

# STOCKPORT CAN - Climate Action Now

February 2020 Climate Action Strategy

# The Stockport Ambition

Carbon Neutral by 2038

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# 1. Introduction – the need to act

Globally, we recognise that climate change poses an unprecedented threat to our society. In many ways this is a decisive decade, where we have the knowledge and the emerging technology to take greater action.

Locally we have already felt disruption through severe flooding and these events are likely to become more frequent and severe with climate change posing a significant economic, social and environmental threat. This will also have an impact on wildlife and biodiversity, resulting in loss of species.

As a Council we have already started to act by leading the way in recycling, embarking on an ambitious LED street lighting programme that will reduce energy demand by 33% and Stockport Homes are recognised as a leader in sustainability.

We are also working with colleagues across Greater Manchester to deliver the 5-Year Environment Plan which sets out our long-term environmental vision and the urgent actions we all need to take in the next 5 years to help achieve this.

However, we recognise that more is needed. The action required is far greater than the Council can deliver on its own, it needs national government legislation and investment alongside all of us changing our behaviour. It means working together with public sector partners, businesses and residents.

This strategy sets out the initial actions that Stockport Council will take to make a difference on climate change over the next five years as we begin our journey to net-zero 2038. As we move forward, we will continue to build upon the foundation we lay here, refining and reviewing to adapt our plan as time goes on.

The scale of the challenge is significant, but we believe that **Stockport CAN**



# Decisive Decade

**Impacts of Climate Change: This shows the impacts of a 2 degree increase in average global temperatures.**

Temp rise °C	Water	Health	Land	Environment
<b>2°C</b>	20 - 30% decrease in water availability.	60 million more people exposed to malaria in Africa	10 million more people affected by flooding each year	40% of species facing extinction
<b>4°C</b>	50% decrease in water availability.	80 million more people exposed to malaria in Africa	300 million more people affected by flooding each year	Loss of around half Arctic tundra and collapse of Amazon rainforest.
<b>5°C</b>	Disappearance of glaciers in Himalayas affecting China/ India.	Diseases mutate and spread, water borne diseases increase.	Sea level rise threatens coastal areas and major world cities.	Rising risk of collapse of West Antarctic Ice Sheet.



Pictured: The aftermath of the wildfires in Australia (top left); bystanders watch as the wildfires destroy areas of the natural environment in Australia (background); the damage caused by Cyclone Idai in Southern Africa (bottom).



Pictured: Areas of Stockport are hit with severe floods (background and bottom left); the Toddbrook Dam breaks (top right).

## 2. Background – The need to act

In March 2019, we declared a Climate Emergency and agreed our ambition to become carbon neutral by 2038. This was a cross-party agreement, empowering us to do our part to combat climate change. It recognised that:

- The impacts of global temperature rises above 1.5°C are so severe that governments at all levels must work together to make this their top priority;
- As well as large-scale improvements in health and wellbeing around the world, bold climate action can deliver economic benefits in terms of new jobs, economic savings and market opportunities;
- As urban populations rise, greater consideration of how urban systems can develop sustainably will be required.

Globally, the 2016 Paris Agreement marked a milestone in global climate change efforts, as countries across the world joined together and agreed to new measures to tackle climate change, and to report on those efforts in a spirit of transparency. In line with climate science, the agreement aims to limit the increase in global average temperatures to 1.5°C, by rapidly reducing the amount of greenhouse gases that are released into the atmosphere. The scientific consensus is that a failure to limit warming to 1.5°C will result in an increase in droughts, water shortages, the loss of coastal lands and the decline of fresh water supplies – to name just a few. The effects will be felt at every level: global, national and local – and it is at every level that we need to act.

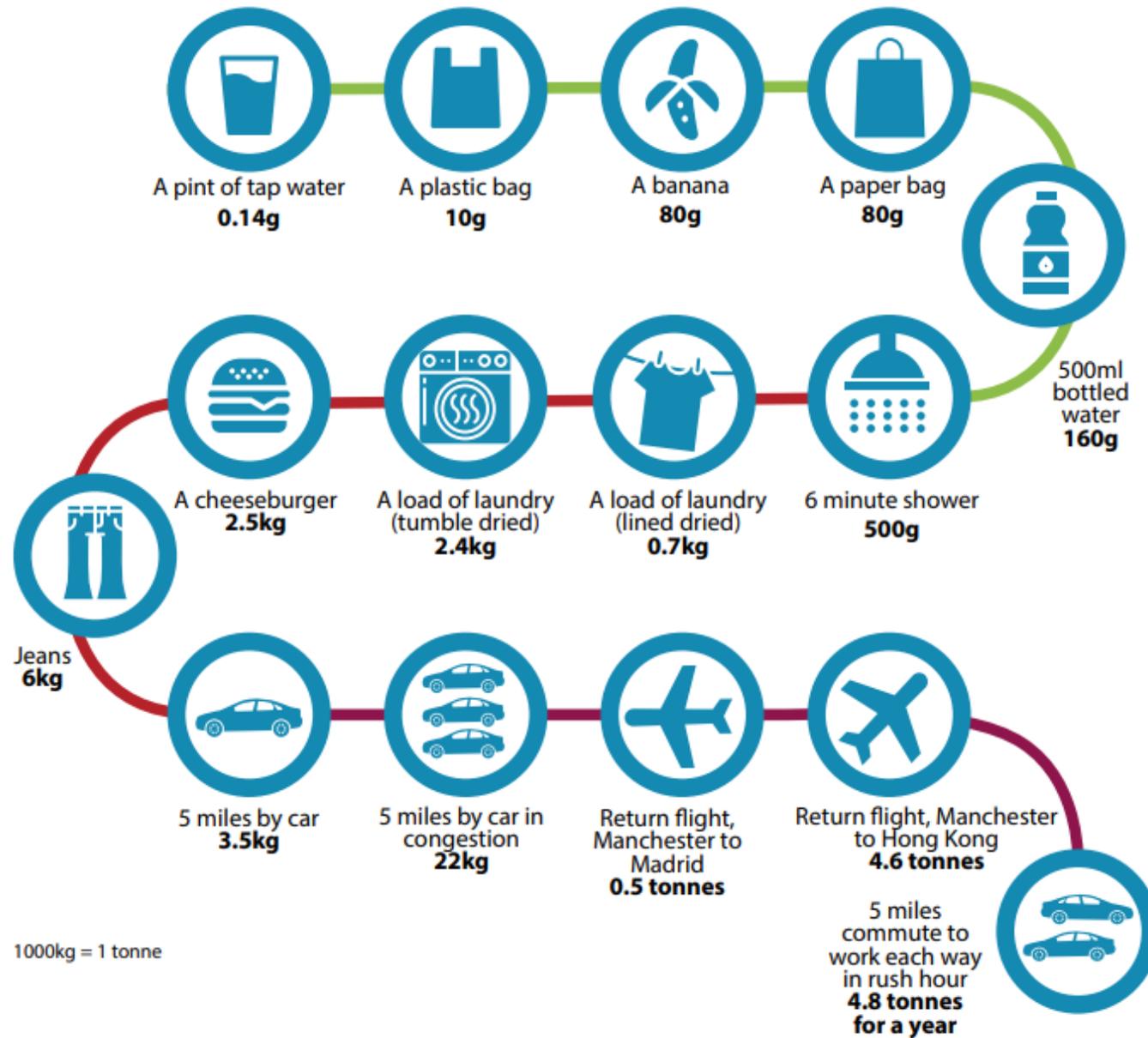
### 3. What is a Carbon Footprint?

‘Carbon footprint’ is a shorthand way of describing the full climate change impact of something by calculating its CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. It includes production and freight costs, and it allows us to make comparisons between very disparate things – e.g. riding a bike versus eating a banana. They are usually described in terms of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalence, as the different greenhouse gases all have different impacts on the climate – some are much more damaging than carbon dioxide. To calculate the carbon footprint of a country, we need to include not only what we produce and create ourselves, but also what we import. Often goods we import will have a bigger carbon footprint than goods we produce, especially if they are imported from countries that rely heavily on fossil fuels for energy.



Knowing our carbon footprint helps us understand the impact our lives are making. The WWF has an website (<https://footprint.wwf.org.uk>) where you can calculate your own carbon footprint. It then shows you how much you are using compared to your share of the world average: if you are using more than 100% then either we need a bigger planet, or you are using more than your share. Increasingly, people are using the idea of a 'ten tonne lifestyle' – how do each of us in the industrialised world use no more than a maximum of ten tonnes of CO2 per year.

## The carbon footprints of some common items<sup>8</sup>



## 4. Stockport Picture

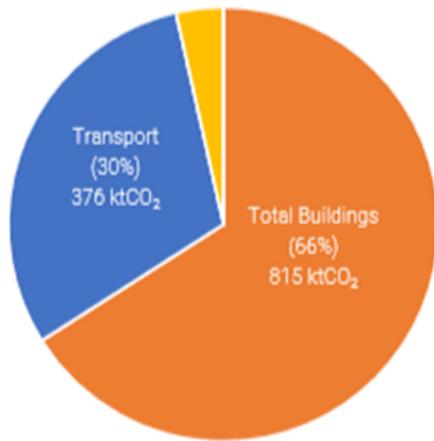
To meet our commitment, we commissioned research to understand Stockport's carbon emissions profile. This is a mathematical process that calculates how much carbon dioxide is put into the atmosphere. This research was done using Tyndall Centre data and a SCATTER (Setting City Area Targets and Trajectories for Emissions Reductions) model.

The SCATTER graph demonstrates how Stockport's carbon budget can be spent over the next 18 years to enable us to meet our target to become carbon neutral by 2038. Crucially, the graph shows that large scale change needs to happen now. There are many pathways to carbon neutrality, and they all depend on what we do within the sectors within our control, the 'levers' we can use to reduce our carbon emissions. By being bold in every sphere of our influence – both direct and indirect – we can meet these goals.

But Stockport is not just the Council. It is its people, its communities and its businesses. The research shows that the Council makes up just 5% of Stockport's carbon emissions. But every agreement – the Paris Agreement, the Climate Change Act and our Climate Emergency – needs action from the 100%. We all have our part to play.

# Current Emissions Profile Summary

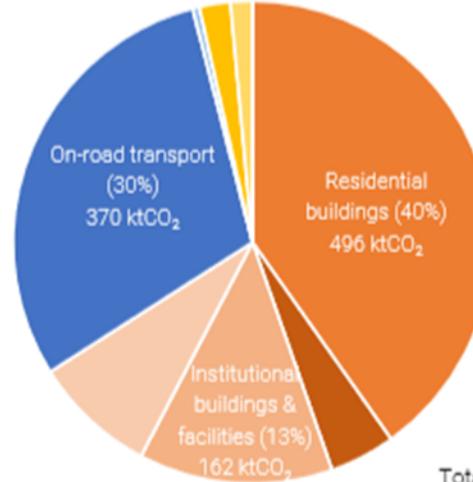
Figure 2: SCATTER sector inventory for direct and indirect emissions within Stockport, 2017



- Total Buildings (66%)
- Transport (30%)
- Waste (4%)
- Industrial Processes and Product Use (<1%)

Total: 1,234 ktCO<sub>2</sub>e

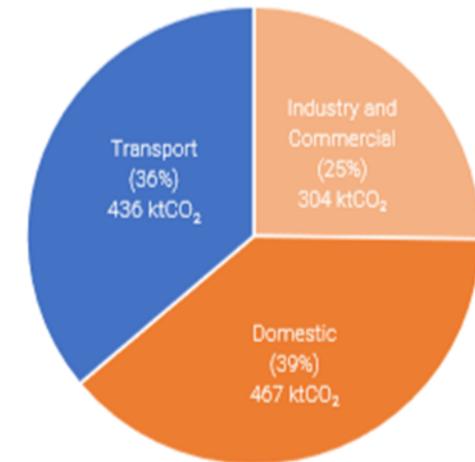
Figure 3: SCATTER sub-sector inventory for direct and indirect emissions within Stockport, 2017



- Residential buildings (40%)
- Institutional buildings & facilities (13%)
- On-road transport (30%)
- Waterborne navigation (<1%)
- Wastewater (1%)
- Industrial product use (<1%)
- Commercial buildings & facilities (4%)
- Industrial buildings & facilities (8%)
- Rail (<1%)
- Solid waste disposal (2%)
- Industrial process (<1%)

Total: 1,234 ktCO<sub>2</sub>e

Figure 4: BEIS sector inventory for direct and indirect emissions within Stockport, 2017



- Industry and Commercial (25%)
- Domestic (39%)
- Transport (36%)

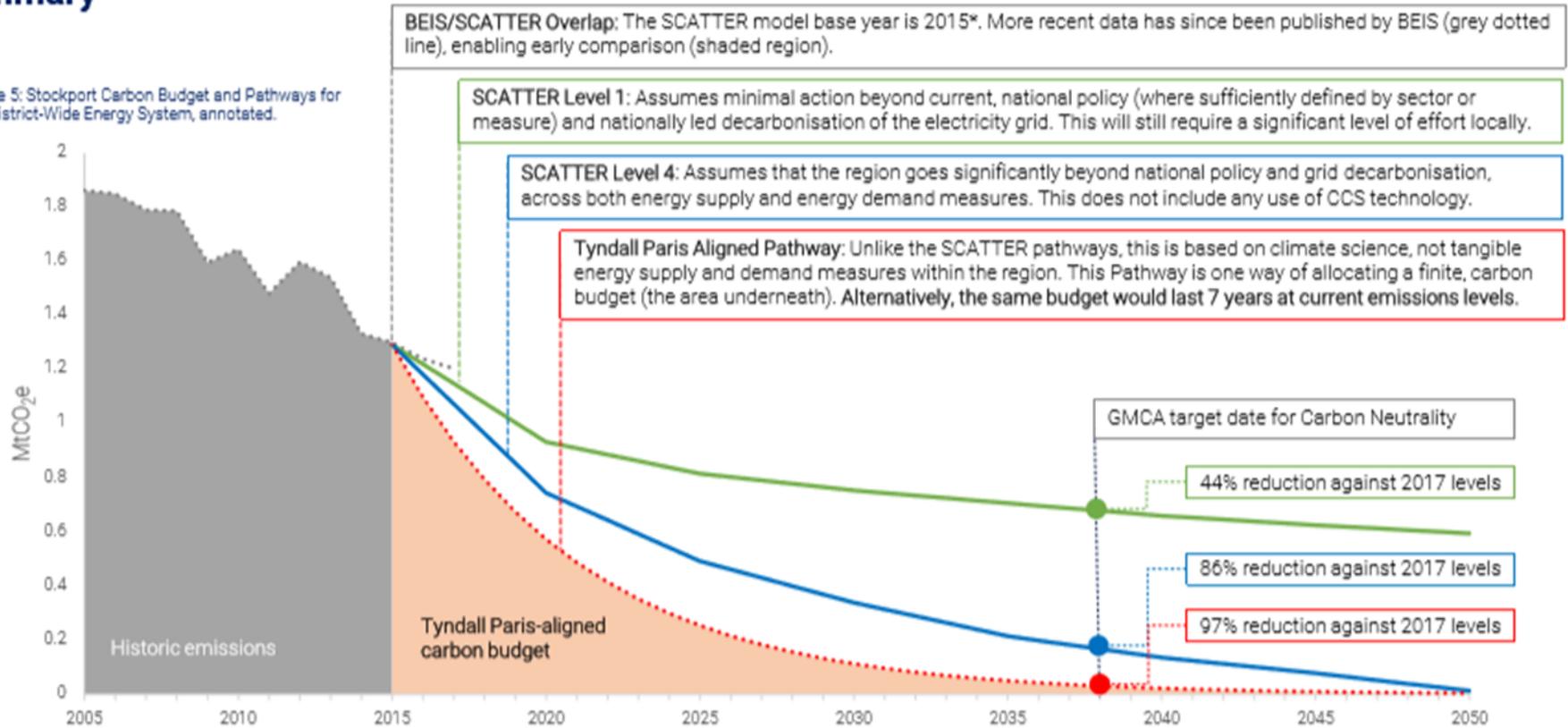
Total: 1,205 ktCO<sub>2</sub>



# Future Emissions Profile

## Summary

Figure 5: Stockport Carbon Budget and Pathways for the District-Wide Energy System, annotated.



## 5. Our residents have told us this is important

We know this is important to the people of Stockport, especially young people.

In 2019, 7,662 young people from Stockport took part in the Make Your Mark ballot and of these, 4,127 said that the biggest priority was to protect the environment. The Make Your Mark ballot is supported by Local Authorities, schools, UK Parliament, Fledglink and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport. It gives young people across the country a say on what is to be debated on the green benches of the House of Commons by Members of Youth Parliament.

*“We believe that we have a responsibility to protect the environment from the effects of climate change for the next generation; and that the Government should look towards carbon neutral alternatives.”* –  
YouthParliament.org.uk

Young people from all over the UK came together to organise the first Youth Environmental Conference to be held in the UK. The event was hosted by Manchester Metropolitan University and took place during November 2019 and 20 schools from Stockport took part.

During 2020 we are holding ‘Our Stockport Conversation’. We’ll ask people what they want the borough to be like over the next 10 years and what their ambitions are for the future of Stockport. We have started this conversation with children and young people in schools and colleges and have heard that tackling climate change is high on their agenda.

## 6. We are already taking action

Across the borough, we are already acting on tackling the climate crisis.

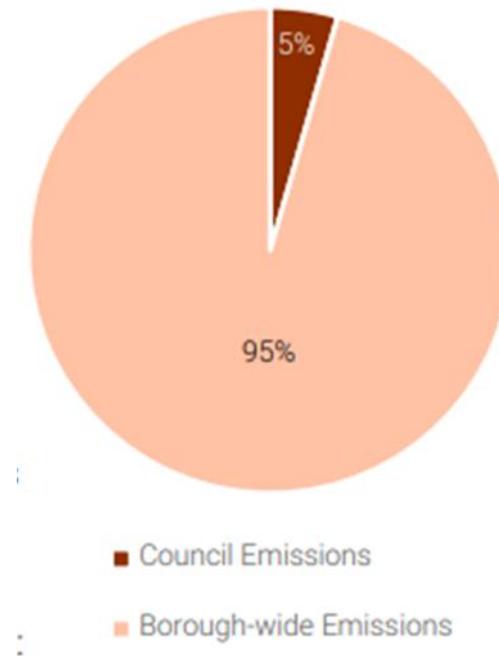
The journey so far...

- Stockport Homes are recognised as leaders in sustainability
  - Currently 91% of Stockport Homes housing stock is at EPC rating C or above compared to the borough average of 70% D or below.
  - We have already installed 2,300 solar PV as well as biomass heating on 2,100 homes.
- Stockport Council have commenced a £20 million LED Lighting and Energy Efficiency project for its street lighting network which aims to reduce the associated energy demand by 33%.
- Stockport Council are leaders in recycling, consistently recycling circa 60%
- We are in the process of planting 2,200 trees across the borough.
- Renewable Energy
  - We have already installed 2,300 solar PV installations on domestic properties.
  - Stockport Hydro has been operational since 2012 and generates enough clean energy to power 60 homes.
- Sustainable Travel
  - Unprecedented investment in walking and cycling schemes through the Mayoral Corporation Fund (MCF).

- We have introduced electric charging points within the borough and electric vehicles into our fleet.

## **7. We have to work together**

This strategy sets out Stockport Council's commitment to playing our part in achieving our climate ambitions. We know they will be challenging so we will need to work closely with all residents, businesses, partners and government to achieve them. We know we can't act alone to make the kind of impact that is needed immediately, so we will seek to play a leading role within GMCA and alongside other councils and to collectively lobby to ensure we are supported and enabled by the right UK Government policies. Legislative change and investment are needed at a national level to make a real difference.



The pie chart demonstrates that emissions directly related to Council activities typically represent less than 5% of the total emissions of the borough, therefore we have an important role in stimulating and influencing action in the borough.

However, we will provide credibility by leading by example, delivering our services in a green manner and helping to shape the market. We also want to put people at the heart of our action plan and will continue to work with our public sector partners, businesses and local communities so that everyone can play their part in reducing carbon.

# **Stockport CAN – Climate Action Now**

**Stockport CAN** is not only the name of our strategy, it is a call to action – it recognises that while we will be ambitious leaders in addressing the climate challenge, we know we cannot do this alone.

Throughout this strategy we recognise that it is a collective effort:

- **Stockport Business CAN**
- **Stockport Residents CAN**
- **Stockport Communities CAN**
- **Stockport Schools CAN**
- **Stockport Council CAN**

## 8. Workstreams

Our action plan consists of **seven** priority workstreams:

1. **Stockport Council CAN** – leading the way by building climate action into everything we do
2. **Sustainable Financial Appraisal** – We’re putting climate impact at the heart of everything we do by introducing a brand new model of financial appraisal which informs all decisions we make.
3. **Climate Friendly Borough** – working with businesses and local people to take action
4. **Low Carbon Buildings** – more energy efficient homes and buildings, now and in the future
5. **Renewable Energy** – ensuring that the future energy needs of the borough can all be met in a sustainable way
6. **Sustainable Transport** – moving to carbon-free transport options and increasing walking, cycling and use of public transport
7. **Natural Environment** – protecting and enhancing our natural environment

We have an underpinning action plan that provides more detail on each strand.

## Council CAN – *leading the way to build climate action into everything we do*

To make a difference we need to put Climate Change at the heart of everything we do and make it a core part of strategy development and decision making. We need to change the way we behave and lead by example. This is a supporting theme that runs across everything we do. Ultimately it means changing our individual behaviour alongside systems and processes.

We have already begun to make progress

- An all-party Climate Emergency Task Group has been established following the Council declaring a Climate Emergency.
- We have already achieved official recognition as a bronze carbon literate organisation with 120 members of staff Carbon Literacy Trained including the Senior Leadership Team.
- We commission our electricity from a green energy supplier
- Stockport Homes has designed and developed an interactive environmental awareness course called 'My Planet and Me' which is delivered by Stockport Homes' staff members to new starters. It is accredited to the carbon literacy standard but includes waste and biodiversity

**Our Ambition:**

**We will** incorporate climate impact assessment into everything we do by incorporating it into decision making, report templates and all key strategies

**We will** support our staff to be carbon literate by making carbon literacy training mandatory by March 2021

**We will** encourage our staff to change behaviour by reducing the resources they use such as energy, fuel and materials. For example, we will aim to reduce the amount of paper we use by 50% by 2025. To encourage behaviour change we will have measures such as carbon reduction competitions and Climate Action Days to promote awareness.

**We will** upgrade our staff travel plan that reduces the carbon in staff journeys by 20% by 2025

**We will** use our role as a place shaper to invest in local markets and be transparent in our activity to encourage others

# Sustainable Financial Appraisal – *putting climate impact at the heart of everything we do by developing and adopting a brand new model of financial appraisal which informs all decisions we make*

We will put in place a new model of financial appraisal to make sure that climate impact is embedded into all investment decisions from 2020/21 onwards. This work is leading the way in local government.

We have identified a gap to financial appraisals: There is currently a lack of prioritisation of business cases in relation to carbon efficiency.

We are currently working with Anthesis to develop an appraisal solution, which will provide us with an improved carbon evidence base for capital investment decisions and cross-departmental climate action collaboration. We will completely change the way we undertake investments and put carbon at the heart of everything we do.

- Consideration for carbon emissions will become “business as usual” and therefore an integral part of how we plan investments
- The Capital Board will take a view of all investments so that we maximise Carbon reduction
- We’ll develop a programme that can bid for government grants and respond when external funds become available

This work ultimately positions Stockport as the pioneer of internal carbon finance within Greater Manchester (GM), vital for achieving the GM carbon net zero goal of 2038.

## **Our Ambition:**

**We will** put in place a new model of financial appraisal for 2020/21 that will ensure that climate impact is embedded into decision making

# Climate Friendly Borough – *working with businesses and local people to take action*

To make a difference on climate change we need to encourage businesses and communities to work differently. We can play a key role in this by providing the conditions to facilitate and enable change within external organisations.

We know that there are many people in the borough, particularly young people that are passionate about climate change. We need to harness this energy to help people to make a difference. We also need to encourage individual behaviour change through education and advice.

We already have examples of where this has been developed:

- Stockport Local Fund – £1m fund that community groups can apply for to help improve neighbourhoods
- Stockport has risen 23 places in the Sustainable Growth Index which means it is in the top 30% of local authorities in the UK
- We Love Stockport campaign includes a business awards scheme which aims to encourage businesses to address their impact on the local environment
- Over 20 Stockport schools took part in a Climate Summit in November 2019

## **Our Ambition**

- **We will** develop a Stockport CAN (Climate Action Now) campaign, including social media, that provides information and advice to residents about action they can take.
- **We will** continue to put children and young people at the heart of our approach utilising established forums and developing a climate change network.

- **We will** ensure procurement policy considers carbon neutral considerations by March 2021 and run our own services through this test.
- **We will** work with local organisations to hold a Climate Summit in summer 2020.
- **We will** add climate action as a priority within the Stockport Local Fund for 2020.
- **We will** add climate action to our business development framework so that we will have supported 100 businesses to consider climate change by March 2021.
- **We will** continue to grow the climate action business network and target businesses that have the highest carbon footprint.

# Low Carbon Buildings – *more energy efficient homes and buildings, now and in the future*

The quality, design and use of homes and buildings across Stockport must be improved now to address the challenges of climate change. Doing so will also improve health, wellbeing and comfort, including for vulnerable groups such as the elderly and those living with chronic illnesses. Some of the things we have already done include:

- Stockport Homes are leaders in sustainable housing and have already installed 2,300 solar PV as well as biomass heating for 2,100 homes.
- We've invested £32 million since 2008 on providing energy efficient homes.
- Currently, 91% of Stockport Homes stock is at EPC rating C or above with the average being rating C. This is significantly higher than the borough average (70% EPC D or below).
- We've started a £20 million LED Lighting and Energy Efficiency project for its street lighting network which aims to reduce the associated energy demand by 33%. The estimated carbon savings based on this reduction in energy demand is 2,151 tCO<sub>2</sub>

## **Our Ambition:**

- **We will** reduce the carbon emissions for our Council services' buildings by 10% by the end of 2021.
- **We will** complete the replacement of street lamps with LED bulbs by 2023.
- **We will** ensure that at least 40% of the Council housing stock will incorporate one or more renewable technologies by the end of 2021 (for example, solar PV).

- **We will** work with Stockport Homes who are committed to delivering the Homes as Energy Systems project, which will see approximately 300 homes with improved ground source and air source heating within the next 24 months.
- **We will** promote renewable and sustainable technology for newbuild and major renovations within our Local Plan by 2021, including encouraging PassivHaus developments.
- **We will** produce an annual report on planning approvals detailing the carbon savings from developments that exceed government standards.
- **We will** seek government funding and work with developers to deliver renewable technologies for the 3,500 homes built within the Mayoral Development Corporation urban neighbourhood.
- **We will** promote opportunities such as the iChoose solar initiative so that those that can afford to invest in their homes introduce renewable technologies.
- **We will** work with GM colleagues to lobby government for funding and legislative change to deliver the scale of retrofitting needed in the private housing sector.

# Renewable Energy - *ensuring that the future energy needs of the borough can all be met in a sustainable way*

We understand that switching our appliances, lights and vehicles to electric is only as sustainable as the source of the electricity that powers these improvements. That's why we plan to increase our sustainable energy supply, to ensure that the future energy needs of Stockport can all be met in a sustainable way, from smartphones to streetlights. We know we have a long way to go, and we will get there by stepping up our efforts, building on some of the sustainable energy projects already in Stockport, such as:

- We have already improved our energy supply through the installation of solar PV, with 28 solar PV systems installed on our corporate estate and approximately 2,300 installed on homes.
- Stockport Hydro was Greater Manchester's first community owned hydroelectric project. It has been operational since 2012 and generates enough clean energy to power 60 homes.
- Across the borough, we have seen the installation of solar, heat pumps and biofuels in schools, churches and businesses, as well as supplying 2,100 homes with biomass heating.

## **Our Ambition:**

- **We will** seek government grants to maximise sustainable energy and heating systems into the Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC)
- **We will** install large scale solar infrastructure in three locations within the borough should we be successful with our funding bid through the European Structural Investment Fund (ESIF).
- **We will** introduce solar and battery storage infrastructure at our depots to enable us to transform our fleet to electric vehicles.

- **We will** work with businesses and communities to promote sustainable energy and power.
- **We will** ensure our Local Plan is informed by low carbon energy capacity mapping and report on this in May 2020.

## Sustainable Transport – *moving to carbon-free transport options and increasing walking, cycling and use of public transport*

We all need to get around, and the ways we choose to travel, and the options available to us, are more important now than they ever have been. Transport is an issue that impacts everyone, whether you walk to your local shop, get the bus to school, or drive to work. We understand that transport is one of the biggest single contributors to climate change, with petrol and diesel cars playing a significant part. This is why we will be doing all we can to make alternative ways of getting around easier, such as encouraging active travel, promoting sustainable transport and improving infrastructure to make the switch to electric vehicles easier. All of this will be carried out in addition to our work with regional partners to continue to build upon the significant changes already taking place. Through schemes making it easier for staff to travel to work by bike, as well as being an early adopter of electric vehicles, we have been championing active and sustainable modes of travel for decades. We will continue to lead by example.

Some of the things we have already achieved in this area include:

- Promoted sustainable transport including use of public transport and encouragement of walking and cycling.
- Introduced incentives for lower polluting vehicles by providing reduced permits for zero and low emission vehicles.
- We have started to introduce electric fleet and currently have 3 zero emission vans, 4 electric vehicles and EV recycling points.
- Our commitment to walking and cycling has seen us introduce local park and stride groups as well as a walking and cycling forum that meets multiple times per year.
- We consistently promote active travel for staff and residents.

**Our Ambition:**

**We will** continue to transform walking and cycling opportunities across the borough, encouraging people to take part in active travel.

**We will** develop 14 walking and cycling schemes to be delivered in the next two to three years with the unprecedented funding from the Mayoral Challenge Fund (MCF).

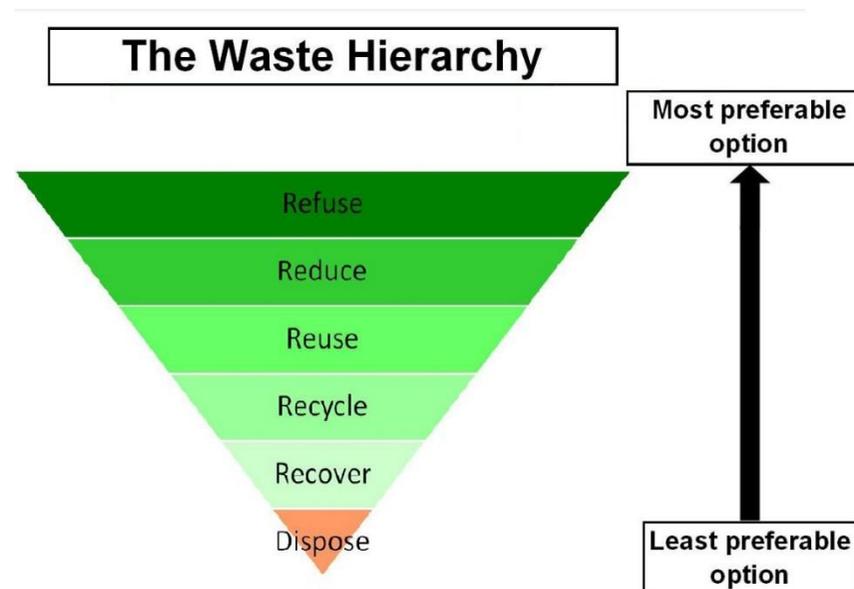
**We will** continue to improve our public transport, including the introduction of the Metrolink, creation of a new Cheadle train station, and improvements through bus franchising.

**We will** increase council maintained public electric charging points up to 30 by 2025 and ensure all new vehicles which form part of our fleet will be non-carbon within five years where technology allows.

**We will** consult residents on the introduction of a clean air zone.

# Natural Environment - *protecting and enhancing our natural environment*

Our natural environment is one of the most important resources we have in Stockport. It provides space for wildlife, enhances the beauty of Stockport, and improves our mental health. We understand that our natural environment means many things, to many people, and that is why we won't just protect our natural environment and biodiversity, we will enhance it. But we can't do this alone. To really safeguard our natural environment for future generations, we all need to play our part. The shops we buy from, the rubbish we throw out, and the way we treat our waste all impact the natural environment, locally and nationally. We know that individuals will have an important role to play here in reducing the amount of waste they create by buying fewer products and by buying products which last longer. The phrase Reduce, Reuse, Recycle is often used when we talk about how to be more environmentally friendly and so we will encourage individuals to live sustainably through this model.



Together, we CAN play our part.

- Stockport Council is supporting 'Feeding Stockport' which is funded by the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation through Sustainable Food Cities.
- We delivered the #GotToBeABottle campaign with Recycle for Greater Manchester to promote and improve recycling. The campaign aimed to make plastics recycling less confusing and provided every household in Stockport with a wheelie bin recycling guide.

### **Our Ambition:**

**We will** plant at least 11,500 standard trees in parks and along the highway by 2030.

**We will** create one new woodland each year, for the next ten years, using up to 80,000 whips (young trees) in total. These woodlands will be created in partnership with community groups.

**We will** ensure that all developers are encouraged to include sustainable drainage and biodiversity net gain wherever possible as part of our planning policy.

**We will** continue to encourage recycling by promoting correct recycling practice and educating our residents

**We will** create areas managed for long grass in every ward across the borough by 2025.

**We will** create an orchard in every ward across the borough by 2025/26, planting over 3,500 fruit trees by 2030.

**We will** reduce Council waste by at least 15% by 2025. Although we are already successful, we will seek to maintain and improve on our efforts and encourage residents to do the same.

## 9. Reporting on Progress

Next steps:

- Subject to Members feedback through Scrutiny, we will seek approval of the strategy from Full Council in April 2020. This will include an outline of the Climate Summit to be held in the Summer. The Climate Summit will be an opportunity for us to provide additional detail on the plans the sub-groups have been developing to collaborate with our stakeholders to establish how we can all play our part.

We'll report our action plan to the following groups:

- Climate Action Member Task Group (This is a cross-party group of Elected Members)
- Climate Action Steering Group (Made up of Senior Managers and representing all areas of focus within this report)
- Annual Monitoring and Update report to Communities and Housing Scrutiny Committee

# Stockport CAN Working Groups

The following working groups have been established to develop the plan and to deliver the actions set out within the report.



