to services, businesses and basic amenities
- significant continuing CO₂e emissions past 2030, due to transport being the third largest sector in Sheffield
- increasing vehicles ownership, exacerbating existing parking constraints and increasing emissions further
- increase in time-poverty for those who do not have the means or capacity to travel by vehicle, are reliant on public transport, or have to trip-chain in order to meet their needs
- increased insecurity over fuel cost and supply.

This committee will contribute to increased travel mode shift, and decarbonising the way we travel, by taking decisions which:

- enable and encourage modal shift towards zero emission travel by supporting increased safe active travel and public transport participation for as many people as possible
- lower resident and business dependency on cars and vehicles to reduce journeys, traffic and vehicle numbers
- lever influence to support businesses in consolidating and decarbonise their freight fleets whilst maintaining efficient and affordable goods movement in the city
- support an equitable provision of infrastructure necessary for the transition to vehicles powered by electricity or alternative fuels, suitable for each locality and community
- give consideration of every opportunity for investing in renewable energy projects on council land and buildings to generate energy and income.

Reducing travel emissions has perhaps the most extensive, strongest and most obvious wider benefits, many of which would be worth the investment even without the carbon benefits:

- increased social inclusion and travel choices as bus and tram services expand and improve, and more people are able, and choose, to use them

- better health and wellbeing as more people walk, cycle and wheel, helping increase healthy life expectancy, reduce absenteeism, and increase productivity
- quieter neighbourhoods with better air quality, where people feel safe to walk and cycle and where children are free to be more independent and to play
- less dependency on car ownership and use reduces the number of cars, improving pressure on car parking and congestion and making neighbourhoods more pleasant places to live and spend time
- new economic and business opportunities are created as the sector grows, and well-planned improvements result in more people visiting local businesses as they travel about their day.

Regeneration

The impacts of regeneration on our cities are varying and difficult to quantify. Construction activity can be a significant source of emissions, and land-use and surface structure changes can decrease carbon sequestration. However, regeneration also offers the significant opportunity to implement equitable and lasting change in relation to decarbonisation and adapting our city for a changing climate, as we invest in the areas that need improvement and development from a city-wide to neighbourhood level.

The council can lead, influence and support sustainable regeneration by using its spheres of influence, through direct delivery and working with partners to encourage delivery that goes beyond building regulations, facilitates innovation, and showcases good practise for replication at scale. Taking a place-based approach to delivery of regeneration enables a number of varying measures, such as renewable energy generation, electric vehicle charging and sustainable urban drainage, to be incorporated into schemes, to reduce emissions and deliver an adapted, climate-ready and lasting solution, while reducing local disruption and increasing the schemes lifecycle benefits.

If the city doesn't act further to support reducing city emissions and deliver an equitable distribution of regeneration that is adapted for a changing climate, we could see:

- increased infrastructure maintenance and repair costs, as well as an increased cost and occurrence of abortive works
- increased costs for future schemes
- increased property and infrastructure damage from extreme weather events such as flash flooding, drought and heat waves
- on-going and repeated local disruption from multiple schemes as we deliver the action needed to respond to the climate emergency
- loss of green-space, reduced carbon sequestration and ecological degradation
- a city, neighbourhoods and infrastructure that does not meet the changing future needs of its residents.

This committee will contribute to support sustainable and equitable regeneration, by taking decisions which:

- take a longer-term approach that reduces the need for further future intervention, particularly where investment and innovation in future years is unclear
- support taking a place based, multi-measure approach to maximise climate mitigation and adaptation, and reduce the need for future works to decarbonise and adapt for a changing climate
- give consideration of every opportunity for investing in renewable energy projects on council land and buildings to generate energy and income
- explore opportunities to integrate sustainable urban drainage, following a similar approach to our award-winning Grey to Green schemes to replicate best practice
- Our draft Local Plan requires new developments to cut carbon emissions and supports the council's clear objective to be net zero carbon by 2030.

The benefits of taking this approach are:

- a city, neighbourhoods and infrastructure which is future-proofed and fit for a changing climate, while meeting the needs of our citizens
- supporting a just and fair transition, by ensuring that actions we take consider inequities and have a positive impact on those who are already disadvantaged
- helping to create a more sustainable economy, through supporting the development of local supply chains and skills to deliver our regeneration programmes
- utilising investment in high quality, sustainable public realm to create a setting for wider investment
- helping to support creation of new habitat and improving biodiversity.

Key Actions

1. Decarbonisation Routemaps	The seven thematic routemaps will set out the vision of a net zero city and council, and the action that will be taken over the next few years to achieve that. The Transport, Regeneration and Climate Committee approved the Our Council and The Way We Travel routemaps on 19 th July 2023, and will continue to have oversight, and contribute to, the development of the remaining thematic routemaps.
2. Local and Neighbourhood Transport Programme 2022-2023	The programme for developing and implementing the council's capital transport schemes, including pedestrian and cycling enhancements, electric vehicle charging, highway safety enhancements active neighbourhoods, cycle parking, and signage for active travel routes, wayfinding to public transport and localised pedestrian navigation.
3. Connecting Sheffield	Connecting Sheffield supports mode shift toward zero-carbon travel by delivering high-quality, convenient and safer routes into and around the city for walking, wheeling, cycling

	and public transport, such as the Arundel Bus Gate, Sheaf Valley cycle route, and a number of active neighbourhoods.
4. Sheffield Local Plan	Local Plan addresses climate change through choice of spatial strategy to determine distribution of regeneration and new development and by inclusion of policies in the plan that embed sustainable principles within the decision-making process relating to proposals.
5. Sheffield Flood Programme	Our city-wide flood programme continues, with city flood schemes significantly having reduced impacts in floods experienced in February 2023 and October 2023. Following the completion in October 2023 of the Upper Don Flood Alleviation Scheme phase 1 (Loxley) the business case for phase 2 of the scheme from Neepsend to Kelham will be presented next year (2024/25). This will be followed by proposal for the Sheaf & Porter Catchment Flood Alleviation Scheme which is also in business case development. We will also continue to work with our partners in the Environment Agency, our Parks & Countryside colleagues and wider groups including the Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust in delivering nature-based flood risk reduction measures across the city.
6. Decarbonisation Routemap: Energy, Generation and Storage	This report will bring forward the Energy Generation and Storage Routemap, setting out city-wide actions up to 2026.