

Sheffield City Council
**Our Statement of Climate
Commitments**

December 2023



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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 Statements

Education, Children and Families Policy Committee

As set out in the Our Council Decarbonisation Routemap, this Committee acknowledges that whilst children and families in our city who already experience disadvantage have contributed the least to greenhouse gas emissions, they will be most impacted by it and be least able to adapt to it, especially those living in poverty and in deprived communities and those with health issues.

Our maintained schools accounted for 4,425t/CO₂e in 2022, a reduction of 36% from the council's emissions baseline year of 2019. Emissions from our maintained schools account for 46% of our non-domestic estate emissions or 3% of the council's overall emissions.

As a result of climate change in Sheffield, the following impacts will be experienced by our citizens:

- an increase in heat related illnesses and reduced well-being during extreme weather, leading to an increase in loss of life
- increased costs for food, utilities and other goods and services, increasing the number of children living in poverty
- impact on educational provision during extreme heat events as seen in the summer of 2022.

This committee commits to ensuring climate change and decarbonisation is at the heart of our decision making when designing our policies, support and service provision to children and their families and our looked after children. This will:

- enable the decarbonisation of our school estate and residential settings ensuring our children and young people have access to quality school environments and homes in which they feel safe to learn and live and develop the skills to reach their full potential
- ensure we're meeting our primary objective in promoting and enhancing the rights, wellbeing and safeguarding of all our children
- ensure that our learning and skills policy, programme and intervention work support climate change education and develops the skills required for our future workforce and low carbon economy
- ensure our work aligns to the Department for Education's (DfE) sustainability and climate change strategy
- give consideration of every opportunity for investing in renewable energy projects on council land and buildings to generate energy and income.

Key Actions

1. Draft School Improvement	Ensure sustainability and climate education is embedded into school improvement. Encouraging the implementation
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Framework 2023-2024	of the DfE's Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy and supporting schools with their climate action plans by 2025.
2. Children and Families Sufficiency Strategy	<p>This Strategy will set out our approach to ensuring our looked after children are placed within Sheffield as priority as this is in their best interest. This will also ensure that children and their social workers are having to travel less for appointments and contact sessions, helping to reduce our travel related emissions.</p> <p>In seeking options for new residential settings, we will look for opportunities to install renewable energy and refurbish any acquired properties to ensure their energy efficiency and reduced operational costs.</p>
3. Belonging Framework	The Belonging Framework will ensure that everything we do is focussed on developing and deepening children and young people's sense of belonging. This will lead to sense of pride of the places they call home and may in time lead to children going to school and socialising in their community, reducing the need for travel.
4. Renewable energy projects	We will work with other policy committee areas to identify opportunities and funding for renewable energy projects.
5. School transport	We will work with other policy committee areas to ensure a sustainable school transport service.