

## What is the Council doing to tackle climate change?

### Carbon Neutral Council

- **Creating our own carbon neutral (CN) council action plan by April 2022.** This will look at how we as a council operate and how we can work towards decarbonising our estate, fleet, decision making processes and the way we buy and commission services.
- Created a 40+ **CN Officer Group** to develop and coordinate action across the Council. They will also develop the actions for the CN Council Action Plan and oversee its delivery post April 2022.
- **Rolling out carbon literacy training**, starting with senior staff and Cabinet.
- Final stages of developing a **corporate environment and carbon neutral policy** to help all staff change the way we work.
- We have been **bidding for a range of decarbonisation grants** from government. Most recently we secured £36k to develop plans for how to decarbonise 6 primary schools. We have also secured funding to support homes in fuel poverty to improve the energy efficiency of their homes and £1.8m to decarbonise Torbay Leisure Centre.

### Carbon Neutral Torbay

Beyond the council's direct operations there are a range of things we can do to influence and reduce carbon emissions across the wider Torbay-area.

- We have an Energy and Climate Change Strategy. See [here](#). It will be refreshed as part of our planned work to **create a Carbon Neutral Torbay Action Plan in 2022**. We also have a range of other strategies that support carbon reduction. For example, our Local Plan, Local Cycling and Walking Investment Plan, waste and recycling and others. These will need to be reviewed to ensure they are in line with our CN ambition by 2030.
- University of Exeter have completed a study on how to achieve net zero for Devon, including Torbay. See [here](#).
- **Created a Torbay Climate Partnership** to help with oversee Torbay-wide action.
- Based on the results of the conference, **hold further conversations on what we should tackle in Torbay**. These will feed into the new Carbon Neutral Torbay Action Plan.
- Continued to work with the **Devon Climate Emergency Partnership** to develop a draft Devon Carbon Plan. Residents of Torbay recently took part in the Devon Climate Assembly. See [here](#) for more details. Our local actions will help to deliver this Plan and vice versa.
- For more visit this [Cabinet paper \(item 9\)](#)

## What immediate action is the Council, with partners, taking this year?

- In March 2021 we adopted a [one year initial Torbay action plan](#) to accelerate action. See [here](#).

Here are some updates on various works/projects within this plan:

### Solar parks

- We are currently developing two solar farms in Torbay, both are in or just starting their planning process and could be online in 2023. Tor Bay Harbour Authority has installed solar PV panels as well as purchasing an electric forklift truck and installing LED lighting.

### LED Lighting

- We have installed efficient energy saving LED street lights, together with carrying out a comprehensive overhaul of traffic signal inventories. This has led to significant energy and carbon savings.

### Cycling and walking

- We are looking at investing £120,000 to various walking and cycling projects in this financial year.

### **Tree planting & open spaces**

- Through our three year, i-tree 2 programme, our plan is to plant 350 of the right trees in the right place and we have just launched our Tree Warden scheme which saw 60 volunteers sign up for. They are currently going through their induction.
- Communities across the Bay are making real, sustainable change by volunteering in parks and green spaces enabling wider engagement with the natural environment leading to real local action to help tackle climate change
- With partners Groundwork South and local communities, we are protecting and enhancing Westerland Valley. This is a 35-acre haven for wildlife, with a rich tapestry of interconnected habitats supporting an abundance of wildlife including many species of both local and national significance.

### **Recycling**

- Torbay has become a Zero to Landfill authority and has run a variety of waste minimisation schemes.
- Our Recycling Officers are now in post and are supporting our residents in recycling more and better. Over the next three year we aim to increase recycling rates from the current 40% to 50%.

### **Reducing carbon emissions at Torbay Leisure Centre by 60%**

- Secured £1.8 million from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme to install air source heat pumps to create low carbon heating and hot water and solar panels to generate clean electricity.

### **Electric charging points**

- All new homes, with off street parking, built in Torbay have electric vehicle charging points installed
- We have secured funding for the installation of small banks of charging points in 10 of our off-street car parks. Hope to have some of these in place in 2022.

### **Energy efficiency**

- Working with Devon County Council we have secured some funding from the government to help create warm, energy efficient homes. We also work with Exeter Community Energy to offer homeowners and tenants practical advice and support to save energy and money. They can also offer advice on fuel switching and debt advice.

### **Climate resilience and flood alleviation**

- As our climate is changing, sea levels are rising and more storms are hitting Torbay. With the Environment Agency we will act to rapidly reduce properties at risk from flooding. This will include consulting on the design of [new sea walls along Paignton and Preston sea fronts](#).
- We also are working with the Devon Climate Emergency Partnership to develop a Devon-wide response to climate change. A Devon Carbon Plan is in development. More here [Devon Climate Emergency – Creating a resilient, net-zero carbon Devon – where people and nature thrive](#).

### **Recent government strategy**

- The UK Government is committed to cutting emissions by at least 68% by 2030 on 1990 levels, and reaching net zero by 2050. A new [Net Zero Strategy: Building Back Greener](#) . was published in October. We will need to explore this strategy and the opportunities and implications for Torbay.

