

Climate Change Action Plan

Annual Report 2024/25

Background

The Council's revised [Climate Change Action Plan 2023-26](#) was agreed by Cabinet in July 2023 and contained 12 actions to be progressed over the next three years. This report sets out a progress update on the delivery of each of those actions.

A refreshed [Climate Change Strategy & Action Plan 2025-28](#) was approved by Cabinet in March 2025. The 2025/26 Annual Report will update on progress of the priority actions outlined in the current plan.

Action 1: Transition electricity across the Council's sites to 100% renewable tariffs

The Council's energy tariffs are being continually reviewed, to understand opportunities to switch to renewable tariffs where feasible.

Action 2: Switch the Council's car fleet to electric alternatives and investigate options for other Council vehicles.

The Council has procured three new electric vehicles to replace the Place Protection fleet with electric alternatives. For the Council's remaining vehicles, such as those used by our maintenance team, we will continue to review options to determine when it may be feasible to transition to lower carbon alternatives.



Action 3: Achieve a 5% annual reduction in overall travel from employee-owned vehicles for business purposes and refresh the Council's Workplace Travel Plan.

Information regarding staff travel is available on the staff intranet site. This includes details of the Cycle to Work scheme.

Action 4: Consider opportunities arising from a relocation of the Council's offices to reduce gas consumption and/or increase renewable energy generation onsite.

Work is underway to install solar panels at Aldershot Pools & Fitness Centre. These are being funded through the government and Sport England's Swimming Pool Support Fund.

Action 5: To continue to engage young people on climate change through the schools' programme which is now running in four junior schools within Rushmoor.

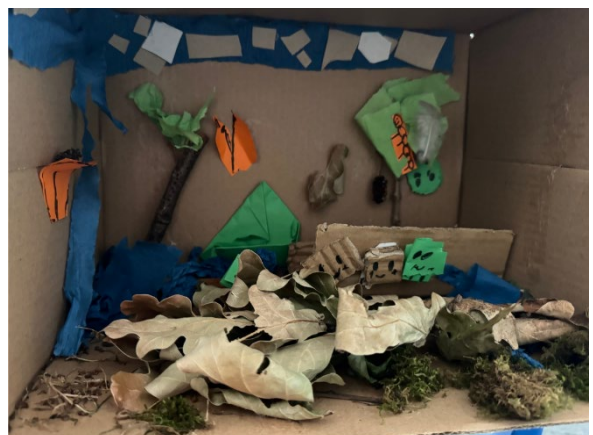
Winchester Science Centre (Wonderseekers) received a grant to run a *Climate Trackers* scheme in schools within the borough. The focus of the scheme is to raise climate awareness, whilst developing interest and skills in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM).

The third year of delivery of this scheme has concluded and was delivered to four schools in the borough. This reengaged the three schools who took part in the last round of the scheme (Cherrywood, Talavera, and Tower Hill), as well as an additional school (Cambridge). This focused on years 4 and 5, where approximately 300 children took part.

As added value, each participating school was offered a free visit to Winchester Science Centre, supporting their repeat engagement model and reinforcing their interest in science.

This year Wonderseekers have also increased their added value to the grant. Each school will be offered *Caterpillar Champions*, which include activities for their year 2 pupils.

Wonderseekers also seek to support community activities aimed at young children within Rushmoor, such as Playfest.



Action 6: To use the Council’s communications channels (including through Member engagement) to promote opportunities for residents and local businesses to reduce their own carbon footprint, including promoting schemes to the improve energy efficiency of their home or business.

Over the course of 2024/25 the following communications campaigns have appeared on the Council’s communications channels:

Energy Efficiency	• Warmer Homes (HUG2 – Home Upgrade Grant) • Solar Together (iChoosr) • Parity Trust • Warm & Welcome event at Library • Eco Fair • RBC Website • Internal communications (Viva Engage & CEx News)
Travel	• Travel Improvements • Ride Rushmoor • Rushmoor Voluntary Services healthy walk • Enterprise Car Club
Events & Local Groups	• Eco Fair • Eco Explorers • Rushmoor Repair Cafe
Waste & Recycling	• Food waste • Global recycling day • Walk this Waste • Eco friendly Christmas crafts • Binfluencers
Local Greenspaces	• Wellesley Woodlands • Rowhill Nature Reserve • Cove Brook Greenway • Tree planting (UTCF – Urban Tree Challenge Fund)

Climate Change Action Plan	• Rushmoor Borough Council's Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan • Rushmoor Climate Community • Swimming Pool Covers at Aldershot Pools
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In addition, the following information has been shared with the business community within the Borough:

Sustainable Business Network

Rushmoor Borough Council contributes to the Sustainable Business Network (North Hants) and also supports the development of the Sustainable Business Network seminars to improve support and mentoring to SMEs on carbon reduction and sustainable business measures. This is organised and run by Carbon Footprint Ltd. SMEs can register to join the network for free and have access to the full video library of past sessions. [More information can be found here.](#)

2024/25 sessions have included topics such as:

- Greenwashing & Greenhushing
- Energy Efficiency
- Net Zero – What is it, why you need it and how to do it.
- Assessing carbon emissions (Keynote at Unlocking Hampshire's Green Potential event).
- Product Carbon Footprinting

Action 7: To hold an eco-fair in September 2023 at Southwood Country Park and Field Centre to allow residents to find out more about climate change and opportunities to reduce their own carbon footprint and to hold an event for local businesses on low carbon opportunities.

Following on from a successful Eco Fair in 2023, the annual Eco Fair was held at Southwood Visitor Centre (Saturday 14th September 2024). Approximately 100 young people were engaged with environmental activities at the event.

Stallholders included:

- RBC Climate Change
- RBC Contracts team (Food waste & recycling)
- Basingstoke Canal Art (Upcycled artwork)
- Tice Meadow Bird Group
- Wellesley Woodlands – Children’s Activities
- Rushmoor Repair Café
- Blackwater Valley Friends of the Earth
- Honey & Beeswax products
- Reclaimed wood pieces
- Blackwater Valley Countryside Partnership – set up as trail around the Country Park (themed around sustainable living), with sustainable prizes.

This is now an annual event and is expected to be held on 14th September 2025.



Action 8: To work with Hampshire County Council to improve access to EV charging facilities across Rushmoor.

The Council continues to work with Hampshire County Council on EV infrastructure throughout the borough. Hampshire County Council is currently applying for Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) funding and further support will be given as this progresses.

Action 9: To refresh the Council’s procurement strategy to ensure that the goods and services that the Council buys support the aim of the Council being carbon neutral by 2030.

In November 2024, Cabinet agreed the Council’s [Procurement Strategy 2025-2028](#).

Procurement is the process of acquiring goods, works and services, covering both acquisition from third parties and in-house providers. The process spans the whole

life cycle, from identification of needs to the monitoring of performance, through to the end of a contract or the end of the useful life of an asset.

The Council's vision for procurement over the term of this strategy is to demonstrate value for money through the effective procurement of goods, services and works on a whole life basis, whilst generating wider benefits for the local community and taking positive steps wherever possible to reduce the impact on the environment.

The Strategy includes additional outcomes, including taking positive steps to tackle climate change and reducing waste, recognising that sustainability and environmental impacts are considered when making procurement decisions.

As well as this, there is potential for additional social value - which could involve environmental projects that relate to protecting, enhancing the local environment, supporting the Council's commitments to become carbon neutral by 2030.

Action 10: To review processes for the Council's capital programme so that environmental impacts are incorporated into business case development and whole life cycle carbon assessments are undertaken.

A specialist piece of work on the carbon footprint of the crematorium refurbishments was commissioned.

Climate Change Impact Assessments are currently being developed, which will need to be considered for Cabinet Reporting to integrate climate change considerations into decision making.

Action 11: To develop the Council's offsetting approach with a view to ensuring that any offsetting undertaken by the Council has a local impact.

The Council's approach to offsetting emissions will be developed further as we progress toward 2030. This will ensure that the most up-to-date opportunities and recognised best practice are considered.

Action 12: To review, update and publish the Council's carbon footprint on an annual basis, publish an annual report detailing all that the Council has achieved in relation to its climate action plan and associated strategies (e.g., Green Infrastructure Plan).

The following details updates on associated strategies and wider climate-related activity delivered in 2024/25.

Associated Strategies

Green Infrastructure Strategy

The Green Infrastructure Strategy for Rushmoor was adopted by the Council in July 2022. The Strategy includes a vision, objectives, and a number of broad priorities. In order to deliver these priorities, the Strategy identifies a number of potential projects. It is noted in the Strategy that these projects were identified as having potential, but their inclusion did not represent a commitment to delivery or assume that partnership working has been agreed. Since the adoption of the Strategy, the Council has reviewed the potential projects and started to make progress on those considered to be of high priority. These include:

PP3 – A biodiversity net gain off-site compensation scoping project.

The Environment Act 2021 introduces a new mandatory requirement for new development to provide 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). This is due to come into force on large sites on 12th February 2024. BNG must be provided on-site in the first instance, but if evidence demonstrates this is not possible, it can be provided off-site. Local authorities can offer BNG units on their own land. Therefore, officers have undertaken preparatory work to establish whether a 'Habitat Bank' of units can be created and offered once the mandatory requirement is in place. This has focused initially on the Council's three Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces (SANG) and a number of urban tree planting locations.

In January 2024, Cabinet approved the launch of a Rushmoor Habitat Bank. Unfortunately, the launch of the Habitat Bank has been delayed.

PP6 - Review of Potential SANG Sites

This project will identify whether there are opportunities to identify new Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) that can mitigate the impact of net new residential development on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area. Work on the project has commenced and is focused on understanding the SANG capacity required to support the new Local Plan and reviewing previous work.

PP7 - Carbon reduction through tree planting.

This project seeks to identify if, where and what type of tree planting may be desirable within Rushmoor Borough, and how Rushmoor Borough may best contribute towards delivery of national woodland creation commitments. Part of this project is being progressed through the identification of urban tree planting locations which can be funded through off-site BNG payments (see Project PP3 above).



The Council has also been successful in securing funding as part of the Urban Tree Challenge Fund.

This grant will fund the purchase, planting, and establishment of 194 trees within 14 planting locations, within wards identified as having the lowest canopy cover (i.e. below 20%).

A further 164 trees were planted during the Autumn / Winter 24/25. A total of 194 trees have now been planted under this project.

GP1 - Southwood and Cove Brook Floodplain Enhancement Project

The project is underway, but implementation has been on hold awaiting the completion of the ESSO Southampton to London Pipeline Project and is now awaiting the completion of works by the Environment Agency who are undertaking engineering works in the same location. This project will be delivered Autumn / Winter 2026 subject to securing all necessary Flood Risk Activity Permits, securing a contractor and favourable weather conditions to allow access.

GP5 - Southwood/Bramshot SANG Network Project

This project will explore the potential to formally identify and agree a SANG network with Natural England, which incorporates existing and potential SANG within Hart and Rushmoor (including Southwood Woodlands, Southwood Country Park, Hartland Country Park, and Bramshot County Park). This project is closely linked to PP6 and will be progressed alongside this project.

Tree Management Plan & Tree Maintenance Policy

In February 2025, a new [Tree Management Plan](#) and [Tree Maintenance Policy](#) were agreed by Cabinet. This set out the overall management approach in relation to Council owned trees. The policies also set out how trees would be surveyed and how work would be prioritised in relation to the safety of persons and property.

Tree Management Plan

Primarily the actions within this plan will provide a robust defence against claims of negligence against the Council. In addition, a healthy tree population provides benefits to health by filtering polluted air and mitigating against climate change factors, they provide wildlife habitats, land stabilisation, and enhanced quality of urban landscape.

Tree Maintenance Policy

This policy sets out the principles for the maintenance of the Council's tree population giving details of the considerations for decisions relating to tree work, tree planting and (legal) nuisance.

The aim of this Policy is to maintain the green leafy character of the borough and manage the existing tree population by appropriate and sensitive maintenance to ensure a healthy, pleasant, and safe environment now, and ensure adequate canopy cover for the future. To lead by example with regard to the value we place on our trees and their contribution to environmental quality within the urban landscape, including climate change benefits.

Primary objectives include urban environmental benefits such as local climate effects, shade, CO2 (Carbon Dioxide), and storm water runoff. Secondary objectives include Wildlife (biodiversity) and sustainable communities. The objectives aim to manage our trees in a global sense and encourage urban forest with 'continuous cover management' to provide a healthy and diverse tree population. That the amenity provided by the trees is preserved for perpetuity by maintaining and improving tree cover for the future and planting of suitable trees in appropriate locations.

Council Site Improvements

Princes Hall

The addition of recycling bins throughout Princes is now complete. This aims to ensure that waste streams are properly separated throughout the venue.



Aldershot Pools & Lido

Aldershot Pools & Fitness Centre received a grant from the Government and Sport's England's Swimming Pool Support Fund, to fund energy efficiency improvement works at the Centre. This includes two pool covers for the pools, which help retain the heat in the pools overnight, reducing energy consumption at the centre.

This also includes the installation of solar panels at the centre, providing renewable energy generation, phase one of which has been completed, with phase two scheduled for September.

The floodlights on the 3G football pitches have also been upgraded to LED lights, saving energy during the winter months.



Community Engagement

Rushmoor Climate Community

Rushmoor Climate Community Group launched in October 2024. This is a forum for residents that live, work or volunteer within the borough to engage with the Council on climate, environmental and sustainability issues within Rushmoor.

Objectives/aims of the RCC Group are:

- To **ENGAGE** Rushmoor residents in caring for, protecting, and enhancing our natural environment
- To **CONSULT** and ask for opinions and feedback on Rushmoor Borough Council's existing policies and help shape and inform future policies and plans.
- To **NETWORK & SHARE** information & resources and form partnerships between people and organisations.
- To **CREATE** initiatives by and for residents



- To **RAISE AWARENESS** of climate, environmental and sustainability issues across the community and beyond

This group has good attendance, has received positive feedback, and continues to grow.

More information about Rushmoor Climate Community can be found: [Our Rushmoor Climate Community group - Rushmoor Borough Council](#)



Eco Explorers

The Eco Explorers Club is held in town centres on the first weekend of every month (Aldershot on Saturday, Farnborough on Sunday, from May-October). These drop-in sessions feature interactive environmental-themed storytelling, alongside a hands-on activity focused on topics such as pollination, growing and gardening, global warming, green energy, plastic, recycling, and wildlife. This has an attendance of approximately 200 visitors each weekend.

More information: [Monthly Eco Explorers Club - Rushmoor Borough Council](#)



Rushmoor Community in Bloom



Rushmoor Borough Council supports the Rushmoor Community in Bloom competition organised by Rushmoor Voluntary Services. In addition to providing grant funding towards the competition, the Council's Climate Change Officer is part of the planning team, as well as judging the Best Wildlife Friendly Garden category.

The competition continues to grow, and for 2025, an additional category was introduced: Best Business Floral Display.

More information: [Rushmoor Community in Bloom 2025](#)



Warm Homes – Energy Efficiency

Warmer Homes: HUG2 (Home Upgrade Grant)

The Council was part of a consortium of local Councils which were awarded funding. This scheme gave residents the opportunity of fully funded energy efficiency improvements. This was only applicable to off-grid properties with an EPC of band D or lower. These improvements are funded by the Home Upgrade Grant (HUG) funding, which is administered by the Government's Department for Energy Security & Net Zero (DESNZ). HUG2 closed at the end of March 2025.

A total of £46k was spent in Rushmoor with 6 properties improved and 7 measures put in place. This includes properties getting at least one of the following: an air source heat pump, low energy storage heater, loft insulation, and solar panels.

Warm Homes Local Grant

Warmer Homes supports residents to make their homes more energy efficient and the next programme of grants is expected to be launched in March 2025.

Warmer Homes provide a range of fully funded energy efficiency improvements for your home and is led by Portsmouth City Council, working in partnership with a consortium of 32 other local authorities. These improvements are funded by Warm Homes: Local Grant, which is administered by the Government's Department for Energy Security & Net Zero (DESNZ).

Residents could be eligible if:

- They have a total household income of £36k or less per year
- They receive a means-tested benefit
- Their home has an EPC rating of D, E, F or G.
- They are a homeowner or private tenant.

More information: [energy-efficiency home improvements | Warmer Homes](#)

Hitting the Cold Spots

This service delivered by the Environment Centre provides advice to residents (particularly those who are vulnerable) on heating, insulation, energy bills, smart meters and switching energy tariffs. It also has a small budget to help residents with heating repairs and can provide portable heaters if a heating system breaks.

More information: [Hitting the cold spots](#)

Great British Insulation Scheme

Residents are signposted to this scheme on our webpage. This is a scheme to help lower the cost of heating your home, by adding insulation for free or at a discount.

Anyone can apply, as long as their home is:

- In a lower council tax band (A to D)
- Rated as with an energy performance certificate D to G.

More Information: [Apply for support from the Great British Insulation Scheme - GOV.UK](#)

Solar Together

Rushmoor Borough Council worked with Hampshire County Council and iChoosr to take part in Solar Together. This is a Group buying scheme for residents to reduce the cost of solar PV and battery storage systems, as well as ensuring a trusted supplier. Below is a breakdown of the figures for the current and previous Solar Together schemes for Rushmoor Borough Council. The installation phase of the current scheme will run until June 2025.

Solar Together Scheme Phase	Scheme 3 2023/24	Scheme 4 2024/25*
Registration	161	155
Acceptances	30	149
Installations	20	0

**to date (April 2025)*

Farnborough Airport Community Environmental Fund

The Farnborough Airport Community Environmental Fund is a grant fund for community environmental improvement projects.

The Airport pays a levy of £2 or £5 for every take-off or landing, dependent on the weight of the aircraft. This money goes into the Farnborough Airport Community Environmental Fund, which the Council administers. In 2024, this fund awarded grants to **12 projects**, totalling **£93,647**.

A celebration event was hosted at Farnborough Airport for those who received funding in 2024, to showcase the impact that the fund has had.

The event included presentations from three projects that were awarded funding in 2024. Each shared the amazing work these groups are undertaking that is benefiting the local community and the positive impact that the funding has had on the surrounding environment.



The Farnborough Airport Community Environmental Fund Annual Report can be found here: [Farnborough Airport Community Environmental Fund - Annual Report 2024](#)

Contact Details:

sustainability@rushmoor.gov.uk